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**George Anthony Keddie**

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***IUDAEA CAPTA, IUDAEA INVICTA:***

**The Subversion of Flavian Ideology in *Fourth Ezra***

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**George Anthony Keddie, B.A., M.A.R.**

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# ***IUDAEA CAPTA, IUDAEA INVICTA:***

## **The Subversion of Flavian Ideology in *Fourth Ezra***

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SUPERVISOR: Steven J. Friesen

The present report applies Pierre Bourdieu's social theory to the study of ancient Judaeen apocalypticism in its historical, socioeconomic, and political contexts. Its central thesis is that each Judaeen apocalyptic discourse is waged against the dominant ideology of its society and its perceived sustainers and beneficiaries. The particular focus in this report is Flavian ideology—the dominant ideology of the Roman Empire in the last three decades of the first century CE—and its subversion by the apocalyptic discourse of the late-first century CE text *Fourth Ezra*. After the Romans quashed a revolt in the province of Judaea and sacked the Jerusalem temple in 70 CE, the soon-to-be Roman emperor Vespasian, and his sons Titus and Domitian, initiated and maintained an empire-wide discourse proclaiming *Iudaea capta* ('Judaea captured'). By means of coins, monuments, statues, literary propaganda, and the institution of a new Judaeen tax, the Flavian emperors magnified their successful suppression of this provincial revolt in order to legitimate their dynasty. This discourse, which quickly became misrecognized in society and persisted long after the tenure of the Flavian dynasty, marked all Judaeans throughout the empire as foreign rebels and barbarians. The author of *Fourth Ezra* challenged Flavian ideology, and the

*Iudaea capta* discourse in particular, by “revealing”—that is, persuading his audience to believe—that Rome’s victory over Judaea is part of the divine plan, the glory of Rome is fleeting, and the righteous ones who keep God’s Law will still have an opportunity for redemption. A focus of the present analysis is the figure of a lamenting woman employed by both discourses. Whereas the Flavian discourse used a dejected Judaeian woman to represent Judaea after the Roman victory, *Fourth Ezra*’s apocalyptic discourse reveals a similar figure of a lamenting Judaeian woman to be Mother Zion, and has her transform into the new, eschatological Jerusalem. When these two discourses are viewed together, regardless of direct influence or dependence, it is clear that the apocalyptic discourse subverts Flavian ideology. In the process, the author of *Fourth Ezra* recycles power by simultaneously delegitimizing the Flavian emperors and legitimating his own social circle of sage-leaders.

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## Chapter One:

### Dominant Ideology and Apocalyptic Discourse

The ten-horned beast of Daniel; the seven-headed, ten-horned sea-beast of Revelation; the three-headed, twenty-winged eagle of *4 Ezra*—all these and many other monsters are the product of a generative friction between the socio-historical situations of Judaeen communities and the spatial and temporal transcendence of those situations. As Adela Yarbro Collins explains, apocalyptic texts “are not independent sacred objects,” but “point beyond themselves to social situations.”<sup>1</sup> In the last half century or so, there have been many attempts to understand those social situations, or present realities, and their relation to apocalyptic thought. Although oft-quoted statements like Paul Hanson’s thesis that apocalyptic literature was intended to “give comfort to those tested by persecution”<sup>2</sup> and David Hellholm’s claim that these texts were “intended for a group in

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<sup>1</sup> Adela Yarbro Collins, *Cosmology and Eschatology in Jewish and Christian Apocalypticism* (Leiden: Brill, 2000) 19-20. For an overview of trends in scholarship on the Judaeen and Christian apocalypses, see Adela Yarbro Collins, “Apocalypse Now: The State of Apocalyptic Studies near the End of the First Decade of the Twenty-First Century.” *HTR* 104 (2011): 447-57.

<sup>2</sup> Paul D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (rev. ed.; Philadelphia, Pa.: Fortress, 1979) 430. For similar views of apocalyptic texts as literature of the oppressed or distressed, see P. Vielhauer and G. Strecker, “Apocalypses and Related Subjects,” in *New Testament Apocrypha* (ed. E. Hennecke et al.; vol. 2; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster, 1991) esp. 558; E. P. Sanders, “The Genre of Palestinian Jewish Apocalypses” in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Apocalypticism, Uppsala, August 12-17, 1979* (ed. D. Hellholm; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck) 447-59. For a discussion of many of these issues, see John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* (2d. ed.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998) 1-42.

crisis with the purpose of exhortation and/or consolation by means of divine authority”<sup>3</sup> are limited in their application, they helpfully highlight the ethos of oppression associated with the “us” of apocalyptic texts, as well as the persuasive intent of that literature. John J. Collins sums up this aspect of the purpose of apocalyptic literature nicely: “the function of the apocalyptic literature is to shape one’s imaginative perception of a situation and so lay the basis for whatever course of action it exhorts.”<sup>4</sup>

What is at stake in apocalyptic literature, then, is the transformation of a socio-historical situation through an imaginative discourse.<sup>5</sup> Thus, it stands to reason that, through an archaeology of this discourse, we can glimpse the once-present realities of the ancient apocalypticists. One way of approaching this problem of sociohistorical contexts involves ethnography and cross-cultural comparison. Scholars such as John Gager have sought to illuminate proto-Christian apocalypticism through insights gleaned from the study of modern millenarian movements.<sup>6</sup> One of Gager’s most valuable conclusions is that “*relative* rather than absolute deprivation most often characterizes premillenarian

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<sup>3</sup> David Hellholm, “The Problem of Apocalyptic Genre and the Apocalypse of John” in *Semeia 36: Early Christian Apocalypticism: Genre and Social Setting* (ed. A. Yarbro Collins; Decatur, Ga.: Scholars, 1986) 13-64 at 27.

<sup>4</sup> J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 42.

<sup>5</sup> By discussing apocalyptic discourse, I follow such works as: Greg Carey, “Introduction: Apocalyptic Discourse, Apocalyptic Rhetoric” in *Vision and Persuasion: Rhetorical Dimensions of Apocalyptic Discourse* (ed. G. Carey and L. G. Bloomquist; St. Louis, Mo.: Chalice, 1999) 1-17; Stephen D. O’Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford, 1994). I say more about this later in this chapter.

<sup>6</sup> John G. Gager, *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1975).

conditions.”<sup>7</sup> Employing Yonina Talmon’s definition of relative deprivation as an “uneven relation between expectation and the means of satisfaction,”<sup>8</sup> Gager determined that there is not a *necessary* correlation between early Christian apocalypticism and poverty or oppression.<sup>9</sup> Instead, the texts evince an “ideology of poverty” that “exaggerates and idealizes” social reality.<sup>10</sup> Apocalyptic texts emphasize, and may even generate, a sense of alienation among their readers regardless of antecedent socioeconomic conditions.<sup>11</sup> For Gager, this sense of alienation is induced by the brinksmanship of imminent apocalyptic expectations that fail to be realized.<sup>12</sup> Gager’s work thus suggests that the real conditions of apocalyptic communities do not need to involve active or overt oppression for apocalyptic literature to self-identify in that way. However, Gager has not offered an explication of the cyclical negotiation of power that must define the relationship between the apocalyptic group and its social environment for this self-alienating rhetoric of apocalyptic discourse to be effective.

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<sup>7</sup> Gager, *Kingdom and Community*, 27 (his italics). On relative deprivation and Revelation, see also Adela Yarbro Collins, *Crisis and Catharsis: The Power of the Apocalypse* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Westminster, 1984) 141. For an important (though overstated) alternative to the relative deprivation approach to apocalypticism, which emphasizes charismatic authority in a community, see Stephen L. Cook, *Prophecy & Apocalypticism: The Postexilic Social Setting* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1995) 19-54.

<sup>8</sup> Yonina Talmon, “Pursuit of the Millennium: The Relation between Religious and Social Change,” *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 3 (1962): 137 (italics removed), cited by Gager in *Kingdom and Community*, 27.

<sup>9</sup> Gager, *Kingdom and Community*, 27.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> As Stephen O’Leary has noted, audiences receptive to apocalyptic discourses have “included emperors, peasants, merchants, farmers and factory workers, the educated and uneducated alike from Isaac Newton to Ronald Reagan (*Arguing the Apocalypse*, 9).

<sup>12</sup> Gager, *Kingdom and Community*, 27.

The endeavor to describe the power dynamics that characterize the situation of an apocalyptic group vis-à-vis its political sovereigns has, however, become fashionable in the study of Judaeo and Christian apocalyptic literature in recent years.<sup>13</sup> The emergence of this scholarly trend is partially the result of archaeological advances in the study of ancient Mediterranean material cultures that have called attention to the imprint of political power in local scenes not properly represented in the surviving literature of these cultures.<sup>14</sup> The study of political power and apocalypticism has also received attention, especially post-9/11, in the more theoretically-oriented subfield of “Empire Studies”—the disciplinary intersection of Marxian, postcolonial, and poststructural methods.<sup>15</sup> Scholars taking this approach—with varying sophistication—have generally been driven by the

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<sup>13</sup> See, *inter alia*: Anthea E. Portier-Young, *Apocalypse against Empire: Theologies of Resistance in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2011); Richard A. Horsley, *Revolt of the Scribes: Resistance and Apocalyptic Origins* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2010); Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *The Power of the Word: Scripture and the Rhetoric of Empire* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2007); Stephen D. Moore, *Empire and Apocalypse: Postcolonialism and the New Testament* (Bible in the Modern World 12; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2006); Leonard L. Thompson, *The Book of Revelation: Apocalypse and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); Brigitte Kahl, *Galatians Re-imagined: Reading with the Eyes of the Vanquished* (Paul in Critical Contexts; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2010).

<sup>14</sup> With regard to apocalyptic literature, see especially Steven J. Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John: Reading Revelation in the Ruins* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). See also, among many other important works on this topic in Classics, Clifford Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2000); Simon R. F. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); David J. Mattingly, *Imperialism, Power, and Identity: Experiencing the Roman Empire* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2011).

<sup>15</sup> On Empire Studies approaches to biblical materials, see Schüssler Fiorenza, *The Power of the Word*, 2-7; Stephen D. Moore and Fernando F. Segovia, “Postcolonial Biblical Criticism: Beginnings, Trajectories, Intersections,” in *Postcolonial Biblical Criticism: Interdisciplinary Intersections* (ed. S. D. Moore and F. F. Segovia; London: T&T Clark, 2005), 7-8.

“categorical presumption that apocalyptic authors and texts resist empire.”<sup>16</sup> In some cases, this has resulted in an abstraction of “empire,” rendering the term indistinguishable from “power.”<sup>17</sup> This is problematic, I submit, because it obscures apocalyptic discourses concerned with, for instance, the power of provincial kings, intranational leaders, or competing groups—of, for example, Herods, Asiarchs, and Pharisees.

Furthermore, some scholars employing an “against empire” perspective have been rightly accused of seeking to “rehabilitate” the religious texts they study, “rather than proceeding in a self-critical fashion.”<sup>18</sup> This criticism is symptomatic of the tendency of scholars taking this approach to view all imperial power negatively and all resistance positively, resulting in an uncritical stance toward the motivations and ambitions of those viewed as resisting empire.<sup>19</sup> So, whereas scholarship concerned with the persuasive interests of authors tend to ignore external power, “against empire” scholarship often overlooks the motives of authors altogether.

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<sup>16</sup> I have previously summarized the approach in this way in “Judaean Apocalypticism and the Unmasking of Ideology: Foreign and National Rulers in the *Testament of Moses*,” *JSJ* 44 (2013; in press).

<sup>17</sup> This is especially true of works such as Horsley’s *Revolt of the Scribes* (among some of Horsley’s other works); Wes Howard-Brook, *Come Out, My People!': God's Call out of Empire in the Bible and Beyond* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2010); Wes Howard-Brook and Anthony Gwyther, *Unveiling Empire: Reading Revelation Then and Now* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1999). Although Portier-Young’s *Apocalypse against Empire* is generally much more theoretically sophisticated than these other works, it too abstracts empire unhelpfully at times. For a helpful criticism of Horsley’s works in particular, see John J. Collins, “Apocalypse and Empire.” *SEA* 76 (2011): 1-19.

<sup>18</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *The Power of the Word*, 4.

<sup>19</sup> The problem, as I see it, occurs when postcolonial and liberationist approaches take a critical tone and employ some of the methods of historical criticism without being clear about their own agendas.

Yet, scholars such as Stephen D. Moore, in subtle and self-critical scholarship, note the too-often overlooked reinscription of power that characterizes apocalyptic discourse. Moore's comments on Revelation are apt:

In effect, faithful Christians constitute an imperial countercult in Revelation, a priesthood dedicated to the Christian Emperor [God] and his co-regent, Jesus Christ, in relation to which the official [Roman imperial] cult is meant to be seen as a monstrous aberration: worship of a hideous Beast that derives its ultimate authority from Satan.<sup>20</sup>

Apocalyptic discourse thus pushes back against imperial ideology, but is not innocent of the trappings of power in its own imagined reappropriation of imperial prowess, as the reception histories of biblical apocalyptic texts will attest. It is, as Moore has demonstrated, both the machinations of power exerted on the apocalypticists and those reappropriated by them in apocalyptic discourses that need to be parsed.

In the remainder of this chapter, I briefly outline the theoretical concepts and social model that I employ throughout this study. I begin with a survey of Pierre Bourdieu's theory of the workings of domination in society, as well as his understanding of resistance to that domination. I then turn to a discussion of Roman ideology and the

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<sup>20</sup> Moore, *Empire and Apocalypse*, 105 (I removed the scriptural references). While I agree with Moore's statement, I disagree with his label "faithful Christians," since I think the author and his audience would have identified as *Judaeans* Jesus-believers. See David Frankfurter, "Jews or Not? Reconstructing the 'Other' in Rev 2:9 and 3:9," *HTR* 94 (2001): 403-25. In another interesting discussion of this type of issue, Kahl (*Galatians Re-imagined*, 21-25) goes to great lengths to argue that while the new messianic order of Paul's apocalyptic vision preserves the language and logic of the old imperial order, its binaries are inverted. Although I agree that the apocalyptic order is not a simple mirror image of the imperial order, Kahl's attempt to mark the new order as positive and the old order as negative is uncritical. Even with a much more egalitarian community ethos, the messianic order/new creation nevertheless recycles the power of the imperial order in a way that is not benign.



importance of images in its dissemination in society. Finally, I use Bourdieuan theory to propose a few theses about how apocalyptic discourses resist dominant ideology.

### ***The Economic Logic and Misrecognition of Dominant Ideology***

Ideology is a word that sometimes gets thrown around haphazardly by scholars with the consequence that it is used in a wide variety of ways.<sup>21</sup> I wish to employ a particular conceptualization of ideology here, even though ideology is not a term frequently used by Pierre Bourdieu, whose social model is the basis of this study. Instead, I turn to Louis Althusser, one of Bourdieu's teachers,<sup>22</sup> who provides this definition of state ideology:<sup>23</sup> "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence."<sup>24</sup> A Marxist theorist, Althusser claims that the state ideology's purpose in society is to sustain the dialectical modes and relations of production by which the masses are exploited and the upper classes accrue wealth and power. This ideology is both enforced in society by "repressive state apparatuses" such as

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<sup>21</sup> See Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London: Verso, 1991) esp. 1-2.

<sup>22</sup> Althusser was Bourdieu's teacher at the Parisian École Normale Supérieure. However, Bourdieu attempted to distance himself from Althusser's more mechanical approach to domination.

<sup>23</sup> In this way, I follow the approach of Clifford Ando, *Imperial Ideology*, 19-48. However, I do not employ Habermas, Weber, and some of the other theoretical bases Ando does.

<sup>24</sup> Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (trans. B. Brewster; New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971) 127-88 at 162. For a helpful guide to Althusser's theory, see L. Ferretter, *Louis Althusser* (London: Routledge, 2006). For an attempt to apply Althusserian theory to a biblical text, see Roland Boer, *Marxist Criticism of the Bible* (London: T&T Clark, 2003) 14-41; to a non-canonical Judaeon apocalyptic text, see Keddie, "Judaeon Apocalypticism"; to the Flavian amphitheater as an ideological apparatus, see Erik Gunderson, "The Ideology of the Arena," *Classical Antiquity* 15 (1996): 113-51.

the police and army and “ideological state apparatuses” such as education, sports, and politics, which encourage the participation of subjects in the trappings of dominant ideology.<sup>25</sup> The assumptions of Althusser’s theory of state ideology inform Bourdieu’s understanding of domination; however, Bourdieu’s theory is preferred here because it overcomes what I regard as the two main problems of Althusser’s theory: its economic determinism (i.e., economic infrastructure determines ideological superstructure) and eschewal of human agency. Thus, while I preserve the useful concept “ideology,” I label it “dominant ideology,” and conceptualize it in Bourdieuan terms. The primary intent of my reconceptualization of ideology is to detach it from a strictly deterministic, top-down model of state power.<sup>26</sup>

Unlike Althusser’s understanding of ideology, Bourdieu’s more reflexive social theory seeks to identify a space of negotiation between human subjects and state ideology.<sup>27</sup> Bourdieu elevates the material concerns of the modes of production from the

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<sup>25</sup> Althusser, “Ideology,” 142-43.

<sup>26</sup> My use of the term “dominant ideology” is essentially a circumlocution for what Bourdieu variously labels “domination,” the “modes of domination,” and the “relations of domination.” Even though I follow Bourdieu in thinking that in society objectification causes the relations of domination to “escape the grasp of individual consciousness and power” (*Outline of a Theory of Practice* [trans. R. Nice; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977] 184), I also recognize that there are often (especially in the Roman Empire) intentional attempts by those in power to systematically make or remake dominant ideology. Thus, “Flavian ideology” for me does not mean something the Flavians strictly maintain; rather, it is a dominant ideology that is reproduced and transformed in various ways by subjects participating in it. Yet, ultimately, the leaders of the state have more power over the dominant ideology than anyone else.

<sup>27</sup> Terry Rey’s *Bourdieu on Religion: Imposing Faith and Legitimacy* (Key Thinkers in the Study of Religion; London: Equinox, 2007) is an excellent introduction to Bourdieu’s thought, particularly as it pertains to religion. As Rey notes throughout his book, religionists, unfortunately, have been especially slow to employ Bourdieuan

Althusserian economic base (infrastructure) to a cultural field of economics.<sup>28</sup> This field is considered homologous with other fields such as art, religion, etc.<sup>29</sup> (Bourdieu's recapitulation of Althusser's "ideological state apparatuses"). Thus, all fields of cultural production share with the field of economics an economic logic, with its goal of sustaining the state through the acquisition and exchange of various types of capital.

Cultural production, for Bourdieu, encapsulates the politics and poetics of the naturalization of domination in society. Bourdieu introduces concepts such as practice, taste, doxa, and habitus to help explain this social process. Practice is what people do in society, their physical movements and rituals—religious and otherwise.<sup>30</sup> Like taste—that is, the socially conditioned ability to distinguish one's preferences in things such as art, sports, and literature—practice is part of an agent's sense of what they should and should not do, or their habitus. Randal Johnson gives a helpful description of Bourdieu's concept of habitus:

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theory. Another accessible introduction to Bourdieu's theory is Jen Webb et al., *Understanding Bourdieu* (London: Sage, 2002).

<sup>28</sup> Randal Johnson helpfully summarizes Bourdieu's notion of field (*champ*): "According to Bourdieu's theoretical model, any social formation is structured by way of a hierarchically organized series of fields..., each defined as a structured space with its own laws of functioning and its own relations of force independent of those of politics and the economy.... Each field is relatively autonomous but structurally homologous with the others" (Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production* [ed. and introduced by R. Johnson; New York: Columbia University Press, 1993] 6). Cf. Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 42-46.

<sup>29</sup> See Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 87-97; idem, *Outline*, 143-58; idem, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (trans. R. Nice; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984) 175-208.

<sup>30</sup> Bourdieu, *Outline*, esp. 16-22. Consult Webb et al., *Understanding Bourdieu*, 45-62. For a prominent application of Bourdieu's theory of practice to rituals, see Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

The habitus is sometimes described as a ‘feel for the game’, a ‘practical sense’ (*sens pratique*) that inclines agents to act and react in specific situations in a manner that is not always calculated and that is not simply a question of conscious obedience to rules. Rather it is a set of dispositions which generates practices and perceptions. The habitus is the result of a long process of inculcation, beginning in early childhood, which becomes a ‘second sense’ or a second nature.’<sup>31</sup>

The collective sense across social groups of what one can do, say, or think—the habitus writ large—is what Bourdieu calls doxa.<sup>32</sup> While it is true that social agents are always active participants in the production of social distinctions that legitimate the domination of those in power, they are not unconscious ‘cultural puppets’ as in classical Marxian models of state power.

Because of the economic logic of all fields of production, Bourdieu is able to talk about various types of symbolic capital homologous with material capital and similarly sustaining contingent modes and relations of production.<sup>33</sup> He explains that

‘Symbolic capital’ is to be understood as economic or political capital that is disavowed, misrecognized and thereby recognized, hence legitimate, a ‘credit’ which, under certain conditions, and always in the long run, guarantees ‘economic’ profits.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 5. See Bourdieu, *Outline*, 78-86, 143-58; idem, *Distinction*, 169-74. Cf. Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 46-50; Web et al., *Understanding Bourdieu*, 21-44.

<sup>32</sup> Bourdieu, *Outline*, 159-71. Bourdieu describes doxa as “that which is beyond question and which each agent tacitly accords by the mere fact of acting in accord with social convention. Doxa is often at the center of class struggle since, “The dominated classes have an interest in pushing back the limits of *doxa* and exposing the arbitrariness of the taken for granted; the dominant classes have an interest in defending the integrity of doxa or, short of this, of establishing in its place the necessarily imperfect substitute, *orthodoxy*” (his italics; 169).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 171-83. See Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 50-53;

<sup>34</sup> Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 75.

In the homologous, relatively autonomous, fields of cultural production, different forms of symbolic capital constitute people as subjects, giving them the sense that they are independent social agents.<sup>35</sup> Yet, the belief that these forms of capital are actually valuable is part of the culturally produced ideological illusion (*illusio*) that naturalizes dominant power. Thus, in the religious field, there are “salvation goods,” which, regardless of their material worth, make people feel worthy.<sup>36</sup> Symbolic capital in any field, then, is portrayed as constituent of cultural capital, the social honors and other markers of elevated status that are reckoned as the prizes that accrue in consort with various forms of material and symbolic capital.<sup>37</sup>

This entire system of cultural production, Bourdieu asserts, is aimed at misrecognition and as such should be considered a system of symbolic violence.<sup>38</sup> Terry Rey describes the process as such:

...for it is only when armed with symbolic capital that any agent, institutional or individual, can commit acts of symbolic violence and engender in dominated groups and individuals the misrecognition of social order as something natural.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Bourdieu, *Outline*, 178-79; idem, *Distinction*, 219.

<sup>36</sup> Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 94-99; idem, “Marketing the Goods of Salvation: Bourdieu on Religion,” *Religion* 34 (2004): 331-43.

<sup>37</sup> On cultural capital, see especially Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 1-96.

<sup>38</sup> See Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 53-55. Bourdieu is careful to note that emphasizing symbolic violence does not assume the overlooking of physical violence. The two types of violence can, and often do, coexist and mutually support each other (*Masculine Domination* [trans. R. Nice; Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998] 34-42, esp. 35).

<sup>39</sup> Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 54. Rey also provides an apt definition of Bourdieu’s concept of misrecognition: “the affirmation of the value or naturalness of any kind of social capital or social distinction as being something more than arbitrary, i.e., as being ‘natural’ and thus ‘legitimate’” (155).

For Bourdieu, it is the mellow machinations of culturally inflected honors and values that mask the power mechanisms of domination and enact a type of symbolic violence on social agents through the guarantee of their complicity. Every form of cognition, judgment, and practice is somehow tied into this system of domination.

### ***Resistance to Dominant Ideology***

A problem arises when one turns to a theorist of ideological misrecognition like Bourdieu to identify resistance.<sup>40</sup> In Bourdieu's large corpus of writings, he has had surprisingly little to say about resistance. This has resulted in trenchant criticism, and often dismissal, of his theory by those who focus their analyses on the voices from the margins.<sup>41</sup> Yet, as Rey has pointed out, Bourdieu does indeed conceive of forms of resistance against the misrecognition of domination; he simply has not written much

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<sup>40</sup> I suspect that this is a major reason why scholars of apocalyptic literature have steered clear of Bourdieuan theory—because they have been especially interested in uncovering forms of resistance in the visions and historical schemata that occupy apocalyptic discourses. For instance, Schüssler Fiorenza views apocalyptic discourse as anti-imperial language, following the work of Michael Halladay (*Power of the Word*, 5); Portier-Young turns to the theory of Antonio Gramsci, among others, to suggest that apocalyptic resistance contests imperial hegemony and domination (*Apocalypse against Empire*, 9-27); and Moore uses Homi Bhabha's postcolonial theory to describe the hybrid images forged when the identity of apocalypticists is waged against the language of empire (*Empire and Apocalypse*, 97-121; cf. Christopher A. Frilingos, *Spectacles of Empire: Monsters, Martyrs, and the Book of Revelation* [Divinations Series; Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004] esp. 13). While I find merit in all of these theoretical approaches and their respective applications, I suggest that a socioeconomic approach to dominant ideology and apocalyptic resistance affords a more nuanced payoff with respect to the social and political dimensions of apocalyptic discourse and the material concerns that undergird them.

<sup>41</sup> See, for example, Joan M. Martin, *More than Chains and Toil: A Christian Work Ethic of Enslaved Women* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2000) esp. 72-73.

about them. One exception is Bourdieu's late, highly politicized work directed against neo-liberalism, *Acts of Resistance: Against the New Myths of Our Time*, which actually advocates resistance and construes it as tantamount to "breaking the appearance of unanimity which is the greater part of the symbolic force of dominant discourse."<sup>42</sup> This rupture of unanimity is central to his idea of resistance.

In his work on the religious field of cultural production, Bourdieu reckons prophecy as a form of resistance. He distinguishes the prophet as a type of heresiarch. Considered a heretic by orthodox standards, the prophet competes with the institutionalized and internalized forms of authority propagated by the orthodox shapers of doxa. In order to resist the naturalization of the orthodox domination of the religious field by gaining adherents and power, the prophet manufactures and brokers independent forms of symbolic capital.<sup>43</sup> The prophet must counter power with power, and consequently, legitimizing prophetic authority involves some of the same power dynamics couched in forms of unrecognized symbolic capital as the dominant ideology. In Bourdieu's words:

the heretical discourses which draw their legitimacy and authority from the very groups over which they exert their power and which they literally produce by expressing them: they derive their power from their capacity to *objectify* unformulated experiences, to make them public....<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance: Against the New Myths of Our Time* (trans. R. Nice; Cambridge: Polity, 1998) viii. This book is also published in English with the alternative subtitle "Against the Tyranny of the Market."

<sup>43</sup> Bourdieu, "Genèse et structure du champ religieux," *Revue française de sociologie* 12 (1971): 295-334, esp. 319-21; idem, *Outline*, 168-71.

<sup>44</sup> Bourdieu, *Outline*, 170-71 (original emphases).

Whereas Marxian theory does not typically acknowledge the ideological nature of its own agenda and postcolonial theory often refuses to admit the abuses of power in the discourses of the dominated, Bourdieuan theory offers a more balanced description of power in its many manifestations. Resistant discourses rely on power not only to resist the dominant social order, but also to fortify their own movements. By “offering the means of expressing experiences usually repressed,” and “announcing to [the group] what they want to hear,” a prophet, political leader, or other type of heresiarch simultaneously subverts the naturalization of the dominant habitus, but also uses self-alienating rhetoric to recycle the power into a new self-legitimizing discourse.<sup>45</sup> But does this unmasking of the naturalization of dominant interests entail total liberation from those structures of domination?

It is at this point that Bourdieu’s notion of *collusio* is helpful. This concept assumes that social groups digest doxa collectively, as “a kind of collective habitus” nevertheless grounded in doxa.<sup>46</sup> *Collusio* is the term Bourdieu uses for

an immediate agreement in the ways of judging and acting which does not presuppose either the communication of consciousness, still less a contractual decision....<sup>47</sup>

Thus, for our purposes, it is possible to discern a Judaeon *collusio* that coexists with a Roman doxic system. The Judaeon *collusio*, while distinguished by its particular morphology of socialization, is grounded in Roman doxa and must negotiate how much to assimilate into the Roman *collusio* (that is, be naturalized by the Roman *illusio*). This

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

<sup>46</sup> Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 88.

<sup>47</sup> Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations* (trans. R. Nice; Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2000) 145, cited by Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 88.



is never a uniform process and is often arbitrated by heresiarchs such as prophets. Thus, each competition between a dominated *collusio* and dominant doxa must be parsed on its own terms.

Within the bounds of Bourdieu's theory, then, there is a space for resistance, even if it is not paramount in his writings. Resistance means objectifying the misrecognized social distinctions of dominant ideology, breaking the naturalization of doxa, and interrogating the socioeconomic positions of members of society. Yet, in its recognition of doxic misrecognition, a resistant discourse or movement inevitably *recognizes* within the confines of doxa.<sup>48</sup> As a result, even forms of resistance in some ways still perpetuate the naturalization of the arbitrariness of the social order that defines the doxic system. When resistance happens, it is usually a collective endeavor spearheaded by heresiarchs who refute the dominant power structures in order to reappropriate them in favor of their own interests, represented as those of a social group. Heresiarchs use self-alienating rhetoric to gain adherents and accrue power, and thus dominate a social collectivity by resisting the present order of domination. Heresiarchs make the present order a foil for their own motives in order to become authoritative guarantors of symbolic and material capital. Even in acts of resistance, subjects are constrained by the market of power.

### ***Images and the Misrecognition of Roman Imperial Ideology***

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<sup>48</sup> By this, I emphasize that every act of cognition—even the recognition of some aspect of dominant ideology—always involves some degree of misrecognition because it is impossible for anyone to truly and fully recognize all of the structures and mechanisms of dominant ideology simultaneously.

To turn now from a discussion of the theoretical bases of our study to the process of applying that theory to our data, namely, Flavian ideology and its critique in the Judaeapocalypse *4 Ezra*, it is necessary to acknowledge the problem of distance between modern social theory and ancient social formations. The ancient/modern problem is well known as it pertains to the study of religion in the ancient world, and does not need to be rehearsed here.<sup>49</sup> Yet, a word must be said about fields as a hurdle for the application of Bourdieuan theory to the ancient world.

Bourdieu's understanding of practice as specific to various autonomous, yet interrelated, fields of cultural production in society—religious, economic, political, legal, etc.—is the backbone of much of his theory. However, separating ancient societies according to the same field divisions Bourdieu posits is impossible. There was no clear conceptual or material separation of religion, politics, economics, law, and other aspects of social life in the Roman Empire. For this reason, Bourdieu himself and other scholars have admitted that such theory is not intended for undifferentiated societies.<sup>50</sup> But does that mean that it cannot have merit for the study of the ancient world? I argue that Bourdieu's theory, consciously adapted, has much merit for the study of the ancient Mediterranean. Because of the principle of homology, it is possible to talk about the exchange of capital and concomitant processes of legitimation in any facet of social life. The fields in ancient societies are not the same as those in the modern world. The ancient

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<sup>49</sup> See, *inter alia*, Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1991 [1962]) esp. 15-50; Brent Nongbri, "Dislodging 'Embedded Religion': A Brief Note on a Scholarly Trope," *Numen* 55 (2008): 440-60; Steve Mason, "Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism: Problems of Categorization in Ancient History," *JSJ* 38 (2007): 457-512.

<sup>50</sup> Bourdieu, "Genèse"; Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 85.

*domus* was structured much differently than the modern family, for example. Every society is different, as are its fields. Yet, in no society are these fields as sharply differentiated as Bourdieu would like.<sup>51</sup> For instance, despite the Separation of Church and State, religion and politics are hardly as distinct in America as discourses about them make it seem.<sup>52</sup> In this way, to speak of a distinct religious field in America can be about as arbitrary as talking about a distinct religious field in the Roman Empire. Therefore, I would argue that those who claim that the differentiated nature of modern societies assumed in Bourdieuan theory poses a problem for applying such theory to undifferentiated societies are too quick to accept the discourses of the dominant ideologies of those modern societies that present their fields as differentiated. The fields in Bourdieu's theory are as arbitrary and heuristic when applied to modern societies as they are with ancient ones. Bourdieuan theory should help us to identify the economic logic of domination in various fields in society, but these fields must be cautiously redescribed by scholars and cannot be taken for granted.

Furthermore, Bourdieuan concepts such as practice, habitus, doxa, symbolic and cultural capital, and symbolic violence, when carefully applied, can also be useful for the study of the Roman world. L. Michael White, for instance, has demonstrated that honorific rhetoric in Judaeon inscriptions from the imperial period indicates Judaeon accommodation of and participation in the same forms of symbolic capital as non-

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<sup>51</sup> I thank Steven Friesen for his particularly helpful insights on this issue.

<sup>52</sup> Consider, for instance, contributions to political theology that argue that Western political and economic spheres are structured according to religious epistemologies. See, e.g., Giorgio Agamben, *The Kingdom and the Glory: For a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government* (trans. L. Chiese and M. Mandarini; Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2011).

Judaean benefactions, honors, and imperial cult activities. White argues that, while walking a line between negotiation with the Roman value system and outright resistance towards it, Judaeans were nevertheless working within the modes and mediums of Roman symbolic capital, and thus Roman ideology.<sup>53</sup>

White's study of Judaean exchanges in the Roman system of symbolic capital takes its cue from Clifford Ando's work on Roman imperial ideology, presently the most thoroughgoing attempt to apply Bourdieuan theory to Roman ideology. Though he also incorporates Habermas's "lifeworld" model of socialization, Ando mainly draws on the Althusserian concept of state ideology and Bourdieuan habitus to argue that the Roman imperial government legitimates itself and guarantees the loyalty of its subjects—including its provincial subjects—through ideology. For Ando, "state ideology took place not at the level of explicit state publication but in the day-to-day lives of the population."<sup>54</sup> While imperial propaganda is noteworthy as a symptom of dominant ideology, it is in its logic of participation—through habitus and *collusio*—that dominant ideology functions.

In the Roman Empire, propaganda, symbolic capital, and material capital intersected in images, coins, monuments, and inscriptions, which recorded the imperial economy of symbols. Whether prescribed by the imperial government or crafted by imperial subjects as an investment in the markets of material and symbolic goods, images facilitated and manufactured the misrecognition of the Roman imperial system of

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<sup>53</sup> L. Michael White, "Capitalizing on the Imperial Cult: Some Jewish Perspectives," in *Rome and Religion: A Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue on the Imperial Cult* (ed. J. Brodd and J. L. Reed; SBLWGRW 5; Atlanta, Ga.: SBL) 173-214.

<sup>54</sup> Ando, *Imperial Ideology*, 41.

domination.<sup>55</sup> Scholars have noted in recent years that subjects are encouraged to invest in the market of symbolic goods shaped by imperial ideology through structures such as the imperial cults. Friesen, for instance, has argued that the provincial and municipal imperial cults of Asia involved subjects in the worship of the emperors by providing an imperial religious discourse involving cosmogony, cosmology, human maturation, and eschatology.<sup>56</sup> This discourse did not constitute an “independent, mythic worldview” of the imperial cults, but rather evinced “an identifiable feature of the larger symbolic world of Greco-Roman polytheism.”<sup>57</sup> Friesen’s work supports the idea that imperial ideology was a focus of the imperial cults, but was nevertheless inculcated in subjects through an array of social media.

One particularly important medium of this imperial doxic system, at once material and symbolic, was coins. Through the hands of subjects investing in the commercial realities of material exchange, imperial coins simultaneously disseminated a symbolic message that marked Rome and its emperor as legitimate and maintained a far-reaching, cohesive value-system that entailed the misrecognition of imperial domination.<sup>58</sup> While often featuring images of the emperor, coins also regularly materialize positive attributes

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<sup>55</sup> A point supported by studies such as Paul Zanker’s magisterial work, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (trans. A. Shapiro; Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1988).

<sup>56</sup> Friesen, *Imperial Cults*, esp. 122-31.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

<sup>58</sup> As Christopher Howgego explains, “The use of a single coinage throughout an empire (whether exclusively or not) is a symbol of cohesion and belonging, affirmed by constant use. It is part of the active definition of what it means to be a subject/citizen of the empire” (*Ancient History from Coins* [London: Routledge, 1995] 43).

of the emperor (e.g., clemency).<sup>59</sup> On coins, foreign conquests and military victories are depicted as expansions aimed at the maintenance of the *Pax Romana*, the security purportedly offered to all subjects through imperialism.<sup>60</sup> Victory is a credit in favor of the emperor, whose symbolic value is intertwined with the fate of Rome. As Christopher Howgego notes, “The imperial coinage of Rome parades an imperial ideology in by far the most blatant and systematic way.”<sup>61</sup> This statement, casting coinage as imperial propaganda, raises questions about who the producers and consumers of numismatic imagery were. It is, for instance, unlikely that the emperors were the sole or primary designers of their coins, though coins were undoubtedly consistent with and indicative of the interests of the emperor and imperial government. As for consumers, it is unclear how much it is fair to say that imperial subjects noticed and absorbed the imagery on coins.<sup>62</sup> Jesus’ statement in the gospels about Caesar’s image on coins is an important—albeit rare—form of literary evidence in favor of the widespread recognition of numismatic imagery.<sup>63</sup> At the very least, we may presume that the numismatic symbols were often recognized and that, if they were not, part of the reason is because they were such

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<sup>59</sup> See Carlos F. Noreña, “The Communication of the Emperor’s Virtues,” *JRS* 91 (2001): 146-68.

<sup>60</sup> Consider, for instance, Seneca’s description of the terrible, barbaric conditions of life of the Germans and nomadic tribes to whom the *Romana pax* does not extend (*Dial.* 1.4.14). Cf. Florus, 1 *pr.* 7.

<sup>61</sup> Howgego, *Ancient History*, 39.

<sup>62</sup> For the scholarly debates over the producers and consumers of coins, see Howgego, *Ancient History*, 70-74; Daniel N. Schowalter, *The Emperor and the Gods: Images from the Time of Trajan* (HDR 28; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1993) 89-91; Richard Oster, “Numismatic Windows into the Social World of Early Christianity: A Methodological Inquiry,” *JBL* 101 (1982): 195-223 at 202-203.

<sup>63</sup> Matt 22:17-22; Mar 12:13-17; Luke 20:21-26. See also the important references to the significance of the messages on coins in Dio 47.25.3; 60.22.3; 77.12.6.

familiar elements of the imperial market of symbolic goods in which consumers were invested. In this way, the coins are symptomatic of dominant ideology, whether or not we can always say with certainty who produced and consumed this product.

Images of symbolic value, mediated through coins, monuments, imperial cult buildings, inscriptions, texts, and other discursive media constructed the realm of social agents, thereby informing the habitus of imperial subjects. These images, and their interconnected systems of symbolic capital, were implicated in such social processes as patronage, benefaction, the role of the paterfamilias, the dynamics of honor and shame, and the construction of masculinity.<sup>64</sup> In this way, images are distinguishable evidence of the misrecognition of dominant ideology in society, and may thus be considered a form of symbolic violence. To redescribe images in this way is to divorce them from the simplistic conception of top-down imperialism, or imperial propaganda, with which they are often associated.<sup>65</sup> Instead, the present approach stresses the misrecognition of dominant ideology in both the production and consumption of images. In a reflexive way, then, this approach does not view dominant ideology as a simple power binary, but as a complex, dynamic process in which all imperial subjects actively and semi-consciously engage in the production and maintenance of a habitus that perpetually generates social distinctions. These distinctions benefit some and oppress others, while sustaining the

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<sup>64</sup> I find David Mattingly's work (*Imperialism, Power, and Identity*) especially insightful on many of these issues. See esp. 94-124, 203-76.

<sup>65</sup> My intention is not to suggest that imperial images and concepts were not often propagandistic and markedly programmatic (viz. the Augustan program of images, as elucidated by Zanker in *The Power of Images*), but rather to call attention also to the participation of the masses in the perpetuation of these images and the consequent role of subjects in the production of cultural norms and social distinctions.

domination of the imperial government and ruling classes. It is these distinctions, and the images and practices inflected by them, that must be unmasked in order to resist the dominant ideology and those beneficiaries it legitimates. In the following sections, I discuss Judaeen apocalyptic discourse as one variety of resistance against ideological misrecognition.

### *Apocalyptic Discourse against Dominant Ideology*

The fundamental thesis of the Bourdieuan approach to apocalyptic discourse that I wish to employ here is that apocalyptic discourse resists dominant ideology. While I claim that apocalyptic discourse is not simply a product of the persecuted or impoverished, an assumption of my approach is that apocalyptic discourse is fundamentally countercultural. It is a minority discourse that may be the product of a single iconoclast, a burgeoning social group, or a well-established minority. The point is that apocalyptic discourse takes dominant ideology as a target.<sup>66</sup> I do not contend that this is true of every apocalyptic discourse, especially since apocalyptic discourses had different functions when, for instance, they were produced by the leaders of the Christian empire in late antiquity and the Middle Ages. I would argue, however, that in the

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<sup>66</sup> Even though I argue that the target of apocalyptic discourses is dominant ideology, this does not mean that the heads of state or ruling class(es) are the only human targets implicated. They usually are implicated, but very often subjects who participate in the maintenance of dominant ideology are often castigated. In Revelation, for instance, the discourse not only directed against Rome and its emperors, but is also directed against people, including Jesus-followers, who worship at the imperial cults and thereby sustain the dominant ideology (e.g., Rev 13:11-18). Revelation also takes aim at other groups too, such as other Judaeans (3:9). It is important to point out, then, that apocalyptic discourses often involve several intersecting polemics which are more or less closely related to the text's revelation and critique of dominant ideology.



Hellenistic and early Roman periods, Judaeian and Christian apocalyptic discourses typically resisted dominant ideology.

By describing apocalyptic literature as a type of discourse, I am largely following Stephen D. O’Leary’s rhetorical approach to apocalyptic literature. O’Leary uses the concept of discourse in order to emphasize the strategic element of apocalyptic literature, namely that it is an “argument that is intended to persuade” its audience.<sup>67</sup> This theoretical supposition distances apocalyptic discourse from simplistic formalistic or genre-based approaches to apocalyptic literature,<sup>68</sup> opens apocalyptic literature up to criticism by analyzing it as a motivated discourse, and allows us to interrogate the power-laden historical, political, and socioeconomic circumstances—both internal and external to the discourse’s generative environment—that have induced its discursive morphology. Discourse in my usage here has a semantic and conceptual range similar to what ideology has in some theoretical sectors. Thus, we could discuss the ideology of the author or the

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<sup>67</sup> O’Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse*, 15. By viewing apocalyptic texts in this way, my approach could also be considered a variety of socio-rhetorical criticism. See Vernon K. Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Interpretations* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 1996).

<sup>68</sup> I am suggesting that formalistic approaches are often lacking and overly generalizing, not unimportant altogether. The study of apocalypticism in Biblical Studies has been largely based on the formal identification of the genre apocalypse (see John J. Collins, ed., *Semeia 14: Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre* [Atlanta, Ga.: SBL, 1979]), though that is hardly the focus of this subfield in recent years. For helpful criticisms of definitions of apocalypse as genre, see, among others: Carol A. Newsom, “Spying out the Land: A Report from Genology,” in *Seeking out the Wisdom of the Ancients: Essays Offered to Honor Michael V. Fox* (ed. R. L. Troxel et al.; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2005) 437-50; Gregory L. Linton, “Reading the Apocalypse as Apocalypse: The Limits of Genre,” in *The Reality of Apocalypse: Rhetoric and Politics in the Book of Revelation* (ed. D. L. Barr; SBLSym 39; Atlanta, Ga.: SBL, 2006) 9-42; David L. Barr, “Beyond Genre: The Expectations of Apocalypse,” in *The Reality of Apocalypse: Rhetoric and Politics in the Book of Revelation* (ed. D. L. Barr; SBLSym 39; Atlanta, Ga.: SBL, 2006) 71-90.

text. To avoid confusion, I do not use the term ideology other than in the formulation “dominant ideology” (or more specifically in this study, “Roman imperial ideology” or “Flavian ideology”), as outlined above. I use the term discourse also to describe one heuristically isolable aspect, or trajectory, of Flavian ideology—namely the *Iudaea capta* discourse. In this way, I consider the relationship of discourse to dominant ideology as that of part to whole.

As a discourse of resistance against dominant ideology, apocalyptic discourse recycles power by attempting to symbolically delegitimize the assumed beneficiaries of dominant ideology and legitimate the producers of the apocalyptic discourse. Apocalyptic discourse thus entails identification of the perceived abuses of dominant ideology—of symbolic violence and its social effects—and the reconfiguration of certain symbols of that dominant ideology. The reconfiguration of the symbols of dominant ideology results in the reappropriation of symbolic capital. Instead of symbolic capital being attributed to the leaders of the state and the ruling classes, it is given to the author of an apocalyptic discourse and his social circle. The author, in this way, is a heresiarch. He uses a rhetoric of self-alienation to construct cohesion between himself and his community while also revealing to his audience (i.e., persuading his audience) that they have been alienated by dominant ideology.<sup>69</sup> The heresiarch then exhorts his audience to a particular course of action that allegedly benefits them, but also—and often primarily—benefits the author and his social circle. The delegitimation of the beneficiaries of dominant ideology thus also involves the legitimation of others. As heresiarchs recycle power, they never eschew

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<sup>69</sup> On the rhetorical production of a sense of crisis in apocalyptic literature, see first Yarbrow Collins, *Crisis and Catharsis*, esp. 144-45.

the entire doxic system of dominant ideology.<sup>70</sup> They remain constrained by doxa—whether in their language, symbols, or other cultural norms. The producers of an apocalyptic discourse effectively shape or reshape the *collusio* of their audience, but they never escape the doxic trappings of the dominant ideology they oppose in their own discursive process of self-legitimation.

In apocalyptic texts, then, there is usually more happening than a simple revelation of the symbolic violence of dominant ideology. More often than not, there is a subversion of the dominant ideology's symbolic forms of capital involving a reappropriation of those forms that ultimately supports the apocalypticists' *collusio*, especially as it pertains to history, eschatology, and the otherworld. By employing historical, social, and ethnic tropes known to the audience of the discourse, apocalyptic authors envision extraterrestrial and extratemporal realities that are very obviously critical reconfigurations of their own present symbolic system, itself sustained by dominant ideology.<sup>71</sup>

The example of one particular symbol of dominant ideology should demonstrate these points: the Roman eagle. A symbol of Roman *imperium* pervasive across a range of discursive media throughout the Roman Empire, the eagle (*aquila*), usually with spread

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<sup>70</sup> Thus, there is no such thing as pure liberation from dominant ideology, only acts of resistance on a continuum. On the philosophical and politico-theoretical conversation surrounding the impossibility of liberation, see Kenneth Surin, "Liberation," in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies* (ed. M. C. Taylor; Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1998) 173-85, esp. 178-81.

<sup>71</sup> I argue that the content and form of the authors' future ideals are deeply informed by a social critique of present reality, and that such a future-projected critique would have induced a group's present self-understanding especially as it concerns the group's relationship with dominant ideology. I do not mean to suggest that the authors did not believe in and expect their future ideals.

wings, functioned most significantly as the military standard carried by each Roman legion.<sup>72</sup> Affiliation with the eagle is construed by the imperial ideology as guaranteeing the security of the *Pax Romana* and the culture of Rome. In other words, the symbolic violence of this military symbol was misrecognized.

Since it is both iconic and a symbol of Roman ideology, it is not surprising that the Judaeans in particular noticed and were bothered by this eagle.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, even though the eagle appears in pre-Roman apocalyptic texts, it becomes a frequent symbol during the Roman period. Eagles appear—with more or less clear associations with Rome—in the *Testament of Moses*, *Sibylline Oracles*, *Revelation*, and *4 Ezra*.<sup>74</sup> In the eschatological scenario of the *Testament of Moses*, after God lashes out against the nations, Israel finds happiness after mounting above the wings of an eagle (10:8).<sup>75</sup> By

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<sup>72</sup> See, e.g., Livy 26.48.12; Pliny, *Nat.* 10.5; Vegetius 2.6; *ILS* 2295. Consult, among others: Ando, *Imperial Ideology*, 260; Kai M. Töpfer, *Signa Militaria: Die römischen Feldzeichen in Republik und Prinzipat* (Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2011); Michael P. Speidel, “Eagle-Bearer and Trumpeter: The Eagle-Standard and Trumpets of the Roman Legions Illustrated by Three Tombstones Recently Found at Byzantium,” *Bonner Jahrbücher* 176 (1976): 123-63.

<sup>73</sup> For Judaeans reactions to the eagle and other Roman military standards, see Josephus, *B.J.* 1.649-650; 2.169-170; 3.123-124; *A.J.* 17.167; 18.55; Philo, *Legat.* 299-305. See the insightful discussion of the incidents with standards mentioned in Josephus’ works in Jason von Ehrenkrook, *Sculpting Idolatry in Flavian Rome: (An)Iconic Rhetoric in the Writings of Flavius Josephus* (SBLEJL 33; Atlanta, Ga.: SBL, 2011), esp. 107-14. Cf. Carl H. Kraeling, “The Episode of the Golden Standards at Jerusalem,” *HTR* 35 (1942): 263-89.

<sup>74</sup> *T. Mos.* 10:8; *Sib. Or.* 8:78 (καὶ γὰρ ἀετοφόρων λεγεώνων δόξα πεσεῖτα!); *Rev* 8:13, 12:14 (the associations with Rome are less clear here); *4 Ez.* 11:1-12:39. See also 1QM 3:12-5:2; 1 QpHab 6:4; and the interesting discussion of the influence of Roman warfare on the sectarian texts from Qumran in John J. Collins, *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: Routledge, 1997) 95-99.

<sup>75</sup> Adela Yarbro Collins has convincingly observed that this aspect of *T. Mos.* reflects the incident involving the placing of the golden eagle on the Jerusalem temple mentioned by Josephus in *B.J.* 1.655 and *A.J.* 17.167 (“Composition and Redaction of the

mounting the eagle, Israel is raised up to the heavens. In *4 Ezra*, the Roman eagle is similarly outdone by Israel in an eschatological vision (11:1-12:39). The Davidic messiah, symbolized by a lion, repudiates the Roman eagle and ultimately delivers the remnant of Israel. In this text, however, the eagle is monstrous, having three heads representing Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian, as well as twenty wings representing the succession of Roman emperors.<sup>76</sup> In both of these texts, the eagle is reappropriated and reconfigured in the eschatological purview of the apocalyptic discourses. It is made to help Israel reach the salvific moment in its history; it is also depicted as weak, or at least inferior to Israel. Thus, one of the most valuable symbols of Roman ideology is transformed into a symbol that Israel will conquer in its pursuit of the highest form of symbolic capital in the Judaeen apocalyptic *collusio*, eschatological salvation.

However, not every symbol of dominant ideology works in quite this way in apocalyptic discourses. No two apocalyptic discourses will treat the same symbol in the exact same way. With the approach outlined here, it is best to determine the use and understanding of the ideological symbol in society and then its identification and critique in apocalyptic discourses.

### ***Flavian Ideology and Judaeen Apocalyptic Discourse***

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*Testament of Moses* 10,” *HTR* 69 [1976]: 179-86). I disagree, however, with Yarbro Collins’s theory of the text’s redaction (see Keddie, “Judaeen Apocalypticism”). Furthermore, while this element shows that Rome is in view in this text, it does not indicate that Rome itself is the primary target of the text’s critique.

<sup>76</sup> For a detailed examination of the eagle vision of *4 Ezra* and its historical referents, see Lorenzo DiTommaso, “Dating the Eagle Vision of *4 Ezra*: A New Look at an Old Theory,” *JSP* 20 (1999): 3-38. I say much more about this vision in the second section of the third chapter below.

Now that we have established at length the theoretical framework of this study, we turn to the present case study: the subversion of Flavian ideology by the Judaeen apocalyptic discourse of *4 Ezra*. While there are a few texts and several symbols and ideas that could be used to approach this topic, here we will focus on the mourning figure of Mother Zion in *4 Ezra* as a subversion of the post-war Flavian *Iudaea capta* discourse.

In the following chapter, I examine the textual and material evidence of the *Iudaea capta* discourse from around the Roman Empire and argue that, in the Flavian period, a particularly polemical view of Judaeans and Judaea became part of the wide-ranging Roman ideology that was misrecognized in social life. It was not merely Flavian propaganda, but was a pervasive aspect of Roman ideology maintained reflexively by both propagandistic media and in social life. I outline what I consider the particular symbolic morphology of the *Iudaea capta* discourse and suggest that its related images would have been widely recognized and thus need to be taken into account by scholars of Judaeen and proto-Christian texts in this period.

In my final chapter, I turn to the mourning Mother Zion figure in *4 Ezra*. I begin by situating my views on the date, provenance, and political critique of the text vis-à-vis Rome. I then proceed to argue that the transformation of this mourning woman into the heavenly Jerusalem, while drawing from the scriptural Mother Zion traditions, has a particular political edge. Namely, it is a subversion of the Flavian *Iudaea capta* discourse and its concomitant images.

## Chapter Two:

### The Dejected Judaeen Woman and the Cultivated Date-Palm Tree:

#### *Iudaea Capta* as Flavian Ideology

They [certain writers] desire to represent the Romans as a great nation, and yet they continually depreciate and disparage the actions of the Judaeans. But I fail to see how the conquerors of a puny people deserve to be accounted great.

—Flavius Josephus, *Bellum Judaicum* 1.3<sup>1</sup>

If we may put aside the ironic matter of Josephus's own bias,<sup>2</sup> it seems that the historian has made an important observation about the Roman discourse concerning the capture of Judaea in 70 CE, namely that, in the vicissitudes between dominant ideology and reality, the Judaeans became pawns in a market of Roman symbolic and material capital in the decades following the Judaeen revolt against Rome. Paradoxically, the Judaeans were simultaneously portrayed as a weak nation and as a nation that was so politically and

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<sup>1</sup> All translations of classical authors in this chapter are from the Loeb Classical Library volumes, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>2</sup> As an elite Judaeen writing in Rome under the patronage of the Flavians for an elite audience, Josephus's bias has been the subject of much scholarly discussion, especially in recent years. See, *inter alia*, Steve Mason, "Of Audience and Meaning: Reading Josephus' *Bellum Judaicum* in the Context of a Flavian Audience," in *Josephus and Flavian History in Flavian Rome and Beyond* (ed. J. Sievers and G. Lembi; JSJSup 104; Leiden: Brill, 2005) 71-100; Jonathan J. Price, "The Provincial Historian in Rome," in *ibid.*, 101-20; Hannah M. Cotton and Werner Eck, "Josephus' Roman Audience: Josephus and the Roman Elites," in *Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome* (ed. J. Edmondson et al.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) 37-52; John M. G. Barclay, "The Empire Writes Back: Josephan Rhetoric in Flavian Rome," in *ibid.*, 315-32; Steve Mason, "Flavius Josephus in Flavian Rome: Reading On and Between the Lines," in *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text* (ed. A. J. Boyle and W. J. Dominik; Leiden: Brill, 2003) 559-90.

materially significant that its defeat propelled the Flavian dynasty into power. Modern historians have also often noted the uniqueness of the treatment of Judaeans in the period following the revolt. In particular, they have noticed the unusual level of intensity for a discourse surrounding the military suppression of a revolt in a Roman province. Greg Woolf, for instance, explains that “Roman emperors often played down the seriousness of provincial revolts...because provincial unrest reflected poorly on their own claims to be the guarantors of the Roman order.”<sup>3</sup> Usually, after the suppression of a provincial revolt, there would not be a triumph<sup>4</sup> or a numismatic program of “*capta* coin types.”<sup>5</sup> Rather, the provincial ruling class would be restored or replaced and the *Pax Romana* would be

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<sup>3</sup> Greg Woolf, “Provincial Revolts in the Early Roman Empire,” in *The Jewish Revolt against Rome: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (ed. M. Popovic; JSJSup 154; Leiden: Brill, 2011) 27-44 at 33. Gil Gambash similarly notes the widespread differences in Roman policies of commemoration when it comes to provincial and foreign victories. Provincial victories received moderate commemoration whereas foreign achievements received commemoration on a grand scale. In this way, Gambash notes that the case of the Judaeans was exceptional. See “Official Roman Responses to Indigenous Resistance Movements: Aspects of Commemoration,” in *Israel’s Land: Papers Presented to Israel Shatzman on His Jubilee* (ed. J. Geiger et al.; Raanana, Israel: The Open University of Israel, 2009) 53-76; “Foreign Enemies of the Empire: The Great Jewish Revolt and the Roman Perception of the Jews,” *SCI* 32 (2013): 173-94.

<sup>4</sup> Based on the surviving historical record, “It was in fact the only triumph ever to celebrate the subjugation of the population of an existing province,” as Fergus Millar notes (*The Roman Near East 41 BC – AD 337* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993] 79).

<sup>5</sup> On the unusual use of *capta* coin types instead of *restitutio* or *fides* types to represent Judaeans, Jane M. Cody, in the fullest extant discussion of the *Iudaea capta* coins, remarks that, “Judaea became a Roman province in 6 BCE [*sic.*: 6 CE!], and one might well expect that after this date the portrayal of Judaeans would adhere more closely to the types used for provincials of the civilised Greco-Roman world. This is not the case. Rather, these Jews continue to appear as part of compositions reserved for conquered peoples beyond the borders of this world and their dress and pose reinforce this characterization” (“Conquerors and Conquered on Flavian Coins,” in *Flavian Rome* [ed. A. J. Boyle and W. J. Dominik; Leiden: Brill, 2003] 103-23 at 109).



secured again.<sup>6</sup> The post-revolt discourse about Judaea, then, with its triumph, triumphal arches, other commemorative monuments, inscriptions, and statues, widespread and long-lasting numismatic program, special system of taxation for Judaeans, and literary propaganda, would appear to have involved more than a simple revolt in a province at the margins of the empire.

In general, scholars have understood the uniqueness of this *Judaea capta* discourse in two main, overlapping ways.<sup>7</sup> On the one hand, its momentum and intensity are attributed to the rampant anti-Judaism of pagans and are a matter of ethnic or religious prejudice.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, the discourse is a consequence of the political ambition of the Flavian dynasty, and especially Vespasian, who amplified the military success of himself and his son, Titus, in Judaea in order to rally support as he prepared to move against Vitellius, legitimate his family's claim to the imperial throne, and later, commemorate the Flavian record of military prowess.<sup>9</sup> There are problems with each of

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<sup>6</sup> See Martin Goodman, *The Ruling Class of Judaea: The Origins of the Jewish Revolt against Rome A.D. 66-70* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) 235.

<sup>7</sup> The "*Judaea capta* discourse" is the label that I use to synthesize the related developments involving attitudes toward Judaeans beginning in the immediate aftermath of the revolt. By using the term discourse, I intend only to indicate that I am isolating a particular discursive trend within Flavian ideology.

<sup>8</sup> The divide between these two scholarly views is admittedly arbitrary, as most authors come to some compromise between the two views. However, it is evident that Goodman, for example, while recognizing the political strategies involved, views this as an attack on the Jewish people and religion (see, for instance, *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Ancient Civilizations* [New York: Vintage, 2008] 442-69).

<sup>9</sup> In recent scholarship, there has been an important move toward recognizing the political motivations of the anti-Judaean policies, texts, and materials, and in a more cohesive way. See especially: J. Andrew Overman, "The First Revolt and Flavian Politics," *The First Jewish Revolt: Archaeology, History, and Ideology* (ed. A. M. Berlin and J. A. Overman; London: Routledge, 2004) 213-20; Fergus Millar, "Last Year in Jerusalem: Monuments of the Jewish War in Rome," in *Flavius Josephus and Flavian*

these views taken on their own. On the one hand, there is not a substantial record of pagan anti-Judaean literary invectives prior to the Flavian period, and thus no reason to assume that ethnic prejudice was an overwhelming impetus for the discourse.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, while the theory of Flavian political ambition undoubtedly holds merit, it cannot explain why the discourse was sustained for so many years, even after other Flavian military victories.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, each view, in my opinion, is partially correct.

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Rome (ed. J. Edmondson et al.) 101-28; Martin Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 424-69; idem, "Religious Reactions to 70: The Limitations of the Evidence," in *Was 70 CE a Watershed in Jewish History?: On Jews and Judaism before and after the Destruction of the Second temple* (ed. D. R. Schwartz et al.; AJEC 78; Leiden: Brill, 2012) 509-16. See also these important early precedents: H. J. St. Hart, "Judaea and Rome: The Official Commentary," *JTS* 3 (1952): 172-98; E. Mary Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule: From Pompey to Diocletian: A Study in Political Relations* (Leiden: Brill, 2001 [1976]) 331-88.

<sup>10</sup> As Goodman points out, only Pompeius Trogus and one speech of Cicero (*Pro Flacco* 28.67) seem to have been "strongly disparaging rather than amused or contemptuous about Jewish religious practices" prior to 70 CE (*Ruling Class*, 236). By the end of the first century, however, polemics against Judaeans were appearing in all genres of literature—a co-development with the increasingly apologetic tendency in Josephus' work, culminating with his *Contra Apionem* at the end of the century. Of course, the prejudicial tendencies in pre-70 literature should not be overlooked, but it is an important corrective in scholarship to note that the earlier non-Judaean discourses about Judaeans were much less often vitriolic than in post-70 literature. This is a relative distinction. To be sure, the Alexandrian pogroms under Caligula and other pre-70 instances of anti-Judaean sentiments could certainly be pointed out (see John G. Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes toward Judaism in Christian and Pagan Antiquity* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983]). But, in general, ethnic and religious prejudice against Judaeans escalated significantly after 70. On rethinking prejudice against Judaeans in antiquity, see Erich S. Gruen, *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2011) esp. 179-96, 277-307, though I would argue that Gruen goes too far in mollifying the Tacitean defamation of the Judaeans as ironic.

<sup>11</sup> Domitian is an interesting case in point. In almost the same breath, Suetonius explains how Domitian brought harsh measures against Judaeans and how he took the cognomen Germanicus after his two triumphs over Germany (*Dom.* 12-13). His own claim to fame was clearly his German victories, but nevertheless he kept the *Iudaea capta* discourse going with intensity.

The discourse was fueled by a dynamic relationship between Flavian ideology and popular participation in the imperial habitus. As a result, the Flavian period marked a new era in the history of Judaeans relations with outsiders.<sup>12</sup>

In this chapter, I apply my largely Bourdieuan socioeconomic approach to dominant ideology to the Flavian *Iudaea capta* discourse. I begin by examining the symbolic morphology and dissemination of the discourse as materialized through the well-known *Iudaea capta* coins. I argue that these coins were more widespread than is usually realized, that they have an ethnic dimension that transcends territoriality, and that they are structurally connected to a larger discourse within Flavian ideology. I proceed to examine the other media of this discourse first in Rome and then in the rest of the empire, and I conclude that the *Iudaea capta* discourse would have been widely known and invested in throughout the empire.<sup>13</sup> In a brief concluding section, I suggest that this discourse should be viewed as symbolic violence—as a formulation of Flavian ideology that creates and maintains inequitable social relations between Judaeans and non-Judaeans.

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<sup>12</sup> This was a period in which many New Testament and non-canonical Jewish and Christian texts were written, yet this Flavian discourse is too rarely taken into account in scholarship on these texts. Noting this problem, Overman has insightfully suggested that the especially polemical use of the label *Ioudaioi* in the Fourth Gospel should be understood in light of these developments (“First Revolt,” 218-19). Among other texts, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, Revelation, *Sibylline Oracles* 5, and *4 Ezra* all reflect the discourse in important ways.

<sup>13</sup> By simply redescribing this as a systematic and coherent discourse within Flavian ideology, I am doing something different than the best current meta-historical narratives of the period. The closest precedent I know, which considers all of these things together as the “official commentary” on the Judaeans war is H. St. J. Hart’s “Judaea and Rome.”

## Flavian Ideology and the Misrecognition of the *Iudaea Capta* Discourse

Although descriptions and images of the *Iudaea capta* coins are frequently published and are readily available to scholars in technical catalogues of Roman coins,<sup>14</sup> their historical and cultural significance has rarely been studied in relation to Flavian ideology<sup>15</sup> or Judaeian culture.<sup>16</sup> The aim of this section is to correct this oversight through a close examination of the habitus constructed by these coins.

The *Iudaea capta* coin types are not unusual in their own right. The *capta*-type was commonly employed by Romans in the Republican and Augustan periods before

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<sup>14</sup> The only specific catalogue of *Iudaea capta* coins that I know of is Howard B. Brin, *Catalog of Judaea Capta Coinage* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Emmett, 1986) [hereafter: *HBB*]. For the main technical catalogues in English, see Ya‘akov Meshorer, *Ancient Jewish Coinage: Volume II: Herod the Great through Bar Cochba* (Dix Hills, N.Y.: Amphora, 1982) 190-97 [hereafter: *AJC*]; I. A. Carradice and T. V. Buttrey, eds., *The Roman Imperial Coinage, Volume II – Part I: Vespasian to Domitian* (2d. rev. ed.; London: Spink, 2007) [hereafter: *RIC*]; Harold Mattingly, *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum: Volume II: Vespasian to Domitian* (London: Chiswick, 1930) [hereafter: *BMCRE*]; Andrew Burnett et al., *Roman Provincial Coinage: Volume II: From Vespasian to Domitian (AD 69-96)* (London: British Museum Press, 1999) [hereafter: *RPC*]. Unless otherwise noted, coins will be listed according to their numbers in these catalogues, as and not by the page numbers where they appear.

<sup>15</sup> The main exception is Cody, “Conquerors and Conquered.”

<sup>16</sup> Discussions of different lengths and levels of sophistication can be found, however, in Martin Goodman, “Coinage and Identity: The Jewish Evidence,” in *Coinage and Identity in the Roman Provinces* (ed. C. J. Howgego et al.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) 163-66; Hart, “Judaea and Rome”; Overman, “The Jewish Revolt,” 215; Larry J. Kreitzer, *Striking New Images: Roman Imperial Coinage and the New Testament World* (JSNTSup 134; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996) 135-40; Davina C. Lopez, *Apostle to the Conquered: Reimagining Paul’s Mission* (Paul in Critical Contexts; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2008) 35-38; idem, “Before Your Very Eyes: Roman Imperial Ideology, Gender Constructs and Paul’s Inter-Nationalism,” in *Mapping Gender in Ancient Religious Discourses* (ed. T. Penner and C. Vander Stichele; BIS 84; Leiden: Brill, 2007) 115-62 at 119-23.

reemerging in the Flavian period.<sup>17</sup> This coin type, whose reverse portrays one or more captives mourning or with their hands bound, was often used to depict the captured people as barbaric, uncivilized, and weak in contradistinction to the nobility, strength, and virtue of the Romans. It is for this reason that it is surprising that this type was used by the Flavians to depict Judaea, since Judaea was already a Roman province at the time of the revolt.<sup>18</sup> One might expect, instead, a *restitutio*-type, showing a personification of the province being restored to its status prior to the revolt.<sup>19</sup> Yet, the series of Flavian *Judaea capta* coins was, as Jane Cody has demonstrated, entirely consistent with the *capta*-type used to depict Gauls, Spaniards, and other barbarian warriors in earlier times.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> As Cody explains, the *capta* type “originate[d] in the Hellenistic tradition for the representation of defeated barbarian warriors,” and was used frequently on Caesarian and Augustan coins to depict Spanish and Gallic captives (“Conquerors and Conquered,” 105-106). On Roman literary representations of barbarians, see Derek Williams, *Romans and Barbarians: Four Views from the Empire’s Edge: 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD* (London: Constable, 1998). On material representations of barbarians, see Annalina Caló Levi, *Barbarians on Roman Imperial Coins and Sculpture* (Numismatic Notes and Monographs 123; New York: The American Numismatic Society, 1952), esp. 9-12 on the *Judaea capta* coins.

<sup>18</sup> Cody, “Conquerors and Conquered,” 109.

<sup>19</sup> On *restitutio* coins, see *ibid.*, 117-19. The only known Flavian *restitutio* coin (*BMCRE* 504) was issued in Syria and seems to allude to the restoration of some Eastern province or settlement. However, I am thankful to Michael White for indicating to me that, even in the absence of a legend such as RP (*Restitutor Pacis*), some Flavian coins do contain imagery casting the Flavians as the restorers of peace to the entire *oikoumenē*. See, e.g., *RIC* 2.110 (80-81 CE), in which the obverse has Titus sitting in repose beside his shield while holding an olive branch and the reverse depicts the Flavian Amphitheater.

<sup>20</sup> As Cody puts it, “in adopting the compositional scheme and details of the republican and Augustan *capta* types, the designers intended to portray the Judaeans as worthy enemies on the battlefield, but as uncivilised, like Gauls or Spaniards” (*ibid.*, 110).

The *Iudaea capta* coins are rightly associated with the Flavian dynasty, though they did make earlier appearances under Antony and Vitellius as well as a later appearance under Hadrian.<sup>21</sup> However, the non-Flavian examples were short-lived by comparison. The *Iudaea capta* coins of Vitellius were the only non-Flavian coins struck in response to the revolt of 66-70 CE. None of Vitellius' known coins bear the legend *IVDAEA CAPTA*. Instead, they proclaimed *VICTORIA AVGVSTI*—evincing the emperor's attempt to connect his military record to that of Augustus, as the Flavians would later do as well.<sup>22</sup> These coins did, however, feature the date-palm tree and seated captive that would become hallmarks of the Flavian series.<sup>23</sup>

The Flavian series of coins referencing the Judaean revolt is often simply referred to as the *Iudaea capta* series, though the coins do not always include that eponymous legend. The majority of these coins have as their reverse legends either *IVDAEA CAPTA*, *IVDAEA*, *IVDAEA DEVICTA*, *DE IVDAEIS*, *VICTORIA AVGVSTI*, or *ΙΟΥΔΑΙΑΣ ΕΑΛΩΚΥΙΑΣ* in Greek—although the most common of these is *IVDAEA CAPTA*. In

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<sup>21</sup> Antony's single known issue of this type was minted in 36 BCE and features a trophy with male and female Judaean captives (*HBB* 1). Three *Iudaea capta* issues are known from Vitellius, and all depict Victory placing a shield on a trophy or date-palm tree (*HBB* 2-4). Two of these issues have seated Judaean captives (*HBB* 3-4). Hadrian's three known issues are rather different than their *Iudaea capta* precedents, but celebrate Hadrian's *adventus* with Judaea personified as a woman and making sacrifice at a Roman altar as well as children holding palms (*HBB* 136-138; *RIC* 2.853, 890-891). On the Hadrianic coins and their relation to the foundation of Aelia Capitolina in Palestine, see Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 461.

<sup>22</sup> On the Flavian use of Victoria imagery and legends as a way to forge a connection with the reign and ideology of Augustus, see Rachel Meredith Kousser, *Hellenistic and Roman Ideal Sculpture: The Allure of the Classical* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 66-70.

<sup>23</sup> However, one coin of Vitellius does not depict a captive (*HBB* 2), and on the two that do (*HBB* 3-4), the gender of the captives is unclear.

almost every case, the coins' obverses feature images of the emperor—either Vespasian, Titus, or Domitian—as well as their appropriate titles around the circumference of the coin.<sup>24</sup> It is noteworthy that, despite the obvious content of the coins, none of these emperors ever displayed the agnomen *IVDAICVS*. Although the reason for this omission is debatable, it is probably best explained by Judaea's provincial status.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, the reverse images of the coins clearly attribute the capture of Judaea to the emperor.

A variety of images appear on the reverses of these coins. One of the most common is the date-palm tree with seven fronds (three on each side and one on top in the middle) and two bunches of dates hanging down.<sup>26</sup> This was a familiar and accepted symbol of the province of Judaea, as affirmed by its use by Judaeans on the highly nationalistic coins minted during the Bar Kochba revolt.<sup>27</sup> It has the specific function of referring to the territory of Judaea and portraying it as a place of abundance in the desert.<sup>28</sup> It was not uncommon for an image of a plant or animal to represent a territory in

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<sup>24</sup> In at least one case, however, there is a *quadriga* with the emperor in the cart instead of an imperial portrait on the obverse (*HBB* 26; *BMCRE* 149). The only other exceptions are the tiny *quadrans* issues, which depict a palm tree on the obverse instead of the emperor (*HBB* 72-76; *RIC* 2.504, 509, 512, 513, 530).

<sup>25</sup> So Marvin Tameanko, "Speculation on the Missing Agnomen, Judaicus, on the Coins of the Flavian Emperors," *SAN* 17 (1988): 44-47 at 47. However, Tameanko also puts forth the possible reason, also advocated by Smallwood (*The Jews under Roman Rule*, 329) that the agnomen was not adopted in order not to cause problems with diaspora Judaeans and their sympathizers. Given the breadth of the discourse and implementation of the *fiscus Iudaicus*, however, I find this latter reason unlikely—at least on its own.

<sup>26</sup> Among many examples, see *HBB* 20, 22, 32, 42, 93, 133.

<sup>27</sup> See *AJC* 5, 5a-d, 7, 7a, 8, 9, 10, 10a-b, 11, 40-42b, 71-76, etc.

<sup>28</sup> Lopez, "Before Your Very Eyes," 121.

this way.<sup>29</sup> In many cases, shields or other battle implements are hung from the tree or are being placed on the tree by Victory.<sup>30</sup> When the tree is not depicted, the armor is usually hung from a trophy.<sup>31</sup>

Another very common image on the *Iudaea capta* coins depicts subdued Judaeans in a battlefield, usually flanking a date-palm tree or trophy. Sometimes—especially in coins of Titus—there is a male captive with hands bound, either standing, kneeling in supplication, or sitting.<sup>32</sup> Interestingly, a male captive never appears on these coins without there also being a female captive who, regardless of the position of the male, is almost always sitting.<sup>33</sup> This seated Judaeans woman also appears very frequently as the only captive in the image, and even as the only figure on the reverse. A regularly repeated reverse type featured simply the seated female captive, a date-palm tree or trophy, and the legend.<sup>34</sup> The precise position of the Judaeans woman varied. Most frequently she “is depicted seated, with her right hand in her lap, her left elbow on her left knee and her head resting on that hand in a general attitude of dejection,” as Howard

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<sup>29</sup> The best precedent was probably the depiction of the crocodile on the Augustan *AEGVPTO CAPTA* coins. See Meshorer, *AJC*, p. 191. A. J. Boyle suggests that Vespasian modeled himself in many ways on Augustus, and that the use of *Iudaea capta* coinage is modeled after Augustus’ *Aegypto capta* coins (“Introduction: Reading Flavian Rome,” in *Flavian Rome* [ed. A. J. Boyle and W. J. Dominik] 1-68 at 5).

<sup>30</sup> E.g., *HBB* 40, 49-54, 77, 84, 100, 123, 124/*RIC* 2.419, 466, 467, 468, 373, 614.

<sup>31</sup> E.g., *HBB* 15, 65, 80/*RIC* 2.114, 501, 59a.

<sup>32</sup> E.g., *HBB* 43, 88, 96, 97, 107-110, 112-113, 125/*RIC* 2.426, 21a-b, 91-93, 280.

<sup>33</sup> The exceptions are *HBB* 36 (*RIC* 2.148b; *BMCRE* 371), in which the female Judaeans captive stands next to the tree and *HBB* 104 (*RIC* 2.638; *BMCRE* 652), in which the female Judaeans captive stands next to the tree while leaning toward Titus, along with a male captive, in supplication.

<sup>34</sup> E.g., *HBB* 6, 8, 17, 20, 117, etc./*RIC* 2.15, 16, 287, 784.



Brin observes.<sup>35</sup> In certain cases, her hands are tied, she is sitting on or next to a pile of weapons, or she is overtly draped in a way that accentuates her disposition of mourning. This dejected Judaeen woman was, apparently, the token symbol of this series of coins. The captive woman is, scholars agree, clearly a personification of Judaea consistent with female personifications of nations, cities, and lands in the ancient world.<sup>36</sup> Her femininity indicates the feminization of Judaea by the Romans.<sup>37</sup> Some issues underscore this gendered aspect of imperial power by placing an imposing, militarized figure of Vespasian holding an upward-pointing dagger with its base at his groin next to the dejected woman, who is looking the other way (see Figure 1).<sup>38</sup> Thus, the weakness of Judaea is emphasized through the femininity of this figure and her juxtaposition with the dominant, penetrative male power of Rome and its emperor. I would add that the range of positions the Judaeen woman is shown in (seated, crouching, bending over herself, kneeling, etc.) stands in stark contrast to the stately, even masculinized, personifications of a seated *Roma* (not to mention various personified imperial virtues) on other Flavian coins.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, as Davina Lopez has argued, this woman is a representative of the Judaeen *ethnos*.<sup>40</sup> Yet, whereas Lopez assumes that the woman is a territorial representation, I wonder whether she represents the entire Judaeen *ethnos* in the homeland and diaspora. At the very least, I would suggest that the combination of a

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<sup>35</sup> Brin, *HBB*, p. 4.

<sup>36</sup> Lopez, *Apostle to the Conquered*, 37; idem, “Before Your Very Eyes.”

<sup>37</sup> Lopez, *Apostle to the Conquered*, 37.

<sup>38</sup> E.g., *HBB* 44 (figure 1), 45, 57, 59, 85, 90, 93, 98/*RIC* 2.427, 733, 751a, 160, 367, 608.

<sup>39</sup> E.g., *RIC* 2.336 (*Concordia*), 1533 (*Roma*), etc.

<sup>40</sup> Lopez, *Apostle to the Conquered*, 37.

female Judaeian body with the territorial appellation *IVDAEA* would be jarring to *Ioudaioi/Iudaei* throughout the empire and could be easily taken as more than a territorial designation. The wide dissemination of the related discourse, as we see in the following sections, supports this idea that the *Iudaea capta* discourse transcends territorial interests.

**FIGURE 1: AE Sestertius of Vespasian, 71 CE, Rome**



*Obverse Type:* Head of Vespasian, laureate, right

*Obverse Legend:* IMP CAES VESPASIAN AVG PM TR PPP COS III

*Reverse Type:* Vespasian, in military dress, standing right, holding spear and parazonium, foot on helmet; Judaea, right, seated right, under date-palm tree

*Reverse Legend:* IVDAEA CAPTA SC

*References:* HBB 44; RIC 2.427; BMCRE 543

*Image Source:* American Numismatic Society: Online Coins of the Roman Empire

In addition to the date-palm tree and the dejected Judaeian woman, there are a variety of other symbols and figures that appear on different issues. One of the most frequent is Victory, who is usually shown standing on a helmet and writing on a shield hung from the date-palm tree (or trophy). The inscription, when clear, is most often *OB CIV SER* (*ob cives servatos*; “because of the citizens having been served”; see Figure

2).<sup>41</sup> Thus, Victory herself inscribes ideology by proclaiming that the Flavian victory in Judaeae was for the benefit of imperial subjects. Consumers of this message are invited to see symbolic capital in the victory for themselves along with the emperors while misrecognizing the symbolic violence unapologetically represented by the disconsolate body of a subdued Judaeae woman.

**FIGURE 2: AE Sestertius of Vespasian, 71 CE, Rome**



*Obverse Type:* Head of Vespasian, laureate, right

*Obverse Legend:* IMP CAES VESPASIAN AVG PM TR PPP COS III

*Reverse Type:* Victory standing right, resting left foot on helmet, inscribing OB CIV SERV on shield attached to date-palm tree; Judaea seated right

*Reverse Legend:* VICTORIA AVGVSTI SC

*References:* HBB 50; RIC 2.467; BMCRE 582

*Image Source:* American Numismatic Society: Online Coins of the Roman Empire

Another recurring image on the coins with the purpose of legitimating and exalting the emperor is the *quadriga*, the chariot drawn by four horses (or elephants) that

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<sup>41</sup> Brin, *HBB*, p. 7. E.g., *HBB* 48-51, 54/*RIC* 2.464, 466, 467. Victory does write other things in certain cases: *SPQR* in *HBB* 40 (*RIC* 2.419) and *IMP T CAES* in *HBB* 84 (*RIC* 2.373).

carried the emperor during his triumph.<sup>42</sup> This image, then, commemorates the triumph of Vespasian and/or Titus over Judaea. The emperor is dressed as the Capitoline Jupiter in purple and gold on these coins, and in a couple of cases, a temple is also depicted that may be the temple of Isis from the triumph route described by Josephus.<sup>43</sup> With this image, the celebration of the triumph is transported beyond the scene of the parade route in Rome at a particular period in time and placed into the hands of the masses.

The *Iudaea capta* coins spread the symbols of a conquered Judaea, its valorized *triumphatores*, and an effective Roman military in the service of citizens much farther and for a longer time than is generally realized. H. St. J. Hart describes their dissemination aptly, though somewhat over-dramatically:

It is in all metals—not only gold and silver, it is on the poor man’s brass, the money of the people, even to the little quadrans with its emblematic palm-tree .... It comes from all mints—from Spain, Rome, Gaul, Syria, and elsewhere. ... The whole empire must concentrate on the one theme—IVDAEA CAPTA.<sup>44</sup>

A rare coin of this series from Asia Minor that was recently published further underscores the breadth of their circulation, providing evidence of their circulation in regions where such evidence was previously unknown.<sup>45</sup>

As for duration, the Flavian *Iudaea capta* coins are first minted in 69 CE, the same year Vitellius issued his version of the coins. The surviving evidence suggests that

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<sup>42</sup> E.g., *HBB* 10, 12, 34, 55, 82, 94/*RIC* 2.294, 44, 524, 60, 368. The *quadriga* even appears on the obverse in the rare case of *HBB* 26 (*BMCRE* 149).

<sup>43</sup> E.g., *HBB* 79, 82, 83/*RIC* 2.60-61. In his *B.J.* 7.123, Josephus claims that the emperors rested at the temple of Isis the night before the triumph. On the Isis temple depiction, see Brin, *HBB*, p. 5; Levi, *Barbarians*, 9.

<sup>44</sup> Hart, “Judaea and Rome,” 184. Cf. Meshorer, *AJC*, pp. 196-97.

<sup>45</sup> David Hendin, “A Rare Judaea Capta Type of Asia Minor,” *Israel Numismatic Journal* 16 (2007-2008): 109-11.

they were minted with greatest frequency from 69 to 73 CE (just before the capture of Jerusalem to a couple years after the triumph) and again in 80-81 CE (a date range that starts after the death of Vespasian and covers the accession of Titus, completion of the first Arch of Titus, death of Titus, and completion of the second Arch of Titus; many of these coins often feature *DIVVS AVGVSTVS VESPASIANVS* on the obverse).<sup>46</sup> However, the coins were certainly minted throughout the reigns of Vespasian and Titus and show very few symbolic differences on the reverses over time. Under Domitian, there is much less evidence for the production of this series. This is not surprising since Domitian was not as personally involved in the siege of Jerusalem as his father and brother were, and thus the victory over Judaea is of far less propagandistic value to him. Nevertheless, the discourse did continue in the time of Domitian. One sestertius is dated to 85 CE and features familiar symbols: the *IVDAEA CAPTA* legend, a seated Judaeian female captive, and a Judaeian male captive.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, Domitian minted coins with the date-palm tree and palm branches that clearly reference Judaea,<sup>48</sup> even though commemorating the victory of his father and brother over Judaea was evidently not as important to him as his own military victories in Germany and elsewhere.<sup>49</sup> It is also important to note that the

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<sup>46</sup> On dating, see Brin, *HBB*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>47</sup> *HBB* 125/*RIC* 2.280/*BMCRE* 328a. Smallwood considers the Domitianic *Iudaea capta sestertius* “suspect,” but her only reason for doing so is that it is a rare example during the reign of Domitian. Others accept it without hesitation.

<sup>48</sup> *HBB* 126, 129, 133/*RIC* 2.688.

<sup>49</sup> As Cody explains, in his use of *capta* types, Domitian was more concerned with his victory over Germania (*GERMANIA CAPTA*) since he was not as involved in the victory over Judaea as his father and brother (“Conquerors and Conquered,” 112). Furthermore, “On coin types, as elsewhere, Domitianic art moves away from the earlier Flavians’ adherence to republican and Augustan numismatic models into a more cosmic realm...” (113).

coins minted by the earlier Flavians would still have been in circulation throughout the reign of Domitian and that the symbols of the *Iudaea capta* coins would continue to appear under later emperors, and especially in the reign of Hadrian.<sup>50</sup>

The *Iudaea capta* coins, thus, were an important vehicle for Flavian ideology during the decades following the Judaean revolt. They featured a symbolic system of misrecognition that feminized and degraded the Judaean *ethnos*, honored the Flavian dynasty, and implied that the victory over Judaea benefited Romans throughout the empire. With these coins, as also with other elements of the *Iudaea capta* discourse described below, the construction and maintenance of social distinctions and the bloodshed and depravity of war are at once masked and legitimated by a system of symbolic capital that has as its prizes the exaltation of the imperial dynasty and the protection and glorification of the Roman people.

### **The Economic Logic of the *Iudaea Capta* Discourse**

Although they are generally studied in isolation, I argue that the *Iudaea capta* coins should not be separated from the larger post-revolt discourse about the Judeans, and its manifestation across a range of discursive media other than coins. In this section, I suggest that this *Iudaea capta* discourse operates according to a discernible economic

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<sup>50</sup> The date-palm tree appears in relation to the Judaean tax on Nerva's coins, as discussed below. Furthermore, Judaea is personified as a woman and palm branches appear on Hadrianic coins. On Nerva's coins, see Martin Goodman, "The Meaning of 'Fisci Iudaici Calumnia Sublata' on the Coinage of Nerva," in *Josephus and the Varieties of Ancient Judaism: Louis H. Feldman Jubilee Volume* (Ed. S. J. D. Cohen and J. Schwartz; Leiden: Brill, 2007) 81-89. On Hadrian's coins, see idem, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 461.

logic that assures the production of material and symbolic capital that benefits the emperor and ruling classes while creating a particular habitus for imperial subjects regarding the Judaeans. I begin by evaluating the evidence from the city of Rome before proceeding to consider data from throughout the empire.

### ***Evidence from the Imperial Capitol***

Rome was the epicenter of the *Judaea capta* discourse that would quickly permeate the empire. Martin Goodman helpfully underscores the gravity of the discourse in Flavian Rome:

That this war on Judaism was not to be only a temporary feature of Flavian propaganda is clear from the building projects into which it was incorporated. ...Over the fifteen years or so following the conquest of Judaea the center of the city of Rome was remodeled to reflect the victory.<sup>51</sup>

The extravagant Flavian triumphal procession in June 71 CE, staged as the concluding ceremony of the war, actually marked the inception and purpose of this remodeling program and its related discourse. Josephus describes the triumph at length in his *Bellum*

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<sup>51</sup> Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 432. While I find Goodman's remark apt, I take issue with his understanding here and elsewhere of Flavian propaganda as a "war on Judaism," because the ancients did not have a conceptualization of Judaism as a religion and differentiated aspect of human experience quite like moderns do. Many scholars have noted this, but the most pertinent study of the issue for our purposes is Steve Mason, "Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism: Problems of Categorization in Ancient History," *JSJ* 38 (2007): 457-512. Instead of religion or Judaism, being identified as a Judaeans had more to do with ethnic identity, of which what might be called religious identity was a part. This is important for this study, because it is in the Flavian period, I argue, that Judaeans across the empire are connected by means of their ethnic attachment to Judaea. See, e.g., Dio Cassius' remark, "The country has been named *Ioudaia* and the people *Ioudaioi*. I do not know how this name came to be given to them, but it also applies to all other people who, though of different ethnicity (καίπερ ἄλλοεθνεῖς ὄντες), follow their customs..." (37.17.1; LCL trans., adapted).

*Judaicum* (7.123-157). Beginning at the Campus Martius and maneuvering through the city up to the Capitoline temple, the procession featured Judaeans including the notorious leader Simon bar Giora who would be flogged and executed before the crowd, the Roman troops, plunder from the temple, large tapestries illustrating scenes of the war, and most importantly, Vespasian and Titus in chariots, with Domitian walking alongside.<sup>52</sup> As Mary Beard points out, this was no ordinary triumph; for the Flavians, it was “the inaugural triumph of the dynasty.”<sup>53</sup> Less-than-subtle allusions to this triumph continue to appear throughout the Flavian period—on coins such as those in the *Iudaea capta* series, on the Arch of Titus, and in literary propaganda.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, the triumph and its later reception were more than Flavian propaganda. The triumph became part of a discourse that encouraged mimesis—that brought the Roman masses into the celebration of a defeated Judaea.<sup>55</sup> As Josephus explains, the triumphal procession “portrayed the incidents to those who had not witnessed them, as though they were happening before their eyes” (*B.J.* 7.146). Therefore, as with the *Iudaea capta* coins, the imagery of this triumph exalted the Flavian dynasty and deigned to benefit the masses through the masculinized allure of sport and spectacle and the cultural production of victory as an incomparable form of symbolic capital.

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<sup>52</sup> As Goodman notes, Josephus may have expanded Domitian’s role in his narrative of the triumph after the death of Titus and accession of Domitian in 81 CE (*Rome and Jerusalem*, 431). On the spoils of the temple displayed during the procession, see Ida Östenberg, *Staging the World: Spoils, Captives, and Representations in the Roman Triumphal Procession* (Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 111-19.

<sup>53</sup> Mary Beard, “The Triumph of Flavius Josephus,” in *Flavian Rome* (ed. A. J. Boyle and W. J. Dominik) 543-58 at 558.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* See further discussion of the legacy of the triumph below.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 551.



In the years that followed the triumph, each major construction project that altered the landscape of Rome materialized the capture of Judaea.<sup>56</sup> Some of these projects were financed (or at least purported to have been financed) by the Judaeian war booty and/or the *fiscus Iudaicus*, the tax on all Judaeans throughout the empire that Vespasian instituted after the revolt, and which is discussed in greater detail below. Josephus tells us, for instance, that the monies collected from Judaeans by means of the *fiscus Iudaicus* were used to finance the reconstruction of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus (Jupiter Optimus Maximus), which was burned down during fighting between the supporters of Vespasian and Vitellius in 69 CE.<sup>57</sup> Thus, the money that diaspora Judaeans once paid to the Jerusalem temple now supported Rome's greatest temple.

Similarly, spoils from the Jerusalem temple were used to finance the monumental temple of Peace, which was completed in 75 CE. An architectural masterpiece of Flavian ideology, the temple of Peace was clearly intended to recall and supersede the significance of the Augustan Altar of Peace. Since the Flavian government wanted to show that the dynasty restored the peace to the Roman people by conquering Judaea, some of the spoils of the Judaeian temple were conspicuously displayed in the temple of

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<sup>56</sup> The effect of this materialization of the *Iudaea capta* discourse in the landscape of Rome could perhaps be best understood in terms of what Susan E. Alcock calls memory theaters, "spaces which conjured up specific and controlled memories of the past through the use of monuments, images, and symbols..." ("The Reconfiguration of Memory in the Eastern Roman Empire," in *Empires: Perspectives from Archaeology and History* [ed. S. E. Alcock et al.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001] 323-50 at 335). On the reconfiguration of the Roman landscape in light of the revolt, see Millar, "Last Year in Jerusalem"; Overman, "The First Revolt."

<sup>57</sup> Josephus, *B.J.* 7.218.

Peace.<sup>58</sup> These artifacts of *Iudaea capta* were part of the temple's highly propagandistic display which also featured statues of dying Gauls and other works of art once housed in Nero's Domus Aurea, but now allegedly returned to the Roman people by Vespasian.<sup>59</sup> Imperial subjects were thus invited to misrecognize the indubitable comparison between the Augustan peace (with the Gauls as villains) and the new Flavian peace (with the Judaeans as villains).<sup>60</sup> The representation of dying bodies and plundered goods is couched in an iconographic discourse that simultaneously presents military victories as evidence of the glory of Rome, its emperors, and its citizens while casting the defeated peoples as enemies of Rome. As a result, this particular imperial habitus desensitizes subjects to symbolic violence waged against Judaeans as well as the disproportionate symbolic capital attributed to the emperors and government through participation in this habitus.

After the accession of Titus, the building program fueled by the *Iudaea capta* discourse had not ended. In early 81 CE, the first Arch of Titus was constructed on the south-east end of the enormous Circus Maximus. Its inscription praised Titus, who,

because of the instructions and advice of his father, and under his auspices, he subdued (*domuit*) the nation (*gentem*) of the Jews and destroyed the city of Jerusalem, which by all generals, kings, or nations (*gentibus*) previous to himself had either been attacked in vain or not even attempted at all.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> See Josephus, *B.J.* 7.158-162; Suetonius, *Vesp.* 9.1; Dio Cassius 66.15.1.

<sup>59</sup> Pliny, *N.H.* 34.84. See Maria Paola Del Moro, "The temple of Peace," in *The Museum of the Imperial Forum in Trajan's Market* (ed. L. Ungaro; Milan: Electa, 2007) 170-77 at 174-75; Millar, "Last Year in Jerusalem," 110.

<sup>60</sup> See Brigitte Kahl, *Galatians Re-imagined: Reading with the Eyes of the Vanquished* (Paul in Critical Contexts; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2010) 302-303.

<sup>61</sup> The full Latin inscription (*CIL* 6.944 = *ILS* 264) is: *Senatus Populusque Romanus Imp(eratori) Tito Caesari divi Vespasiani f(ilio) Vespasian[o] Augusto*

This honorary inscription, then, simultaneously legitimates Vespasian as divine and Titus as emperor by magnifying not just their destruction of Jerusalem, but also by proclaiming that they dominated (*domuit*) the Judaeian people. The language used does not specify that those dominated were provincial rebels, rather it was the entire Judaeian *gens*—a term that is not territorially bound. Furthermore, the remark that previous attacks on them by other kings and nations failed not only portrays the Flavians as superior military tacticians, but also implies that the Flavians accomplished something others had also attempted. The implication here is that all Judaeians are barbarians whom the Flavians rightfully conquered, not that the Flavians successfully suppressed a provincial revolt in Judaea. This inscription thus illustrates an ethnic dimension of the *Judaea capta* discourse that would have resonances for Judaeian life beyond the territorial boundaries of Judaea.

The second, more famous, Arch of Titus features symbols of Judaeian culture that also implicitly target all Judaeians as opposed to the Judaeian rebels in the homeland. This monument, prominently situated on the Velian Hill between the Forum Romanum and the Flavian Amphitheater, was completed just after Titus' death in 81 CE. The coffered ceiling of this honorific arch features an image of the apotheosis of Titus. Thus, this arch, like the other Arch of Titus, accredits the Flavians with spiritual symbolic capital by implying that the Judaeian victory proved their legitimacy. Though this is not technically

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*pontiff(ici) max(imo), trib(unicia) pot(estate) X, imp(eratori) XVII, [c]o(n)s(uli) VIII, p(atri) p(atriciae), principi suo, quod praeceptis part[is] consiliisq(ue) et auspiciis gentem Iudaeorum domuit et urbem Hierusolymam omnibus ante se ducibus, regibus, gentibus aut frurtra petitam aut omnino intemptatam delevit.* Text and Translation adapted from Millar, "Last Year in Jerusalem," 120. Cf. Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 433; R. H. Darwall-Smith, *Emperors and Architecture: A Study of Flavian Rome* (Brussels: Latomus, 1996), 69.

a triumphal arch, the panel reliefs lining the passageway within the arch celebrate the triumph of Vespasian and Titus.<sup>62</sup> The north panel depicts Titus as *triumphator* being carried on the *quadriga* as on some of the *Iudaea capta* coins.<sup>63</sup> Titus is being crowned with laurel by Victory. The south panel features the Jerusalem temple spoils being carried along the triumphal procession—the golden candelabra, the altar of the shewbread, and the golden trumpets (see Figure 3). Though specific to a temple located in Jerusalem, these items had significance for Judaeans everywhere since there was only one temple to which Judaeans throughout the diaspora paid tribute.

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<sup>62</sup> The dedicatory inscription (*CIL* 6.945) on the arch is: *Senatus Populusque Romanus Divo Tito Divi Vespasiani F(ilio) Vespasiano Avgvsto* (The Roman Senate and People [dedicate this] to the divine Titus Vespasianus Augustus, son of the divine Vespasian). Thus, the arch, constructed at the beginning of Domitian's reign, legitimates Vespasian and Titus as deified emperors (and legitimates Domitian, by extension, as a son of god) on the grounds of their military victories.

<sup>63</sup> For further discussion of the reliefs and their representation of the Flavian triumph, see Barbara Eberhardt, "Wer dient wem? Die Darstellung des Flavischen Triumphzuges auf dem Titusbogen und bei Josephus (*B.J.* 7.123-162)," in *Josephus and Jewish History* (ed. J. Sievers and G. Lembi) 257-78; John Henderson, "Par Operi Sedes: Mrs Arthur Strong and Flavian Style, the Arch of Titus and the Cancelleria Reliefs," in *Flavian Rome* (ed. A. J. Boyle and W. J. Dominik) 229-54; Millar, "Last Year in Jerusalem," 122-27.

**FIGURE 3: Arch of Titus Relief**



*Location:* Rome, on the Velia between the Forum and Flavian Amphitheater

*Description:* South panel relief from arch passageway showing the booty from the Jerusalem temple being carried in the Flavian triumphal procession

*Source:* Wikimedia Commons

Less is known about other monuments evincing the *Iudaea capta* discourse in Rome, although that certainly should not suggest that this discourse was not made manifest in other monuments and buildings. It now appears that that the earliest form of a dedicatory inscription from the Flavian amphitheater (“Colosseum”) indicates that the project was paid for “from the spoils of war (*ex manubi[i]s*)”—an obvious reference to the Judaeian war.<sup>64</sup> Since the construction of the amphitheater began early in Vespasian’s

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<sup>64</sup> See Millar, “Last Year in Jerusalem,” 118; Louis H. Feldman, “Financing the Colosseum,” *BAR* 27-4 (2001): 20-31, 60-61; Jodi Magness, “The Arch of Titus at Rome and the Fate of the God of Israel,” *JJS* 59 (2008): 201-17 at 214. The “ghost inscription” was originally deciphered by Géza Alföldy, “Eine Bauinschrift aus dem Colosseum,” *ZPE* 109: 195-226. All of the scholars listed here accept Alföldy’s work. However, it has

reign, being completed under Titus in 80 CE, it is not surprising that it was connected to the *Iudaea capta* discourse.

The Arcus ad Isis is another monument that should be taken into account here because of its iconography, though its evidence is somewhat elusive. An image of the arch is produced in detail on the tomb of the Haterii family in Rome (see Figure 4).<sup>65</sup> Although the arch has not survived, it probably stood near the temple of Isis on the Via Labicana—the temple that played a role in the triumphal procession and is featured on some of the *Iudaea capta* coins depicting the *quadriga*.<sup>66</sup> Whether it was constructed before or after the triumph, its statuary reliefs must have been crafted after the triumph. As the Haterii tomb shows, the attic of the arch has a *quadriga* at its center with images depicting prisoners tied to palm-trees on each side of it. This might, in fact, have been the earliest of the triumphal arches constructed by the Flavians. In any case, its iconic image of Judean prisoners—who appear to be women—tied to palm trees clearly corroborates the *Iudaea capta* symbolic system with a different discursive medium. It is possible, as Annalina Caló Levi suggests, that the coins were influenced by the arch and may even allude to it.<sup>67</sup> Whether the coins or the arch came first, however, does not seem to matter as much as the significant fact that both carry the same economy of symbols and support the same *Iudaea capta* discourse.

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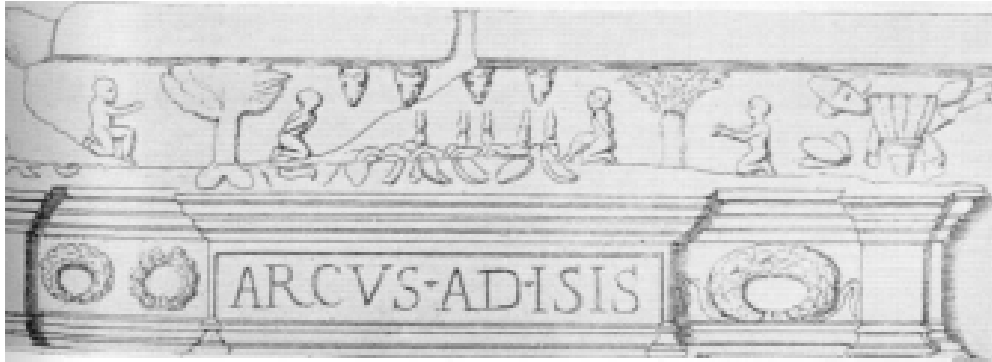
been called into question by Keith Hopkins and Mary Beard, *The Colosseum* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005) 34.

<sup>65</sup> See Levi, *Barbarians*, 9-12; plate III, 1; Hart, “Judaea and Rome,” 180-81; plate V.

<sup>66</sup> Josephus, *B.J.* 7.123; *HBB* 79, 82, 83/*RIC* 2.60-61.

<sup>67</sup> Levi, *Barbarians*, 11-12.

**FIGURE 4: Drawing of the Arcus ad Isis Attic Depicted on the Haterii Tomb**



*Description:* Quadriga in center, with one palm tree to each side and one bound captive on each side of each tree, all facing center

*Source:* H. St. J. Hart, "Judaea and Rome: The Official Commentary," plate V.

As we have seen, then, the *Iudaea capta* discourse had a significant impact on the landscape of Rome in the Flavian period as we know it from the surviving evidence. One can only imagine that there were other statues, monuments, and buildings that referenced this discourse, but have not stood the test of time. Now, we turn to the evidence from the rest of the empire.

### ***Evidence from the Empire***

Compared to the evidence from Rome, the historical traces of the *Iudaea capta* discourse from the rest of the empire seem meager. If one expected to find a systematic program of monuments, statues, and inscriptions referencing *Iudaea capta* around the empire, they would be disappointed. Nevertheless, there are some noteworthy material traces of the discourse from the empire which I consider here before evaluating the

substantial evidence of the *fiscus Iudaicus* and literary propaganda—the two main facilitators of the discourse throughout the empire other than the coins.

The material evidence of the *Iudaea capta* discourse outside of Rome is minimal, but important because it offers a glimpse into what was likely a much more widespread material presence of the discourse in the empire. There is a rarely referenced marble statue of Vespasian from Sabratha, the westernmost city of ancient Tripolis in modern Libya, which showcases the unmistakable symbols of the *Iudaea capta* discourse. This over-lifesize statue of a cuirassed Vespasian was part of a dynastic group that also included Titus and Domitilla Minor and probably was originally on display in the basilica of the city forum during the Flavian period.<sup>68</sup> Vespasian's cuirass features a familiar image: a date-palm tree in the central background (see Figure 5); Victory to the left of the tree inscribing a shield hanging from it; a standing male prisoner to the right of the tree with his hands bound; and in the central foreground of the image, a captive Judaeian woman seated on a pile of shields and extending her right hand out toward Victory in supplication.<sup>69</sup> While there are some variations, the notion that this imagery is the same

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<sup>68</sup> See Kousser, *Hellenistic and Roman Ideal Sculpture*, 73-74; Richard A Gergel, "Costume as Geographic Indicator: Barbarians and Prisoners on Cuirassed Statue Breastplates," in *The World of Roman Costume* (ed. J. L. Sebesta and L. Bonfante; Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994) 191-212. Cf. Hart, "Judaea and Rome," 172.

<sup>69</sup> It is difficult to tell for sure, from the images available to me, whether the seated captive on the cuirass is indeed a woman. Hart makes this assumption without hesitation, citing the authority of J. M. C. Toynbee as an oral source ("Judaea and Rome," 172), and Kousser does not make note of the figure's gender (*Hellenistic and Roman Ideal Sculpture*, 73-74). Giacomo Caputo, however, considers the captive a man ("Sculture dallo Scavo a Sud del Foro di Sabratha (1940-2)," in *Quaderni di Archeologia della Libia* [vol. 1; Rome, 1950], 7-58 at 16). The problem is the ambiguous garment the figure is wearing, which could be worn by a man or woman. I follow Hart and Toynbee



as that on the *Iudaea capta* coins is irrefutable. That this statue was displayed in an imperial forum is not surprising and raises questions about the materialization of the discourse across the empire in spaces and forms that have not survived. One wonders how many Flavian statues like this one stood in city forums, or graced the statuary reliefs of imperial cult temples as the imagery of Claudius crushing Britannia does in the Aphrodisias cult building.<sup>70</sup> The discourse was widespread and thus the structures of its misrecognition in social spaces should not be underestimated due to the dearth of remaining evidence.

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in considering the figure a woman because she is beardless and sitting in precisely the place one would expect to find the female personification of Judaea based on numismatic parallels; however, the issue must be left unresolved.

<sup>70</sup> On the similarity of the *Iudaea capta* imagery and the *Britannia capta* imagery, see Lopez, *Apostle to the Conquered*, 42-55. On the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias and its reliefs, see further Steven J. Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John: Reading Revelation in the Ruins* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) 77-95.

**FIGURE 5: Cuirass of Vespasian from the Forum of Sabratha**



*Location:* Sabratha Museum

*Description:* Focus on cuirass of an over-life-sized statue of Vespasian showing Victory standing right, inscribing a shield hung on a date-palm tree, a standing male Judaeen captive with hands bound and facing left, and a female Judaeen captive seated on a pile of shields, facing Victory with her right arm extended in supplication.

*Source:* Wikimedia Commons

Another source of material evidence for the discourse comes to us circuitously through the *Chronicle* of the sixth-century Antiochene John Malalas (10.260-261). Malalas claims that Vespasian set up the cherubim from the Jerusalem temple in Antioch and also built at Daphne, near Antioch, a theater which displayed the inscription “from the spoils of Judaea (*ex praeda Iudaeae*).”<sup>71</sup> While this late account may not be reliable, it would not be surprising if one considers the evidence from Josephus about Titus’ mini-triumphal processions through Near Eastern cities on his return to Rome. Beginning in

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<sup>71</sup> Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 79.

Caesarea Philippi, the metropolis of Agrippa II's kingdom, Titus marched northward stopping at several major cities to celebrate his victory with gladiatorial combats and wild-beast shows.<sup>72</sup> Titus personally played a role in spreading the discourse in its earliest stages.

In the immediate aftermath of the war, it is also noteworthy that the discourse spread through the empire by word of mouth and official reports. After Jerusalem was sacked and the Judaeen population of the homeland either sold into slavery or slaughtered, there were repercussions for Judaeans in the diaspora.<sup>73</sup> In Egypt, the Judaeen temple at Leontopolis was closed; in Cyrene, three thousand wealthy Judaeans were killed, and their property confiscated; in Antioch, the Judaeen population was rescued at the last moment from a mass execution based on a false accusation that they set fire to part of the center of the city.<sup>74</sup> Although some of this Josephan narrative about the details of Judaeen persecutions in the wake of the revolt must be understood as hyperbole, Goodman is surely correct that at this time, "All Jews in the Roman Empire might now feel under threat."<sup>75</sup>

At this point we turn to the strongest evidence of the spread and maintenance of the discourse throughout the empire: the *fiscus Iudaicus* established by Vespasian soon

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<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 78. See Josephus, *B.J.* 7.23-24, 37-38.

<sup>73</sup> Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 433-42; idem, *Ruling Class*, 231-51; Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 368-70. After the war, among other effects to the infrastructure and topography of Judaea, the Flavians initiated direct Roman rule, Jerusalem was occupied by legion X Fretensis, Caesarea Maritima became a Roman colony, a city named Flavia Neapolis (Nablus) was founded in Samaria, and Ioppe became Flavia Ioppe.

<sup>74</sup> Josephus, *B.J.* 7.41-62, 100-111 (Antioch), 407-436 (Egypt), 437-453 (Cyrene).

<sup>75</sup> Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 440.

after the end of the war.<sup>76</sup> This two *denarii* tax on Judaeans, variously called the *Ioudaiōn telesma* or *didrachmon* was administered by the *fiscus Iudaicus*, a special treasury established to collect this tax.<sup>77</sup> It redirected the annual half-shekel (two *denarii*) tax that Judaeans throughout the diaspora once paid to the Jerusalem temple to the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in Rome and probably other institutions and projects as well. While the Jerusalem temple tax was collected from men between the ages of twenty and fifty, the *fiscus Iudaicus* affected Judaeans as young as three years, including women, children, and apparently even slaves, as tax receipts from Egypt affirm.<sup>78</sup> The receipts from Egypt, the earliest of which date to 71/72 CE, are fairly systematic, usually reading something like the following:

“Paid by Thedetos son of Alexion, in respect of the Judaeian tax (Ἰουδαϊκοῦ) [τελέσματος]) for the 12th year of our lord Domitian, 9 drachmai 2 obols. Year 12...” (CPJ II.189).

The abbreviation Ἰουδ τελ for Ἰουδαϊκοῦ τελέσματος (or δύο Ἰουδ in the earlier receipts) is symptomatic of the regularity of the tax. Because it had to be collected throughout the empire, this tax required the participation of tax collectors and other

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<sup>76</sup> See Josephus, *B.J.* 7.218; Dio Cassius 66.7.2; Suetonius, *Dom.* 12.2.

<sup>77</sup> On the collection of the Judaeian tax, see Victor Tcherikover and Alexander Fuks (eds.), *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum: Volume II* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960) [hereafter: *CPJ*] 112-36. See also Marius Heemstra, *The Fiscus Judaicus and the Parting of the Ways* (WUNT 2.277; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010); Martin Goodman, “Nerva, the *Fiscus Judaicus* and Jewish Identity,” *JRS* 79 (1989): 40-44; Leonard A. Thompson, “Domitian and the Jewish Tax,” *Historia* 31 (1982): 329-42; Margaret H. Williams, “Domitian, the Jews and the ‘Judaizers’: A Simple Matter of Cupiditas and Maiestas?,” *Historia* 39 (1990): 196-211.

<sup>78</sup> *CPJ* II.160-229. Cf. *CIJ* I.532 (an epitaph from Rome for T. Flavius Euschemon, a freedman of the emperor, who held the position of *procurator ad capitularia Iudaeorum*).

bureaucrats and, in this way, the symbolic violence of the *Iudaea capta* discourse became misrecognized in society.

The only criterion for paying this tax was identification as a Judaeans, regardless of whether the person has ever been to Judaea. This tax is thus part of the *Iudaea capta* discourse that materially and symbolically affected Judaeans throughout the empire while providing the imperial government with material capital. The Judaeans tax—whether considered a consequence of or punishment for the Judaeans revolt—underscores the extent of the *Iudaea capta* discourse well beyond the typical commemoration of a provincial revolt. According to Suetonius (*Dom.* 12.2), the tax was imposed on the entire Judaeans *gens*.<sup>79</sup> Dio Cassius relates, however, that it was only collected from Judaeans “who continued to follow their ancestral customs” (66.7.2). There is some opaqueness, then, in the sources about who exactly qualified for the tax, and this probably reflects the actual trouble of defining Judaeans ethnicity that would have accompanied the collection of this tax.

In any case, it is clear that Domitian changed something about the collection of this tax that made its evasion more difficult. Suetonius explained that Domitian’s unstated innovation amounted to “an extremely harsh exaction of the *fiscus Iudaicus* (*Iudaicus fiscus acerbissime actus est*).” Exactly what this entailed is unknown, but the sources suggest that Domitian’s policy amounted to what Leonard Thompson describes as “a witch-hunt for so-called Jewish tax-evaders and a spate of persecutions of alleged

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<sup>79</sup> Cf., Josephus (*B.J.* 7.218), who claims that the tax was imposed “On Judaeans, wheresoever they were (τοῖς ὅπουδηποτοῦν οὖσιν Ἰουδαίοις)” (my trans.)—clearly a reference to Judaeans throughout the empire.

evaders.”<sup>80</sup> The exact circumstances of Domitian’s policy and the ensuing persecution are debated by scholars but need not concern us here. What matters for the purpose of this study is that the *fiscus Iudaicus* galvanized social distinctions through the acquisition of material capital by the imperial government and simultaneously cooperated discursively with coins, monuments, buildings, and literature in the vilification of Judaeans. That the discourse had entirely transcended its dissemblance of territorial boundaries is evident in the exaction of the tax from the time of Vespasian, but is even clearer in the reign of Domitian. By the time of the emperor Nerva, the date-palm tree, with its overt territorial symbolism, had clearly been understood as an ethnic symbol representing all Judaeans everywhere. In 96 and 97 CE, Nerva minted coins featuring the date-palm tree along with the legend *FISCI IVDAICI CALVMNIA SVBLATA* (“To commemorate the suppression of wrongful accusations in regard to the *fiscus Iudaicus*”).<sup>81</sup> In order to gain popularity in Rome, Nerva’s regime made a clear numismatic statement against the harsh exaction of the tax by Domitian.<sup>82</sup> His coins seem concerned with ending the witch-hunt, but certainly did not put an end to the tax, which was still collected in Origen’s time and

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<sup>80</sup> Thompson, “Domitian,” 329. Domitian’s harsh exaction of the tax led to public circumcision trials (so Suetonius, *Dom.* 12.2) and charges of “atheism” against certain notable persons including Flavia Domitilla and Flavius Clemens (Domitian’s niece and her husband, the consul) for “drifting into Judaeian ways,” leading to several executions in 95 CE (so Dio 67.14.1-3; 68.1.1-2). See Williams, “Domitian,” 206-10.

<sup>81</sup> My adaptation of Thompson’s translation (“Domitian,” 329). See *BMCRE* 88, 98, 105, 106.

<sup>82</sup> Nerva’s leniency did not go unnoticed by Judaeans. The apocalyptic fifth book of *Sibylline Oracles* (composed during Hadrian’s reign prior to the Judaeian revolt of 132 CE) has favorable views of only Nerva and Hadrian (hence the pre-revolt date) among the emperors, starkly contrasting Nerva with the “cursed” Domitian who came before him (39-46). This is noted by Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 448.

possibly even into the fourth century CE.<sup>83</sup> Nerva's coins do show, however, that the *Iudaea capta* discourse, with its concomitant socioeconomic consequences for Judaeans, was still in effect and a matter of public debate after the death of Domitian.

A final way in which the *Iudaea capta* discourse would have permeated the empire during the Flavian period and ensuing decades was through the circulation of propagandistic literature.<sup>84</sup> Of course, the literature was produced and consumed mainly by elites and the breadth of circulation for such literature is unclear. Nevertheless, it seems that these sources both reflected social realities and influenced public opinion, if only in minor ways. It is significant that a discernible anti-Judaean trend in pagan literature emerges for the first time in the Flavian period, coming to fruition in the early second century CE with authors like Tacitus and Juvenal. However, even in Flavian times, authors such as Martial and Pliny the Elder (to say nothing of Josephus' unique contribution) textualized the *Iudaea capta* discourse.

Martial's *Liber spectaculorum*, which celebrates the Flavian amphitheater, has several allusions to the Judaean victory, for instance.<sup>85</sup> Honora Howell Chapman has demonstrated that the text uses anthropomorphism to commemorate Flavian victories over the Judaeans and other barbarians by depicting these defeated enemies in the semi-

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<sup>83</sup> Origen, *Ep. ad Africanum* 20 (14). See Goodman, "Nerva," 40.

<sup>84</sup> In the following discussion, I only consider authors writing during the Flavian period, as opposed to those who wrote much about it in the following decades. On the problem of the anti-Flavian (usually, at least anti-Domitianic) bias in early-second century CE authors, see Marcus Wilson, "After the Silence: Tacitus, Suetonius, Juvenal," in *Flavian Rome* (ed. A. J. Boyle and W. J. Dominik) 523-42.

<sup>85</sup> See Honora Howell Chapman, "Reading the Judeans and the Judean War in Martial's *Liber spectaculorum*," *JSP* 22 (2012): 91-113.

transparent guise of animals subdued in the arena.<sup>86</sup> Howell Chapman points out that Martial also takes jabs at the Judaeans in his *Epigrams*, connecting circumcision with uncivilized hypersexuality and associating Judaeian barbarism with their defeat by the Flavians and payment of the Judaeian tax.<sup>87</sup>

Whereas Martial used animals and the amphitheater as his literary allusions for discussing the war, most authors took an interest in Judaeian palm trees. Silius Italicus praises Vespasian, who “shall subdue in war the palmgroves of Idume” and Titus, who “shall put an end to the war with the fierce people of Palestine.”<sup>88</sup> Statius makes a similar declaration, relating the spread of the Flavian Pax to the sweetness of Idume’s grove.<sup>89</sup> But by far, the most vivid use of the palm-tree as a metaphor for Judaea appears in Pliny the Elder’s *Natural History*:

The balsam-tree is now a subject of Rome, and pays tribute together with the nation [*gente*] to which it belongs; it differs entirely in character from the accounts that had been given of it by Roman and foreign writers, being more like a vine than a myrtle: it has quite recently been taught to grow from mallet-shoots tied up on trellises like a vine, and it covers whole hillsides as vineyards do. A balsam unsupported by a trellis and carrying its own weight is pruned in a similar manner when it puts out shoots; the use of the rake makes it thrive and sprout rapidly, bearing in its third year. Its leaf is very near that of the tuber-apple, and it is evergreen. The

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<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 101-107.

<sup>87</sup> See the references to circumcision in Martial, *Ep.* 7.30, 7.55, 7.82, and 11.94. *Ep.* 7.55 makes the connection plainly: “If you give presents [i.e., fellatio] in return to no man, Chrestus, give and return none to me either: I will believe you to be generous enough. But if you give them to Apicius, and Lupus, and Gallus and Titius and Caesius, you shall assault, not my penis [*mentulam*] (for that is chaste and petty), but the one that comes from Solyma [Jerusalem] now consumed by fire, and is lately condemned to tribute.”

<sup>88</sup> Silius Italicus, *Punica* 3.600, 605-606. Translation from Menahem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism: Volume I: From Herodotus to Plutarch* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976).

<sup>89</sup> Statius, *Silvae* 3.2.137-138.



Judaeans vented their wrath upon this plant as they also did upon their own lives, but the Romans protected it against them, and there have been pitched battles in defense of a shrub. It is now cultivated by the *fiscus*, and was never before more plentiful....<sup>90</sup>

With this extended metaphor, Pliny depicts the entire Judaeian *gens*—all Judaeans throughout the empire<sup>91</sup>—as a tree in need of cultivation. In this way, he connects the territorially specific palm tree—the ubiquitous symbol of the *Iudaea capta* discourse—with the *fiscus Iudaicus*. He boldly implies that all Judaeans are uncivilized people that have now been cultivated by Rome thanks to the Flavians, whose triumph is mentioned just before this passage.

As we have seen, then, the symbols of the *Iudaea capta* discourse extend far beyond Rome with a symbolic system that fairly consistently vilifies the entire Judaeian *ethnos* while legitimating the Flavians and producing and maintaining the collective sentiment that the capture of Judaea was for the good of all Romans since the Judaeans were a threat to the empire and its citizens. The surviving evidence of the discourse is impressive. The dejected Judaeian woman and the palm tree in need of cultivation were the central symbols of this discourse, while the Judaeian temple booty and *fiscus Iudaicus* were its primary material capital.

### **Conclusion: The *Iudaea Capta* Discourse as Symbolic Violence**

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<sup>90</sup> Pliny the Elder, *N.H.* 12.112-113.

<sup>91</sup> It was a major function of the discourse to homogenize all diaspora Judaeans with Judaeans from Judaea. As a result, shortly after the Flavian period, Dio Cassius was able to express the idea that *Ioudaios* refers to people from Judaea as well as those who follow Judaeian customs wherever they reside (37.17.1).

The *Iudaea capta* discourse began with the suppression of a provincial revolt in Judaea and over the course of three decades escalated into an empire-wide discourse that marked all Judaeans as outsiders. At its most extreme, all those who identified with Judaeans seem to have been likened to barbarians. When all of the evidence is brought together, the misrecognition of this discourse of Flavian ideology in society is discernible. By considering this discourse a form of symbolic violence, we have seen that the naturalization of this discourse produced social distinctions that simultaneously benefited the state, emperor, and ruling classes who thrived under the emperor, and degraded Judaeans throughout the empire.

It is during the reign of Domitian that the *Iudaea capta* discourse first begins to take the shape of a persecution. While physical violence does not seem to have been the *modus operandi* of the persecution, public circumcision trials indicate the aggression of the policies under Domitian and illuminate the particularly precarious and vulnerable position of Judaeans at this time.<sup>92</sup> Apart from this upsurge of repressive measures, however, I contend that the discourse from its earliest stages was defined by symbolic violence. This is an appropriate redescription because the discourse about Judaeans, despite varying degrees of vitriol, was never simply an invective. Our parsing of the discourse in this chapter has demonstrated that it had several noteworthy contours that

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<sup>92</sup> See Suetonius, *Dom.* 12.2-3; cf. Martial, *Ep.* 7.82. As Williams notes, public circumcision trials would have been particularly shameful for Judaeans who were generally conservative about nudity compared to Romans (e.g., 1 Macc 1.11-15) (“Domitian,” 205 n. 59). See further Michael L. Satlow, “Jewish Constructions of Nakedness in Late Antiquity,” *JBL* 116 (1997): 429-54. However, it is important that the fascination of the Romans with circumcision also has to do with Roman disgust for physical mutilation.

masked any overt designation of the Judaeans as barbarians. The territorially specific date-palm tree connected all Judaeans to the revolt, thereby providing a historical etiology for the ethnically-inflated idea that Judaeans were enemies of Rome. Victory and the *Pax Romana* frequently took part in the discourse to popularize the Judaeans problem—to make the Judaeans a threat against the Roman state, culture, values, and thus, the Roman people. The Flavian emperors, the *triumphatores* over the Judaeans, were invariably honored and legitimated by the discourse in its many manifestations.<sup>93</sup> Thus, in lieu of a mere symbolic castigation of Judaeans, this discourse had as its emphasis the symbolic capital at stake for the people and imperial authorities. The degradation of Judaeans, as a result, is misrecognized in the touting of Roman values and glories that construct a unifying *collusio* for Romans of all social classes.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that the discourse is consistent with an ideology that maintains social distinctions as well as the domination of the emperor's regime and the ruling classes whose interests are intimately bound with those of the state. Aside from the highly propagandized and symbol-laden legitimation of the Flavians that this

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<sup>93</sup> While I have focused here on the function of the *Iudaea capta* discourse as a means of legitimation for the Flavians, I want to point out that it is only one discursive mode of legitimation. Often intersecting with the *Iudaea capta* discourse are anti-Neronian discourses, discourses connecting the Flavians to Augustus, discourses of deification, and discourses against the usurpers Vitellius, Otho, and Galba. Some of these I have pointed out in passing throughout this chapter, but due to the constraints of space, I have not been able to deal with them at length or highlight other significant overlaps, such as anti-Neronian rhetoric in Martial's *De Spec.* 2 and in the propaganda surrounding the temple of Peace. Thus I would like to emphasize here that my intent has been to focus on the *Iudaea capta* discourse's legitimating function, not to reduce the Flavians endeavor to legitimate themselves to their triumphal discourse about the Judaeans. For a closer examination of the beginnings of the Flavian program of self-legitimation, see Gwyn Morgan, *69 A.D.: The Year of Four Emperors* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) esp. 170-268.

discourse wrought, it also assured material capital through war booty and, more importantly, the *fiscus Iudaicus*. The taxes that Judaeans were forced to pay supported state building projects that further materialized and enforced the misrecognition of dominant ideology.

The *Iudaea capta* discourse became misrecognized throughout the Roman Empire in various ways under the Flavian dynasty. The entire landscape of Rome changed while there were lesser, but still considerable, effects of the discourse throughout the empire. Most significantly, coins brought the discourse into the hands of subjects of the empire. Literary propaganda and the institution of a new tax caused further penetration of the discourse in society. The result is an upsurge in anti-Judaean sentiments in society—the imbrication of the idea that the Judaeans are barbarians on dominant ideology. As such, the discourse was largely the consequence of pointed attempts by the Flavian regimes to legitimate their dynasty, but also became naturalized in social life—in the habitus of Roman subjects—in such a way that Roman subjects were both implicated in the discourse and played a role in developing and perpetuating it.

By the final years of the first century, more than two decades after the provincial revolt in Judaea, the question of what it means to be a Judaeans in the Roman Empire had vital implications. In general, identifying as a Judaeans, or even with elements of Judaeans culture, at this time meant paying taxes (or facing legal sanctions) and being degraded by the *Iudaea capta* discourse, thereby legitimating the dominant ideology and its authoritative beneficiaries through the attribution of material and symbolic capital. Being

a Judaeen at this time meant identifying with the dejected Judaeen woman and the date-palm tree, being at the same time effeminized and cultivated by Rome.

## Chapter Three:

### ***IUDAEA INVICTA: Mother Zion in Fourth Ezra and the Subversion of Flavian Ideology***

As the Flavian *Iudaea capta* discourse spread throughout the Roman Empire in the decades following the Judean war, Judeans in the homeland and the diaspora alike were confronted by regular reminders of the subjugation of their people and destruction of their temple. Payment of the *fiscus Iudaicus* and the handling of Flavian *Iudaea capta* coins were two of the most overt ways that this discourse affected the lives of Judeans. At this same time, at least four Judean authors wrote apocalypses that address themes such as the theological justification for gentiles destroying the temple and Israel being dispersed throughout the gentile world and questions of how to keep the covenant and achieve salvation without the temple. These texts—*4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, and Revelation<sup>1</sup>—all envision an earthly or heavenly restoration of Zion,

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<sup>1</sup> I put Revelation in this group because, although it was written by a person who clearly views Jesus as Messiah, much of its imagery is deeply rooted in the traditions of Israel, and the apocalypse is very similar to other Judean apocalyptic texts. Though communities the author addressed had some issues with local Judean communities (Rev 2:9, 3:9), and clearly identified with believers of Christ, there is no reason to believe that they identified strictly as “Christians”—that is, as something entirely other than Judeans. See David Frankfurter, “Jews or Not? Reconstructing the ‘Other’ in Rev 2:9 and 3:9,” *HTR* 94 (2001): 403-25. Furthermore, as Steven J. Friesen points out, John’s use of the traditions of Israel was “a significant political choice” since the text critiques Rome during the time of the very dynasty that “distinguished itself and bolstered its claims to authority by defeating the Jewish revolt against Roman rule” (“Myth and Symbolic Resistance in Revelation 13,” *JBL* 123 [2004]: 281-313 at 312 n. 94). On another note, *3 Baruch* could also be included here, but I have excluded it because of its diaspora provenance and somewhat dissimilar concerns.

though in very different ways.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, and Revelation all depict Zion as a mother in distress and relate her to the eschatological, new Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup> In Revelation and *4 Ezra*, the Mother Zion metaphor coalesces with anti-Flavian rhetoric in a way that is subversive of Flavian ideology.<sup>4</sup> Although there is only space to deal with *4*

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<sup>2</sup> In *4 Ezra* 10:25-28, the new Jerusalem seemingly emerges from the earth, being a transformation of Mother Zion. In *2 Baruch* 4:1-7, a sort of heavenly Jerusalem that exists with God, and has since creation, is revealed to Baruch. In *Apocalypse of Abraham* 9:8-10, 12:3-10, 15:1-2, 18:13-14, 21:1-6, 22:4-5, 29:17-19, a new Jerusalem is expected on Mount Horeb, but at the same time, Paradise is envisioned as a sort of heavenly Jerusalem. In Revelation 4-5, heavenly worship is envisioned, and in 21:1-22:5, a new Jerusalem comes down out of heaven. On new Jerusalem traditions in ancient Judaism and Christianity, and their background in the Hebrew prophets, see Pilchan Lee, *The New Jerusalem in the Book of Revelation* (WUNT 2.129; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> See *4 Ezra* 9:38-10:59; *2 Baruch* 3:1-4:7; Revelation 12:1-6, 19:7-9, 21:2.

<sup>4</sup> The mother in Revelation 12:1-6 is, of course, not explicitly labeled as Zion; however, the very use of the mother metaphor in this context along with allusions such as the crown of twelve stars, which possibly represent the twelve tribes of Israel, is suggestive. Furthermore, the relation (albeit ambiguous) between the mother of the messiah in chapter 12 and the Bride, that is, the new Jerusalem, in chapter 21 implies an underlying Zion theology. Both the mother and the Bride are related to eschatological redemption through the messiah and the coming of the new Jerusalem. Both are also contrasted with Babylon (Rome) and the forces of evil on earth which cause people to worship the Roman emperors as gods. Revelation is decidedly anti-Roman and anti-Flavian. By having this political perspective, and also using Zion symbolism to portray Jerusalem as a woman first distressed (ch. 12), but then redeemed, Revelation evinces certain similarities with *4 Ezra*. To be sure, there are important differences, but the combination of the mother metaphor, wilderness motif, and expectation of a new Jerusalem with an anti-Flavian (anti-Babylon) stance are noteworthy. Space will not allow a full comparison here, but for an explication (though not a comparison) of these aspects of each text, see Edith McEwan Humphrey, *The Ladies and the Cities: Transformation and Apocalyptic Identity in Joseph and Aseneth, 4 Ezra, the Apocalypse and The Shepherd of Hermas* (JSPSup 17; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995) 57-118. On the use of a female metaphor for the new Jerusalem, see Barbara R. Rossing, *The Choice between Two Cities: Whore, Bride, and Empire in the Apocalypse* (HTS 48; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 1999); Lynn R. Huber, *Like a Bride Adorned: Reading Metaphor in John's Apocalypse* (Emory Studies in Early Christianity 12; New York, N.Y.: T&T Clark, 2007).

*Ezra* here, it is significant that very similar themes emerge across this set of apocalypses, and that the Mother Zion tradition appears or is implied in at least three of them.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the Mother Zion Vision in *4 Ezra* in light of the Flavian *Iudaea capta* discourse. Some scholars have suggested that the captive Judaeen woman in Flavian *Iudaea capta* iconography might have been seen by Judaeans as Mother Zion.<sup>5</sup> Mother Zion, along with Daughter Zion, is a metaphor used frequently in the prophets and elsewhere in the Hebrew Scriptures.<sup>6</sup> Especially in exilic texts, Daughter or Mother Zion is often portrayed as lamenting or injured. While the Romans would not have modeled the *Iudaea capta* images on this scriptural tradition, it is certainly plausible that Judaeans would have made the connection upon seeing Judaea personified as a lamenting woman on coins. My interest here is in questioning whether the Mother Zion figure in *4 Ezra* is somehow a response to the Flavian discourse. I argue that, while there is no direct evidence to connect *4 Ezra* to the material data of the Flavian discourse, the text nevertheless reflects knowledge of the logic of the Flavian discourse. Thus, I suggest that *4 Ezra* reconfigures some of the symbolically violent images and assumptions of Flavian ideology, and is thereby subversive.<sup>7</sup> Regardless of whether the

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<sup>5</sup> See Luise Schottroff, *Lydia's Impatient Sisters: A Feminist Social History of Early Christianity* (trans. B. and M. Rumscheidt; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster, 1995) 190-91; Davina C. Lopez, *Apostle to the Conquered: Reimagining Paul's Mission* (Paul in Critical Contexts; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2008) 37.

<sup>6</sup> E.g., Isa 49:22-23, 50:1, 60, 66:7-14; Jer 4-6, 50:12; Hos 2:4, 4:5; Ps 87; Lam. Cf. Bar 4:16-37, 5:5-6; Gal 4:26. On the Daughter Zion and Mother Zion traditions in the Hebrew Bible, see Christl M. Maier, *Daughter Zion, Mother Zion: Gender, Space, and the Sacred in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2008).

<sup>7</sup> Philip F. Esler ("God's Honour and Rome's Triumph: Responses to the Fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE in Three Jewish Apocalypses," in *Modelling Early Christianity: Social-Scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context* [ed. P. F. Esler; London:



woman from the Flavian discourse instigated *4 Ezra*'s vision of Mother Zion, the text transforms *Iudaea capta* into *Iudaea invicta*.

This chapter begins with an overview of the critical issues in scholarship regarding the production of *4 Ezra*. The following section examines the text's evaluation of the temple destruction and its related anti-Flavian polemic. The remainder of the chapter addresses the Mother Zion Vision, paying attention to its literary context and scriptural sources, and comparing it to the *Iudaea capta* woman. In a brief conclusion, I consider the purpose of *4 Ezra* as a response not simply to the temple destruction, but to the Flavian discourse surrounding it.

### **The Date, Provenance, and Authorship of *Fourth Ezra***<sup>8</sup>

Despite the widespread interest of scholars in the political critiques and sociohistorical situations of other apocalyptic texts, most scholarship on *4 Ezra* is markedly unconcerned with these issues. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth

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Routledge, 2002] 239-58) has made a similar argument about *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, and the *Apocalypse of Abraham* being subversive of Roman ideology, especially as represented by the Flavian triumph and *Iudaea capta* coins. However, Esler's all-too-brief treatment does not deal with the full extent of the Flavian discourse, especially as it pertains to the reign of Domitian. Therefore, although he makes the pivotal connection between these apocalypses and the Flavian discourse, identifying them as "counter-ideological," he ultimately rehashes the ubiquitous scholarly conclusion that these texts are responses to the Roman destruction of the Jerusalem temple. There is certainly some veracity to this, but such a conclusion is too simple and does not account for the time lapse between 70 CE and the final decade of the century. I return to this matter in the conclusion to this chapter.

<sup>8</sup> N.B., *4 Ezra* = *2 Esdras* 3-14. *2 Esdras* 1-2 is a Christian addition known as *5 Ezra* and *2 Esdras* 15-16 is another Christian addition known as *6 Ezra*.

century, scholars were mainly interested in the source and text criticism of the work.<sup>9</sup>

Since then, the theological message(s) of the text have been a primary concern.<sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless, there has been some work on matters of date, provenance, and authorship which I consider in this section.

As for the date of composition, scholars unanimously conclude that the text was written not long after the destruction of the temple in 70 CE.<sup>11</sup> The definitive evidence for 70 CE as *terminus post quem* is the text's setting in the wake of the Babylonian

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<sup>9</sup> See the surveys of previous scholarship in Alden L. Thompson, *Responsibility for Evil in the Theodicy of IV Ezra* (SBLDS 29; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars, 1977) 85-120; Egon Bradenburger, *Die Verborgenheit Gottes im Weltgeschehen: Das literarische und theologische Problem des 4. Esrabuches* (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1981) 22-57; Michael E. Stone, *Fourth Ezra* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1990) 11-21; Karina Martin Hogan, *Theologies in Conflict in 4 Ezra: Wisdom Debate and Apocalyptic Solution* (JSJSup 130; Leiden: Brill, 2008) 9-35. The view that *4 Ezra* is a composite work and comprises five separate sources was first proposed by Richard Kabisch (*Das vierte Buch Esra auf seine Quellen untersucht* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1889]), and was further developed by G. H. Box (*The Ezra Apocalypse: Being Chapters 3-14 of the Book Commonly Known as 4 Ezra (or 2 Esdras)* [London: Pitman, 1912]; "IV Ezra," in *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* [ed. R. H. Charles; vol. 2; Oxford: Clarendon, 1913] 542-624). *Contra* Kabisch, an early proponent of the present consensus in favor of the literary unity of the text was Herman Gunkel ("Das vierte Buch Esra," in *Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments* [ed. E. Kautzsch; vol. 2; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1900] 331-401).

<sup>10</sup> On theological themes, see *inter alia*, Thompson, *Responsibility*; Bradenburger, *Verborgenheit*; Bruce W. Longenecker, *Eschatology and the Covenant: A Comparison of 4 Ezra and Romans 1-11* (JSNTSup 57; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991) 40-159; Hogan, *Theologies in Conflict*; Jonathan A. Moo, *Creation, Nature and Hope in 4 Ezra* (FRLANT 237; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011).

<sup>11</sup> However, Stone points out that there have been occasional proponents for a date in the last third of the first century BCE who have found allusions to Pompey, Sulla, and Caesar in the Eagle Vision (11:1-12:39) (*Fourth Ezra*, 363-64). The most recent advocate of this generally antiquated view is P. Geoltrain, "Quatrième Livre d'Esdras," in *La Bible: Ecrits Intertestamentaires* (ed. A. Dupont-Sommer and M. Philonenko; Paris: Gallimard, 1987) 1400-70 at 1469-70. There have also been attempts to date either the entire book, or an important stage in its redaction, to 218 CE based on possible allusions to the Severan emperors in the Eagle Vision. These will be further discussed below.

destruction of the first temple, and in particular the vivid description of the temple destruction in 10:19-24. Typologically, the fictional exilic Babylonian context is universally thought to correspond to the author's post-70 CE Roman context. If one wishes to push this association, the text should be dated, as it often is, to approximately 100 CE since it opens by setting itself "In the thirtieth year after the destruction of our city"<sup>12</sup> (3:1, based on Ezek 1:1).<sup>13</sup> Another consideration for dating could warrant a slightly earlier date. The vision of the eagle with three heads (11:1-12:39) is best interpreted with the three heads representing Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian.<sup>14</sup> This allusion may further indicate that the text was written before the death of Domitian in 96 CE, because the head representing Domitian does not disappear until after the appearance of the messianic lion (11:36-12:3).<sup>15</sup> Thus, both internal evidences for a *terminus ante quem* are not self-evident, and are in conflict with each other.<sup>16</sup> As no sufficient answer to this quandary has been proposed, most scholars settle on a date range in the reign of

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<sup>12</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all translations of *4 Ezra* are from Stone, *Fourth Ezra*.

<sup>13</sup> While some scholars view this as a strict indication of a 100 CE date of composition, others view it as a general estimate of years passed, and still others understand it as part of the "pseudepigraphic 'stage setting,'" drawing on Ezekiel 1:1, and thus not decisive for dating purposes. For discussion and bibliography, see *ibid.*, 9-10, 55.

<sup>14</sup> This vision, and the difficulties with its dating, are discussed further below.

<sup>15</sup> As Stone remarks on this method for dating, "It is to be presumed that the author had knowledge of events past and contemporary but not future. So the point at which he abandons the actual course of events to predict future happenings is the point of time in which he lived" (*Fourth Ezra*, 363).

<sup>16</sup> The discussion here has revolved around internal evidence because the external evidence for a *terminus ante quem* is much later. The earliest is a citation of a Greek version of the book by Clement of Alexandria in his *Stromateis* (3:16, quoting *4 Ezra* 5:35) at the very end of the second century CE. See Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 9.

Domitian (since he is the latest figure alluded to in the Eagle Vision).<sup>17</sup> Michael Stone prefers a date in the latter part of Domitian's reign (r. 81-96 CE), that is, in the early 90s CE, "when [Domitian's] cruelty and oppression reached unprecedented heights."<sup>18</sup> I agree that the anti-Flavian stance of the text does likely respond to the intensity of the *Iudaea capta* discourse in the latter years of Domitian's reign. The fact that the text's messianic expectation does not allow association with a particular earthly figure or suggest that such a messiah has already come indicates that the author most probably wrote before Domitian's death. If the "thirtieth year" connection holds up, it must be considered an approximation more important in constructing the text's pseudepigraphic setting than revealing a precise date of composition.

The typological approach to the details of the text's production does not hold up for its provenance. Since the text is very clearly set in Babylon during the exile (3:1, 29), one would expect that it was written in Rome.<sup>19</sup> However, that the text was originally written in Hebrew,<sup>20</sup> and is closely affiliated with *2 Baruch*,<sup>21</sup> has led most scholars to

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<sup>17</sup> See Stone (*Fourth Ezra*, 364-65), who mainly follows Emil Shürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.; vol. 3; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1909) 241-43.

<sup>18</sup> Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 10.

<sup>19</sup> So Gustav Volkmar, *Das vierte Buch Esrae* ("Esdra Propheta") *Handbuch der Einleitung in die Apokryphen* (vol. 2; Tübingen: Fues, 1863) 329; Bruno Violet, *Die Apokalypsen des Esra und des Baruch in deutscher Gestalt* (GCS 32; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1924) 33.

<sup>20</sup> Though the text's best witnesses are in Latin, it is also preserved in whole or in part in Syriac (also good witnesses in many places), Armenian, Georgian, Arabic, Slavonic, Greek, Ethiopic, and Coptic. The Latin text throughout this study is from Robert L. Bensly, *The Fourth Book of Ezra, the Latin Version Edited from the MSS* (TS 3.2; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1895). On the textual criticism and transmission history of *4 Ezra*, see Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 1-11; Bruce M. Metzger, "The Fourth Book of Ezra," in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. J. H. Charlesworth; vol. 1;

assume a Palestinian provenance.<sup>22</sup> While the Hebrew *Vorlage* does point to Palestine, one can only speculate that it was written there as opposed to somewhere else in the Roman Empire.

Because of the scant evidence for a particular provenance, few conclusions are possible with regard to authorship and social setting. As George Nickelsburg puts it, “The book shows no certain connection with any known Jewish group.”<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, some scholars—notably Bruce Longenecker—have attempted to connect the text to the

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Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983) 517-60 at 518-19. Stone agrees with A. F. J. Klijn’s conclusion that the text’s original language was Hebrew, but at the stage in the language in which it was strongly influenced by Aramaic. See Klijn, *Der lateinische Text der Apokalypse des Esra* (TU 131; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1983) esp. 9-10. On evidence of a Hebrew original, see Violet, *Die Apokalypsen*, xxxi-xxxviii. See also the many Hebrew retroversions proposed by Box throughout his commentary (*The Ezra Apocalypse*), some of which are more tenuous than others. The alternative view of Leon Gry that the original language was Aramaic (*Les dires prophétiques d’Esdras* [2 vols.; Paris: Geuthner, 1930] passim) has been succinctly and cogently debunked by Stone (“Some Remarks on the Textual Criticism of 4 Ezra,” *HTR* 60 [1967]: 107-15).

<sup>21</sup> Scholars unanimously agree that *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* are far too similar to not have some sort of noteworthy relationship. However, defining the nature of this relationship is a matter of great debate. The most thorough and convincing analysis of this relationship and the history of scholarship on the relationship is that of Matthias Henze in *Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel: Reading Second Baruch in Context* (TSAJ 142; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011) 148-86. Henze concludes that we cannot say which text influenced the other, but should instead recognize that their parallels “have their origin in the earliest (pre-redactional) narrative traditions of both compositions” and that “the processes that led to the formation of 2 Bar and 4 Ezra involved both oral and written modes of composition” (182, 184, italics removed). This very much supports a common provenance for the texts. *2 Baruch* was also clearly written in Hebrew, and its Palestinian provenance is betrayed by the author’s assumption at points of a homeland perspective vis-à-vis Judaeans of the diaspora (esp. 78:1-87:1). See A. F. J. Klijn, “2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch,” in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. J. H. Charlesworth) 1.615-52 at 616-17.

<sup>22</sup> Metzger, “Fourth Book of Ezra,” 520; Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 10.

<sup>23</sup> George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction* (2d ed.; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2005) 276.

burgeoning rabbinic movement at Yavneh.<sup>24</sup> But, while the contents of the texts have many parallels in the rabbinic corpora, the text itself seems to have made very little impression on these writings.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, if Philip Esler is correct—and I think he is in part—that the social function of *4 Ezra* is that it “provides a means for Israel to reduce extreme dissonance occasioned by the sack of Jerusalem in 70 CE and its aftermath,”<sup>26</sup> then the text could theoretically hail from any Judaeen social milieu because of the extensiveness of the *Iudaea capta* discourse. At best, it seems likely that *4 Ezra* was composed in the same Palestinian context as *2 Baruch*, and targeted an audience of sage-leaders (the so-called *sapientes*),<sup>27</sup> but a direct connection with the rabbis simply cannot be affirmed on the basis of the available evidence.

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<sup>24</sup> Bruce W. Longenecker, “Locating Fourth Ezra: A Consideration of Its Social Setting and Functions.” *JSJ* 29 (1997): 271-93. See also the earlier argument of F. Rosenthal in this vein (*Vier apokryphische Bücher aus der Zeit und Schule R. Akiba’s* [Leipzig: Schulze, 1885]).

<sup>25</sup> Most scholars would agree that there are many theological parallels between *4 Ezra* and the rabbinic movement, but that it is impossible to definitively connect the two. See Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 38-39, as well as his rabbinic cross-references throughout the commentary. The problem is that there are also certain differences between *4 Ezra* and rabbinic theology. John J. Collins has pointed out some of *4 Ezra’s* divergences: the sharp break between this world and the coming world; pessimistic perspective on justice; understanding of human inability to fulfill the Law (*The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* [2d ed.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998] 211-12). Collins further suggests that there is nevertheless no reason to think that *4 Ezra* was not associated in some way with the community at Yavneh, since the community there was diverse. Whatever social circle generated the text, it was almost certainly the same one that produced *2 Baruch*, which is remarkably similar and also generally much more pessimistic than the rabbinic texts.

<sup>26</sup> Philip F. Esler, “The Social Function of *4 Ezra*,” *JSNT* 53 (1994): 99-123 at 123.

<sup>27</sup> As Hogan concludes, “The most specific social context that is warranted by the evidence of the epilogue is that the author was a scribal sage addressing himself to other sages” (*Theologies in Conflict*, 226). See *4 Ezra* 14 (the epilogue), where Ezra takes the role of a leader and makes a distinction between the “wise” (*sapientes*) and the rest of the

As a result, little can be known about the author of *4 Ezra*.<sup>28</sup> In early scholarship on the text, many critics considered the apocalypse the product of a redactor who compiled several earlier sources.<sup>29</sup> Since the appearance of Michael Stone's monumental Hermeneia commentary in 1990, however, the literary unity of the work has rarely been disputed. The question at stake is whether the "theologies in conflict"<sup>30</sup> in the text reflect different sources. Stone and Karina Martin Hogan, among others, have shown that the conflict of views in the text follows a clear narrative progression—in other words, the conflict of theologies is a narrative feature, and a didactic one at that.<sup>31</sup> Once literary

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people. Cf. Michael A. Knibb, "Apocalyptic and Wisdom in *4 Ezra*," *JSJ* 13 (1982): 56-74.

<sup>28</sup> For a survey of views on the author's perspective, see Humphrey, *The Ladies and the Cities*, 60-66.

<sup>29</sup> See n. 9 above. The most sophisticated source criticism of *4 Ezra* is Box's commentary, which was followed by many scholars in the early to mid twentieth century. Box argued that the text was the product of a redactor (R) who compiled five discreet sources: S (Salathiel apocalypse) in 3:1-31, 4:1-51, 5:13b-6:10, 6:30-7:25, 7:45-8:62, 9:15-10:57; E (Ezra apocalypse) in 4:52-5:13a, 6:13-29, 7:26-44, 8:63-9:12; A (eagle vision) 11-12, but heavily redacted; M (son of man vision) in 13, very heavily redacted; E2 (another Ezra piece) 14:1-17a, 14:18-27, 14:36-47. See *The Ezra Apocalypse*, xxi-xxxiii, esp. xxvi-xxvii; "4 Ezra," 2.549-53. Though Gunkel was the first major proponent of literary unity ("Das vierte Buch Esra"), it is Stone who has been the most influential on account of his extended emphasis on unity throughout his commentary (*Fourth Ezra*, 21-23, and passim). Stone concedes, however, that "The author has clearly used preexisting sources and literary forms" (23).

<sup>30</sup> To borrow Hogan's useful conceptualization (*Theologies in Conflict*).

<sup>31</sup> Stone's work on *4 Ezra* is in many ways indebted to Gunkel's psychological approach, by which he affirmed literary unity by tracing the author's psychological development throughout the text. Stone contends that "the thread that holds the book together is the Odyssey of Ezra's soul." In the three dialogues with Uriel, "Ezra and the angel are both the author but are Janus faces of the author's self." Then, with the Mother Zion Vision, Ezra undergoes a conversion, which Stone colors as a real religious experience that the author recounts here. After the conversion, Ezra takes on the views of the angel and God—those things once external to him and in conflict with him (*Fourth Ezra*, 32-33; cf. Stone, "Apocalyptic: Vision or Hallucination?," *Milla wa-Milla* 14 [1974]: 47-56).

unity is assumed, the question of the author's perspective becomes easier to answer. It is best to understand the author's view in light of the overall literary technique of the book and its epilogue. A series of debates between Ezra, who is skeptical of divine justice given the destruction of the temple and the handing over of Israel to gentiles, and the angel Uriel, who urges Ezra to put stock in the apocalyptic age and coming judgment, are resolved when Ezra accepts that belief in God's apocalyptic revelation is the best way forward for the Judaeans.<sup>32</sup> He does not accept this "apocalyptic solution" because he was persuaded by the angel Uriel, but rather because he began to recognize the "pastoral necessity" of the angel's perspective and because of a visionary experience.<sup>33</sup> If Ezra's developed view reflects that of the author, as it seems to, then the author likely recognized how tenuous any argument for divine justice seems in the wake of the events of 70 CE and their aftermath, but nevertheless accepts, and even urges, apocalyptic expectation as the only way for Judaeans to continue believing in God. Thus, the author

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<sup>32</sup> Hogan's understanding of the text, which asserts literary unity, moves away from importing the author into the text by looking at how the author uses the text to portray the competing worldviews of sages in the Second temple period, but in light of the temple destruction. She considers the three dialogues a wisdom debate in which Ezra's point of view represents that of sages beholden to traditional covenantal wisdom and Uriel's views represent those of "more eschatologically-oriented sages." The visions and epilogue offer an apocalyptic solution to this wisdom debate: because of the destruction, the sages must "accept the revealed 'wisdom' of apocalyptic theology" and set their hopes on divine intervention, instead of attempting "to construct a rational theodicy" (*Theologies in Conflict*, 4-5). I contend that Hogan's approach helpfully moves beyond the pure speculation inherent in Stone's assumption that Ezra's character embodies the author's religious experience. Thus, Hogan's view of the text's progression and internal logic is typically accepted here.

<sup>33</sup> Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 211.



had a vested interest in the leadership and direction of his post-bellum Judaeian community, and undoubtedly held or aspired to some position of authority.<sup>34</sup>

In sum, very little can be known about the circumstances of *4 Ezra*'s production. Part of the reason for this is, I submit, the longevity and wide dissemination of the *Iudaea capta* discourse during the Flavian period. The text could have been written just about anywhere in the empire during or just after the reign of Domitian. However, it is most likely that the text was written in Palestine by a single author for an audience of sages toward the end of Domitian's reign.

### **The Subversion of Flavian Ideology in *Fourth Ezra***

Posed as a response to the destruction of Zion, Ezra's ruminations and laments not only concern Israel, nor simply Israel and God; rather, they are interested in the role of Babylon—that is, Rome—in the history of Israel and the history of humanity. As Ezra says in his first discourse with Uriel,

For I did not wish to inquire about the ways above, but about those things which we daily experience: why Israel has been given over to the Gentiles as a reproach... (4:23).

By the end of the text, Ezra accepts that he cannot understand the present state of Israel without acknowledging and trusting in God's inscrutable ways. Coming to terms with God allowing Israel to be subjugated by Babylon-Rome is a vital part of Ezra's transformation in the text. In this section, I examine the text's understanding of the

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 222-27.

relationship between Babylon-Rome and Israel in the divine plan, its conception of the fate of Babylon-Rome, and its critique of Rome and its Flavian emperors.

The confrontation between Israel and Rome in 70 CE is the “catalyst” for Ezra’s skepticism about God’s covenant with Israel.<sup>35</sup> Throughout the text, Rome, in the guise of Babylon, takes on the paradigmatic role of Israel’s oppressor. Particularly jarring for Ezra is the juxtaposition of the disfavor he believes God has shown toward Israel and the dominance and affluence of Babylon-Rome. The apocalypse begins with Ezra saying, “I saw the desolation of Zion and the wealth of those who lived in Babylon” (3:2).<sup>36</sup> The discrepancy between the present states of Israel and Babylon-Rome causes Ezra to question God’s fidelity to Israel. He asks, “Are the deeds of those who inhabit Babylon any better? Is that why she has gained dominion (*dominavit*) over Zion?” (3:28-29). For Ezra, the righteous deeds of those among the chosen nation, Israel, should afford the protection and favor of God; but, instead, it is Rome that is wealthy and dominant despite not keeping the commandments or being God’s elect nation (3:33). This paradox recurs in Ezra’s discourses with Uriel and is the occasion for the apocalypse.

As the dialogue between Ezra and Uriel progresses, Uriel explains that the sack of Zion was part of the divine plan.<sup>37</sup> Israel was conquered because the “many” (*multi*)

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<sup>35</sup> Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 200.

<sup>36</sup> Revelation also depicts Babylon-Rome as excessive in its wealth (and immoral because of it; e.g., Babylon as great whore, Rev 17:4-5). See Barbara R. Rossing, “City Visions, Feminine Figures, and Economic Critique: A Sapiential *Topos* in the Apocalypse,” in *Conflicted Boundaries in Wisdom and Apocalypticism* (ed. B. G. Wright and L. M. Wills; SBLSym 35; Atlanta, Ga: SBL, 2005) 181-96.

<sup>37</sup> On Ezra’s position as covenantal wisdom and Uriel’s as apocalyptic wisdom, and their three dialogues as a wisdom debate, see Hogan, *Theologies in Conflict*, 101-57.

among Israel had sinned (7:19-25).<sup>38</sup> Thus, in keeping with the text's Deuteronomic theology of retribution, Rome is imagined as an instrument used by God to punish his people for their sins.<sup>39</sup> In this way, the Roman capture of Judaea is seen as part of the divine plan and not a credit to the imperial power of Rome. By putting the hand of God behind this Roman victory, the text effectually subverts the *Judaea capta* discourse in which the conquest of Judaea is taken as an exemplary display of Flavian military success in support of the Roman Peace and protection of the Roman people. For this author, the Roman victory over Israel was God's accomplishment. Despite the favorable position of gentiles in the present, they will be part of the "many"—the majority of humanity that will not be saved by God because of their iniquities.<sup>40</sup> With its wealth, Rome may seem

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<sup>38</sup> The text manifests a paradoxical interplay of national and universal themes, discussed using the binaries "one" (*unus*)/"many" (*multus*) and "few" (*pauci*)/"many" (*multus*). In the first two dialogues, Ezra is mainly concerned for the fate of Zion, but in the third dialogue, Ezra intercedes for all humankind. He is told by Uriel that "Many have been created, but few shall be saved" (8:3). Thus, the text recognizes that the children of Zion, like all other humans, are also descendants of Adam and children of the Earth. However, its pessimistic view of judgment holds that all gentiles and much of Israel are equally sinners for not keeping God's Law. The few who will be saved are those among Israel who have properly kept the Law. According to Thompson, Ezra's perspective develops from prioritizing Israel (one/many) to concern for humankind (many/one) and then back to an interest in Israel (one/many). While I think the binaries overlap and flip back and forth more often than that throughout the text, I concur with Thompson's observation in general. See *Responsibility for Evil*, 157-256.

<sup>39</sup> Cf., 3:27, 5:28-30, 14:27-36. Collins rightly points out, however, that *4 Ezra* differs from the typical Deuteronomic schematization of salvation history because of its emphasis on failure instead of salvation (*Apocalyptic Imagination*, 200). See further, Pieter G. R. de Villiers, "Understanding the Way of God: Form, Function and Message of the Historical Review in *4 Ezra* 3:4-27," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1981 Seminar Papers* (ed. K. H. Richards; SBLSP 20; Chico, Calif.: Scholars, 1981) 357-78.

<sup>40</sup> Much of Israel will also not be saved because of their failure to keep the Law. Thus, the number of the saved will be very small (7:48). This is because all humans inherited the disease of Adam—a heart inclined toward evil (*cor malignum*, similar to the rabbinic *yešer ha-ra'*; 3:20-27). Each person must choose to follow the Law and be

to have received divine favor, but it is only God's instrument for the punishment of the unrighteous among Israel. Rome too will be punished in the end when only a small remnant of Israel will be saved.

More specific than the text's subversion of Roman achievement in the war against Judaea is its concomitant critique of the Flavian emperors contained in the Eagle Vision (11-12). The problem with assessing this critique of the Flavians is that the Eagle Vision appears to have been emended by a later scribe or redactor. The eagle that Ezra sees in this dream vision is explicitly interpreted by the text as the fourth beast in the vision in Daniel 7, and clearly represents the Roman Empire (cf. Rev 13:1-7; 2 Bar 36-40).<sup>41</sup> It has three heads, twelve wings, and eight opposing wings. The details of the vision and the angel's interpretation of it, while not always cohering at the level of the text, do not *easily* fit a Flavian date because the wings representing the Roman emperors before the Flavians are too numerous.<sup>42</sup> This has led some scholars, most notably and recently Lorenzo Di

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righteous, thereby controlling their evil inclination. On the wider tradition of the evil inclination, see Ishay Rosen-Zvi, *Demonic Desires: "Yetzer Hara" and the Problem of Evil in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011). See also George F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* (2 vols.; New York, N.Y.: Schocken, 1971) 1.479-93.

<sup>41</sup> On the use of Daniel 7 in this vision in 4 Ezra, see André Lacocque, "The Vision of the Eagle in 4 Ezra: A Rereading of Daniel 7 in the First Century C.E.," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1981 Seminar Papers, 1981* (ed. K. H. Richards) 237-58, esp. 240-42. On the critique of Rome in this vision and throughout the text, see James H. Charlesworth, "The Triumphant Majority as Seen by a Dwindled Minority: The Outsider according to the Insider of the Jewish Apocalypses," in *'To See Ourselves as Others See Us': Christians, Jews, and 'Others' in Late Antiquity* (ed. J. Neusner and E. S. Frerichs; Chico, Calif.: Scholars, 1985) 285-316 at 294-300.

<sup>42</sup> It is often a problem in apocalypses to determine the precise referents of historical allusions. Thus, problems abound in the allusions to a succession of emperors in Rev 17:10-11 as well. See David E. Aune, *Revelation 17-22* (WBC 52C; vol. 3; Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 1998) 947-60. For a thorough evaluation of the various

Tommaso, to argue that the details in the present form of the vision are best explained by a thorough redaction in 218 CE, and thus with the three heads representing the Severan emperors (Septimius Severus and his sons Geta and Caracalla).<sup>43</sup> However, while the Severan theory is in some ways less problematic than the Flavian one, it still leaves some issues unresolved (e.g. not enough wings to represent the emperors preceding the Severans). And most importantly, as Karina Martin Hogan points out, “Di Tommaso’s theory requires all of the subsequent translations of 4 Ezra to derive from the single Greek manuscript of the redactor who updated the vision of the Eagle in 218, which seems highly unlikely.”<sup>44</sup> Thus, a Flavian date and contextualization remains the best

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theories proposed for a list of emperors (and pretenders, usurpers, vassals, or generals!) that fits the number of eagle’s wings in 4 Ezra, see Lorenzo Di Tommaso, “Dating the Eagle Vision of 4 Ezra: A New Look at an Old Theory,” *JSP* 20 (1999): 3-38. See also Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 363-65. Instead of attempting to determine who each wing represents, Stone (following Schürer and Gunkel) wisely concedes that “we are forced...to ascribe to the author more detailed knowledge of this period than is available today” (365).

<sup>43</sup> The main problem (among several) with the referents of the heads that leads Di Tommaso (“Dating the Eagle Vision”) and his predecessors to prefer a Severan date is that Titus was not assassinated by Domitian as 12:28 (cf. 11:35) claims, whereas Geta was killed by Caracalla. Schürer’s explanation for this is that, although most records show that Titus died of a fever, assassination by Domitian was what many people believed about Titus’ untimely death at the time (see Suetonius, *Domitian* 2; Dio Cassius 66.26; Aurelius Victor, *Caes.* 10, 11) (*Geschichte*, 3.241). So also Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 368.

<sup>44</sup> Hogan, *Theologies in Conflict*, 185. Stone had rejected the Severan date, among other reasons, on the basis that the Severan date is too late since Clement of Alexandria quotes from a Greek version of the text already in the late second century CE (*Fourth Ezra*, 364). Di Tommaso correctly rebutted that Clement did not quote from the Eagle Vision, so there is no reason to believe that vision was in its final form at this point (“Dating the Eagle Vision,” 7). However, Hogan’s critique of Di Tommaso—that his theory requires that only those MSS with the redaction have survived, despite Clement’s citation being evidence that the text was already widely circulated and translated by this time—easily debunks his argument, though she generously notes that it does not absolutely invalidate it (185).

theory. The two elusive extra wings that supposedly had brief reigns after the death of the Domitian-head must have been added by a later author attempting to either make the vision fit a later context or push it farther into the future.<sup>45</sup> Thus, while it is difficult to make sense of the particular identities associated with the wings, the rest of the vision can be interpreted as an anti-Flavian polemic.

Therefore, the three heads must represent Vespasian and his sons, Titus and Domitian.<sup>46</sup> The middle head is the greatest and rules first—this would be Vespasian.

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<sup>45</sup> So Hogan, *Theologies in Conflict*, 184-85. The problematic lines are 12:2-3a, “and behold, the remaining head disappeared. And the two wings that had gone over to it arose and set themselves up to reign, and their reign was brief and full of tumult. And I looked, and behold, they also disappeared....” One theory used to explain these extra wings is that the text was written early in the reign of Trajan; thus, the two wings after the demise of the last head would be Nerva and Trajan. Nerva only ruled 96-98 CE, which qualifies as the prescribed short reign, but for Trajan’s to also qualify, the text must have been written early in his reign, ca. 100 CE. So Lacocque, “The Vision of the Eagle,” 239, following Violet, *Die Apokalypsen*, ad loc. This theory is certainly possible and cannot be dismissed entirely. However, it is more reasonable to place the text’s composition in the reign of Domitian, and see the final two wings as a later addition by a scribe unsatisfied with the text’s unfulfilled prophecy. This is a simpler solution because the messiah is soon to come in the eschatology of *4 Ezra*, whereas the knowledge of two wings reigning after the lion appears would indicate that the messiah had already arrived at the time of the text’s composition. Furthermore, the two wings seem out of place logically and literarily, coming after the climax of the vision—the appearance of the lion. Hogan thus considers these wings a Trajanic addition, and also suggests that the doubling of the wings indicated by 11:11 may have been an even later addition to propel the expectation of the messiah far into the future (185). This is an interesting speculation that is at least more likely than the idea that the full number of wings included usurpers and imposters like Vindex, Nymphidius, and Piso, and other unlikely theories proposed to make sense of the number of wings.

<sup>46</sup> See, among others, Schürer, *Geschichte*, 3.236-39; Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 363-65; Hogan, *Theologies in Conflict*, 182-85; Jacob M. Myers, *I and II Esdras* (AB 42; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974) 299-302; R. J. Coggins and Michael A. Knibb, *The First and Second Books of Esdras* (commentary on *I Esdras* by Coggins; commentary on *2 Esdras* by Knibb; CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

Then one of the remaining heads devours the other (i.e., Domitian devours Titus<sup>47</sup>), and it is the final head that is confronted by the messiah, who is represented by a lion, before disappearing (11:36-12:3).<sup>48</sup> The text indicates that the Flavians were oppressive (11:32-43; 12:24-25) and implies that they were responsible for the destruction of the Judaeen temple by having the lion accuse the Domitian-head of destroying the walls of those who did not provoke him (11:42: *humiliasti muros eorum qui te non nocuerunt*).<sup>49</sup> In this way, the text connects the Flavians to the temple destruction and even goes so far as to claim that the emperors were not provoked. The condemnation of Domitian in connection with the sacking of Jerusalem, and the conflation of the three heads, show that the author views Domitian's actions against the Judaeans as connected to those of his father and brother, reaching back to the Judaeen war. The symbolism and interpretation of the

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<sup>47</sup> See n. 43 above.

<sup>48</sup> Interestingly, the lion symbol here suggests Judahite associations for the messiah, who is also said explicitly to be of Davidic descent (12:32). Stone has pointed out that the messiah in *4 Ezra* is paradoxical in this and several other ways (*Fourth Ezra*, 207-13 [esp. 209-10], 368; "The Concept of the Messiah in 4 Ezra," in *Religions in Antiquity: E. R. Goodenough Memorial* [ed. J. Neusner; SHR 14; Leiden: Brill, 1968] 295-312).

<sup>49</sup> The indictment throughout this vision is waged against the eagle, that is, the Roman Empire as a whole. However, the three heads are considered at once exemplary and surpassing of the general insolence of the empire. Thus, the interpretation of the three heads in 12:23-25: "In its last days, the Most High will raise up three kings, and they shall renew many things in it, and shall oppress the earth and its inhabitants more oppressively than all who were before them. For this reason they are called heads (*capita*) of the eagle, since it is they who shall be the heads (*recapitulabunt*) of his wickedness and perform his last actions." There is clearly *paronomasia* in these verses. Stone follows Violet (*Die Apokalypsen*, ad loc.) in seeing a wordplay between ראש and ראשית (*Fourth Ezra*, 359 n. 25; 367), while Hogan finds a wordplay between ראש and רשע just as likely (*Theologies in Conflict*, 180 n. 49). Both are possible simultaneously, but Hogan's suggestion seems preferable, especially since it is supported by the Syriac rendering of the text.

vision, then, are decidedly against Rome and its Flavian rulers who sustained the *Iudaea capta* discourse for nearly three decades by the time the text was written.

In sum, the apocalyptic perspective of *4 Ezra* inheres with anti-Roman sentiments because Roman domination is the present reality the text opposes and symbolically subverts. By considering Roman *imperium* and military success a byproduct of God's plan for the remnant of Israel, and portraying the Roman eagle—a hallowed symbol of the Roman military<sup>50</sup>—as the Danielic fourth beast, the text reveals and subverts Roman ideology and particularly those aspects conveyed by the *Iudaea capta* discourse. The messianic lion's censure of the eagle, with Domitian symbolically as its head, joins the text's eschatology with its political critique. The Flavian dynasty, and Domitian in particular, subdued Israel in such a way that the coming of the messiah was necessary—that the end times would come into sight.<sup>51</sup> The destruction of the temple is viewed as a sign of the eschaton that would be heralded by a messiah whose coming would bring the demise of Rome, and who would reign for a four hundred year transitional period before

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<sup>50</sup> See, e.g., Livy 26.48.12; Pliny, *Nat.* 10.5; Vegetius 2.6; *ILS* 2295. Consult, *inter alia*: Kai M. Töpfer, *Signa Militaria: Die römischen Feldzeichen in Republik und Prinzipat* (Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2011); Michael P. Speidel, "Eagle-Bearer and Trumpeter: The Eagle-Standard and Trumpets of the Roman Legions Illustrated by Three Tombstones Recently Found at Byzantion," *Bonner Jahrbücher* 176 (1976): 123-63.

<sup>51</sup> The trouble with the "end" (*finis*) in *4 Ezra* is in determining in each instance whether "end" is used to refer to the messianic transitional period or the actual transition between the two worlds—the present world including the messianic reign and the other world after the judgment and resurrection (Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 204). I concur with Stone that "end" can refer to the messianic age or the transition between worlds, depending on the context ("Coherence and Inconsistency in the Apocalypses: The Case of 'The End' in *4 Ezra*," *JBL* 102 [1983]: 229-43; contra Peter Schäfer, "Die Lehre von den zwei Welten im 4. Buch Esra und in der tannaitischen Literatur," in *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des Rabbinischen Judentums* [Leiden: Brill, 1978] 244-91).



the resurrection of the righteous (7:26-44).<sup>52</sup> Thus, whereas the *Iudaea capta* discourse considers the sublation of Judaea a sign of Flavian military prowess and interest in spreading the Roman Peace, *4 Ezra* depicts the same Roman victory as a sign of the coming messianic reign and resurrection—as a sign of God’s intervention in human affairs to save a remnant of Israel as he foreordained.

### **The Subversion of Flavian Ideology in the Mother Zion Vision (9:26-10:59)**

Although the Eagle Vision is usually considered the quintessential anti-Roman section of *4 Ezra*, I would like to suggest that the previous section, the Mother Zion Vision is similarly subversive of Roman ideology. When seen as a Judaeian discourse competing with the dominant *Iudaea capta* discourse, it appears that both discourses are constrained by the same doxic system. The Mother Zion figure in *4 Ezra* effectually reclaims the humiliated female personification of Judaea of the *Iudaea capta* discourse by having a similarly despondent Judaeian woman transform before Ezra’s eyes into the new Zion. In this section, I discuss the literary context of this passage, give a description of the vision and its interpretation, consider the vision’s scriptural precedents, and indicate how the vision subverts the *Iudaea capta* discourse.

Most scholars agree that the Mother Zion Vision, the fourth discreet subsection of the text, undoubtedly contains the turning point of the narrative.<sup>53</sup> Appearing after Ezra’s

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<sup>52</sup> For the most thorough analysis of the eschatology of *4 Ezra*, see Michael E. Stone, *Features of the Eschatology of IV Ezra* (Harvard Semitic Studies 35; Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars, 1989).

<sup>53</sup> Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 205. For a survey of scholarly views on the significance of this vision for Ezra’s development, see Humphrey, *The Ladies and the*

three dialogues with Uriel over divine justice and related issues in the wake of the destruction of Jerusalem, this vision is the first of three visions that Ezra sees. It is with this vision that Ezra's perspective changes from skepticism to what Alden Thompson has rightly described as "guarded optimism."<sup>54</sup> Ezra has a role reversal, transforming from the one needing assurance and exhortation to the one providing them. This vision is what causes what is often called Ezra's conversion in the text.<sup>55</sup> After this vision, Ezra is no

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*Cities*, 59-73. Older scholarship that viewed the text as a redaction of five sources generally did not recognize this vision as any type of turning point because it was considered the concluding segment of the Salathiel Apocalypse (S), which included most of the contents of the three dialogues but none of the other visions or epilogue.

<sup>54</sup> Thompson, *Responsibility for Evil*, 148.

<sup>55</sup> Stone uses the term "conversion" to describe Ezra's (and thus the author's) religious experience (*Fourth Ezra*, 31-32), yet he also cautions elsewhere that "the term 'conversion' is not really appropriate, since this is not an adherence to a new deity or faith" (326). He helpfully suggests that the term "intensification" may be more appropriate. On problems with misuse of the term "conversion" in the study of ancient religions, see Zeba A. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty, and Conversion in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean* (BZBW 130; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004). Even for those who agree that this vision is the turning point of the text, there is still some question as to what exactly causes Ezra's transformation. For Brandenburger (*Verborgenheit*, 87), Stone ("The City in 4 Ezra," *JBL* 126 [2007]: 402-407), Longenecker (*Eschatology and the Covenant*, 279), Humphrey (*The Ladies and the Cities*, 64), and Frances Flannery (*Dreamers, Scribes, and Priests: Jewish Dreams in the Hellenistic and Greco-Roman Eras* [JSJSup 90; Leiden: Brill, 2004] 217-18; "'Go, ask a woman's womb': Birth and the Maternal Body as Sources of Revelation and Wisdom in 4 Ezra," *JSP* 21 [2012]: 243-58 at 249), it is actually Ezra's experience of the city that causes his transformation. Others would emphasize that Ezra's transformation is more gradual, beginning in the dialogues and having its climax in the visionary experience of the city. So Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 199-200; Wolfgang Harnisch, "Die Ironie der Offenbarung: Exegetische Erwägungen zur Zionvision im 4 Buch Esra," *ZAW* 95 (1983): 74-95. In lieu of these views, I agree with Hogan's insight that this vision is what causes the transformation that continues with the next two visions, but that the dialogues do contribute something, albeit negatively by showing that the covenantal and apocalyptic forms of wisdom at the center of the debate in the three dialogues are incompatible and leaving Ezra in a state of *aporia* (*Theologies in Conflict*, 37-38). I would further emphasize that Ezra's assumption of the position of a consoler in his

longer in dialogue with Uriel, but with the Most High himself. Even structurally, this section of the text comprises elements that cohere to the structure of the previous dialogues, which show uniformity, as well as to the following visions, which also show uniformity.<sup>56</sup> This is the only section of the text that is a hybrid of a dialogue and a vision.<sup>57</sup> There can thus be no question that what Ezra sees in this vision is fundamental to the text.

This fourth section of the text begins as every other section does, with a note about setting. In this case, Ezra has been directed by God to go into “a field (*campum*) of flowers where no house has been built, and eat only of the flowers of the field” (9:24)—a field known as Ardat (9:26).<sup>58</sup> While laying on the grass in this field, having been satisfied by eating its vegetation,<sup>59</sup> Ezra again questions the Most High about the Law,

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conversation with the woman is at least a foreshadowing, if not the inception, of his transformation upon seeing the new Jerusalem.

<sup>56</sup> Humphrey, *The Ladies and the Cities*, 69-77.

<sup>57</sup> This is often overlooked because of the tendency of scholars to misleadingly label all seven sections (the three dialogues, the three visions, and the epilogue) of the text as visions.

<sup>58</sup> Much ink has been spilled over the possible etymology of Ardat (it has many variants in the manuscript tradition) as well as its location and significance. There is, and probably never will be, a convincing explanation of the word’s etymology or identification of it with any known place. For possibilities, see Box, *The Ezra Apocalypse*, 213; Myers, *I and II Esdras*, 270; Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 304-305. I agree with Knibb that “it seems likely that the name has a symbolic meaning—though what this is cannot now be ascertained” (*First and Second Books of Esdras*, 221). This is especially true since the preceding section of the text uses a parable about a field (9:14-25). It is clear that the field is supposed to be outside of the city of Babylon (9:17-18). However, I think the field is intentionally mysterious. It is a desolate unknown space in which the new Jerusalem appears to Ezra. I would suggest that its location is beside the point; its symbolism is what is significant.

<sup>59</sup> Fasting and then eating flowers may have been how Ezra was supposed to have brought on the ecstatic trance in which he has the three visions. See Stone, “Apocalyptic—Vision or Hallucination?,” 56.

complaining that the Law remains even after those who attempt to keep it perish (9:28-37).<sup>60</sup> Before receiving a response, Ezra is interrupted by the sight of a lamenting Judaeen woman:<sup>61</sup>

I lifted up my eyes and saw a woman on my right, and she was mourning and weeping with a loud voice, and was deeply grieved at heart, and her clothes were rent, and there were ashes on her head (9:38).

Ezra instigates the woman by asking her why she grieves. After initially resisting his prying, the woman tells the story that caused her despair. This story is very likely a version of an earlier folk tale adapted by the author of *4 Ezra*.<sup>62</sup> She explains that God gave her a child after thirty years of living with a husband and being barren, but that her son died on the day that he entered the wedding chamber (9:43-47). Because of her sadness, she claims that she came to the field to mourn and fast unto death (10:3-4). Ezra lambastes the woman for what he considers her selfish individual concern at a time when she should be partaking in the collective concern of all Judaeans over the humiliation of Zion, whom Ezra describes as “the mother of us all” (*mater nostra omnium*, 10:7)—a

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<sup>60</sup> As Karina Martin Hogan has shown, the term “Law” (Lat.: *lex*) in *4 Ezra* is a translation of Hebrew *tôrâ* meaning more than simply the Mosaic Law. It is best understood as “divine instruction,” and is viewed as part of the natural order. See “The Meanings of *tôrâ* in *4 Ezra*,” *JSJ* 38 (2007): 530-52, 545-58 on 9:29-37.

<sup>61</sup> Although the text does not explicitly state that the woman is a Judaeen, I argue that it indicates as much through her mourning rituals. The woman’s extinguishing the lights and sitting in silence in 10:2 along with her mourning and weeping with rent clothes and ashes in 9:38 and seeking out God in 9:44 all show that she was Judaeen. On her actions as required Judaeen mourning customs, see Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 314.

<sup>62</sup> Though there is no reason to consider the woman’s tale a separate source used by the author, it very well could have been a preexisting folk tale, not unlike what one finds in *Tobit*. It is best to understand it, however, as an adaptation of a tale or motif that perhaps was originally based on 1 Sam 1-2. The unusual names of God (“God” and “Strong One” instead of “Most High”) here supports the originally independent nature of this tale; yet, there can be little doubt that it the story was transformed for this particular literary context. See *ibid.*, 311.

literary foreshadowing of the vision's interpretation.<sup>63</sup> Thus, Ezra tells this mother that the loss of her son dwindles in comparison to the recent loss experienced by Mother Zion as well as Mother Earth (10:9-15).<sup>64</sup> He tells her to keep her sorrow to herself and go back into the city to be with her husband, advising her that, "if you acknowledge the decree of God to be just, you will receive your son back" (10:16). She refuses and insists that she will die in the field.

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<sup>63</sup> Three recent articles have noted the repeated use of maternal and childbearing imagery as a literary motif in this text: Flannery, "'Go, ask a woman's womb'"; Kindalee Pfremer De Long, "'Ask a Woman': Childbearing and Ezra's Transformation in 4 Ezra," *JSP* 22 (2012): 114-45; Karina Martin Hogan, "Mother Earth as a Conceptual Metaphor in 4 Ezra," *CBQ* 73 (2011): 72-91.

<sup>64</sup> Ezra's transition between talking to the woman about Zion and discussing Mother Earth is somewhat jarring, as is the juxtaposition of Mother Zion and Mother Earth here. Pfremer De Long describes Ezra's conflation of metaphorical mothers as "confusion" ("Ask a Woman," 140-41) and argues that Ezra's real concern here is with the earth. However, Pfremer De Long's conclusion is tied to her misguided tendency to view Ezra's concern for Zion throughout the text as really being a concern for the earth, emphasizing the text's universalistic themes over its particularism. Hogan rightly points out that the segue between the metaphors is Ezra's description of Zion as "mother of us all," which she says "apparently reminds him of the earth"—hence the transition between metaphors ("Mother Earth," 89). Flannery helpfully points out the layering of personal, national, and universal/cosmological language here, noting that there are three mourning women in this passage: the mourning woman, Mother Zion, and Mother Earth ("Go, ask a woman's womb," 249-51). Because the mourning woman turns out to be Mother Zion, all three women are mourning over the same event—the destruction of the temple. Although the layering of metaphors here is ambiguous, there are no indicators that Ezra is "confused" or mistaken in his conflation of Zion and Earth. For him, the loss of the children of Zion is also the loss of the children of the Earth. On the mother metaphor as a link between Zion and Earth, and thus the text's themes of particularism and universalism, see Thompson, *Responsibility for Evil*, 222-35.

Ezra takes her refusal as a reason to describe the troubles of Zion with more specificity. He offers, in the poetic form of a traditional lamentation,<sup>65</sup> an unusually vivid portrait:<sup>66</sup>

For you see that our sanctuary has been laid waste, our altar thrown down, our temple destroyed; our harp has been laid low, our song has been silenced, and our rejoicing has been ended; the light of our lampstand has been put out, the ark of our covenant has been plundered, our holy things have been polluted, and the name by which we are called has been profaned; our free men have suffered abuse, our priests have been burned to death, our Levites have gone into captivity; our virgins have been defiled, and our wives have been ravished; our righteous men have been carried off, our little ones have been cast out, our young men have been enslaved, and our strong men made powerless. And what is more than all, the seal of Zion...has been given over into the hands of those that hate us (10:21-23).

Ezra thus attempts to console the woman by suggesting that the sack of Zion was far worse than the death of her son, with the implication that, through faith in God, both the woman and Zion would be vindicated. The description of the temple destruction focuses mainly on the event in religious terms—the building where God is worshipped, the implements used during services, and the leaders of that worship were all targeted. Notably, certain manifestations of the *Iudaea capta* discourse such as the Flavian triumph, the reliefs of the Arch of Titus, and the galleries of the temple of Peace also use some of these symbols of Judaeian worship as evidence of the Flavian victory over Judaea. In this instance, the symbolic programs of the *Iudaea capta* discourse and the text coincide in isolating the destroyed system of Judaeian worship as indicative of the

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<sup>65</sup> Stone insightfully observes that the lament is well structured as two tricola broken by a single colon, and that this Zion lament is similar in kind to Lam 1:-5; *1 Macc* 1:36-40, 2:7-13, “suggesting a shared body of traditional lament material” (*Fourth Ezra*, 317, 324).

<sup>66</sup> Cf. esp. *Apocalypse of Abraham* 27: 1-6.

magnitude of the loss suffered. For the *Iudaea capta* discourse, this amplifies the success of the Flavian victory; for *4 Ezra*, this shows how deeply Zion has suffered for the sinfulness of the people, and thus underscores the difficulty of having faith in God and provides a foil for God's redemption of the few who prove to be righteous. Most immediately, the severity of the sack of Jerusalem is Ezra's frank way of consoling the woman, by trivializing her loss in comparison.

Before having a chance to respond, or rather as her response, the woman underwent a transformation before Ezra's eyes. Her "countenance flashed like lightning" (10:25), she cried out,<sup>67</sup> there was an earthquake (10:26), and suddenly "the woman was no longer visible to me, but there was an established city, and a place of huge foundations showed itself" (10:27).<sup>68</sup> Frightened, Ezra calls out for Uriel who comes and interprets the vision for him. The angel explains that the woman is Zion and the death of her son is the destruction of Jerusalem. Though not stated outright, the son apparently represents the Jerusalem temple.<sup>69</sup> Frances Flannery argues that the birthing imagery used in the vision

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<sup>67</sup> Flannery has demonstrated that the Syriac text here may contain even stronger language of a painful birth in this scene; however, her analysis is mainly speculation ("Go, ask a woman," 250-51).

<sup>68</sup> *Et uidi et ecce amplius mulier non comparebat mihi, sed ciuitas aedificabatur, et locus demonstrabatur de fundamentis magnis* (10:27). As Humphrey has pointed out, *aedificabatur* here is unusual since in 10:44 it is clear that the city is already built (*aedificatam*). See *The Ladies and the Cities*, 75-76. Most translators follow the Syriac, Ethiopic, and Armenian variants here with "upbuilt" or "established" (Metzger, "Fourth Book of Ezra," 547; Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 326).

<sup>69</sup> Stone has noted the interpretive difficulty here: "the symbol 'son' does not have a specific role in the symbol structure" (*Fourth Ezra*, 323, cf. 335). The birth of the son is related to Solomon's building of the city and institution of sacrifices (10:46) and his death is the destruction of the city (10:48). Box's conclusion that the son represents the earthly Jerusalem is attractive (*The Ezra Apocalypse*, 233-34; cf. Myers, *I and II Esdras*, 280), but the fact that Jerusalem existed prior to Solomon suggests that the son is

of the city's emergence suggests that Mother Zion actually gives birth to another child to replace her deceased son, the eschatological Jerusalem.<sup>70</sup> While Flannery is right that birthing language is used here, the scene is a transformation not a birth. The text is explicit that "the woman was no longer visible to me" (10:27), which would not make sense if Zion simply gave birth to the city. Instead, Mother Zion is transformed into the eschatological city. A somewhat different image than the new Jerusalem in Revelation and *2 Baruch*,<sup>71</sup> this eschatological city, while divine, is earth-bound.<sup>72</sup> It is with the emergence of this new city that the mourning Mother Zion is redeemed and the righteous triumph over the many.

The figure of Mother Zion in this allegory, though rooted in the scriptures, is unique in several ways. Mother Zion in the Hebrew Bible is typically invoked to portray the city populace as children of Zion—that is, the mother is Jerusalem and the Judaeans are her children.<sup>73</sup> Second Isaiah uses the Mother Zion metaphor to portray Zion as the wife of God, who has been sent away because of the sins of her children, but will be reunited with her children (Isa 50:1).<sup>74</sup> Lamentations, which focuses less on the hope

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probably the temple. Box's conclusion that the woman is the heavenly Jerusalem, while intriguing, is tenuous. She apparently gave birth to the old Jerusalem and gives birth to the new Jerusalem. As a metaphorical concept, she apparently is divine, but it is unclear whether the spatial connotations of "heavenly" are part of her character in this text. The woman is abstractly defined as Zion; unfortunately, it is difficult to say more about the precise nature of this particular Mother Zion.

<sup>70</sup> Flannery, "Go, ask a woman's womb," 251.

<sup>71</sup> See n. 2 above.

<sup>72</sup> Flannery, "Go, ask a woman's womb," 251. *Contra*, among others, Stone, who haphazardly describes the city as "heavenly" because of parallels with other literature ("The City in 4 Ezra," *JBL* 126 [2007]: 402-7).

<sup>73</sup> See esp. Isa 49:20-23, 60; Lam 1-2. See Maier, *Daughter Zion*, 189-210.

<sup>74</sup> See *ibid.*, 190-91.



of restoration than Second Isaiah, conflates the metaphor of Mother Zion lamenting over her dying children with the image of human mothers holding their dying children on their bosoms (Lam 2:11-12).<sup>75</sup> While Lamentations is the closest scriptural precedent for *4 Ezra*'s employment of the Mother Zion tradition, *4 Ezra*'s allegory is dissimilar to its scriptural bases in several ways. First, the vision and interpretation sequence, which conceals the identity of the woman and thus delays the metaphor is an apocalyptic format not used in the scriptural Mother Zion tradition. Second, the woman in the vision is Zion, but her son ambiguously represents the temple. In scriptural uses of the metaphor, typically her children are the people of the city and she alone represents either the city or the temple.<sup>76</sup> Third, the woman has a husband whose identity is not exposed in the interpretation, but he is apparently not God since the Most High plays his own discreet role in her story.<sup>77</sup> Finally, Mother Zion in *4 Ezra* is actually transformed into the eschatological city. Thus, the Mother Zion figure in *4 Ezra* has scriptural roots, but is also distinctive in several ways.

Now that we have determined, as best as possible, what is going on in the vision, we turn to a discussion of the symbolic system employed in *4 Ezra* and its relation to the

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<sup>75</sup> See *ibid.*, 190.

<sup>76</sup> The Zion traditions in the Hebrew Bible are usually linked to a temple theology in one way or another. The term Zion seems to have eventually been used to refer to Jerusalem through metonymy since Jerusalem is the city of the temple. See Jon D. Levenson, "Zion Traditions," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (ed. D. N. Freedman; 6 vols.; New York, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1992) 6.1098-1102.

<sup>77</sup> The identity of the husband is impossible to determine on the basis of the text. However, his importance is in showing that the woman's barrenness—a scriptural motif (Gen 21:1-7, 30:22-24; 1 Sam 1) deliberately presented in "biblicizing" style in 9:43 (Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 313)—was not because she was husbandless. Thus, as the tale is adapted here, the husband is basically a straw-man.

Flavian *Iudaea capta* discourse. At the most rudimentary level of comparison, there are certain similarities between the figural depictions used by each discourse to represent the Roman capture of Judaea. In both the Flavian discourse and *4 Ezra*, the image of a dejected Judaeian woman is used as a symbol for the Judaeian defeat, and in particular the disposition of Judaeians in its aftermath. In each discourse, she is depicted as hopeless and lamenting the loss. In the Flavian discourse, she is typically seated; however, it is unclear whether she is seated or standing in *4 Ezra*.<sup>78</sup> Both discourses set her in a field with trees, though there are no date-palm trees specifically noted in *4 Ezra*.<sup>79</sup> The setting in the coins is very clearly a battlefield in the aftermath of the war (hence the trophies and scattered military implements). In *4 Ezra*, Ardat is a field specifically said to have no buildings in it (9:24) and be outside of the city (10:17).<sup>80</sup> Considering that a field is an unusual space for traditional Judaeian mourning, one must wonder why it functions so prominently in *4 Ezra*. A field filled with only vegetation certainly resonates with the text's concern with the Earth and nature, but it may also enhance the sentiment of loss and emptiness which

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<sup>78</sup> Although her posture is clearly not an important element in the text, it seems likely that she was sitting since Ezra was seated (9:26; cf. 14:1). The text notes that Ezra lifted his eyes and saw her (9:38), but since he had not seen her before, it is unclear whether she walked up to him or just appeared either seated or standing to his right.

<sup>79</sup> However, *4 Ezra* 14:1 has Ezra seated under an oak tree (*sub quercu*) in the field.

<sup>80</sup> The city here is presumably Babylon based on the text's setting, but this does not seem to matter as much in the visions, where the field is cast as a mysterious other place, at once earthly and removed from earthly associations. In any case, since the date-palm tree is territorially specific symbol, it would not make much sense in a Babylonian narrative setting or in a field detached from territorial symbolism.

are significant in the woman's story.<sup>81</sup> That the new Jerusalem emerges from that field supports such an understanding of the field as a symbol for the feeling of sadness associated with the woman prior to her transformation. Thus, in each discourse the field to a certain degree also represents the defeat of Judaea. To be sure, there are other differences between the images, such as the woman of the coins being a captive and sometimes being combined with other figures such as captives, soldiers, the emperor, or Victory. But ultimately, the primary elements of the image—the woman and the field—bear important similarities.

The comparison of the symbolic meanings attributed to the woman in the *Judaea capta* discourse and *4 Ezra* is a more difficult endeavor. In the Flavian discourse, the woman seems to represent both the province of Judaea and the people of that province. I suggested in the previous chapter, however, that the dissemination of the wider discourse made the defeat of Judaea relevant to the entire Judaeian *ethnos* across the empire, as opposed to only the Judaeans in the province. Thus, the woman of the coins in the context of the larger discourse could represent all Judaeans, and certainly might have to a Judaeian outside the homeland who noticed the imagery. The woman in *4 Ezra*, on the other hand, is explicitly said to represent Zion (10:44), which is somewhat abstractly construed as the city of God's sanctuary. As in the Flavian discourse, the destruction is presented as having universal relevance in *4 Ezra* because the loss of Mother Zion is also considered the loss of Mother Earth. So whereas the *Judaea capta* discourse proclaims

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<sup>81</sup> On wilderness as suffering, purification, and a locus for revelation in Judaeian texts, see Hindy Najman, "Toward a Study of the Uses of the Concept of Wilderness in Ancient Judaism," *DSD* 13 (2006): 99-113.

the defeat of Judaea to be good for the whole empire, this apocalyptic discourse portrays the whole world as sorrowing because of it (10:8). For the author of *4 Ezra*, the whole world is not served by the defeat of Judaea, nor are they secure. Instead of being protected by the Flavians, this discourse proposes that most humans are actually doomed because they ignored God's Law.

Each discourse, then, imagines one particular historical event as signifying something much larger, and of universal relevance. The *Judaea capta* discourse has an authority-legitimizing function, persuading its audience to misrecognize ideas and images that magnify the imperial ruling dynasty and government, thereby giving them more symbolic capital. By objectifying the oppression and violence of the Flavians, *4 Ezra* subversively counters misrecognition by delegitimizing the Roman rulers. According to *4 Ezra*, the glory of the Flavian emperors is fleeting and was designed by God for the benefit of Israel. It is not all of Israel that is slated to receive symbolic capital through the audience's misrecognition of *4 Ezra*'s apocalyptic discourse, however; it is the wise, and purportedly through them, the righteous. *4 Ezra* casts the sages who are commissioned in the epilogue as leaders, and those who follow their instructions by seeking righteousness through observance of God's Law as the beneficiaries of Ezra's work.<sup>82</sup> The wisdom

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<sup>82</sup> As noted in the first section of this chapter, it is not necessary to associate the sages in *4 Ezra* with the Rabbis at Yavneh as Rosenthal (*Vier apokryphische Bücher*) and Lonenecker ("Locating Fourth Ezra"), among others, have attempted to. Nevertheless, we see in the epilogue a social distinction between the sages and the people much like what one would expect at Yavneh. But regardless of whether connections between the author's circle and Yavneh are reflected here, a similar authority structure is present in which sages claiming authority derived from a divine commission have power over a community of people seeking the teaching of those sages in order to achieve their salvation (symbolic capital).

contained in this apocalypse, then, as well as the other books Ezra and the sages wrote according to divine dictation (14:37-48), is made available to the people because of the defeat of Judaea.<sup>83</sup> Therefore, the defeat of Judaea in the apocalyptic discourse of *4 Ezra* empowers the sages as leaders and offers a path to salvation for those who are righteous and obedient. Whereas the *Judaea capta* discourse legitimates the Flavians, *4 Ezra*'s discourse aims at persuading its audience of the legitimacy of its apocalyptic epistemology that strips the Flavians of their legitimacy and legitimates the sages.

Furthermore, the people are pawns in the power struggle of these competing discourses. In the Flavian discourse, the Roman people are said to be protected by the destruction of Judaea. In the apocalyptic discourse of *4 Ezra*, the people are said to be offered an opportunity for salvation (see esp. 14:27-36). Yet, the manufacturers of each discourse are the ones who stand to receive most of the material and symbolic capital as a result of the misrecognition of their discourses concerning the defeat of Judaea to the end

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<sup>83</sup> It is invariably assumed that the twenty-four books that are for all the people (14:45) are the books of the Hebrew Bible, which was starting to take the shape of what we might call a canon at this point (cf. Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.38); yet, the identity of the other seventy books reserved for only the "wise" (14:46) is unclear, though most scholars assume that they are apocalyptic books like *4 Ezra* and including *4 Ezra* (see the divine command to Ezra about keeping secret the transmission of the Eagle Vision in 12:36-38). So Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 439-41. I suspect that the number of books is not as important here as the matter that this text lends authority to apocryphal books including itself. The formation and transmission of various corpora of authoritative teachings alongside a relatively more authoritative collection (i.e., canon, in later terms) was part of the "canonical process" in Judaism and Christianity well into late antiquity. On the one hand, this is how the Prophets and Writings were originally seen in relation to the Torah. On the other hand, this is how the Talmud was seen in relation to the Mishnah. The same could even be said for non-canonical, yet authoritative, books in Christianity (see Athanasius's *Easter Letter*). Even if the author of *4 Ezra* accepted and promoted a set collection of twenty-four books as authoritative and for mass consumption, he clearly also saw the importance of other books for the "wise," and deemed them authoritative. This is also a similarity between this text and the rabbinic movement.

of self-legitimation. The people who would and did participate in the misrecognition of each of these discourses may have experienced a sense of security or edification, but they also semi-consciously cavorted in legitimating and supporting those already in power.<sup>84</sup>

How, then, can we understand the relationship between these two discourses other than in their functional and symbolic similarities? Did the Flavian discourse, which predates *4 Ezra* and continues at the time of its composition, influence the Judaeen author who wrote this apocalypse? It seems to me that there is not enough evidence to affirm the hypothesis that the specific imagery of the coins influenced the author of *4 Ezra*.<sup>85</sup>

However, it is certainly possible that the author was familiar with the imagery, and the same goes for the audience of the text. To a Judaeen who did connect the woman of *4 Ezra* with the woman featured on the *Iudaea capta* coins, the woman of *4 Ezra* would take on a subversive anti-Flavian political relevance. Even without a direct connection

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<sup>84</sup> I imply here that the sages being legitimated by *4 Ezra* already had some social standing—they were already operating as sages in at least minimal leadership roles in their community. I make this assumption because the text seems to have as its aim the legitimation of their authority, as opposed to the construction or establishment of it. This is because the text assumes that a social stratum of the “wise” (*sapientes*) already existed in the social setting of this text. By suggesting that the sages already had some degree of power relative to the people, however, I recognize that their authority was of a much different kind and their power much less than the Flavian emperors and government. My point here is that the process of legitimation operates on the same logic for the Flavians through the *Iudaea capta* discourse as it does with the sages through the apocalyptic discourse of *4 Ezra*.

<sup>85</sup> To argue for direct influence, I would expect a more deliberate attempt on the part of the author of *4 Ezra* to depict the woman as the *Iudaea capta* woman. Mainly, I would expect the text to be explicit that she was seated under a date-palm tree. A more overt anti-Roman emphasis in the vision (like in the Eagle Vision) would also support a hypothesis of direct influence. Without such clear distinctions, it is impossible to argue that the author intended to subvert the imagery of the *Iudaea capta* discourse. Instead, I suggest that he subverted the *Iudaea capta* discourse using similar imagery either unconsciously or semi-consciously.

between the discourses, though, the fourth episode of this apocalypse should still be considered subversive of Flavian ideology. In its vindication of the sacked city and its implication that the defeat of Judaea does not matter since *Zion* lives on, in combination with its critique of the Romans and their emperors throughout the text, *4 Ezra* subverts the Flavian commentary on the capture of Judaea.

Without being able to posit the influence of one discourse on the other, it is best to view these as two competing discourses surrounding the same historical event and similarly constrained by the doxic limits of dominant ideology. While *4 Ezra*'s use of the eagle as a symbol for Rome is an instance of a Judaeian apocalyptic discourse borrowing and reconfiguring a symbol from the dominant ideology of the empire, the lamenting woman as a symbol for the defeat of Judaea may not be a borrowed symbol; instead, it hails from a doxic repository of symbols shared by both discourses. The Flavian discourse and *4 Ezra* each use a mourning woman to represent defeat. The Flavian use of the image has a prehistory in the pervasive Greco-Roman depictions of conquered women as symbols of conquered people. The Mother *Zion* figure in *4 Ezra* has its precedents in scriptural uses of the metaphor of a woman who represents Jerusalem and/or its sanctuary and is typically used to portray the city in a negative light—either as a whore because of the sinfulness and idolatry of its people or as despondent because of the death and/or exile of its people. Thus, the image used in each discourse employs gender as a way of emphasizing something negative about an ethnic group—subjugation, barbarism, vulnerability, inferiority, disloyalty, and so on. In this ubiquitous ancient patriarchal symbolic system, a woman's body becomes the foil for masculine power and

prosperity.<sup>86</sup> However, in *4 Ezra*'s use of the symbol, the woman is redeemed; she transforms into the new Jerusalem, though only after being comforted by Ezra, a man. The apocalypse thus subverts the symbol of a lamenting woman representing loss even while suggesting that the woman could not vindicate herself.

In sum, the woman on the Flavian *Iudaea capta* coins and the woman in *4 Ezra*'s Mother Zion Vision may not be directly connected. Yet, *4 Ezra* uses the symbol of a woman in its subversion of Flavian ideology in a way that both attributes to her a symbolic meaning similar to that of the Flavian discourse and partially reverses that role. It is useful, then, to understand these as competing discourses. In the Flavian discourse, the defeat of Judaea is symbolized by a lamenting woman and the Flavian emperors are set up to be legitimated. In *4 Ezra*, the defeat of Judaea is symbolized by a lamenting woman and the Flavian emperors are explicitly delegitimated while the sages are set up to be legitimated and given authority over access to symbolic capital for those interested in eternal salvation.

### **Conclusion: The Apocalyptic Discourse of *Fourth Ezra* against Flavian Ideology**

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<sup>86</sup> I want to emphasize, however, that women's bodies were not only portrayed in this way in antiquity. They very often also represented noble virtues or played the roles of heroines. Yet, since most women could not read and write in antiquity, they were usually scripted by men who attributed to them attributes that were deemed positive through a lens of masculinity. For instance, the goddess Victory on some of the *Iudaea capta* coins, as noted in chapter 2, is often posed in contradistinction to the lamenting Judaeian woman. The Judaeian woman thus represents loss and defeat while the Roman goddess represents military victory. In antiquity, it was not uncommon to view two women as foils for each other, often in order to advance a masculine perspective on morality that is also binding for women. See Rossing, *The Choice between Two Cities*, 17-60; "City Visions."



In the foregoing examination of the apocalyptic discourse of *4 Ezra* and its relationship to the *Iudaea capta* discourse, Bourdieuan theory proved especially useful for understanding the economic logic of *4 Ezra*'s political criticism. In particular, we found that the author's critique of Flavian ideology involves a recycling of power, taking it symbolically from the Flavian emperors and attempting to attribute it to the leaders of the author's Judaeian community and presumably the author himself. In this sense, the author is the paradigmatic Bourdieuan heresiarch, a prophetic figure who subverts Flavian ideology while objectifying and publicizing a particular understanding of a historical event in order to legitimate himself and his fellow community leaders. His use of self-alienating rhetoric, emphasizing the plight of Judaeans in the wake of the defeat of Judaea, allows him to persuade the audience of his message, and thus to expand his influence. The text's subversion of Flavian ideology and its theologically motivated objectification of the discrepancy between the wealth of Rome and the pitiful state of Zion, then, are a type of resistance against the Flavian *Iudaea capta* discourse and its doxic underpinnings. At the same time, however, the text is the discourse of an author vying for legitimation for himself and his colleagues.

In light of our study of *4 Ezra* and its relation to the *Iudaea capta* discourse, then, a reevaluation of the function of the text is in order. For most scholars, the function of *4 Ezra* is to provide consolation, comfort, and hope<sup>87</sup> for Judaeans during their time of

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<sup>87</sup> For the purpose of *4 Ezra* as consolation, comfort, and/or hope, see, e.g., Earl Breech, "These Fragments Have I Shored against My Ruins: The Form and Function of *4 Ezra*," *JBL* 92 (1973): 267-74. This simple thesis is perpetuated using more sophisticated terms by Philip F. Esler, who uses social-scientific theory to argue that the purpose of the book was to "reduce extreme dissonance occasioned by the sack of Jerusalem in 70 CE

trauma in the wake of the temple destruction.<sup>88</sup> While I would not disagree that this text would provide comfort and hope for its audience,<sup>89</sup> this is a rather benign assessment of the function of this or any apocalyptic text. The destruction of the temple happened nearly thirty years before the text was written.<sup>90</sup> Was Judaeans' sense of loss, doubt, and fear so pressing by this time? I contend that instead of providing comfort to Judaeans fretting over the loss of the temple, *4 Ezra* objectifies the injustices Judaeans faced in the latter years of Domitian's reign in order to advance an alternative apocalyptic epistemology.<sup>91</sup>

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and its aftermath" ("Social Function," at 123) and Dereck M. Daschke, who uses psychoanalytic theory to argue that *4 Ezra* and other "Zion Apocalypses" offer an "apocalyptic cure" to deal with the melancholia of the traumatic events of 70 CE (*City of Ruins: Mourning the Destruction of Jerusalem through Jewish Apocalypse* [Leiden: Brill, 2010]). Cf., Collins, who similarly concludes that *4 Ezra* offers an "apocalyptic cure" to the "dilemmas of history" (*Apocalyptic Imagination*, 211). While both Esler and Daschke offer insightful theoretical and comparative evidence to help make sense of the preoccupation with the temple destruction in *4 Ezra* and contemporaneous Judaeon apocalypses, their focus is more on the symbolic importance of the temple for Judaeans, and less on the Roman discourse that reinscribed the events of 70 CE in discursive media that had much longer lasting and wider ranging effects on Judaeans.

<sup>88</sup> For *4 Ezra* as a response to the events of 70 CE, see, *inter alia*, Katell Berthelot, "Is God Unfair? The *Fourth Book of Ezra* as a Response to the Crisis of 70 C.E.," in *Judaism and Crisis: Crisis as a Catalyst in Jewish Cultural History* (ed. A. Lange et al.; Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011) 165-81; Michael E. Stone, "Reactions to the Destructions of the Second temple," *JSJ* 12 (1982): 195-204.

<sup>89</sup> The text itself even indicates that this is part of its purpose in 14:13. However, as Hogan points out, even in that verse, the purpose also involves instruction and reproof of the "wise" (*Theologies in Conflict*, 227).

<sup>90</sup> Whereas most scholars do not attempt to account for the time lapse between the destruction and the text's composition, Daschke uses a theory of collective memory to account for the anxiety over the destruction decades later (*City of Ruins*, esp. 13-19). This is helpful, except that Daschke emphasizes the internal aspects of collective memory while disregarding external factors influencing the collective memory of Judaeans—i.e., the *Iudaea capta* discourse.

<sup>91</sup> Most scholars say little or nothing about the historical context of *4 Ezra*'s composition other than that it is a response to the events of 70 CE. While Stone

*4 Ezra*, like many apocalypses, is critical of dominant ideology and its sustainers and beneficiaries. The text's repudiation of Rome and its emperors is intended to persuade its audience of the wickedness of Rome and stir up anti-Roman sentiments. The author of *4 Ezra* dispatches a political critique of Rome couched in self-alienating rhetoric in order to reshape the *collusio* of his audience.<sup>92</sup> The author intends for his audience to accept that God is in control, Rome's glory is fleeting, and salvation will still come to the righteous. The rub is that the righteous are those who follow the instructions set out by the sages commissioned by Ezra on behalf of God. The sages are the author and his colleagues who are legitimated by this text, and their instructions are partially contained in this very apocalypse, which, it turns out, is also self-legitimizing.<sup>93</sup>

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emphasizes the importance of the Domitianic context of the text's composition (*Fourth Ezra*, 10), he does so without any justification or explication. Esler, on the other hand, looks at Roman ideology in the aftermath of the destruction, and the *Iudaea capta* coins in particular, as part of the historical context of *4 Ezra* ("God's Honour"). Esler's study is insightful, but disappointingly brief. It also does not attend very much to the discourse during Domitian's reign.

<sup>92</sup> Thus, while I agree with Hogan that a purpose of the book is the instruction of the "wise," I go further by claiming that it also entails the legitimation of these sages. See *Theologies in Conflict*, 227-31.

<sup>93</sup> Here again, I suggest that *4 Ezra* is one of the 70 books for the "wise" it authorizes in the epilogue (14:46), especially on the basis of its emphasis on preserving and keeping secret some of its contents (12:36-37). See Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 441.

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<sup>1</sup> All abbreviations and formatting conventions in the bibliography and throughout this report follow Patrick H. Alexander, *The SBL Manual of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999).

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This report was typed by the author.