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Title: **“Titus and the Burning of the Temple - *Judeophobia* and *Judeophilia*: Josephus, Sulpicius Severus, Orosius and the Talmudic Literature”**

Panel: Ancient History

The common denominator of these sources is that they all present Titus' attitude to the Jewish Temple as the essence of his attitude towards the Jewish people. Comparison between them produces three interesting cross-sections:

Josephus vis-à-vis the Talmudic literature. Josephus makes a desperate effort to acquit Titus from the responsibility for the destruction of the Temple, especially in Jewish eyes. The Talmudic testimony evidences the complete failure of this attempt. Thus, for the rabbis, Titus becomes the ultimate in Roman wickedness, because he is the only emperor who comes into direct conflict with God himself and his House.

Josephus and the Talmudic literature vis-à-vis the Christian tradition. Josephus and the rabbis of the Talmud see the destruction of the Temple as the climax of the confrontation between Judaea and Rome; in the Christian tradition, the destruction of the Temple signifies above all the "parting of the ways" between Jews and Christians. Sulpicius Severus vis-à-vis Orosius. Sulpicius' historiography is clearly anti-Roman: the 'wicked' Titus burns down the Temple - the common root of both Jews and their Christian 'scion' - cutting down the tree in order to get rid of the fresh new branch. In contrast, Orosius combines Roman and Christian history in a positive light. Thus for him, Titus is the 'good' man, who achieves wide fame and is honoured as *Autocrator* the moment he decides to burn down the Temple.