

Gunnar Heinsohn (15-12-2019)

## **TREVOR PALMER'S DEFENSE OF FIRST MILLENNIUM CHRONOLOGY**

Trevor Palmer's *Writers and Re-Writers of First Millennium History* gives his summary – diligently assembled over many years – of the historiography found in textbooks on the first millennium AD. How can I express a maximum of respect for his achievement? I can assure Palmer that from my entry into grammar school in 1953 until 2013 I not only learned that very historiography for my exams, but literally devoured it. Since 1973, I have used many of these doctrines in the context of different subjects – war history, moral history, history of money, history of contraception – to write my own books. Here and there I may have even succeeded in enriching our textbook wisdom by a few new facets.

Although Palmer does not owe me any repetition of accepted wisdom, I am grateful that he continues to try. I know that my 60 years of faithfulness to much of mainstream teaching will not satisfy him. Unfortunately, however, I cannot promise eternal loyalty to mainstream history. Yet, perhaps I could do something different in order to come closer to Palmer's point of view. If, for example, he would ask me to mentally beam myself back to the time before 2013 in order to improve his criticism of the post-2013-Heinsohn, I would gladly help him. There are many aspects of his text that could be formulated even more sharply against my post-2013-views than the material he presents. By providing such an assistance I would not only improve Palmer's text against the post-2013 Heinsohn, but even make the pre-2013-Heinsohn more insightful than he actually was at that time. We would both win something

I would like to illustrate my readiness to improve Palmer's text with three examples from different regions, (A) the **laws of Justinian**, (B) **Roman-Jewish wars**, and (C) the **stratigraphy of Londinium and Lundenwic**.

(A) Palmer mentions the imperial legislator **Justinian** more than eighty times (Palmer 2019, passim). Nothing in the Roman legacy for humanity is, to this day, more effective than Justinian's *Corpus iuris*. Since Palmer does not even mention it he cannot help but ignore its exciting chronological curiosities. However, it must be conceded that these curiosities are rarely clearly addressed in the dominant literature. But one can find them if one searches carefully. I myself know more about these oddities post-2013 than pre-

2013, and I am happy to provide Palmer with this knowledge in order to enrich his presentation with more substance. To make the curiosities of the Justinian laws easier recognizable visible, they are presented chronologically in the following table.

## ENIGMAS IN THE CHRONOLOGY OF JUSTINIAN'S LAWS

(data from CAH XII-XIV; Madelung 1975; Pohl 2018; Wolfram 2001; data collection was assisted by Tadeusz Heinsohn [Jagellonian University Kraków]).

“There remains the fact that between the writing of the classical works, mostly **before about AD 230**, and the compilation of the *Digest* in the **AD 530s** three centuries intervened. / Most reworking in AD 250-310 of texts [are] dating mostly **before about AD 230**” (Johnston 1999, 21 f.).


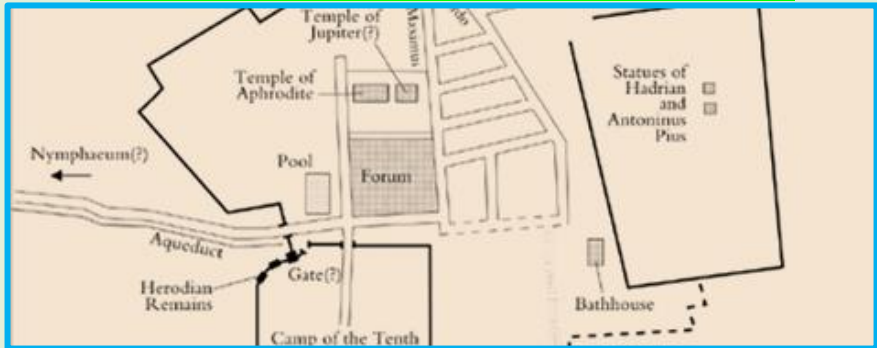
<p>The most recent commentators of Justinian's <i>Digestae</i> were active during <b>IMPERIAL ANTIQUITY (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> c.)</b>  <b>[Latin and Greek of the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> c. stopped its evolution for 700 years until the 10th century.]</b></p>	<p><b>Justinian's</b> collection of laws and comments (all from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> c.) was put together in <b>LATE ANTIQUITY (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> c.)</b>  <b>[Latin and Greek of the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> c. remained miraculously unchanged in the 6<sup>th</sup> c.]</b></p>	<p>Tangible evidence of Justinian's work is missing from the 530s to 900 CE in the <b>EARLY MIDDLE AGES (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> c.)</b>  <b>[Latin and Greek of the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> c. remained miraculously unchanged in the 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> c.]</b></p>
<p><b>SEVERANS</b> were weakened by a <b>plague</b>, had to face a ruler by the name of <b>Khosrow in Persia</b>.</p>	<p><b>JUSTINIAN</b> was weakened by a <b>plague</b>, had to face a ruler by the name of <b>Khosrow in Persia</b>.</p>	<p><b>Khosrow Firuz</b> (early 10<sup>th</sup> c.) from the so-called <b>JUSTANID</b> dynasty ruled in <b>Persia</b>.</p>
<p>Marcus Aurelius (161-180) died of the plague. Rome's State Archives (<i>tabularium</i>) were destroyed by fire in 192 CE under Commodus (177-192).  <b>Because of the fire the Severan emperors urgently needed new law collections. It remains an enigma why they took three centuries to arrive.</b></p>	<p>529/534 CE two editions of the laws. <i>Digestae</i> date from 530-533 CE. Though Justinian promised to keep his work always up to date, his texts belonged “mostly before about AD 230” (Johnston 1999, 22).  <b>It is not known why Justinian needed new law collections. It remains an enigma why they were up to three centuries out of date.</b></p>	<p>An abridged Greek version of the laws (<i>Basilika</i>) was published under <b>Leo VI. (886-912 CE)</b>. That was 700 years after the Severans needed in the eastern part of their empire.  <b>It remains an enigma why Leo used the Greek of the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> c. of the Severan emperors that was some seven centuries out of date.</b></p>
<p><b>MOST RECENT LAW COMMENTATORS CITED BY SEVERANS OF IMPERIAL ANTIQUITY:</b>          -Publius Iuventius Celsus (67-130 CE)          -Gaius (active between 130 and 180CE)          -Aemilius Papinianus (141-212 CE)          -Iulius Paulus (2nd/early 3rd century CE)          -Herennius Modestinus (born ca. 185 CE)          -Domitius Ulpian (murdered 223/<b>228</b> CE)</p>	<p><b>MOST RECENT LAW COMMENTATORS OF JUSTINIAN'S DIGESTAE IN LATE ANTIQUITY:</b>          -Publius Iuventius Celsus (67-130 CE)          -Gaius (active between 130 and 180CE)          -Aemilius Papinianus (141-212 CE)          -Iulius Paulus (2nd/early 3rd century CE)          -Herennius Modestinus (born ca. 185 CE)          -Domitius Ulpian (murdered 223 or <b>228</b> CE)</p>	<p>-No comments are known on Justinian's laws between <b>Domitius Ulpian (+228 CE)</b> and <b>Irnerius of Bologna (ca. 1050-1130 CE)</b>.</p>

If Palmer decides to present the oddities in Justinian's chronology to his readers in a new edition of his text, he himself may find it helpful to first understand them. I explain the striking parallels as well as the absence of evolution over 700 years as being due to the stratigraphic simultaneity of Imperial Antiquity, Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages in the 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> century. After all, there are no excavation sites with ruined buildings of the Severan emperors (190s-230s) below ruins of Justinian structures (500s) upon which one finds ruins of the time of Leo VI (900s). If the German textbooks had shown the problems of Justinian's laws as early as 1953 in a clear arrangement, I might already have wondered about the credibility of our chronology. But that would certainly have been much too late, because countless erudite scholars would already have been at work on the problem a long time ago (cf. in detail Heinsohn 2019).

**(B)** Few events of Imperial Antiquity have been analysed and described in such detail as **Rome's war against Jews** from the First Jewish-Roman War *via* the Kito's War up to the Bar Kokhba Revolt (66-132 CE). We not only have Roman, but also Jewish witnesses, such as Yosef ben Matityahu (Flavius Josephus), author of *The Jewish War*. In addition, there are many archaeological remains. Palmer devotes a brief passage to first major period of these wars: “As reported by Tacitus, Cassius Dio, Suetonius and Orosius, and, in an eye-witness account, by the Romano-Jewish scholar, Flavius Josephus, Jerusalem soon fell to Titus and the city was destroyed. According to the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle and to Josephus, this occurred in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Vespasian” (Palmer 2019, 18).

The heavy fighting began, in 66 CE, with the invasion of a Roman commander named Gallus from Antioch/Syria to Judaea, where he fought bloody battles but could not seize Jerusalem. With the defeat of the Bar Kokhba's rebels under Hadrian, in 132 CE, the Jews in Judaea and Samaria were nearly exterminated or sold into slavery. Only a few thousand survived, mostly in Galilee. But something strange happened in 351 CE. Again, a Roman commander named Gallus marched from Antioch/Syria to Judaea where he devastated cities such as Tiberias, Diospolis, and Diocaesarea. But he did not take Jerusalem. Thousands of captured Jewish fighters were executed.

We do not hear about these events from Trevor Palmer. But the curious repetitions don't stop yet. Just as after the failure of Gallus of the 1<sup>st</sup> century, fresh troops arrived, among whom the *LEGIO X FRETENESIS* operated with particular cruelty. This legion was quartered in Jerusalem. After the conquest by the 4<sup>th</sup> century Gallus, the *LEGIO X FRETENESIS* was again quartered in Jerusalem.

<b>Two Jewish wars against Rome's <i>LEGIO X FRETENSIS</i> within some 300 years?</b> (Banchich 1997; Crown 1989; Dabrowa 1993; Kohen 2007; Strothmann 1997)	
<b>Jewish wars of 66 - 136 CE (IMPERIAL ANTIQUITY)</b>	<b>Jewish war of 351 ff. CE and <i>LEGIO X FRETENSIS</i> up to 420 CE in Judaea (LATE ANTIQUITY)</b>
<b>GALLUS</b> (legate of <b>Syria</b> [63/65-67 CE]) marched from <b>Antioch</b> to attack Judaea in September <b>66 CE</b> . He failed to take Jerusalem.	Constantius <b>GALLUS</b> (a sub-Caesar [351-354 CE]) marched from <b>Antioch/Syria</b> to attack Judaea in <b>351 CE</b> . He did not take Jerusalem.
<b>LEGIO X FRETENSIS</b> (also <b>Decimani</b> ; <b>LEGXF</b> ; <b>LXFRE</b> ) is active in the Samaritan Mountains. In Judaea it takes Qumran, Jerusalem, Herodium, and Massada [72 CE]. <b>Thousands of rebels murdered.</b>	<b>LEGIO X FRETENSIS</b> is still in Judaea around <b>390-420 CE</b> according to the <i>Notitia Dignitatum</i> [estimates for its completion range from 390s to 420s CE] <b>Thousands of rebels murdered.</b>
<b>LEGIO X FRETENSIS</b> becomes sole legion assigned to maintain the peace in Judaea after 70s CE- It is active from its base in Jerusalem against the Bar-Kochba Revolt in the 130s CE. Altogether the Jewish wars last <b>some 70 years</b> (66-136 CE).	<b>LEGIO X FRETENSIS</b> is stationed in Judaea up to the <b>420s CE</b> under Praefectus <i>DUX PALAESTINAE</i> (according to <i>Notitia Dignitatum</i> ). The years from the revolt of 351CE to the 420s CE would give the <i>Legio X Fretensis</i> <b>some 70 years</b> in Judaea during the 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> century CE.
<b>Seals, inscriptions, brick stamp of <i>LEGIO X FRETENSIS</i></b>	<b>NO seals, inscriptions or brick stamps for <i>LEGIO X FRETENSIS</i> during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries CE.</b>
<b><i>LEGIO X FRETENSIS</i> garrisoned at Jerusalem</b>	<b>NO material remains of the garrison of <i>LEGIO X FRETENSIS</i> in Jerusalem during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries CE!</b>  <b>NO material remains of camps for <i>LEGIO X FRETENSIS</i> anywhere during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries CE!</b>
	
	

If we can trust the *Notitia Dignitatum*, the *LEGIO X FRETENSIS* remained in the city until about 420 CE (Dabrowa 1993). Some 70 years have passed since the invasion of Judaea by the second Gallus in 351 CE. That period is close to the time-span from 66 CE

(invasion of Judaea by the first Gallus) to 137 CE (death of Hadrian). Since no material remains were found for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gallus and his troops from *LEGIO X FRETENESIS*, it looks as if we are simply dealing with two variants of the same narrative.

Further anti-Jewish Roman legions joined the strange duplications across some 300 years. According to *Notitia Dignitatum*, *LEGIO XV APOLLINARIS* had – after the conquest of Jotapata and Gamla – left the war theatre around 130 CE for Ancyra/Ankara. After unknown whereabouts since the Severan dynasty (190s-230s), *LEGIO XV APOLLINARIS* reappeared during the 5<sup>th</sup> century, again in Ancyra/Ankara (Ritterling 1925).

However, there are neither archaeological finds in Jerusalem nor in Ankara for two heydays – separated by 300 years – of the two legions. Nowhere was more intensive research done on the material remains of a legion of the 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> century than on the *LEGIO X FRETENESIS* in Jerusalem. The outcome remained zero. This cannot really surprise. After all, Jerusalem jumps at the Kishle, Israel's best long stratigraphy at all, directly from “the remains of Herod's palace [up to 3<sup>rd</sup> c.; GH; ... to] tanneries and dying pools from the Middle Ages“ [late 11<sup>th</sup> c.; GH]” (Tower 2015).

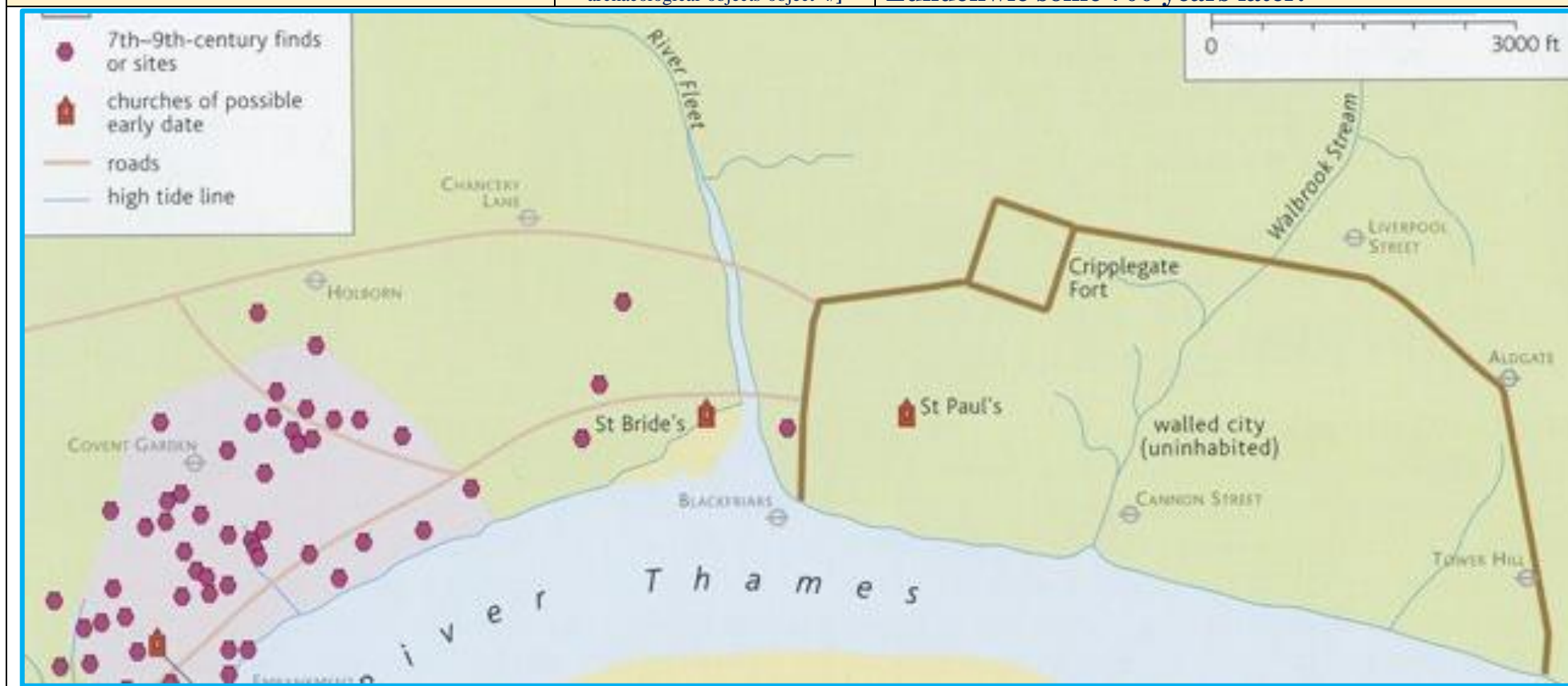
There is no greater puzzle for 1<sup>st</sup> millennium CE Jewish history than the so-called Silent Period. For some 700 years – between the 2<sup>nd</sup> century (with Bar Koseva's [Kokhba's] Mishnaic Hebrew) and the 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century (with the *Codex Cairensis*) – hardly any chronologically verifiable Hebrew manuscripts of the Bible have come down to us. Therefore, the lack of material remains for the *LEGIO X FRETENESIS* during Late Antiquity (4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> c.) should not come as a surprise. Different written sources for the same events have been torn apart chronologically in order to fill periods of time whose incorporation into the text books is never explained. Stratigraphically, the destruction of Herod's Palace occurred not far away from the 11<sup>th</sup> century of the crusaders. This brings the Jewish wars of the 60s to 130s CE roughly into the time-span of ca. 760 to 830 CE (for the corresponding Arab stratigraphy see Heinsohn 2018a).

Trevor Palmer may be content with his firm belief in the reality of the 700 years for which even in Jerusalem there are no super-imposed building layers and Bible texts. For me, on the other hand, this time without settlement strata is simply non-existent everywhere. Removing 700 imaginary years from the chronology of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium CE allows me to solve puzzles that Palmer does not even mention. Among them is the enigma of the non-evolution of the Hebrew, Greek and Latin languages between the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> centuries. Theodulf of Orléans (760s-820s CE), for example, excels with a Latin "written in the metre perfected

by Ovid” [43 BCE-17/18 CE] (Dodwell 1993, 47). With the non-existence of the 700 years in between, this linguistic riddle disappears, too. Palmer does not have to agree with my line of reasoning. But I don't want to renounce the right to be curious about his own solution to these chronological problems.

**(C)** Though Palmer is Scottish, I would like to conclude my attempt to inspire his historical curiosity with a brief look at 1<sup>st</sup> millen-

<p><b>Lundenwic</b> (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> c. CE). It looked like a Roman <b>vicus</b> of the 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> c. CE. It used Londinium's streets of the 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> c. . It was covered by <b>dark earth</b> in the 10<sup>th</sup> c. CE</p>	<p><b>LONDON AREA</b> in the 1<sup>st</sup> millenium CE [<a href="http://blog.museumoflondon.org.uk/a-history-of-london-in-10-archaeological-objects-object-4/">http://blog.museumoflondon.org.uk/a-history-of-london-in-10-archaeological-objects-object-4/</a>]</p>	<p><b>Londinium</b>. It looked like a Roman city of the 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> c. CE. It was covered by <b>dark earth</b> in 3<sup>rd</sup> c. CE but its streets were miraculously spared to be used by <b>Lundenwic</b> some 700 years later.</p>
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nium London. In the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium AD this famous city comprised two parts, **Lundenwic and Londinium**, which were about 1000 m apart. Each of them remained basically unused for about 700 years: Lundenwic from approx. 1-700 CE, Londinium from approx. 230 to 930 CE. Palmer does not discuss them at all.

Two miracles keep the London experts busy:

(1) Both settlements were covered by dark earth: Londinium in the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Schofield 1999), Lundenwic in the 10<sup>th</sup> century CE (Leary 2004b, 145). In Londinium the dark earth layer from the 10<sup>th</sup> century CE is missing. In Lundenwic the dark earth layer from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE is missing. The miracle disappears, however, if one removes the respective empty times of approximately 700 years. Then both dark earth layers lie at the same height. Since new buildings in both parts start around the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Londinium receives the same stratigraphic date as Lundenwic. Both belonged to the 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> century CE.

(2) The 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> c. roads of Lundenwic were neatly connected with the 700 year old and still miraculously intact Roman streets to Londinium: “The line of a [1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> century] Roman road (presently known as the Strand and Fleet Street) was apparently retained throughout the Saxon era [8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> century], and delineated the higher and dry ground from the riverside beach or strand. A second Roman road (presently known as Oxford Street, New Oxford Street and High Holborn) was also retained and passed to the north of Lundenwic“ (Leary 2004a, 20). The miracle of the roads from Londinium to Lundenwic, free of dark earth and intact at the same time, disappears because both parts existed side by side at the same time and were not separated by 700 years (see in detail Heinsohn 2018b).

**To summarize** these comments on Palmer’s massive endeavor: It is the stratigraphy of the first millennium that prevents me in my post-2013 evolutionary stage from once again believing – as Trevor does today, and as I myself did at least partially until 2013 – in the validity of mainstream chronology for this millennium. If one really wants to lead me back to the time before 2013, then one must make me forget the stratigraphies that are found in the ground. For the time being I do not see any humane procedure that could bring about such amnesia. It would be comparable to a demand that astronomers abandon the telescope.

Let me conclude with a dialogue I recently enjoyed in my home city, Gdansk (former Danzig). Like Londinium, Gdansk has no settlement layers between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries CE. Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages are missing. The neighbouring

town, Sopot – which is a little further away from Gdansk than Lundenwic is from Londinium – stratigraphically resembles Lundenwic. Imperial Antiquity and Late Antiquity are missing there. Still, one has the Early Middle Ages. But this period looks strange because people living in the 9<sup>th</sup> century apparently used Roman coins from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. There are elaborate theories to justify the use of a currency that has been obsolete for 700 years (cf. Heinsohn 2018c).

Thus, both cities – Londinium and Gdansk -- complain about having two epochs of about 700 years that have no settlement layers. A little provocatively, I ask local experts on city history why they do not complain that they only have one nose, and not three. My question is perceived as an insult, because nobody has three noses. It would be madness to demand something like that. I agree, but I add that nowhere is there a city with three superimposed settlement layers for (1) Imperial Antiquity, (2) Late Antiquity, and the (3) Early Middle Ages. Nevertheless, they would complain unabashedly that there is only one of these periods in their own city. That makes them hesitate for a moment, but then comes triumphantly: And what about Rome? I am prepared for this question. My *Stratigraphy of Rome* has been online since 21 November 2018 (Heinsohn 2018d). During the first millennium CE (up to approx. 930CE) residential quarters (*insulae*), latrines, waterpipes, sewers, roads, ports, kitchens, bakeries etc. were built in Rome only during Imperial Antiquity (1-230sCE). The eternal city matches Jerusalem's Kishle.

<b>Periods without building of new residential quarters, latrines, aqueducts, bakeries, kitchens, streets, ports etc. (grey) in selected first millennium sites (same color==same period)</b> [adapted from Heinsohn 2018d].					
<b>PERIODS</b>	<b>ROME</b>	<b>CONSTANTINOPLE</b>	<b>JERUSALEM (Kishle)</b>	<b>LONDINIUM</b>	<b>LUNDENWIC</b>
<b>High Middle Ages</b>	<b>Residential quarters.</b>	<b>Residential quarters,</b>	<b>Residential quarters,.</b>	<b>Residential quarters,</b>	<b>Residential quarters,</b>
<b>930s CE</b>	<b>Cataclysm with dark earth wiped out Roman civilization, led to the primitivism of the survivors' new start in the High Middle Ages.</b>				
<b>Early Middle Ages</b>					<b>Residential quarters.</b>
<b>Late Antiquity</b>		<b>Residential quarters etc.</b>			
<b>Imperial Antiquity</b>	<b>Residential quarters, latrines etc.</b>		<b>Residential quarters, latrines etc.</b>	<b>Residential quarters, latrines etc.</b>	
<b>Late Latène</b>	<b>Residential quarters</b>	<b>Residential quarters, etc.</b>	<b>Residential quarters etc.</b>	<b>Residential quarters, etc.</b>	<b>Residential quarters etc.</b>

I don't know if my discussion partners have read my Rome-stratigraphy, from which the table above has been modified for this text. However, I know that I have not yet received a refutation. I also know that Palmer has not written a single word about Rome's stratigraphy though he has mentioned the city more than 300 times. This conveys the nostalgic charm of a *disputatio* about the planet



Jupiter before the discoveries of Galileo Galilei. Nevertheless, I remain hopeful that the stratigraphic aspect of this debate will not be avoided forever.

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Thanks for editorial assistance go to Clark Whelton (New York)