

NOTAE NUMISMATICAE

ZAPISKI NUMIZMATYCZNE



Tom XV

MUZEUM NARODOWE W KRAKOWIE
SEKCJA NUMIZMATYCZNA
KOMISJI ARCHEOLOGICZNEJ PAN
ODDZIAŁ W KRAKOWIE

Kraków 2020

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Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that we present volume XV of *Notae Numismaticae – Zapiski Numizmatyczne* to you. In accordance with the principles that we have adopted, our texts are published in the conference languages with English and Polish abstracts. The whole of the present volume can be found as PDF's on the website of the National Museum in Krakow (<https://mnk.pl/notae-numismaticae-zapiski-numizmatyczne-1>), as are previously published volumes of the journal. The website also contains general information about the journal as well as information for prospective authors and reviewers.

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The Temple on the Coins of Bar Kokhba – a Manifestation of Longing or a Political Programme? A Few Remarks

ABSTRACT: The article is an attempt to answer the question of whether the building on coins issued during the Bar Kokhba revolt, usually interpreted as the Temple in Jerusalem, was a testimony of the control of Jerusalem by the rebels or a manifestation of the political programme of the revolt. This meant that perhaps also worship on the Temple Mount was resumed. The image of the building itself is analysed against a comparative background composed of other sacred buildings shown on earlier Jewish coins, in particular those coming from the period of the First Jewish War with Rome. Coins from other areas where similar buildings are represented were also used as comparative material. Consequently, the answer to the basic question of whether the possible Temple on Bar Kokhba coins was a confirmation of the historical fact of taking power over the Jewish capital or was it only a manifestation of longing – firstly after the loss of the Temple in 70, and secondly after the restoration of Jerusalem as the spiritual and political centre of the Chosen Nation – clearly leads to the second conclusion.

KEY WORDS: Bar Kokhba, Jerusalem Temple, Ancient Jewish Coins, Ancient Rome, Ancient Judaea

ABSTRAKT: *Świątynia na monetach Bar Kochby – manifestacja tęsknoty czy program polityczny? Kilka uwag*

Artykuł jest próbą odpowiedzi na pytanie, czy budynek przedstawiany na monetach emitowanych w okresie powstania Bar Kochby, interpretowany zwykle jako Świątynia Jerozolimska, był świadectwem przejęcia kontroli nad Jerozolimą przez powstańców. Oznaczało to, że być może wznowiono również sprawowanie kultu

na Wzgórzu Świątynnym. Samo wyobrażenie budynku jest analizowane na tle porównawczym z innymi budynkami sakralnymi pokazanymi na wcześniejszych monetach żydowskich, w szczególności z okresu pierwszej wojny żydowskiej z Rzymem. Jako materiał porównawczy wykorzystano również pochodzące z innych obszarów monety, na których są widoczne podobne budynki. W konsekwencji odpowiedź na zasadnicze pytanie: czy ewentualna Świątynia na monetach Bar Kochby stanowiła potwierdzenie historycznego faktu przejęcia władzy nad żydowską stolicą, czy też była tylko, po pierwsze, przejawem tęsknoty po zaginionej w 70 r. Świątyni, po drugie, marzeniem o przywróceniu Jerozolimie statusu duchowego i politycznego centrum Narodu Wybranego, prowadzi jednoznacznie do drugiego wniosku.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: Bar Kochba, Świątynia Jerozolimska, antyczne monety żydowskie, starożytny Rzym, antyczna Judea

Coins minted during the revolt of Bar Kokhba were an extraordinary example of the use of means of payment as a propaganda tool. Their minting on coins already in circulation was probably not due to the lack of ore or the absence of favourable conditions, although of course we cannot completely exclude it. Documents from the Judean Desert clearly indicate that the administrative centre of Bar Kokhba was situated in Herodium. The coins found there seem to indicate that the insurgents had the opportunity to mint the coins from scratch, but we do not yet have clear evidence of a mint existing in Herodium (we do not have unambiguous evidence against this supposition either).¹ So, this numismatic phenomenon must have been primarily propaganda-based. The modification of foreign coins, minted by a hated enemy, had considerable political overtones.² We are also dealing here with a form of revenge, because the images of Roman emperors, gods and temples have been replaced by Jewish symbols, among which the representation of the Temple in Jerusalem stands out first.³ The analysis of Bar Kokhba's coinage clearly shows that the insurgents understood very well that coins are the best possible propaganda tool. As a consequence, they created their own monetary system including silver tetradrachms, drachmas and denarii, as well as three bronze denominations. We must not forget that every proprietary monetary system is a testament to sovereignty, so there was no better way to manifest the independence.

Both the inscriptions and symbols placed on rebels' coins have a propaganda function. For our considerations, the inscription *The first year of the redemption of Israel*, which is undoubtedly an expression of the rebels' hope and goals, i.e. the rebuilding

¹ See CIECIELAĞ 1998: 20–21.

² IDEM 2008: 224.

³ MESHORER 2001: 137.

of the Jerusalem temple, restoration of circumcision and regaining independence, is important. It is worth noting here, however, that perhaps we are not dealing here so much with a political programme, but rather with reconciliation with God and eternal salvation, which would link the revolt of Bar Kokhba with the ideology of the first revolt against the Romans and with the Hasmonean period.⁴ Equally important, or perhaps even more important, is the inscription referring to Jerusalem (on the coins from the first year of revolt), inseparably connected with Hadrian's decision to transform the city into a Roman colony under the name *Colonia Aelia Capitolina* and probably also with the refusal to rebuild the Temple.⁵ As we are once again dealing here with a manifestation of one of the most important goals of Bar Kokhba and the insurgents – the liberation of Jerusalem and the restoration of worship on the Temple Mount. Even more eloquent is the inscription on coins minted in the third year of the revolt: *Freedom of Jerusalem*, indicating probably a gradual loss of hope of regaining the capital and chasing the Romans away. Many researchers believed that in the early period of the revolt, Jerusalem was conquered by rebels,⁶ which is unlikely but cannot be entirely excluded. There was even a hypothesis that Bar Kokhba rebuilt the Temple of Jerusalem, but he had to leave Jerusalem, which he could not defend.⁷

Some researchers have indicated that coins from the first year of the revolt bearing the inscription *Jerusalem* prove that the capital was captured by rebels and that the name of the city indicates also the name of the mint.⁸ Others note that the small number of revolt coins found in Jerusalem clearly contradicts the hypothesis of the rebels having conquered the city, although all coins found within the city must be taken into account.⁹ As far as the likely area of *Colonia Aelia Capitolina* is concerned, only four Bar Kokhba coins and four coins issued by the new city under Hadrian have been found in Jerusalem.¹⁰ It is not easy to explain this fact, although in the case of Roman coins provincial coins always prevailed in circulation, but we do not find them so often and in large numbers in cities that were the seat of the mints, and this is probably the case with *Colonia Aelia Capitolina*.¹¹ What about the Bar Kokhba coins then? One hypothesis claims that, after the suppression of the revolt, the Roman authorities deliberately withdrew the revolt coins from circulation to clearly show the final suppression of the revolt, or that the coins were

⁴ GIRARDIN 2019: 163.

⁵ CIECIELAŁ 2008: 99–101.

⁶ See REIFENBERG 1947: 35; KANAEL 1963: 61; PHILONENKO 1974: 184; SMALLWOOD 1981: 443–445.

⁷ LAPERROUSAZ 2007: 121–129.

⁸ KINDLER 1974: 69; see also ALON 1970: 27, 83, n. 211; OPPENHEIMER 1982: 60.

⁹ ZLOTNIK 2008: 140.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*: 141–142.

¹¹ *Ibidem*: 142.

withdrawn by the insurgent authorities during the revolt for economic reasons.¹² In any case, we are dealing here with clear war slogans, reminding us that for Jews, Jerusalem and the temple form one inseparable image: the temple in Jerusalem is ours and must come back to us.¹³ Who knows, perhaps in his attempt to unite the whole nation around the most important idea, Bar Kokhba did want to become the new Judas Maccabeus, who renovated the temple of Jerusalem after it had been horribly devastated.¹⁴ Another thing is that Bar Kokhba's letters seem to indicate that not everyone was equally enthusiastic about the revolt and believed in its success.¹⁵ So, was the harsh tone of some letters on one side and the war slogan combined with the representation of the temple on the other, supposed to remind all those unconvinced about the purposes of the revolt?¹⁶ This would imply that the purpose was not just the achievement of political or economic goals, but to proclaim the arrival of the Messianic Era.¹⁷

The coins from the first year of the revolt also have an inscription recalling the mysterious figure of priest Eleazar, whose person, despite the efforts of researchers, is still unknown to us. Interestingly, he disappears from coins in subsequent years. Was Eleazar supposed to be responsible for restoring Yahweh's worship after the successful recovery of Jerusalem? His disappearance may indicate that the insurgents failed to capture Jerusalem, although coins from the second year mention the freedom of Israel, but not of Jerusalem. Most scholars considered Eleazar to be a religious leader of unknown origin, subordinate to Bar Kokhba.¹⁸ Attempts were made to identify him with the known rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah, who came from a priesthood family, or with Eleazar of Modi'in, Bar Kokhba's uncle,¹⁹ or with rabbi Eleazar ben Harsom.²⁰ However, the tasks that Eleazar and the entire revolt are burdened with, i.e. the recovery of Jerusalem, the rebuilding of the Temple and, perhaps, the coming of Messiah, may link this mysterious character to the high priest Eleazar, son of Aron, known to us from the Old Testament.²¹ Let us recall that the leader of the revolt enjoyed great support in rabbinical circles, but

¹² *Ibidem*: 143.

¹³ MILDENBERG 1984: 31.

¹⁴ GIRARDIN 2019: 166.

¹⁵ *P. YADIN* 49, 2–4.

¹⁶ GIRARDIN 2019: 168.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ SMALLWOOD 1981: 441; MILDENBERG 1984: 30 recognized the existence of Eleazar only as a conjecture.

¹⁹ SMALLWOOD 1981: 440; MESHORER 2001: 142–143; HENDIN 2010: 371.

²⁰ MILDENBERG 1984: 29–30.

²¹ HENDIN 2011–2014: 155; Num. 26:1–4, 63–65; 27:19; Jos. 14:1.

the support of priests cannot be ruled out either,²² the more so because we do not know how quickly the process of degradation and disappearance of this social group took place after the destruction of the temple in 70. Perhaps the priests still retained at least some of their influence and meaning.²³ Certainly, the insurgents had some success in their struggle against the Romans, as reflected in the said inscription, but the basic goal was not achieved. And Eleazar himself probably was no longer needed in these circumstances, or perhaps he had lost the trust of the leader of the revolt.²⁴ It cannot be ruled out that these initial successes convinced Bar Kokhba that he no longer needed the support of Eleazar himself or even priests and rabbis in general, so religious references disappeared from the coins and the everyday functioning of the insurgent administration.²⁵

The most important symbol on the Bar Kokhba coins (tetradrachms) is the image of the facade of the Jerusalem temple with four columns, standing on a narrow or high base (respectively in the first year and subsequent years). Some researchers have pointed out that it could be a representation of a synagogue. Between two pairs of columns there is a structure composed of dotted lines, interpreted by researchers as a gate, a *sukkah* (Meeting Tent), the portal of the Holy of Holies, the Shrine itself or the shewbread table.²⁶ Most likely, however, this is the Ark of the Covenant. The hypothesis that we are dealing with an Ark covered with a veil is particularly striking, it would be a clear reference to Exodus 40:3.²⁷ What is more, the rebel tetradrachms with this symbol were to serve as the announcement of the reconstruction of the Jerusalem temple, in which the Ark of the Covenant was to be kept, because according to late tradition, Jewish society did not realize that the temple, after the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar, was no longer the home of the Ark.²⁸ Apparently, the coins minted by Bar Kokhba were a kind of manifestation of the messianic claims of the revolt leader.²⁹ Perhaps the representation of the Jerusalem temple on insurgent coins was also an opposition to Hadrian's intention to erect Jupiter's temple on the Temple Mount.³⁰ However, it should be clearly stated that, we actually do not know whether this intention was taken by the emperor during his visit to Jerusalem in 129 or 130, or whether it appeared only after the suppression of the Bar Kokhba revolt. We also do not know, unfortunately, whether the coins

²² GOODBLATT 1984: 113–132.

²³ ALEXANDER 2009: 6.

²⁴ MESHORER 2001: 143–143.

²⁵ HENDIN 2011–2014: 162.

²⁶ See HACHLILI 2000: 146–183.

²⁷ ROMANOFF 1971: 40.

²⁸ *Ibidem*: 41–42.

²⁹ HENDIN 2011–2014: 166.

³⁰ ZLOTNIK 2008: 138.

depict the temple of Herod the Great or the design of a new temple, which was to be erected after the victory of the revolt. Any unambiguous interpretation is prevented here by the schematism of the representation. It probably results from the ban on presenting the temple in the Jewish art, which, however, allowed for a simple, schematic presentation without details. The minters, or actually the revolt authorities, did not want to reproduce the temple accurately, but rather express a very clear political manifestation. This schematism is even more visible on the didrachms, where we can see the temple facade with only two columns, between which there is an object that can be interpreted as the shewbread table.³¹ In fact, however, we are groping at straws here. Moreover, I am not sure if we are actually dealing with the representation of the Temple itself. In any case, there has been a significant change in relation to this symbol.

The main question arising in connection with the representation of the temple on Bar Kokhba coins is: was this a confirmation of the historical fact of the control of Jerusalem by the rebels or just a propaganda manifestation, recalling the main purpose of war. First of all, it should be noted that the revolt coins also have other symbols on them associated with the Jerusalem temple and the cult celebrated therein. The most mysterious is the representation of the Ark of the Covenant, which had disappeared after the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar seven centuries earlier. The Ark had never appeared in the Jewish coinage, and the meaning of this symbol can probably be comparable only to the menorah, which was depicted on the coins of Antigonus Matatiah, manifesting the inalienable rights of the last Hasmoneus to the throne of Judea, which his rival Herod the Great could not prove.³² The appearance of the Ark of the Covenant certainly reinforced the propaganda overtones of the placement of the Temple on Bar Kokhba coins. It should be noted, however, that the Ark strengthens the assumption of the failure of the insurgents to recover Jerusalem and only manifests with even greater force the longing for the lost temple and the inability to resurrect it. So, we are probably dealing here with a very strong and explicit intention on the part of the Jewish authorities. A similar role was perhaps played by the shewbread table, which is also one of the most important elements of the Temple, while the representation of the facade with two columns can pose major problems. Perhaps this – even more advanced – schematism was due to the technical problems of the mint or mints at the end of the revolt. Not without significance is the fact that only three Bar Kokhba coins have been found to date in Jerusalem.³³

³¹ BARAG 1987: 19.

³² MESHORER 2001: 55–57.

³³ *Ibidem*: 152; ZLOTNIK 2008: 141–142.

Other symbols associated with temple worship include four species, namely *lulav*, *etrog*, *myrtle* and *willow*, associated with the Feast of Tabernacles. They also appear on coins from the fourth year of the first revolt against the Romans. On Bar Kokhba coins, the four species always accompany the temple, probably to strengthen the message. They not only point to the intention of rebuilding the Temple, but also to the resurrection of religious life in the capital, which during the Feast of Tabernacles was at its peak. It was the most important Jewish holiday in the Second Temple period, and most pilgrims came to Jerusalem during it. It is worth noting here that some researchers argue that all the symbols on the Bar Kokhba coins are associated with Sukkot, and more specifically with *Simchat Beit HaShoeivah*, i.e. the ritual of pouring on the altar of water previously supplied from the source. This ceremony, celebrated on the first day of the feast, was to ensure an abundance of rain, and was accompanied by joyful dances and songs.³⁴ So, we are dealing here with the national dimension of this holiday. Interestingly, there are also hypotheses indicating the desire to replace Sukkot as a feast of victory by, among others, the introduction of associated symbols on the battlefield, far from the temple.³⁵ Let us recall that *lulav* was generally interpreted as a symbol of victory, therefore it was used in temple worship in Jerusalem.³⁶ It is worth mentioning here that a reference to this ritual can also be found on coins with an inscription dedicated to the priest Eleazar, which surrounds a pitcher and a branch of willow.³⁷ The difference between the coins of the first uprising and the revolt of Bar Kokhba relates to the fact that after the destruction of the temple, Jews could no longer come to Jerusalem to celebrate it. So here we are dealing with the manifestation of an element of Bar Kokhba's programme aimed at restoring full worship, of which Jewish feasts were an important element, including, above all, the three pilgrimage feasts. The rebels hoped that their capital would again welcome an influx of pious pilgrims praising the Lord's name and they expressed this hope on coins. It is noteworthy that on earlier Jewish coins these four species occur without the image of a temple, which was still standing on Temple Mount, so there was no need to recall it. During the Bar Kokhba revolt, there were people who had no opportunity to see the temple with their own eyes. The schematic representation on the coins could not, of course, reflect the grandeur of the temple of Herod the Great, or the Shrine, which was to be built in its place after the success of the revolt.³⁸ Let us recall that the revolt

³⁴ FINE 2009: 83–93.

³⁵ LEONHARD 2019: 119.

³⁶ DUECK 2007–2008: 129.

³⁷ ADLER 2007–2008: 135.

³⁸ See remarks by GOLDSTEIN 2010: 42–43; JACOBSON 2008: 6–8.

took place during a period of transformation for Judaism, a kind of transitional stage between inter-Testament Judaism – in which the most important thing was worship in the Temple of Jerusalem – and rabbinical Judaism, which only took on its full dimension during the period of Patriarch Judah ha-Nassi. So, the prospect of rebuilding the temple and restoring sacrificial worship was still absolutely possible. This purpose was also manifested on Bar Kokhba coins by other objects related to temple worship, such as a pitcher, amphora, harp (*nebel*), lyre (*kinor*) or trumpets.

Can we find any representations of the temple or temples or other buildings on earlier Jewish coins? Could they have been any inspiration for the authorities of Bar Kokhba revolt? The rare coin of Agrippa I of the 7th year of reign is interesting: it depicts a square frame with a triangular pediment, inside which we see four figures. Researchers have proposed as many as six interpretations of the presented scene, and hence the structure itself. So, it is supposed to be a ceremony at the Temple of the Marna in Gaza; the crowning of Agrippa by Emperor Claudius (without specifying what the building is); a scene of sacrifice in a Roman temple on the occasion of victory over Caratacus; a scene in the temple in Caesarea with the emperor, Victoria and a surrendering Briton; a scene with Agrippa and Claudius (without identification of the building); and finally a copy of the Claudius sestertius depicting the temple of Augustus.³⁹ Unfortunately, deciphering this scene is actually impossible, even if Burnett proposes an interesting theory that we are dealing here with the consecration of the treaty between Agrippa and Claudius from the Temple of Jupiter on Capitoline Hill.⁴⁰ Perhaps it was supposed to manifest the unchanging loyalty of the Jewish king to Rome, because it was issued shortly before or after the infamous congress of client rulers in Tiberias dispersed by Vibius Marsus. In any case, it would be difficult to assume that the coin was directed at the Jewish subjects of Agrippa. The coin minted in the second year of the reign of this ruler is also worth mentioning, it shows the Augusteum located in Paneas (Caesarea Philippi) on the reverse and is a clear reference to the coins of Herod Philip, the tetrarch of Gaulanitis, Trachonitis, Auranitis, Batanea and Perea.⁴¹ On all coins issued by him, there are portraits of August or Tiberius, and of Philip. The temple built in Paneas in honour of the emperor Augustus by Herod the Great⁴² is probably the most popular representation on the reverse of the coins by Philip, who perhaps made the temple even more magnificent. As a rule, it is depicted in the form of a facade with four columns supporting a triangular pediment decorated with a lily flower. The building

³⁹ BURNETT 1987: 32.

⁴⁰ See *BI* 2, 216.

⁴¹ On coins of Philip see STRICKERT 1995; MESHORER 1984–1985: 37–58.

⁴² *Ant.* 14, 363.

is elevated and has stairs leading to its interior.⁴³ It is also worth mentioning the coin minted after 14, where we can find the heads of August and Livia on the obverse, and the Augusteum on the reverse, with two mysterious concentric circles between the columns. We are dealing here, above all, with an example of the manifestation of the loyalty and gratitude of the Herodian ruler to the Roman emperors, and in particular to the Empress Livia, whom the Herodian family members considered their great benefactor.⁴⁴ The presentation of the pagan temple and the imperial portraits should not naturally be surprising, since the territories ruled by Philip were mostly inhabited by non-Jewish people.

Representations of temples can also be found in the Roman coinage. The coins of the Flavian emperors and the first Antonine emperors are a good example. The coins issued by the emperor Vespasian show the temple of Vesta, the goddess of home and state, one of the oldest temples in Rome and of special importance to the Romans. The representation probably refers to the assumption of the office of the highest priest by the emperor in 71.⁴⁵ It is noteworthy that Vespasian was also depicted on coins as the restorer of the empire, a second Augustus, after a turbulent period of decline of Nero's rule and the year of four emperors. Certainly, the issuance with the Temple of Vesta belongs to this type of issuance. The Temple of Vesta also appears on coins issued by Titus and Domitian.⁴⁶ The coins of the Vespasian also bear the six-column temple of the Capitoline Jupiter and the four-column temple of Isis.⁴⁷ The Domitian "temple" series are very interesting: they have on reverse five temples in total: three four-column temples (of Serapis, Cybele and Minerva), one six-column temple (Jupiter Custos) and one eight-column temple, which has not been identified yet.⁴⁸ During the period of Nerva's reign, we know of cistophoric medallions minted in Asia Minor, which on the reverse depict a temple in which the emperor is crowned by a woman holding a cornucopia in her hand. This woman may be the goddess Fortuna.⁴⁹ With the assumption of imperial power by Trajan, the artistry of Roman coins gradually deteriorated, but on the coins minted by this ruler, in many different types, we can find, among others, an eight-column temple surrounded by colonnades or porticos. Taken into consideration the statue in its centre, it can be concluded that it was originally dedicated to Jupiter Capitoline,

⁴³ See TZAFERIS 1992: 128–135.

⁴⁴ Coins with the heads of Augustus and Livia were struck in Smyrna; see SUTHERLAND and KRAAY 1975: 1305–1315.

⁴⁵ RIC II 5–6, 73.

⁴⁶ RIC II 34, 41, 44, 92, 94–95, 97, 108, 128, 132.

⁴⁷ RIC II 70, 78, 80, 82, 84, 105.

⁴⁸ RIC II 151, 178, 182, 206; see also JACOBSON 2008: 7.

⁴⁹ RIC II 231.

and later dedicated to Trajan again. On his emissions we find two other temples, which, however, cannot be identified. It is possible that they were situated outside of Rome, especially since the emperor did not build any new temple in the capital itself.⁵⁰ Let us also mention the cistophoric medallion minted in Asia Minor, which features a temple with the statue of Diana of Perge. On another medallion, in turn, we can see a temple, inside which Trajan stands in a military outfit crowned by a woman (perhaps the Fortune) holding a cornucopia.⁵¹

Representations of temples also appear on the coins of the conqueror of the Bar Kokhba revolt, Emperor Hadrian. And so, on the first issuances we can find the Temple of Hercules in Gades, Spain, probably accompanied by two Hesperides. This is a clear reference to the plan of imperial travels throughout the empire, because Hercules was also a great traveller.⁵² We must also mention the cistophoric medallions from Bithynia, where we see a four- or eight-column temple. It is not excluded that these are various temples associated with imperial worship in this province,⁵³ especially since Hadrian himself stands at the centre of the four-column temple. On cistophoras from the Asian province, in turn, we see the four-column temple dedicated to Diana of Ephesus.⁵⁴ Images of the four-column temples with Apollo, two Nemeses, Proserpine, as well as the two-column temple in which Minerva stands, also come from the same province.⁵⁵ Hadrian's coinage had a great impact on the propaganda significance of coins minted by Jewish rebels, as the emperor – the eternal traveller and restorer – was a master of using coins as a means of propaganda. So, Hadrian used to announce on his coins the renewal of the Roman state, and the Jews, following his example, announced the renewal of the Jewish state under the leadership of Bar Kokhba.⁵⁶ Of course, temples are not the only symbols of religious nature to be found on Roman coins. A much greater range of possibilities is offered by the representations of the Roman gods, which, however, are not relevant to our considerations.

All these examples indicate that Jews were familiar with the depictions of various temples on coins, even if not all of the issuances reached Judea. Such representations were put even on coins minted by local rulers, although these were pagan temples, and the coins themselves were probably not directed at the Jewish population. Nevertheless, their presence in circulation was a fact. The scheme of

⁵⁰ RIC II 241, 285.

⁵¹ RIC II 296.

⁵² RIC II 321, 347–348.

⁵³ RIC II 334, 396–397.

⁵⁴ RIC II 399.

⁵⁵ RIC II 403.

⁵⁶ MILDENBERG 1984: 69.

coin representations was also significant, because the images of religious buildings on different types of coins are actually quite similar to each other. Today, it is difficult to say unequivocally whether the rebels of Bar Kokhba were guided by these earlier representations to any extent. Undoubtedly, the most important point of reference should be coins from the first revolt against the Romans, on which, however, there is no image of the Temple. Nonetheless, we can find on them many other objects related to the temple worship. The absence of the temple can be easily explained by the fact that throughout the revolt, it still existed and was the place of carrying out daily rites. So, there was no particular reason for it being depicted on coins. However, at the outbreak of the Bar Kokhba revolt, the situation was quite different. If we accept the theory that Hadrian decided to found Aelia Capitolina in 130 and build a temple of Jupiter Capitoline in Jerusalem, it should be easier to understand the placement of the temple of Jerusalem on revolt issues. Of course, the schematism of the symbol makes it impossible to answer the question of whether it is the temple of Herod the Great or a completely new one. Perhaps the symbol of the Ark of the Covenant, which, after all, had not been present in the Jerusalem temple for centuries, can be somehow helpful in this matter. However, this reference may indicate that Bar Kokhba intended to build a completely new temple, and not just a copy of the Temple of the Jews built by Herod the Great. Perhaps the answer should be sought in the messianic claims of the revolt leader. In any case, the representation of the temple on Bar Kokhba coins is – on the one hand – only a manifestation of the longing for the lost past, and – on the other – it is a manifestation of the plan to recover Jerusalem, rebuild the Temple and restore temple worship, which, moreover, seems to be confirmed by the image of the Ark of the Covenant. So, it is also a kind of political programme. Indeed, it would be interesting to discover how these plans of Bar Kokhba relate to the gradual formation or transformation of Judaism into the religion of the word. Apparently, a possible victory of the rebels would stop the transformation process and bring return to the sacrificial worship. This, however, did not happen and eventually the rabbinic Judaism was born. Nonetheless, the most important goal of the coins minted by the rebels was to manifest the political and cultural renaissance of the Jewish state.

ABBREVIATION

RIC II = H. MATTINGLY and E.A. SYDENHAM. *Roman Imperial Coinage*, vol. 2, London 1926.

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PLATE 1

Fig. 1. Bar Kokhba, AD 132/133; sela from year 1 with tetrastyle facade of the Temple of Jerusalem with the Ark of the Covenant

Photo courtesy of numisbids.com, Web Auction 8.01.2019, lot 139

Fig. 2. Bar Kochba, AD 134/135; silver shekel with the Jewish Temple facade with the rising star, surrounded by “Shimon”

Photo courtesy of coinarchives.com, Heritage World Coin Auctions – Dallas Signature Sale 3088, 5.11.2020, lot 33 021

Fig. 3. Herod Philip, AD 1/2; Æ with bare head of Philip and Tetrastyle temple (the Augusteum of Paneas)

Photo courtesy of acsearch.info, Heritage Auctions, Inc., Auction 3003, 9.03.2012, lot 20 123

Fig. 4. Herod Philip, AD 30/31; Æ with conjoined heads of Augustus and Livia and tetrastyle temple (Augusteum of Paneas)

Photo courtesy of acsearch.info, Baldwin’s Auctions Ltd, Auction 83, 24.09.2013, lot 4104

Fig. 5. Domitian, Rome, AD 73; aureus with the Temple of Vesta

Photo courtesy of wildwinds.com

Fig. 6. Domitian, Rome, AD 88; AE with Domitian and hexastyle temple with wreath

Photo courtesy of wildwinds.com

Fig. 7. Hadrian, Rome, AD 119–125; aureus with statue of Hercules within distyle temple

Photo courtesy of wildwinds.com

Fig. 8. Hadrian, Nicomedia, after AD 128; silver cistophoric tetradrachm with octastyle temple

Photo courtesy of wildwinds.com

Fig. 9. Nerva, Pergamum, AD 98; silver cistophoric tetradrachm with cult statue of Diana of Perga within two columned temple

Photo courtesy of numisbids.com, Web Auction 6.10.2016, lot 207



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