

Persecution & the Art of Building – Romans, Jews & the Bar Kokhba Revolt

רדיפה ואומנות הבנייה – רומאים, יהודים ומרד בר-כוכבא

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Madaba Map, Church of St. George, Madaba, Jordan (6th c. CE)

Timeline of Events

Event	Date
Year of the Four Emperors (Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian)	69 CE
Destruction of the Second Temple, Imposition [retroactive] of <i>Fiscus Judaicus</i>	69/70 CE
Death of Titus, Ascension of Domitian	81 CE
Assassination of Domitian, Ascension of Nerva, Revision of <i>Fiscus Judaicus</i>	96 CE
Nerva Adopts M. Ulpius Traianus (Trajan)	97 CE
Diaspora Revolt (Quietus Revolt) – Reign of Trajan	115-117 CE
Founding of <i>Aelia Capitolina</i>	130 CE (?)
Bar Kokhba Revolt – Reign of Hadrian	132-135 CE

1) The Founding of *Aelia Capitolina*

Cassius Dio, <i>Roman History</i> 69.12.2 (early 3 rd century CE), epitomized by Xiphilinus (11 th century CE)	Eusebius, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> 4.6 (ca. early 4 th century CE)
At Jerusalem he founded a city in place of the one which had been razed to the ground, naming it <i>Aelia Capitolina</i> , and on the site of the temple of the god he raised a new temple to Jupiter. This brought on a war of no slight importance nor of brief duration, for the Jews deemed it intolerable that foreign races should be settled in their city and foreign religious rites planted there.	...Thus when the city came to be bereft of the nation of the Jews, and its ancient inhabitants had completely perished, it was colonized by foreigners, and the Roman city which afterwards arose changed its name, and in honor of the reigning emperor Aelius Hadrianus was called Aelia.

Aelia Capitolina Bronze Coin, El-Jai Cave (Eshel & Amit, *Refuge Caves*, 1998) – Deposited ca. 134/5 CE



IMP[ERATORIS] CAES[ARIS] TR[AIANO] HADRIANO



COL[ONIA] AEL[IA] KAP[ITOLINA] COND[ITA]



2) The Flavian Triumph over Judea

Josephus, <i>Jewish War</i> 7.148, 158 (ca. 79 CE)	Cassius Dio, <i>Roman History</i> 65.7.2, epit. Xiphilinus
<p>The spoils in general were borne in promiscuous heaps; but conspicuous above all stood out those captured in the Temple at Jerusalem. (148)</p> <p>The triumphal ceremonies being concluded and the empire of the Romans established on the firmest foundation, Vespasian decided to erect a temple [dedicated to] Peace. (158)</p>	<p>From that time forth it was ordered that the Jews who continued to observe their ancestral customs should pay an annual tribute of two <i>denarii</i> to <i>Jupiter Capitolinus</i>.</p>

3) Domitian & The Jews

Seutonius, <i>Lives of the Caesars</i> (Domitian) 8.2 (ca. mid 2 nd century CE)	Cassius Dio, <i>Roman History</i> 68.1.2, epit. Xiphilinus
<p>Besides other taxes, that on the Jews was levied with exceptional severity, and those were prosecuted who without publicly acknowledging that faith yet lived as Jews, as well as those who concealed their origin and did not pay the tribute levied upon their people. I recall being present in my youth when the person of a man ninety years old was examined before the procurator and a very crowded court, to see whether he was circumcised.</p>	<p>Nerva also released all who were on trial for <i>maiestas</i> [treason] and restored the exiles; moreover, he put to death all the slaves and the freedmen who had conspired against their masters and allowed that class of person to lodge no complaint whatever against their masters; and no persons were permitted to accuse anybody of <i>maiestas</i> or of adopting the Jewish mode of life.</p>

4) The Fiscus Judaicus From Nerva to Trajan

Nerva's <i>Fisci</i> Coin (Madden, <i>History of Jewish Coinage</i> , 1967) – 96 CE	Tax Receipt (Tcherikover & Fuks, <i>CPJ</i> II.194) – 98 CE	Trajan's <i>Divvus</i> Coin (Mattingly, <i>Coins of the Roman Empire</i> , 1936) – 112 CE
 <p>FISCI JUDAICI CALUMNIA SUBLATA</p>	<p>4th District. Dosarion son of Jesus, in respect of the Jewish tax for the 1st year of our lord Trajan, 9 drachmai 2 obols. Epeiph 4 (June 28th, 98 CE).</p>	 <p>DIVVVS PATER TRAIAN</p>

5) Trajan & the Jews of the Diaspora

Cassius Dio, Cassius Dio, <i>Roman History</i> 68.31.1-3	Appian, <i>Civil Wars</i> 2.90 (ca. 2 nd century CE)
<p>Meanwhile the Jews in the region of Cyrene had put a certain Andreas at their head, and were destroying both the Romans & the Greeks...And for this reason no Jew may set foot on that island, but even if one of them is driven upon its shores by a storm he is put to death.</p>	<p>...But in my time, while the Roman emperor Trajan was exterminating the Jewish race in Egypt, it [the buried head of Pompey] was devastated by them in the exigencies of war.</p>