Christians in Athens in the First Two Centuries: From Paul to Bishop Quadratus

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Abstract

In the growing field of New Testament studies that could be termed "Polis and Ekklesia", much investigation has been done on the early Church in the larger urban centres such as Rome, Corinth and Ephesus. Peter Lampe commented, at the end of his study on Rome in the first two centuries (*Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries: From Paul to Valentinus*, 2003), that it would be necessary to explore smaller urban centres in order to ascertain whether or not the larger ones were representative of the Christian movement more broadly.

This thesis seeks to address a small part of the gap identified by Lampe by offering a historical investigation into the Christian church in Athens in the first two centuries CE. It grounds the relevant Christian texts—Acts 17; Paul's letters: 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians; The *Apology* of Quadratus; The *Apology* of Aristides; Athenagoras' *Legatio Pro Christianis*; and Dionysius of Corinth's *Letter to the Athenians*—in the social, political and religious context of the city in this period, engaging with literary and material sources, in order to analyse how the early Christian movement interacted with its Athenian setting.

The church in Athens began through the ministry of the Apostle Paul in the synagogue, the agora, and before the Areopagus council. He proclaimed "Jesus and the resurrection" as the way of salvation for a city embroiled in the tension of courting Roman power and fortifying its traditional legacy. In the second century, as Athens rose once more to prominence under Hadrian and the Antonine emperors, the Athenian church capitalised on the city's status and made its mark through a line of apologists. The early apologists, Quadratus and Aristides, responded to the challenges of the Jewish revolts under Trajan and Hadrian, and engaged the ethno-religious conversations that came about from Hadrian's Panhellenic program. Later in the century, Athenagoras wrote his *Legatio* in a time of significant persecution which seems to have arisen in part in response to the social turmoil of the 170s CE. After Athenagoras' flight from Athens to Alexandria, external support for the Athenian church came from Dionysius, the bishop of Corinth. Dionysius supported the appointment of a new bishop, Quadratus, and encouraged the Athenian Christians to rekindle their faith, a faith that was shared with their founder, that Apostle Paul, and the "first Athenian bishop", Dionysius the Areopagite.

Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

The following sections of my thesis have been published, accepted for publication, or are currently under review by a journal:

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(Signed)_____ Date: 30/09/2020

David Andrew Evans

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I am very grateful for the encouraging feedback and insightful critiques of my examiners: Prof. John S. Kloppenborg (Toronto), Dr. Amelia R. Brown (UQ), and Prof. Todd D. Still (Baylor/Truett). I appreciate the time that they spent on my thesis, and am thankful for the comments they offered which have already proven to sharpen my argument.

My thanks go to the Society for the Study of Early Christianity, by whom I was awarded a scholarship that enabled me to spend a month at Tyndale House in Cambridge, UK. Participating in the scholarly community there was enriching, and I was able to gain access to resources without which this thesis would have been significantly poorer.

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been away for research or conferences, and Erin has shouldered the burden of parenting alone. There have been times when I have been physically present but mentally distant, distracted by my research. I am grateful for Erin's ongoing support and encouragement. I'm thankful that our children have helped me to remember that there is a life outside of thesis writing; they saved me from being too consumed by my work.

Abbreviations

Journals

AJPhil	American Journal of Philology
CBQ	The Catholic Biblical Quarterly
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JDFM	The Journal of Discipleship and Family Ministry
JECS	Journal of Early Christian Studies
JEH	Journal of Ecclesiastical History
JGAR	Journal of Gospels and Acts Research
JHS	Journal of Hellenic Studies
JRA	Journal of Roman Archaeology
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
NTS	New Testament Studies
TAPA	Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association
ZNW	Zeitschrift für Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZPE	Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik

Series

CNT	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
KfA	Kommentar zu frühchristlichen Apologeten
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien
SC	Sources Chrétiennes
STAC	Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum
ThesCRA	Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

Other Volumes

BDAG	Danker, Frederick W., and Walter Bauer, eds. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2000.
BrillGE	Montanari, Franco. *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*. Edited by Madeleine Goh and Chad Schroeder. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
LGPN	P.M. Fraser and E. Matthews, eds. *A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*. 8 Volumes. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987–2018.

Databases

Mantis	*Mantis: A Numismatic Technologies Integration Service*. American Numismatic Society, 2015. http://numismatics.org/search/.

ORBIS Scheidel, Walter, and Elijah Meeks. *Orbis: The Stanford Geospatial Network Model of the Roman World*. Stanford University Libraries. http://orbis.stanford.edu.

TLG *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae.* University of California, 2014. http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu.

1. INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

1.1 A Study of Christians in Athens in the First Two Centuries CE

In his *Panathenaic Oration*, delivered to the Athenians in 167CE, Aelius Aristides stated that one difficulty of his task, that of praising the achievements of the city, was that "we come forward after all the hordes of writers who have spoken on this subject and preoccupied your ears, and we have a greater task in finding what we shall avoid than what we shall use. For although their subjects and laudations are different, that which has been neglected by each has been accomplished by all (*Pan. Or.* 3).[1] He goes on to say, however, "Although the city excels in many great attributes and has left no topic untouched for those who wish to praise it, no one up to the present day has set himself the whole subject, or has had the courage to do so" (*Pan. Or.* 4).

Much the same could be said for studies on the church in Athens in the first two centuries of the common era. Studies abound that focus on individual Christian texts, or texts grouped by genre. As James Harrison observes, most New Testament scholarship on the city has "predictably concentrated on Paul's Areopagus address."[2] In relation to the second century, studies tend to focus on the apologists individually or corporately, but with little effort at locating these carefully within the Athenian context.[3]

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[1] English translation: Aelius Aristides, *The Complete Works. Volume I: Orations I–XVI*, trans. Charles A. Behr, (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 5–77. Greek text: Aelius Aristides, *P. Aelii Aristidis Opera Quae Extant Omnia. Volume 1: Introduction – Oratio I*, edited by Fridericus Waltharius Lenz and Carolus Allison Behr (Leiden: Brill, 1976).

[2] Harrison, "Introduction," 18. For example: Martin Dibelius, "Paul on the Areopagus," in *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Heinrich Greeven (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1956), 26–77; C. Kavin Rowe, "The Grammar of Life: The Areopagus Speech and Pagan Tradition," *NTS* 57, no. 1 (2010), 31–50; Christopher Kavin Rowe, *World Upside Down: Reading Acts in the Graeco-Roman Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 27–41; Clare K. Rothschild, *Paul in Athens: The Popular Religious Context of Acts 17*, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014); Joshua W. Jipp, "Paul's Areopagus Speech as Both Critique and Propaganda," *JBL* 131, no. 3 (2012), 567–88; Kenneth D. Litwak, "Israel's Prophets Meet Athens' Philosophers: Scriptural Echoes in Acts 17.22–31," *Biblica* 85, no. 2 (2004), 199–216.

[3] Two prime examples are Bernard Pouderon, *Les apologistes grecs du IIè siecle* (Paris: Cerf, 2005); and J. Geffcken, *Zwei griechische Apologeten* (Leipzig/Berlin: B.G. Teubner, 1907).

A number of studies have focused on the Christianisation of Athens and Attica in late antiquity, from the Herulian attack (267CE) to the sixth century.[4] The consensus is that the process of Christianisation was slow and, in the words of Homer Thompson, "The old gods and the old philosophers had held on longer in Athens than in almost any other part of the ancient world."[5] Frank R. Trombley, focusing on the Christianisation of Athens in the fourth through sixth centuries, says that early Christian inscriptions "hardly suggest a die-hard ecclesiastical structure c.300 that brooked no compromise with the prevailing Hellenic social and religious ethos."[6] The inscriptions c.284–337 suggest a clear differentiation between the Christians and their surrounding Hellenic culture.[7] Those of the converts who were from higher social strata from the late fourth century onwards, however, reflect a combination of Christian and Hellenic theology and culture.[8] Admittedly, Trombley focuses on a later period than the one under consideration in this study, but the picture of a slow growth of the church in Athens is potentially skewed by his relegation of the Athenian apologists to a footnote.[9]

There is a growing body of literature (discussed further below) examining early Christianity in the major urban centres of the Roman Empire in the first two centuries CE. Relatively little work has been conducted on Athens, though there are some articles and chapters contributing to this field. Bruce Winter and Eckhard Schnabel have more deliberately considered the historical context in Athens at the time of Paul's ministry there. Winter has a chapter exploring the impact of the imperial cult in Athens and how Paul's speech relates to that,[10] and a chapter about the role of the Areopagus as "gate-keepers" to the admission of

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[4] Homer A. Thompson, "Athenian Twilight: A.D. 267—600," *JRS* 49 (1959): 61–72; Alison Frantz, *Late Antiquity: A.D. 267-700*, The Athenian Agora XXIV (Princeton: The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1988), 68–72; "Paganism to Christianity in the Temples of Athens," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 19 (1965): 185–205; Garth Fowden, "City and Mountain in Late Roman Attica," *JHS* 108 (1988): 48–59; Timothy E. Gregory, "The Survival of Paganism in Christian Greece," *AJPhil* 107, no. 2 (1986): 229–42; Helen G. Saradi, "Late Paganism and Christianisation in Greece," in *Late Antique Paganism*, ed. Luke Lavan and Michael Mulryan (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 263–309; Frank R. Trombley, *Hellenic Religion and Christianization C.370–529, Volume I* (Leuven: Brill, 1995), 283–332; Elli Tzavella, "Christianisation of Attica: The Topography of Early Christian Churches," *Pharos* 20, no. 2 (2014): 121–58.
[5] Thompson, "Athenian Twilight," 72.
[6] Frank R. Trombley, *Hellenic Religion*, 283.
[7] *Hellenic Religion*, 284–85.
[8] *Hellenic Religion*, 285–89.
[9] *Hellenic Religion*, 284, n.5. Trombley acknowledges Quadratus and Athenagoras, but not Aristides.
[10] Bruce W. Winter, *Divine Honours for the Caesars: The First Christians' Responses* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 127–65.

new gods in Athens, and how Paul's speech responds to their claim for authority.[11] Schnabel similarly focuses on the role of the Areopagus as cultural "gate-keepers".[12] Regarding the second century, William C. Rutherford has a chapter looking at the relationship between Hadrian's benefactions to Athens and Aristides' *Apology*.[13]

To the best of my knowledge there is no diachronic study currently published of Christianity in Athens in the first two centuries CE.[14] This thesis, therefore, will seek to fill that gap, offering an exploration of the Christian community in Athens from the foundational mission of Paul through to Bishop Quadratus around 180CE. The Christian community, and its texts, will be examined in relation with the religious, political, social and economic context of the city. Unlike Aelius Aristides, I make no claim to great courage in this undertaking; but I have tried to set myself to "the whole subject", and have enjoyed the privilege of studying the "many great attributes" of this small early Christian community.

1.2 Recent City-Focused Studies in Early Christianity

Since the 1960s, there has been a growing field of social-scientific studies of the New Testament—epitomised by scholars such as Edwin Judge, on the social-historical side, and Wayne Meeks on the social-scientific side—which aim to illuminate the New Testament by providing a "thick description" of the early church in its social context.[15] One particular expression of this field is "the detailed city-by-city approach" which, in relation to a specific

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[11] "On Introducing Gods to Athens: An Alternative Reading of Acts 17:18–20," *Tyndale Bulletin* 47, no. 1 (1996): 71–90.

[12] Eckhard J Schnabel, "Contextualising Paul in Athens: The Proclamation of the Gospel before Pagan Audiences in the Graeco-Roman World," *Religion & Theology* 12, no. 2 (2005): 172–90.

[13] William C. Rutherford, "At the Origins of Christian Apologetic Literature: The Politics of Patronage in Hadrianic Athens," in *Stones, Bones, and the Sacred: Essays on Material Culture and Ancient Religion in Honor of Dennis E. Smith*, ed. Alan H. Cadwallader (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 129–155.

[14] Cilliers Breytenbach and Elli Tzavella are currently writing a study entitled *Early Christianity in Attica and Adjacent Areas*, which considers the Christianisation of Attica from the Apostle Paul through to the emperor Justinian I (d.565CE). Their work is due for publication from 2020, and will surely be a substantial contribution to the field.

[15] E.A. Judge, "The Social Patterns of the Christian Groups in the First Century," in *Social Distinctives of the Christians in the First Century: Pivotal Essays by E.A. Judge*, ed. David M. Scholer (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2008 (1960)), 1–56; Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983). Cf. N.T. Wright, *Paul and His Recent Interpreters* (London: SPCK, 2015), 228.

city, brings all of the extant "documentary and archeological evidence into sympathetic dialogue with the upper-class literary evidence and the writings of the New Testament" in order to develop a detailed picture of the church in that city.[16]

Two examples of this approach are Paul Trebilco's *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius* and Peter Lampe's *Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries: From Paul to Valentinus*.[17] Both provide literary and epigraphic analyses of the church in those two cities in the first two centuries CE. A similar study by Wayne Meeks and Robert Wilken focused on Jews and Christians in Antioch in the first four centuries.[18] Bruce W. Longenecker has also published a study on Christianity in Pompeii, though with a much narrower timeframe (for obvious reasons).[19] Amelia R. Brown's *Corinth in Late Antiquity: A Greek, Roman and Christian City* traces the changes in that city during late antiquity, including its gradual Christianisation but primarily focused on the city rather than the Christian community.[20]

Other studies that have been more focused in their scope, considering certain aspects of Graeco-Roman society, religion and culture in relation to one New Testament letter, include Julien Ogereau's *Paul's Koinonia with the Philippians*,[21] Peter Oakes' *Philippians: From People to Letter*,[22] and James Harrison's *Paul and the Imperial Authorities at Thessalonica and Rome: A Study in the Conflict of Ideology*.[23] In the *The First Urban Churches* series, edited by James Harrison and L.L. Welborn, each volume contains[24] a collection of essays looking at varying

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[16] James R. Harrison, "The First Urban Churches: Introduction," in *The First Urban Churches 1: Methodological Foundations*, ed. James R. Harrison and L.L. Welborn (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015), 1–2.

[17] Paul Trebilco, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007); Peter Lampe, *Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries: From Paul to Valentinus* (London: Continuum, 2003).

[18] Wayne A. Meeks and Robert L. Wilken, *Jews and Christians in Antioch in the First Four Centuries of the Common Era* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1978).

[19] Bruce W. Longenecker, *The Crosses of Pompeii: Jesus-Devotion in a Vesuvian Town* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016).

[20] Amelia R. Brown, *Corinth in Late Antiquity: A Greek, Roman and Christian City* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018).

[21] Julien M. Ogereau, *Paul's Koinonia with the Philippians: A Socio-Historical Investigation of a Pauline Economic Partnership*, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).

[22] Peter Oakes, *Philippians: From People to Letter*, SNTS (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[23] James R. Harrison, *Paul and the Imperial Authorities at Thessalonica and Rome: A Study in the Conflict of Ideology*, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).

[24] Volumes 1–5, on methodology, Roman Corinth, Ephesus, Roman Philippi, and the cities of the Lycus Valley are currently in print.

aspects of the early church in a city. Volume two, focusing on Roman Corinth, includes essays discussing inheritance disputes, urban-rural relationships, mixed-language inscriptions and civic values, and what light they shed on our understanding of Corinth and Paul's letters to the Corinthians.[25] A series of three other edited volumes concentrate on Christianity in the urban context of Corinth.[26] There is also a growing body of diachronic studies on the christianisation of various regions. This includes recent volumes in the Early Christianity in Asia Minor (ECAM) series,[27] published by Brill, as well as other stand-alone volumes.[28]

The two studies which have been most influential on the shape of this thesis are those of Lampe, on Rome, and Trebilco, on Ephesus. A brief comment on these studies will help lay a foundation for the approach that will be taken in this thesis.

1.2.1 Rome – Peter Lampe's *Christians at Rome*

Following a description of the arrival of Christianity in Rome (Part 1), Lampe's study of Christianity at Rome consists of four main parts: Part 2 considers topographical concerns, including which areas of the city Christians lived in and the demographics of those areas; Part 3 is a diachronic study of the inscriptional and literary sources from which he seeks to draw general conclusions; Part 4 is a prosopographic study of specific individuals, which gives "color, through concrete data, to the generalizations that the sources themselves draw;"[29] and Part 5, which Lampe describes as "an overview of urban Roman Christianity,"[30] consists of the discussion of various aspects of the "fractionation" of Roman Christianity. The abundance of Christian sources enabled Lampe to conduct an exceptionally thorough study.

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[25] James R. Harrison and L.L. Welborn, eds., *The First Urban Churches 2: Roman Corinth* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016).
[26] Daniel N. Schowalter and Steven J. Friesen (eds), *Urban Religion in Roman Corinth* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Divinity School, 2005); Steven J. Friesen, Daniel N. Schowalter, and James C. Walters (eds), *Corinth in Context: Comparative Studies on Religion and Society* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Steven J. Friesen, Sarah A. James, and Daniel N. Schowalter (eds), *Corinth in Contrast: Studies in Inequality* (Leiden: Brill, 2014).
[27] Ulrich Huttner, *Early Christianity in the Lycus Valley*, trans. David Green (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Cilliers Breytenbach and Christianne Zimmerman, *Early Christianity in Lycaonia and Adjacent Areas: From Paul to Amphilochius of Iconium* (Leiden: Brill, 2018).
[28] Such as Paul McKechnie, *Christianizing Asia Minor: Conversion, Communities, and Social Change in the Pre-Constantinian Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).
[29] Lampe, *Christians at Rome*, 1.
[30] *Christians at Rome*, 1.

Lampe finds that the general source study and the prosopography agree on a number of points. These include "the predominant Greek-speaking character of Roman Christianity… [and] high portion of Christian foreigners;"[31] the mixing of formal pagan education with Christian education organised by the family or church; a range of educational levels; and an increasing social stratification as time went on.[32] He also argues that the Roman church was heavily "fractionated" along geographic and theological lines, without a central unifying leader.[33]

1.2.2 Ephesus – Paul Trebilco's *Early Christians in Ephesus*

Trebilco's expansive study of Christianity in Ephesus begins with a chapter on the Ephesian context, considering the city's history and significance, the Artemis cult and the Imperial cult, and the city's Jewish community. The author notes that the context of the city "exerted influence" on the Christian community, and thus it is an important inclusion in understanding Christianity in the city.[34]

The Christian texts that Trebilco draws on include Paul's letters and Acts of the Apostles (ch. 2–4); the Pastoral Epistles, Johannine Letters and Revelation (ch. 5–13); and Ignatius of Antioch's *Letter to the Ephesians* (ch. 14–15). Like Lampe, Trebilco finds that the Christians in Ephesus gathered in house churches, which meant that "variety, diversity and disagreement could develop amongst the Christians."[35] This diversity was evident in the existence of at least six different Christian groups with significantly diverse theological characteristics in Ephesus by the end of the first century CE.[36]

The period under consideration by Trebilco ranges from before the Pauline mission in Ephesus through to roughly 110CE. The results of his study do not have the same detail regarding topography and socio-economic stratification that Lampe's revealed, but there are notable similarities regarding the diverse Christian groups that co-existed in Ephesus and Rome. While the literature from Ephesus shows that the Christians drew starker lines regarding who was

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[31] *Christians at Rome*, 351.
[32] *Christians at Rome*, 352–55.
[33] *Christians at Rome*, 359–408.
[34] Trebilco, *Christians in Ephesus*, 52.
[35] *Christians in Ephesus*, 98.
[36] *Christians in Ephesus,*

"in" and who was "out" at an earlier date than those in Rome, they both still demonstrate the rapid diversification of the Christian movement in these cities.

1.2.3 Comments on Further Research

In his concluding remarks, Lampe encourages continuing research on Christianity in the cities of the Roman Empire:

> To work inductively on the level of local history means to move from the level of the empire down to the individual cities—*and* later to compile data from the individual cities, to compare them and thus to advance to more general statements. Rome as the capital city … might be more representative for the entire empire than other cities … *How* representative … the city of Rome was for ancient Christianity as a whole, however, will first become apparent when more studies from other parts of the empire are produced.[37]

Continuing this type of study on a smaller city such as Athens will foreground a "minor" centre of the Empire and create an interesting point of comparison to the larger centres such as Rome.

1.2.4 Engaging the Urban-Rural Relationship

The increasing interest in early Christianity in the urban context over the last thirty years has tended to focus on cities in isolation to the regions surrounding them. Some corrective voices have arisen recently, however. Harrison has stated that it is important to investigate "the hinterlands of city life, focusing on the nearby small villages where archaeological and epigraphic evidence might be available" and that "a totally 'urban' lens to our research might oversimplify the social, parochial, and geographical complexities of ancient life."[38] David Pettegrew emphatically agrees, saying, "It is no longer acceptable to ignore the territory as

[37] *Christians at Rome*, 409.
[38] Harrison, "Introduction," 7.

irrelevant to the concerns of the first urban Christians."[39] He argues that the relationship between ancient cities and their territories was such that a study of the urban environment is incomplete if it doesn't include a consideration of the city's surrounding areas. Two of the studies of Athenian Christianity in late antiquity have explicitly focused on the regional areas of Attica rather than the city itself.[40]

Thomas A. Robinson has recently argued that if the Christian population in the Roman Empire at 300CE was roughly six million, or ten percent of the total population, a significant portion of this number would need to be rural, not urban.[41] He observes that the consensus opinion that early Christianity was totally urban comes from a "flawed perception that the urban and rural domains represented alien and mutually exclusive worlds, and that, for Christians, nearly insurmountable barriers faced any effort to take their message to the countryside."[42] The fact that there was high connectivity and interdependence between the rural and urban domains means that a detailed study of a city will only be enriched by also considering its rural and regional surroundings.

In light of Robinson's work, Athens' surrounding regions will be considered where relevant to the thesis. In one sense this is unavoidable, since the record of the city of Athens itself is impossible to separate from its demes, which are located across the broader region of Attica. Furthermore, as will be seen especially in the chapters treating the second century, imperial benefactions to Athens also tended to include its regional surroundings. Eleusis, which lay twenty-one kilometres to the west of Athens and was the location of the famous Eleusinian Mysteries devoted to Demeter and Kore,[43] was the beneficiary of building programs under Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius. The Hadrianic aqueduct linked Athens to the springs in the mountains to its north and east, and was in part designed to help irrigate agricultural regions around the city.[44]

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[39] David K. Pettegrew, "The Changing Rural Horizons of Corinth's First Urban Christians," in *The First Urban Churches 2: Roman Corinth*, ed. James R. Harrison and L.L. Welborn (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 177–78.
[40] Fowden, "City and Mountain," 48–59; Tzavella, "Christianisation of Attica," 121–58.
[41] Thomas A. Robinson, *Who Were the First Christians: Dismantling the Urban Thesis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 39–40.
[42] *Who Were the First Christians?*, 211.
[43] John M. Camp, *The Archaeology of Athens* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 283.
[44] See discussion in Chapter 6.

1.2.5 Formation of Identity in the Second Sophistic

The period under examination in this thesis coincides closely with that of the Second Sophistic, a cultural and political movement characterised primarily by the claim to cultural superiority through the demonstration of "Greekness" or "Hellenism" in contrast to "Barbarianism." In the spheres of rhetoric and literature, this was primarily shown through the adoption of Attic Greek style and a mastery of the texts of Classical Greece.[45] For the individual, Greekness was not only demonstrated by belonging to the Greek "race" or γένος, it could also be attained through Greek *paideia* (education).[46] Such figures as Lucian of Samosata and Favorinus of Arles were both "Barbarians" by γένος—being from Syria and Gaul respectively—but claimed a type of Hellenism on the basis of their *paideia*.[47] The claim to Greekness was not a claim to a singular identity on the part of the individual, but rather one aspect of identity among many that could be claimed for a range of purposes.[48]

It is necessary then, to define the usage of the terms hellenic (ἑλληνικός), hellenism (Ἑλληνισμός), and hellenistic. "Hellenistic" will be used predominantly to refer to the Hellenistic period which spanned from the death of Alexander the Great in 323BCE to the Battle of Actium in 31BCE. "Hellenic" and "Hellenism" will be used to identify Greek language, culture and religion. At a later point in the history of Athens, in the fourth century after an advance in Christianisation, "Hellenic culture meant pagan culture."[49] This hard distinction is inappropriate to apply in the period under examination in this thesis. Even though an early apologist such as Aristides (c.125CE) would distinguish Christians from Greeks, Barbarians, and Jews, it is still evident that—writing in Greek—he was entering these same discussions of culture, religion and social order. Athenagoras, writing later in the second century, does not

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[45] Simon Swain, *Hellenism and Empire: Language, Classicism, and Power in the Greek World AD 50–250* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996),

[46] Simon Goldhill, "Introduction. Setting an Agenda: 'Everything is Greece to the Wise,'" in *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*, ed. Simon Goldhill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 1–15.

[47] Tim Whitmarsh, *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire: The Politics of Imitation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 90–130; Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformation of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 31–33.

[48] See Christopher P. Jones, "Multiple Identities in the age of the Second Sophistic," in *Paideia: The World of the Second Sophistic*, ed. Barbara E. Borg (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004), 13–21.

[49] Swain, *Hellenism*, 5.

use the ethnic divisions as did Aristides, but rather presents Christianity more like a philosophical school and thus engages Hellenic culture in this way.

1.2.6 Approaches to Christian Texts

Following on from the discussion above, it is pertinent to place this thesis in the scholarship related to the function of early Christian texts, particularly Acts of the Apostles and the second century Apologists. Two recent scholars who represent two different streams in this regard are Bruce Winter and Laura Salah Nasrallah. Winter represents the stream of scholarship that approaches Acts as a historical source to be viewed within the contex of the first century CE.[50] Nasrallah, on the other hand, approaches these texts primarily as literature, and assesses their function as such.[51]

An example of the difference between the two can be seen in their treatment of Acts 17. Winter analyses the narrative of Paul's mission in Athens in contrast with the reception of the Imperial cult from the Augustan age through the first century CE.[52] Nasrallah, on the other hand, considers the literary function of what Luke sought to do in Acts more generally, and in Acts 17 specifically.[53] She, holding to a second century date for Acts, assesses the Athens narrative in the light of Hadrian's Panhellenion, a confederacy of cities in the Roman Greek East headed up by Athens.

In this thesis, Acts of the Apostles will be approached as a reliable historical source, written in the first century (as is discussed below in §1.4.1). This does not discount Luke's literary purposes and emphases, but simply retains the text's value as a source for information on the first century church. The second century apologetic texts will also be considered for their value as sources for understanding the Athenian church (discussed further below in §1.4.2).

1.3 Sources for Investigating Athenian Christianity

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[50] For example, note the series: Bruce W. Winter (ed.), *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting*, 6 volumes (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993–1997).
[51] Cf. Laura Salah Nasrallah, *Christian Responses to Roman Art and Architecture: The Second-Century Church Amid the Spaces of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
[52] Bruce W. Winter, *Divine Honours for the Caesars: The First Christians' Responses* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 127–165.
[53] Nasrallah, *Christian Responses*, 90–115.

As seen above, the shape of a study such as this is heavily dependent on the sources available for analysis. The two overviews of Christianity in Rome and Ephesus from Lampe and Trebilco differ significantly in their detail and structure because of the range of sources available for them. While Lampe only had a small number of New Testament texts to use, he had a large array of epigraphic and late first and second century literary material available to him. Trebilco had significantly more biblical material to work with (even considering his decision not to use Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians), but only Ignatius' letter to the Ephesians as a non-canonical literary source.

1.3.1 Christian Sources

The sources that are available for a study of Christianity in Athens in the first two centuries CE are primarily literary, including biblical texts, Athenian apologetic works, and material from later traditions. These Christian texts will be considered in light of literary and material evidence from the city in the period.

Biblical Texts

Acts

The primary biblical passage that is relevant to the study of Paul and Christianity in Athens is Acts 17:15–18:1, in which Luke records the account of Paul's travel to Athens in flight from Jewish persecutors in the Macedonian cities of Thessalonica and Beroea, and his engagement in evangelism in the city and his speech before the Areopagus Council with its ensuing results.

Pauline Epistles

A further reference to Athens can be found in 1 Thess. 2:17–3:5, in which Paul describes the way Satan hindered him from returning to Thessalonica, and his subsequent willingness "to be left behind at Athens alone" while sending Timothy back to Thessalonica. This passage offers an intriguing view into Paul's emotional engagement with his ministry, and is grounds for reflection on Paul's own attitude towards his ministry in Athens.

Paul's Corinthian correspondences also offer an oblique approach to his Athenian ministry. The apostle came to Corinth directly from Athens (Acts 18:1), and he describes his coming in this way:

> And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God (1 Cor. 2:1–5).

Joseph Fitzmyer sees in these verses a confession from Paul that his approach in Athens was a failure and that he would no longer use Graeco-Roman rhetoric in his preaching.[54] Paul's "failure" in Athens, or lack thereof, will be assessed alongside his contrast of his own "coming" to Thessalonica and Corinth against the practices of traveling orators and sophists.

The Athenian Apologists

A further group of sources is the Athenian Apologists—Quadratus, Aristides and Athenagoras—who were active in the early, mid, and late second century respectively.

Quadratus the Apologist

No full treatise from Quadratus survives today, but Eusebius quotes an excerpt from an apology that he addressed to Emperor Hadrian (*Hist. eccl.* IV.3.1–3). Though minor, this reference is worthy of discussion.

Eusebius associates two men named Quadratus with the church in Athens in the second century CE. The first, an apologist whom Eusebius describes as "the disciple of the Apostles" (*Chron.* ad ann. Abrah. 2140) wrote a defence of the Christian religion to the Emperor Hadrian (*Hist. eccl.* 4.3) sometime between 117 and 125CE. Paul Foster accurately notes that "while the *Historia Ecclesiastica* gives no clue to the geographical locale in which the apology was composed, the *Chronicon* links the composition with Athens."[55] Eusebius' description of

[54] Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 172.
[55] Paul Foster, "The Apology of Quadratus," in *The Writings of the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Paul Foster (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 55.

Quadratus as "the disciple of the Apostles" was also used later by Jerome (*Lives* XIX; *Ep.* 70), but this epithet is more likely an indicator of his apostolic orthodoxy than his personal knowledge of any of the apostles. The second is a Bishop Quadratus, who assumed the role after the previous bishop, Publius, was martyred. Bishop Quadratus held office c.180–200CE.[56] Jerome conflates these two, but Eusebius rightly distinguishes the apologist from the bishop.

Eusebius preserves a fragment of the earlier Quadratus' *Apology*:

> But the works of our Saviour were always present, for they were true, those who were cured, those who rose from the dead, who not merely appeared as cured and risen, but were constantly present, not only while the Saviour was living, but even for some time after he had gone, so that some of them survived even till our own time (*Hist. eccl.* 4.3.2).

The basic line of argument is clear: Jesus' works, including healing people and raising people from the dead, were shown to be true because they lasted beyond his lifetime, with some of the recipients of his work surviving down to Quadratus' lifetime. It will be argued below that Quadratus appeals to eyewitness testimonies of Jesus' miracles to establish the Christians as different from the Jews involved in the recent revolts during Trajan's reign.

Aristides

The second Athenian apologist who appeared in the reign of Hadrian was Marcianus Aristides. Eusebius describes him as "a man of faith and devoted to our religion" (πιστὸς ἀνὴρ τῆς καθ᾽ ἡμᾶς ὁρμώμενος εὐσεβείας, *Hist. eccl.* 4.23), and records that he "left behind a defence of the faith addressed to Hadrian." For most of the *Apology* Aristides presents himself as a philosopher and distances himself from the Christians, but towards the end confesses his own Christian belief. The *Apology* was addressed to either Hadrian or Antoninus Pius.[57] It presents the Christians as a fourth "race", alongside Barbarians, Greeks, and Jews (*Apol*. 1). Aristides offers a critique of the other three religious systems (4–14), before presenting the Christians as those who have truly come to know God (15–17).

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[56] "Apology," 55. Foster cites the succession lists given on the official website of the Church of Greece: Demetrius Kiminas, "The Bishops of Athens," The Church of Greece, http://ecclesia.gr/English/EnArchdiocese/EnArchdiocese_bishops.html.

[57] This will be discussed in greater depth in 5.2.2.

The *Apology* was thought to have been lost, until the Syriac manuscript was discovered at St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai in 1889 by J.R. Harris, and subsequently published in 1891.[58] The *Apology* survives in full in a Syriac version (Sy); a Greek version that was edited to fit into John of Damascus' *Barlaam and Joasaph* (Ba);[59] two fourth century Greek papyri (Π^1= P. Oxy. XV.1778; Π^2= *Lit. Lond.* 223); and an Armenian fragment preserved in four manuscripts (Ar).[60] It is not entirely clear how closely any of these different manuscript traditions reflects the original text. It is generally acknowledged that the Syriac is the closest, though in translation, to the original, albeit with its own editorial idiosyncrasies.[61] The Greek in *Barlaam and Joasaph* has clearly been edited to fit the narrative context into which it has been inserted. The two Greek papyri—which consist of *Apology* 4.3–6.2 and 15.4–16.2 respectively—are helpful in this regard, though only fragmentary, since they generally show a closer phraseology to the Syriac than the Greek of *Barlaam and Joasaph*. This suggests that they offer closer glimpses at the original Greek text.[62]

Athenagoras

Athenagoras is described in the title of his *Legatio* as an "Athenian Philosopher and Christian" (Ἀθηναγόρου Ἀθηναίου Φιλοσόφου Χριστιανοῦ). Two texts have traditionally been

[58] J. Rendel Harris, *The Apology of Aristides on Behalf of the Christians. From a Syriac Ms. Preserved on Mount Sinai* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2004 (1891)).

[59] Material from the *Apology* appears in two discourses included in *Barlaam and Joasaph*: 1) the shorter and more fragmentary *Discourse of Barlaam* (§§44–56); and 2) the longer and more complete *Discourse of Nachor* (§§239–255). These two discourses are not dependent on one another, but rather represent two editorial treatments of one Greek source text of the *Apology*. Recent scholarship has preferred to attribute *Barlaam and Joasaph* to Euthymius the Georgian. William C. Rutherford, "Reinscribing the Jews: The Story of Aristides' *Apology* 2.2–4 and 14.1b–15.2.," *HTR* 106, no. 1 (2013): 66–67; Bernard Pouderon and Marie-Joseph Pierre, eds., *Aristide: Apologie*, SC 470 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2003), 110–17.

[60] *Apologie*, 107–41. For the purposes of this study I have consulted the 2003 critical edition (with French translation) of Pouderon and Pierre; the 1893 English translation of J. Rendell Harris; and the recent (2018) German translation and commentary by Michael Lattke. I follow the chapter divisions and subdivisions in Pouderon and Pierre, unless otherwise noted. J. Rendel Harris, *The Apology of Aristides on Behalf of the Christians. From a Syriac Ms. Preserved on Mount Sinai* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2004 (1891)); Michael Lattke, *Aristides "Apologie"*, KfA (Freiburg: Herder, 2018).

[61] Judith M. Lieu, *Image and Reality: The Jews in the World of the Christians in the Second Century* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 164–65; Pouderon and Pierre, *Apologie*, 148.

[62] For a detailed discussion of alignments and deviations between Sy, Ba and Π^2, see *Apologie*, 143–50.

attributed to him: the *Legatio pro Christianis* and *De Resurrectione*. All surviving manuscripts of these texts can be traced to one source manuscript, Parisinus 451, which is a collection of early "apologetic" texts. Parisinus 451 was copied by the scribe Baanes under the supervision of Arethas, the Archbishop of Caesarea in around 914CE.[63]

Athenagoras addressed his *Legatio* to the emperors Marcus Aurelius and Commodus in 176CE. The apologist claims that Christians were not able to enjoy the freedoms that all other residents of the empire enjoyed, regardless of religious or urban affiliation, but rather were being persecuted unjustly on the basis of their name alone (*Leg* 1–2). Appealing to the emperors' "gentle and mild natures, [and] peacableness and humanity (φιλάνθρωπον) toward all," he calls on the emperors to "bring to an end by law the abuse we suffer" (*Leg.* 1.2; 2.1). His argument is structured as three responses to three accusations against the Christians: atheism, Thyestean banquets (cannibalism), and Oedipean unions (incest) (*Leg*. 3). The most important of these three, considering how much space he devotes to each accusation, is the charge of atheism.

The writings of these apologists will be fruitful for developing a picture of the Athenian church along two lines of investigation. Firstly, the content of the documents will be illuminating in regards to the experience of the Athenian church in the second century: its persecution, theology, and its relationship to the pagan authorities. Secondly, they offer an avenue by which to assess the Pauline legacy in Athens—a reception history of Paul in the Apologists. Can the Apologists be considered "Pauline" in any way? The Pauline Epistles and Paul's speeches in Acts—particularly the Areopagus Speech and those addressed to Roman authorities—will provide comparative texts.

Later Sources

Mentions of the Athenian church and Athenian Christians can be found in later sources. Eusebius comments on a letter that Dionysius of Corinth wrote to the Athenian church after it had been ravaged by persecution during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (*Hist. eccl.* IV.23.2–3).

[63] Uta Heil, "Athenagoras," *Brill's New Pauly Supplements I - Volume 2: Dictionary of Greek and Latin Authors and Texts*, English edition by Tine Jerke and Volker Dallman (2009). Consulted online on 01 September 2020 <http://dx.doi.org.simsrad.net.ocs.mq.edu.au/10.1163/2214-8647_bnps2_COM_0038>

The letter refers to Publius, a bishop of Athens who was killed in the persecution, and a new bishop, Quadratus. Eusebius summarises it in this way:

> The letter to the Athenians is a call to faith and to life according to the gospel, and for despising this he rebukes them as all but apostates from the truth since the martyrdom of Publius, their leader, in the persecution of that time. He mentions that Quadratus was appointed their bishop after the martyrdom of Publius and testifies that through his zeal they had been brought together and received a revival of their faith. Moreover, he mentions that Dionysius the Areopagite was converted by the Apostle Paul to the faith, according to the narrative in the Acts, and was the first to be appointed to the bishopric of the diocese of Athens.

The writings of Melito of Sardis, also recorded by Eusebius, highlight the persecution that the Athenians faced intermittently throughout the first and second century (*Hist. eccl.* IV.23.2–3; IV.26.10). In his apology addressed to the emperor (Eus. *HE* 4.26),[64] Melito referred to the Christians being driven about by "new decrees" (καινοῖς δόγμασιν, 4.26.5), and questioned whether these decrees could have come from Marcus. He cited Hadrian's rescript to Fundanus, and noted that Antoninus Pius had written edicts to the cities "that no new measures should be taken concerning [the Christians]" (Eus. *HE* 4.26.10), and expressed a confidence that Marcus would act in the Christians' favour because he held "the same opinion [as Hadrian and Antoninus] about them and, indeed, one which is far kinder and more philosophic" (4.26.10–11).

Apostolic Constitutions 7.46 continues the tradition that Dionysius was ordained by Paul, and the *Liber Pontificalis* records two early popes as being Athenians.[65] The later testimonies of Origen (*Contr. Cels.* 3.30) and Gregory of Nazianzus (*Or.* 43.14–24) will also offer some relevant information for considering the life of the Athenian church after the period that this thesis focuses on. These small references may be of variable value, but they will be considered for the further detail they can add to an understanding of the church in Athens in this period.

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[64] Robert M. Grant, "The Chronology of the Greek Apologists," *Vigiliae Christianae* 9, no. 1 (1955): 27.

[65] Roderic L. Mullen, *The Expansion of Christianity: A Gazeteer of Its First Three Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 159.

1.3.2 Non-Christian Sources

A study of the early Christians in their urban and regional contexts requires placing the Christian sources in conversation with other sources that illuminate the ancient context. One aspect of this is the vast literary remains that are extant from the period. This thesis engages with Jewish sources such as the Septuagint and the Hellenistic-Jewish writers Philo of Alexandria and Josephus; and Greek and Roman authors, especially those that would be considered participants in the Second Sophistic, such as Plutarch, Aelius Aristides, Lucian, Pausanias and Philostratus. In considering these other texts, it is possible to demonstrate not only the intellectual milieu the Christians were surrounded by, but that which they engaged with, participated in, and critiqued.

Beyond literary sources, there is a wealth of material sources that facilitate an understanding of the social, political, and religious contexts that the early Christians inhabited. This thesis will consider what inscriptions, coins, and architecture reveal about Roman Athens, and how they were used to shape culture and promote ideology.

Identifiably Christian inscriptions did not start to appear until the late second century, and this is even later in the case of Athens and its surrounding areas. Beyond using civic inscriptions to understand the local context, a possible avenue exists to use inscriptional evidence to investigate the church in this period. A number of compilations of epigraphy related to Graeco-Roman associations, including those of Athens and Attica, have been published reasonably recently.[66] James Harrison has observed that these "would provide insight into the similarities and differences of the house churches with the ancient clubs, as well as the honorific rituals of a significant Mediterranean city."[67] This line of investigation is utilised most in the analysis of Aristides' *Apology*, because he seems to draw on the practices of associations in his description of the Christian community.

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[66] Richard S. Ascough, Philip A. Harland, and John S. Kloppenborg, eds., *Associations in the Greco-Roman World: A Sourcebook* (Waco: Baylor, 2012); Nicholas F. Jones, *The Associations of Classical Athens* (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1997); John S. Kloppenborg and Richard S. Ascough, *Greco-Roman Associations Texts, Translations, and Commentary: Attica, Central Greece, Macedonia, Thrace* (New York: De Gruyter, 2011); Geoffrey C.R. Schmalz, *Augustan and Julio-Claudian Athens: A New Epigraphy and Prosopography*, Mnemosyne Supplementum 302 (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

[67] Harrison, "Introduction," 18.

While these literary and material remains will be considered throughout the thesis, chapters two, five, and section 7.2, are especially focused on establishing the Athenian context in order to inform the following analysis of Christian texts. Chapter two considers Athens in the first century in order more clearly consider Acts 17 in its local context. Chapter five considers the transition that happened in the city from the late first to the early second century, especially the radical advancement that happened by the benefactions of Hadrian, which relates to the earlier apologists Quadratus and Aristides. Section 7.2 focuses on Athens under Marcus Aurelius, particularly in the 170s, and how that tumultuous period sets the scene for the crop of apologetic works that were produced in that decade.

1.4 Critical Questions Regarding Sources

1.4.1 The Date of Acts

The primary canonical document informing the research on Athens in the first century CE will be the Acts of the Apostles. It is necessary to briefly discuss the position taken in this thesis regarding the date of this text and the significance of that for its use in exploring the historical situation of the early Christians. In this discussion, it is assumed that: 1) The Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles were written by the same author; and, 2) The "we" passages, suggest that he was occasionally a travelling and ministry companion of Paul.[68] While Luke-Acts is technically anonymous, the traditional attribution of authorship to Luke is satisfactory.

Scholarly opinions regarding the date of Acts fall into three main categories: a pre-70CE date, a date between 70 and 100CE, and a date in the second century.[69]

A Pre-70 Date

[68] Martin Hengel has convincingly argued how the description of geography in Luke-Acts reflects the travels of Luke as suggested by the "we" passages. Martin Hengel, "The Geography of Palestine in Acts," in *The Book of Acts in Its Palestinian Setting*, ed. Richard Bauckham, The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 77.
[69] Surveys of the various arguments for these positions can be found in Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1998); Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary. Volume 1: Introduction and 1:1–2:47* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012).

Arguments for a date before 70CE are commonly based on Luke's failure to mention significant events such as Paul's trial and execution, the Neronian persecutions, and the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70CE.

Harnack argued for 62CE on the basis of the absence of the events listed above, saying that Luke must have written at or very shortly after the end of the two whole years (διετίαν ὅλην, Acts 28:30) of Paul's house arrest, because if he knew of further events it would not be easy to explain why he did not mention them.[70] More recent scholarship, however, has suggested numerous explanations for the abrupt ending of the narrative. His silence may be explained by his readers' awareness of the most recent aspects of Paul's ministry (especially if they were in Rome);[71] Luke's focus on the gospel message—rather than the biography of the messengers—which is being proclaimed "without hindrance" in Acts 28:31;[72] or that Luke felt that Paul preaching in Rome was a satisfactory end to his narrative of the expansion of the gospel to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).[73] While these suggestions do not directly contribute to the dating of Acts, they do offer reasons why Luke's writing need not be as unbreakably connected to the end of the two years as Harnack thought.

Darrell Bock suggests that the lack of any mention of the events of 70CE means that Acts must have been written before the events occurred or so long after the fact that they were no longer noteworthy.[74] While there may be no explicit mention of the Neronian persecutions and the fall of Jerusalem, Acts exhibits a strong concern regarding the relationship of Jews and Gentiles within the new Christian community. In particular, the issue seems to be how Gentiles are now included in a movement with roots in Judaism, and perhaps why they would want to be included in light of the persecution and destabilisation that Christian converts were experiencing.[75] If one views Luke's primary audience as urban, Gentile-background Christians

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[70] Adolf von Harnack, *The Date of Acts and the Synoptic Gospels*, trans. J.R. Wilkinson (London: Williams and Norgate, 1911), 93–103. The significance of Harnack's argument is that he himself shifted in his view from the more commonly accepted 70–90CE range to the earlier date.
[71] Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 53; David Evans, "The City in Acts: The Relevance of Paul's Urban Mission for Luke's Purpose," *RTR* 75, no. 3 (2016): 155.
[72] Darrell L. Bock, *Acts* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 26.
[73] Acknowledging that the gospel clearly arrived in Rome earlier than Paul did because of the presence of the Christians who welcomed him (Acts 28:14–15).
[74] Bock, *Acts*, 27.
[75] Ben Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 61.

who were possibly recent converts, these concerns would seem particularly pertinent in the lead up to and aftermath of 70CE.[76]

A Post-70 date

The argument for a post-70CE date is primarily based on Luke's dependence on Mark and the assumption that the references to the destruction of Jerusalem in Luke 19 and 21 require the gospel to have been written after the events of 70CE. In terms of the relationship between the Synoptic Gospels, most New Testament scholars hold to some form of Marcan priority.[77] This means that Luke must have been written after Mark. Some date Mark early, in the late 50s or early 60s, basing their arguments on the assumptions of Marcan priority and Luke writing during Paul's imprisonment in 62CE. The majority of scholars, however, date Mark to the late 60s—during the beginnings of the Jewish War—because the predictions of the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple (Mark 13:2, 14) reflect an understanding of the city's impending destruction, but the descriptions Mark uses draw on apocalyptic imagery from the Hebrew Scriptures rather than offering more accurate descriptions of the events themselves.[78] There are also those who date Mark after 70CE.[79] An early date of Mark would allow for Luke-Acts to be written before 70CE,[80] but the majority views of Marcan priority, Luke's use of Mark, and that Mark wrote in the late 60s, lead to a conclusion that the writing of Luke-Acts would have to be written soon after 70CE at the earliest.[81]

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[76] Evans, "City in Acts," 156–57.

[77] Stanley E. Porter and Bryan R. Dyer, "What Have We Learned regarding the Synoptic Problem, and What Do We Still Need to Learn?" in *The Synoptic Problem: Four Views*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Bryan R. Dyer (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016), 144.

[78] Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 14–17; Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, WBC 34A (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1989), xxxi-xxxii; Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, WBC 34B (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), lxiii; William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 17–21; Mark L. Strauss, *Mark*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 37–39.

[79] John Kloppenborg, "Evocatio Deorum and the Date of Mark," *JBL* 124, no. 3 (2005): 419-450; Brian J. Incigneri, *The Gospel to the Romans: The Setting and Rhetoric of Mark's Gospel* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 118–20; Joel Marcus, "The Jewish War and the Sitz im Leben of Mark," *JBL* 111, no. 3 (1992): 441–462.

[80] Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Acts* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 28,

[81] The suggestion that there would by necessity be many years between the production of Mark and that of Luke is not conclusive. Peterson, *Acts*, 5.

The second major consideration regarding a post-70 dating of Luke, and therefore Acts, is the way that Luke renders Jesus' prophecies regarding the destruction of Jerusalem in Luke 19:43–44 and 21:20. It is possible that Luke 19:43–44 makes reference to the circumvallation wall which Titus set up as siegeworks against Jerusalem (Josephus, *Jewish War*, 5:508): "For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade (χάρακά) around you and surround (περικυκλώσουσίν) you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation." The descriptions here are commonplaces of ancient warfare, however, and lack some of the more colourful elements of Josephus' description of the destruction of Jerusalem. Furthermore Isaiah 29:3 (LXX) utilises similar language in a prophetic announcement: "καὶ κυκλώσω ὡς Δαυιδ ἐπὶ σὲ καὶ βαλῶ περὶ σὲ χάρακα. [82]

There is a suggested Lucan redaction of the Marcan material, particularly his replacement of "when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be (let the reader understand)" (Mark 13:14) with "when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near" (Luke 21:20) and "they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). Ben Witherington opines that "the *way* the fall of Jerusalem is portrayed in Luke 21:20ff., and its difference from the account in Mark 13:14–23, suggests that Luke was writing *after* a.d. 70 with the benefit of hindsight."[83] This is possible, but in the same way that Mark's version echoes Daniel, Luke's also echoes prophetic or apocalyptic texts.[84] Jeremiah 9:11 and 16 allude to Jerusalem's desolation, the scattering of the nation, and the sword. Richard Hays sees an allusion to Tobit 14:4–5, "which also refers to the people of Israel being taken away as captives, the temple being destroyed, and everything being left desolate until the future fulfillment of 'the times of the age'… This is the trajectory of Jewish apocalyptic thought to which Luke 21 unmistakably belongs."[85]

The Synoptic relationship between Mark and Luke may suggest that a post-70CE date is likely for the production of Luke-Acts, but the possibility of an early date for Mark allows for a pre-

[82] C.H. Dodd, "The Fall of Jerusalem and the 'Abomination of Desolation'," *JRS* 37, no. 1–2 (1947): 49–50.
[83] Witherington, *Acts*, 61.
[84] Schnabel, *Acts*, 27; Bock, *Acts*, 26–27. Cf. Jer 9
[85] Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco: Baylor, 2016), 267.

70 date. Similarly, the difference between Mark and Luke at Luke 21:20, and the reference to the enemies surrounding Jerusalem and setting up a barricade could be interpreted as a post-70CE reflection on Jesus' prophecy in light of the destruction of Jerusalem. It has been shown, however, that there are different available explanations for this difference. Luke (or Jesus) may have drawn on well established tropes that are evident in prophetic statements in the Septuagint.

A Second Century Date

The second century date for Acts has been argued most extensively by Richard Pervo, but is an increasingly held position.[86] His primary arguments are that Luke was dependent on Josephus' *Antiquities*, which can firmly be dated to 93–94CE,[87] and a collection of Pauline letters which he argues would not have been available before 95CE.[88]

Steve Mason had earlier written on the literary relationship between Josephus and Luke, and concluded that Luke knew Josephus' work.[89] Mason devotes a chapter to closely considering the parallels, and possible dependence relationship, between the two bodies of literature.[90] He discusses generic similarities, commonly reported events, and parallels in aim, themes, and vocabulary. In terms of generic parallels, Mason finds that both Luke and Josephus sit clearly within the genre of Greek History, and yet together they stand somewhat adjacent to this genre as apologetic history since they both try to defend the legitimacy of their religious community's place in the Roman world. This does not necessitate dependence, however, but highlights the similar situations experienced by Jews and Christians.

Mason's discussion of commonly reported events includes treatment of the census under Quirinius; the three revolutionaries Judas the Galilean, Theudas, and the Egyptian prophet;

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[86] Among others, it has been argued for or adopted by Steve Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 185–225; Nasrallah, *Christian Responses*, 91–92, n.16; Knut Backhaus, "Zur Datierung der Apostelgeschichte: Ein Ordnungsversuch im chronologischen Chaos," *ZNW* 108, no.2 (2017): 212–258.
[87] Richard I. Pervo, *Dating Acts: Between the Evangelists and the Apologists* (Santa Rosa: Polebridge Press, 2006), 197.
[88] *Dating Acts*, 138.
[89] Steve Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 185–225.
[90] The following discussion summarises Mason, *Josephus*, 185–225.

and other minor parallels. He acknowledges that each parallel in itself is not conclusive, but argues that the cumulative effect of numerous coincidences suggests Lucan dependence on Josephus.[91] The parallels, especially in relation to the revolutionaries, are striking, but in each case it is necessary to argue that Luke faultily remembered a version of Josephus' report.[92] Considering that the "we" passages in Acts place the author in Jerusalem and surrounds with Paul for at least two years, it is plausible that Luke could have accessed local reports and traditions such as those used by Josephus, rather than relying on Josephus' works.

Mason argues that "the most telling evidence" of Luke's use of Josephus is the comparison of the two authors' aims, and the themes and vocabulary that follow.[93] Regarding the aim, he notes that Josephus presented Judaism as a national philosophy, and Luke "seems to present early Christianity as a philosophical school within the Jewish orbit."[94] Luke does not do this explicitly, but rather through terminology such as "handed down", *asphaleia*, and *hairesis*; and concerns with common topics of philosophical teaching such as criticism of wealth and luxury, the scene with Paul in Athens, and the "frank speech" (*parrhēsia*) of the early Christian preachers.

Mason's assertion that this shared aim, themes and terminology is the most telling evidence of Luke's knowledge of Josephus is not compelling. That they shared this aim is understandable, especially in light of the apologetic concerns Mason had acknowledged earlier. Similarly, presenting Judaism and Christianity as philosophical schools is a sensible way to make these religions comprehensible to Roman/Gentile audiences (even Christian audiences that were predominantly Gentile in background). This shared aim and terminology shows that Judaism and Christianity both faced challenges of establishing their legitimacy, and Josephus and Luke are central players in that task, but it does not demonstrate literary dependenc.

The argument for Luke's dependence on Josephus has been critiqued by others from a number of angles. Craig Keener argues that it is unlikely that Luke would have had access to his work, and that it is more likely that Luke and Josephus used similar sources, rather than Luke relying

[91] Mason, *Josephus*, 186, 214.
[92] Mason, *Josephus*, 211–12.
[93] Mason, *Josephus*, 215.
[94] Mason, *Josephus,* 215–16.

on Josephus.[95] He also disagrees with Pervo on the grounds of his methodology related to using attestations of Acts in the second century as somehow definitive of the date of an earlier text.[96] Andrew Gregory cites the common practice of authors publicly reading early drafts of their writing as a possible way that Luke could use Josephus as a source but write Acts in the (late) first century.[97]

Frank Dicken identifies evidence of the dependence of *1 Clement* (c. 95CE) on Acts, which would leave a very small window for Acts to be dependent on Josephus *and* prior to *1 Clement*.[98] Pervo also deals with the parallel that Dicken identifies (Acts 13:22; 1 Clem 18:1), preferring the theory that Acts and Clement are both dependent on an older Jewish tradition, rather than one text being dependent on the other.[99]

Pervo is particularly keen to show the similarities between Acts and *1 Clement*. He places both texts in the third generation from Christ, finding similar descriptions in Luke 1:1–3 and *1 Clem.*42.1–4.[100] While his assessment of *1 Clement* is fair, identifying the three generations of "the apostles", "those whom they appointed", and then the "appointees of the appointees" to whom Clement writes, he needlessly inserts an extra generation into Luke's prologue. He reads the "many" who have written accounts of "the things that have been accomplished" as the generation before Luke, but Luke portrays himself as having access to the eyewitnesses also (v.2), placing himself in the second generation with the "many".[101] Pervo expends so much effort trying to establish the contemporaneity of Acts and *1 Clement* because his argument depends in no small way upon it. Dicken's argument, however, is more convincing: it is more likely that *1 Clement* is dependent on Acts, the consequence of which being that

[95] Keener, *Acts* 1:394.
[96] *Acts Vol 1*, 399.
[97] Andrew Gregory, "Acts and Christian Beginnings: A Review Essay," *JSNT* 39, no. 1 (2016): 107. Mason acknowledges the possibility of this for earlier portions of the *Antiquities*, but notes that if Luke knew *Antiquities* 18-20 this would push the date to 95CE or later. Mason, *Josephus*, 225.
[98] Frank Dicken, "The Author and Date of Luke-Acts: Exploring the Options," in *Issues in Luke-Acts: Selected Essays*, ed. Sean A. Adams and Michael W. Pahl (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2012), 23.
[99] Pervo, *Dating Acts*, 302.
[100] *Dating Acts*, 314.
[101] David E. Garland, *Luke*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 53; Keener, *Acts,* 1:393; I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 40.

Luke was not dependent upon a published volume of Josephus' *Antiquities*, thus suggesting a date for Acts no later than the early 90s.

Pervo's argument that Luke used a collection of Pauline letters has been argued against from two directions. Keener thinks that any parallels between Luke's writing and Paul are more likely to stem from their time as traveling companions than from Luke's use of the epistles.[102] Stanley Porter has suggested that it is possible that Paul was personally involved in organising a collection of his letters, of which Luke was aware, but that Luke did not necessarily have to use them slavishly in his writing of Acts.[103] These two lines of critique at least demonstrate that Pervo's argumentation regarding Luke's use of Paul's letters is not watertight.

The second century date proposed for Acts, then, is less than convincing. Pervo has pressed the similarity between Acts and *1 Clement* too far to support his preferred date. Luke's dependence on Paul's letters has not been demonstrated clearly enough, and does not necessarily prove a late date anyway. Similarly, his assumption of a c.75CE date for Mark unnecessarily posits a late *terminus a quo*,[104] and his placement of Acts alongside the Pastoral Epistles and 1 Peter may be an argument for an earlier date of those texts as much as for his later date for Acts.[105]

Conclusion

The discussion above indicates that while dating Luke-Acts is notoriously difficult, the most likely options are that it was written in the 60s or perhaps early 70s CE. A corollary of this is that its proximity to the events it narrates, and the availability of eyewitnesses to verify events would suggest that Acts is likely to be a trustworthy text to use for historical enquiry into this period of the history of early Christianity—acknowledging of course that the narrative is shaped and coloured by Luke's particular purposes and theology.

1.4.2 The Audience of the Apologetic Writings

[102] Keener, *Acts,* 1:235.
[103] Stanley E. Porter, "Paul and the Process of Canonization," in *Exploring the Origins of the Bible*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Emmanuel Tov (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 191–202, esp. 198.
[104] Pervo, *Dating Acts*, 49.
[105] Gregory, "Acts," 109–10.

The earliest Christian writings were essentially "internal" documents, written by Christians for Christians. This is true of the texts which eventually were included in the New Testament canon, and for most of those known collectively as the Apostolic Fathers, such as *1 Clement*, the *Shepherd of Hermas* or the letters of Ignatius.[106] In the second century, in the face of increasing persecution at the hands of authorities, apparently instigated by negative popular sentiment, texts were produced by Christian writers which have been categorised as "apologies" because of their shared purpose of providing some defence (ἀπολογία) of the faith. Broadly speaking, the purpose of these works was two-fold: firstly, in defence, they demonstrated why Christians were not deserving of the mistreatment they faced; and secondly, they positively argued for Christianity's superiority to other religions.[107]

One question that has been discussed at length in the scholarship on apologetic literature is whether the apologists ever intended the emperors to whom they addressed the works to actually receive them. Were the addressees the intended audience, or was this simply a "literary fiction" utilised by the apologists?[108]

The primary reference point for treatments of this question has been Fergus Millar's *The Emperor in the Roman World (31 BC – AD 337)*.[109] Millar observes that many non-Christian works of the second century—on a variety of different topics such as history, philosophy, and grammar—were addressed to emperors. While some orations were certainly delivered before the emperor, others may have been sent to him or his officials.[110] The significance, he notes, of addressing one's work to the emperor is that "literary productions, whether sent to the emperor … or handed to him, or recited before him, afforded a privileged means of access,

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[106] Mark Edwards et al., "Introduction: Apologetics in the Roman World," in *Apologetics in the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews, and Christians*, eds. Mark Edwards, Martin Goodman and Simon Price, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 4–5. *The Epistle to Diognetus* is addressed to an outsider (*Ep. Diog.* 1).

[107] Anders-Christian Jacobsen, "Apologetics and Apologies – Some Definitions," in *Continuity and Discontinuity in Early Christian Apologetics*, ed. Jörg Ulrich, Anders-Christian Jacobsen, and Maijastina Kahlos (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2009), 5–13.

[108] P. Lorraine Buck, "Athenagoras's *Embassy*: A Literary Fiction," *HTR* 89, no. 3 (1996): 209–26; Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians in the Mediterranean World from the Second Century AD to the Conversion of Constantine* (London: Penguin, 1986), 306; Jacobsen, "Apologetics," 13–17.

[109] Fergus Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World (31 BC – AD 337)* (London: Duckworth, 1977).

[110] *The Emperor*, 497–98. He cites two of Dio of Prusa's orations *On Kingship* as being likely to have been delivered before the emperor.

which could be used both to secure benefits and, in intention at least, to influence his conduct more widely than this."[111] In his opinion, the Christian apologies of the second century must be understood in light of this background: "At the very least they owe their literary form to this custom; and we must be open to the possibility that some were actually sent, or even read, to emperors."[112]

Later, in his specific treatment of the apologists, he is careful to note that "we cannot determine with certainty whether such a work [i.e. an apology] actually was presented, or sent, to the emperor named, or merely has the literary form of a work so presented."[113] The fact that these works "passed into the Christian tradition" does not decisively argue against any genuine attempt at an imperial reception, rather it simply demonstrates that the texts were not solely for the emperor, but "they were designed also for the edification and fortification of Christians—and perhaps for the instruction of educated pagans."[114]

The two apologies that survive in full and that will be treated in this thesis, Athenagoras' *Legatio* and Aristides' *Apology*, can be considered separately in relation to this question of audience.

Athenagoras' Legatio

P. Lorraine Buck argues vehemently against any possibility that Athenagoras (and similarly Justin Martyr) intended to present his *Legatio* before the emperors.[115] Her three main concerns are that "the official titulature does not conform to accepted usage"; the work is far too long to meet the requirements of a *libellus* or ambassadorial speech; and that Schoedel's comparisons between Jewish (such as Philo's *Embassy to Gaius*) and Christian embassies is inappropriate due to the difference in their legal statuses.[116] Each of these concerns is valid, and yet Buck draws an overly hard conclusion from them. It is worth briefly responding to each.

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[111] *The Emperor*, 497.
[112] *The Emperor*, 498.
[113] *The Emperor*, 561.
[114] *The Emperor*, 561.
[115] Buck, "A Literary Fiction," 209–26; "Justin Martyr's *Apologies*: Their Number, Destination, and Form," *JTS* 54, no. 1 (2003): 45–59.
[116] "A Literary Fiction." Titulature: 220; Length: 210–212; Legal status: 212–213.

Firstly, Buck is correct in noting that the imperial titulature in the address of the *Legatio* is improper. There is evidence from papyri that the title Ἀρμενιακοῖς ("Conquerors of Armenia") was being used for Marcus Aurelius and Commodus in the late 170s into the 180s, but never only with Σαρματικοῖς. The full titulature used in a papyrus from 178CE reads: Αὐτοκρατόρων Καισάρων Μάρκου Αὐρηλίου Ἀντωνίνου καὶ Λουκίου Αὐρηλίου Κομμόδου Σεβαστῶν Ἀρμενιακῶν Μηδικῶν Παρθικῶν Γερμανικῶν Σαρματικῶν Μεγίστων (Oxy. Pap. 485.37–41; 178CE).[117] Barnes also notes that coinage from the period regularly included the *cognomina* "Germanicus" and "Sarmaticus".[118] Considering the limited manuscript evidence for the *Legatio*, Barnes' suggestion of positing "a lacuna in the transmitted text"[119] is a more charitable approach than Buck's conclusion that the flaws "preclude the possibility that it was intended as a formal speech to the emperors."[120] As will also be noted below, the technical failings of the text do not necessarily disprove any authorial intent to deliver the apology before, or despatch it to, the named addressees.

Secondly, the issue of the length of the treatise has been recognised as problematic not only by Buck. Schoedel acknowledges that if the *Legatio* and other apologies are indebted in any way to other forms of appeal such as *libelli* and embassies, they do not meet exact formal requirements.[121] As noted above, however, the wide range of literary works that were addressed to, and likely delivered before or sent to, emperors set a context in which a lengthy work could at least have been despatched to the emperor. Robin Lane Fox believed that "no second-century Emperor bothered to read these long apologies," but he still maintained that "it is quite credible that some or all of these apologies were despatched or delivered to the Emperor's officials."[122] This is a crucial element in the discussion, as Sebastian Moll noted in his response to Buck's similar claims about formal issues in Justin Martyr's *Apology*: "To investigate whether Justin intended his *Apology* to be read by the emperors has nothing to do

[117] See also: Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος Μάρκου Αὐρηλίου Κομμόδου Ἀντωνίνου Σεβαστοῦ Εὐσεβοῦς Ἀρμενιακοῦ Μηδικοῦ Παρθικοῦ Σαρματικοῦ Γερμανικοῦ Μεγίστου (Oxy. Pap. 513.49–51; 184CE). Bernard P. Grenfell and Arthur S. Hunt, eds., *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri. Part III* (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1903), 176–79; 245–49.
[118] T.D. Barnes, "The Embassy of Athenagoras," *JTS* 26, no. 1 (1975): 112.
[119] "Embassy," 112.
[120] Buck, "A Literary Fiction," 220.
[121] William R. Schoedel, "Apologetic Literature and Ambassadorial Activities," *HTR* 82, no. 1 (1989): 56–57.
[122] Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 305–06.

with the question of whether his *Apology* is an accurate, appropriate, and correct *libellus* or whether the emperor would actually have taken notice of the *Apology*."[123]

Thirdly, drawing on Barnes' overview of the legal position of Christians in the Roman Empire before Constantine,[124] Buck argues that the examples set by Jewish embassies and their imperial responses cannot be used to claim that the imperial address in Christian apologies is anything other than a literary fiction. She states: "As adherents of an accepted and legal religion … the Jews could dispatch embassies to the emperor to present their grievances and petitions ... [T]he Christians, in contrast, belonged to an illicit and proscribed society and would hardly have been granted imperial hearings in order to plead for their faith."[125] Again, Moll asks a pertinent question of this argument: "What are we supposed to make of this argument? … Christians are being persecuted simply for being Christians; are they supposed to wait for the legitimization of their cause before they plead for it?"[126] The desperation of the Christians' plight would surely have inspired a genuine effort to seek reprieve. Furthermore, there even seems to be some acknowledgement by Athenagoras himself that he was in a precarious position in his appeal. In *Legatio* 2, he enjoins the emperors to convict them of evil—if any can be found—but not simply for bearing the name "Christian". Even if the legal status of Christians at this point was that simply maintaining the confession was punishable by death, it is not unreasonable to think that Athenagoras would genuinely attempt to appeal against the injustice of such a situation. However, the apologist makes the following statement:

> [Y]ou make philosophy and profound learning, as it were, the ground of your actions. That is why even those who are defendants before you do not lose heart though accused of the greatest crimes; and since they know that you will examine their conduct and not pay attention to meaningless labels or to false charges from the prosecution, they are equally disposed to grant the justice of a favourable or unfavourable decision. (*Leg.* 2.3)

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[123] Sebastian Moll, "Justin and the Pontic Wolf," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, ed. Sara Parvis and Paul Foster (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 146.
[124] T.D. Barnes, "Legislation against the Christians," *JRS* 58 (1968): 32–50.
[125] Buck, "A Literary Fiction," 213.
[126] Moll, "Justin," 147.

Athenagoras may have had in mind Marcus Aurelius' supposed clemency towards those who had sided with Avidius Cassius in his revolt in 174/175CE.[127] In response to the Alexandrians siding with Cassius, the emperor "forgave everything" (tamen omnibus ignovit; *HA, Marcus Antoninus* 26.4). He could also have known the story, recorded later by Philostratus, that when Herodes Atticus stood on trial before Marcus, he "launched into invectives against the emperor" (Phil. *Vit. Soph.* 561). By contrast, Philostratus encourages his readers to consider the emperor's behaviour in this trial to be among "the things done philosophically by Marcus" (τῶν ἐπιδήλως τῷ Μάρκῳ φιλοσοφηθέντων)—the very characteristic to which Athenagoras appeals—because he acted mercifully towards Herodes and his freedmen. Therefore, even knowing the precarious legal status of the Christians, Athenagoras could well have sent the *Legatio* to the emperor in the hope that maybe his clemency would lead to a favourable response.

The three arguments that Buck makes against Athenagoras having any intention of delivering his *Legatio* to the emperor are ultimately inconclusive. This does not, however, provide a positive argument for the genuineness of the imperial address in the *Legatio*. A more positive argument is, nonetheless, possible. In his discussion of the audience and purpose of Justin's *Apologies*, David Nystrom notes that a "carefully worked out and consistently sustained address speaks in favour of its authenticity. A fictive address … is often dropped when the author moves into the real subject-matter of the text … If the imperial address is genuine, then presumably Justin's demands to the emperor are as well. "[128] In the case of Justin, Nystrom argues that even though the imperial address is consistent throughout the *Apology*, it is not "*logically sustained*"[129] throughout and thus should not be considered genuine. The three reasons he gives for this conclusion are: 1) the distinction of the "you" of the address and the "them" of the accusers becomes less clear, with the emperor being accused of both judgement and accusation; 2) while Justin pleads for justice, he also claims that whether the emperor listens favourably is not important because of the Christians' post-mortem hope—an inherent contradiction; and 3) his argument that "orthodox" and "heretical" groups, both labelled "Christian", were treated differently by authorities is inconsistent with his argument that Christians were persecuted on the sole basis of the name "Christian".

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[127] Robert M. Grant, *Greek Apologists of the Second Century* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1988), 80.
[128] David E. Nystrom, *The Apology of Justin Martyr*, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 44. The following discussion will summarise pages 44–46 in Nystrom.
[129] Italics original.

If we take the first of these inconsistencies as a point of comparison with Athenagoras' *Legatio*, it can be seen that the latter apologist was more consistent in his appeal to the emperors as a source of justice that is distinct from the unnamed accusers. "They" (1.4; 3.1; 4.1; 14.1; 31.1; 32.1) who are blamed for the Christians' persecution and slaughter (1.3), are also characterised as "the crowd" (1.3; 2.6; 15.1; 31.2). This group spreads "the low and untested rumour of the populace" (κοινὴ καὶ ἄκριτος τῶν ἀνθρώπων φήμη, 2.1) and "indiscriminate slander" (ἡ ἄκριτος βλασφημία, 31.2), and they "fabricate stories" (32.1). They are ignorant regarding the things of God (13.1) and cannot produce evidence supporting their accusations against the Christians (35.2). "Judges" participate in the unjust persecution as well (2.2). Athenagoras also notes that while city disagrees with city about their differing gods, they are also so bold as to accuse the Christians for believing in a different God (14.2). It is also interesting that in the lengthy section responding to the accusation of atheism "they" predominantly refers to different people who have promoted certain understandings of the gods. The rhetorical impact in the shift of referent is that the accusers are identified with those who champion other gods.

The emperors, on the other hand, are clearly differentiated from the ignorant crowd. They are characterised by a concern for justice and piety (1.1; 2.2), a philosophic approach to life, and exceptional attainments in learning (1.1; 2.1, 3, 6; 6.2; 9.1; 10.3; 11.3; 17.1; 22.8; 23.1–2; 24.1). Athenagoras is still willing to put some pressure on the rulers, reminding them that "it is your task … to bring an end by law to the abuse we suffer" (2.1), and "it does not become your reputation for justice that … in our case the mere name plays a larger role than legal tests" (2.2). Even this challenge, however, highlights the emperors' identification with justice and law; it does not blur the distinction between imperial addressees and the ignorant, violent persecutors. The distinction is explicit in 34.3: "When laws have been established which *you* and *your* ancestors promulgated to further every form of justice, *they* violate these very ordinances so that the governors of the provinces which you have sent out cannot even handle all the lawsuits."[130]

As well as maintaining the imperial address, Athenagoras maintains the focus of his argument on responding to the three accusations of "atheism, Oedipean unions and Thyestean

[130] Italics mine.

banquets." After introducing the the accusations in *Leg.* 3.1, and beginning his response in 4.1, Athenagoras includes transitional statements at 21.2, 30.6, and 31.1, as he progresses through his rebuttals. He also encourages the emperors to respond in the way he desires them to: "I am well aware that as far as you are concerned I have made my case" (31.3); "nod your royal heads in assent, now that I have destroyed the accusations" (37.1). The instruction to "nod your royal head" is an appropriate element of the *presbeutikos logos* or Ambassador's Speech (Menander 424).[131]

It is true that the logical and rhetorical consistency of Athenagoras *Legatio* does not absolutely prove that he genuinely presented, or attempted to present, it before the emperors. It may well be that he was simply more consistent in his execution of a literary style. However, the challenge raised by Moll is still pertinent: the intensity of persecution against the Christians in Athenagoras' time should lead us to think it is likely that the apologist attempted to get his apology to the emperors, and it is possible that he could have succeeded.

Aristides' Apology

Eusebius claimed that Aristides addressed his *Apology* to Hadrian, but the historian seems not to have had the text in his possession (*Hist. eccl.* IV.3.3). Compared to the *Legatio*, Aristides' *Apology* is less likely to have seriously had the emperor in mind as an addressee. Nystrom rightly describes the *Apology*'s imperial address as "a poorly worked out theme, and serves only as a thin literary framework for the treatise."[132] He says that the titulature Aristides uses to address the monarch—"'King', rather than 'Emperor'"—is incorrect, but βασιλεύς was a term used in the East for Roman Emperors.[133] Sarah Parvis, however, more pertinently argues that the vocative address, "O king" (ὦ βασιλεῦ) could be removed from the text without affecting either the grammar or the argument."[134] Furthermore, the text does not appeal to

[131] Schoedel, "Ambassadorial Activities," 70.
[132] Nystrom, *Apology*, 30.
[133] Nystrom, *Apology*, 30. Cf. I Eleus 502: βασιλῆος ἀμύμονος Ἀδριανοῖο.
[134] Sara Parvis, "Justin Martyr and the Apologetic Tradition," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, ed. Sara Parvis and Paul Foster (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 119.

the emperor for any type of intervention in the plight of the Christians.[135] It seems, therefore, that the imperial address is more likely to be a literary device in this particular apology.[136]

The conclusion above does not mean, however, that Aristides did not intend any non-Christians to read or hear the *Apology*. On the contrary, his encouragements for his readers to read the Christian writings to discover their truth (*Apol*. 2.4; 16.3–4), and his descriptions of the conversions of slaves and children (15.5), and Greeks (17.2), suggest that he had non-Christian readers in view.[137] The development of Aristides' personal testimonial material—from his understanding of God via philosophical endeavour (*Apol.* 1) to his confession that he read and believed the Christian writings (*Apol.* 16)—invites educated pagan readers to follow in his footsteps. It is best, therefore, to understand Aristides' *Apology* as, in Pouderon's terms, a "lettre ouverte".[138] It was intended to have a wide audience, both within and beyond the Christian community.

Conclusion

In light of the discussion above, this thesis will approach the apologetic texts as having two audiences. An important question to consider, then is whether apologetic literature is a trustworthy source of information for constructing a picture of the Athenian church. In the effort to win the favour of outsiders, did the apologists describe the Christian community as things really were? The dual purposes of the apologies—to seek a reprieve from persecution and to help form Christian identity in the face of a dominant culture—mean that the apologies tend to present an idealised image of the church. For example, the Athenian apologists do not offer much description of ecclesiastical structures, but they do emphasise the Christians' good works. This idealised image of the Christians is limiting in some ways, but does not altogether disqualify these texts from being useful for the task of understanding early Athenian Christianity. Going beyond the "what" of the apologies' content to the "why", "how" and "in what context" of their writing enables them to be rich sources of information.

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[135] Pouderon and Pierre, *Apologie*, 41; Parvis, "Justin Martyr," 118.
[136] The imperial address is still relevant for considerations of dating, however, and will be discussed in §6.2. Parvis' argument that the *Apology* should be dated after Justin's apology is not sufficiently justified. Parvis, "Justin Martyr," 118–120; Nystrom, *Apology*, 30.
[137] Though these conversion accounts would also be an encouragement to the Christians to continue to trust that these conversions take place.
[138] Pouderon and Pierre, *Apologie*, 42.

1.5 Thesis Outline

This thesis will take a diachronic approach to the study of Christians in Athens in the first two centuries. Chapter two will discuss the Athenian context in the first century CE, necessarily including some discussion of the significant events of the first century BCE. Having established this context, chapters three discusses Paul's mission to Athens in Acts 17 and the possible references to the city in his letters. Chapter five provides an overview of the developments in the city from Nero through to the reign of Hadrian. The apologists that ostensibly addressed their apologies to Hadrian—Quadratus and Aristides—are the subject of chapter six. Chapter seven discusses the Athenian context in the 170s, and Athenagoras' *Legatio*. Chapter eight will consider the after-effects of the persecution which the church suffered during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, including Dionysius of Corinth's *Letter to the Athenians*, and the references to the Athenian church in Origen and Gregory of Nazianzus. Finally, chapter nine will offer some concluding remarks drawing together the history of the Athenian church in the first two centuries of the common era.

2. ATHENS IN THE FIRST CENTURY CE

Before engaging with the relevant sources that will help construct the picture of the church in Athens in the first century CE, it is necessary to consider the social and historical context of the city that impacted the early Christians. Firstly, a brief overview of Athens' changing political and economic fortunes throughout the first centuries BCE and CE will give a sense of the city's status in the empire during the period in focus. Secondly, the conflicted nature of the city will be discussed, noting its negotiation of increasing Romanisation and desire to maintain its unique cultural heritage. Thirdly, the city's reputation as a place of education and learning, a "university town," will be considered. Finally, the religious landscape of the city will be given a brief overview.

2.1 Status in the Empire

Athens first came under Roman dominance when Sulla sacked the city in 86BCE during the Mithridatic Wars. Athens had sided with Mithridates against Rome, and Sulla laid siege to, and was ultimately victorious over, the city. Appian graphically reports the severity of the famine which occurred during the siege, saying that Sulla had heard that "the defenders of Athens were very severely pressed by hunger, that they had devoured all their cattle, boiled the hides and skins, and licked what they could get therefrom, and that some had even partaken of human flesh" (*Mithr.* 6.38). Sulla and his forces tore down the Athenian wall in the north-western part of the city, between the Piraeus, Sacred, and Dipylon gates. The Roman soldiers inflicted what Appian described as "a pitiless slaughter" and "an indiscriminate massacre, not sparing women or children" (*Mithr*. 6.38). Plutarch's report is similar, if not somewhat exaggerated. He said that the blood shed in the agora coated the Κεραμεικός—the area immediately inside the collapsed section of wall—and "flowed through the [Dipylon] gate and deluged the suburbs" (*Sulla* 14). However, Plutarch also notes that Sulla restrained himself from destroying the whole city because of the supplication of two men named Meidias and Calliphon, the intercession of the Roman senators who were with him, and on account of the ancient Athenians whom he briefly praised (*Sulla* 14). Records show that the Roman general took from the city forty pounds of gold, 600 pounds of silver, some marble columns, some shields from the Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios, and art treasures, as well as allowing his soldiers to

loot the city (Appian, *Mithr.* 6:38; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 36.5; Plutarch, *Sulla* 14; Paus. *Descr. Gr*. 10.21.6; Lucian, *Zeux.* 3). Michael C. Hoff suggests that the sale of Salamis by the Athenians soon after Sulla's departure may be evidence of their "cash-poor economy" after his confiscation of their gold and silver.[1]

After describing the Roman victory over the Athenians, Pausanias comments, "In such wise was Athens sorely afflicted by the war with Rome, but she flourished again when Hadrian was emperor" (*Descr. Gr*. 1.20.7). In his late first- or early second-century letter to Maximus, a friend who had been appointed to the role of *corrector* in the free cities of Athens and Sparta, Pliny the Younger urges Maximus to adopt a moderate approach to exercising his authority. Noting the reputation of these cities—"the pure and genuine Greece, where civilization and literature, and agriculture, too, are believed to have originated" (*Ep*. 8.24.2)—he urges his friend to respect "their antiquity, their heroic deeds, and the legends of their past" (8.24.3). This respectful posture, however, is to maintain a dignity based on a glorious past that is no longer the reality. He continues, "To rob them of the name and shadow of freedom, which is all that now remains to them, would be an act of cruelty, ignorance and barbarism," and, "remember what each city was once, but without looking down on it for being so no longer" (8.24.5–6). By this account, the status of Athens was still quite low even in the decade before Hadrian.

The two centuries between Sulla and Hadrian did see repairs and new construction in the city, primarily funded by Romans.[2] Titus Pomponius Atticus, a Roman of equestrian rank and friend of Cicero who resided in Athens from 86–65BCE, is said to have loaned money to the authorities at no interest and distributed grain to the people (Nep. *Att*. 25.2–4).[3] Claudius Appius Pulcher, the Roman governor of Cilicia, dedicated a propylon for the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis. Camp notes that this "is the first of many gifts to the sanctuary which give clear evidence of Roman enthusiasm for this particular cult,"[4] an enthusiasm that

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[1] Michael C. Hoff, "Laceratae Athenae: Sulla's Siege of Athens in 87/86 B.C. and its Aftermath," in *The Romanization of Athens. Proceedings of an International Conference held at Lincoln, Nebraska (April 1996)*, ed. Michael C. Hoff and Susan I. Rotroff (Oxford: Oxbow, 1997), 37.
[2] Theodosia Stefanidou-Tiveriou, "Tradition and romanization in the monumental landscape of Athens," in *Athens During the Roman Period: Recent Discoveries, New Evidence*, ed. Stavros Vlizos (Athens: Mouseio Benaki, 2008), 15.
[3] B.H.P Farrer, "Cicero's Friend Atticus," *Theoria* 21 (1963): 2.
[4] Camp, *Archaeology of Athens*, 185.

will be seen again in imperial benefactions to Eleusis by Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius. This Roman interest in Athens is captured in a comment by Cicero in a letter to Atticus, saying, "I hear that Appius is making a gateway at Eleusis. Would it be out of the way if I did the same for the Academy? … I am really very fond of Athens, the actual city. I want to have some memorial there, and I hate false inscriptions on other people's statues" (Cic. *Att*. 6.1.26). Within this comment can be seen a respect for Athens, but also a use of the city for Cicero's own legacy-building.

The first century BCE also saw the construction of two buildings explicitly dedicated to Roman rulers. The Market of Caesar and Augustus, including the Gate of Athena Archegetis, was constructed using funds provided by Julius Caesar and Augustus, and was dedicated to Athena Archegetis around 10BCE.[5] Stefanidou-Tiveriou observes, "This Agora, with its traditional layout … and economical construction, is a work of the Athenian *demos* both in its conception and its execution; it is only Roman as far as the source of the financial means is concerned."[6] The Temple of Roma and Caesar Augustus was built on the Acropolis shortly after Octavian took the title in 27BCE.[7]

Camp notes that in terms of building activity "the first century AD was appreciably less active."[8] The only significant works seem to be the refurbishment of the *scaenae frons* of the Theatre of Dionysius during Nero's reign, discussed further below. It was the case that even after the period of rebuilding under Augustus, economic depression was evident. T. Leslie Shear identifies the reuse of materials from derelict monuments in new building projects as evidence of both cost-cutting measures and the dereliction of many monuments in the regions surrounding the city.[9] He notes that the refurbishment of some shrines was undertaken around the time of Claudius, but even so, "the transplanted and rededicated temples, the refurbished sanctuaries, the re-used building materials, scavenged from dilapidated monuments, all this evidence reveals a clear, but gloomy, picture of the state of Athenian culture in the 1st century after Christ."[10]

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[5] Camp, *Archaeology of Athens*, 193.
[6] Stefanidou-Tiveriou, *Tradition*, 20.
[7] Camp, *Archaeology of Athens*, 187.
[8] Camp, *Archaeology of Athens*, 193–94.
[9] T. Leslie Shear Jr., "Athens: From City-State to Provincial Town," *Hesperia* 50, no. 4 (1981): 365.
[10] "Provincial Town," 368.

Further evidence of the depressed state of the city is found in excavations of the block between the Roman and Ancient agoras. Shear notes that buildings on this site, originally constructed in the fifth century BCE but badly damaged in Sulla's attack, were demolished at the time of the construction of the Roman agora in the last two decades of the first century BCE. This site lay vacant until 100CE when "an Ionic stoa with shops behind" was built in the time of Trajan.[11] Hoff identifies a similar situation with the South Stoa of the agora, where destruction debris and the utilisation of the area for "metal, marble, and pottery workshops" in the first and second centuries CE suggest that "the structures lay in a ruinous state for approximately 100 years."[12] He also notes a Claudian- or Neronic-era Roman building that incorporated a formerly ruinous Hellenistic-era stoa. Sulla's attack is the most likely cause of the damage to the earlier building, which means it remained in its ruined state for over a century before being incorporated in the Roman building.[13] When Paul arrived in Athens, he was presented with a city still bearing the scars of Sulla's attack over a century before.

2.2 Athens Under (and Against) the Empire

Throughout this period of economic depression and structural degradation, Athens remained an icon of Greek culture and history in the eyes of its Roman conquerors. Cicero, in the middle of the first century BCE, wrote, "[Athens'] prestige is so great that the present enfeebled and shattered renown of Greece is sustained by the reputation of this city" (*Pro Flacco* 62). Pliny quipped that the city "requires no further advertisement here as her celebrity is more than ample" (*Nat. Hist.* 4.24). This is perhaps surprising in light of the city's repeated affiliations with the losing parties of Roman conflicts—siding with Mithridates, Pompey, and Antony (to some degree), and erecting statues of Brutus and Cassius after Julius Caesar's assassination.[14] Roman interest in the city was demonstrated by numerous cases of benefaction and building programs sponsored by emperors or other prominent Roman citizens in the Julio-Claudian period.

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[11] T. Leslie Shear Jr., "The Athenian Agora: Excavations of 1973–1974," *Hesperia* 44, no. 4 (1975): 354–55; Shear, "Provincial Town," 370.
[12] Hoff, "Laceratae Athenae," 38.
[13] "Laceratae Athenae," 41.
[14] Daniel J. Geagan, "The Athenian Elite: Romanization, Resistance, and the Exercise of Power," in *Romanization of Athens*, 19–20; Michael C. Hoff, "Civil Disobedience and Unrest in Augustan Athens," *Hesperia* 58, no. 3 (1989): 271–74.

Even though Athens was declared a "free and allied" city, Roman rule was an ever-present reality. Building programs sponsored by Julius Caesar, Augustus, and other Julio-Claudian Emperors, while going some way in restoring the city after the destruction it suffered in 86BCE, demonstrate Athens' loss of independence. This is clearly seen in the changes in the ancient agora. In the archaic period, the agora had been an open space set apart for the assembly of Athenian citizens for the purpose of democratic civic governance. While the democratic function of the space may have waned in the Hellenistic period, a period marked by oligarchy and Macedonian dominance with only occasional glimmers of independence,[15] the agora had remained unencroached by further civic developments.[16] After suffering severe damage in Sulla's attack on the city, the Agora was not restored to its former condition. Rather, in what Leslie Shear has called "as clear a statement of the new order in the world as can be made through the medium of architecture,"[17] the space was filled with buildings and statuary. As S.R.F. Price argues about the formalisation of civic space in Roman Asia Minor, "it is preferable to interpret the architectural changes more positively as changes parallel to the gradual regularization and restriction of the freedom of action of the Greek city. The formalization of civic space would seem increasingly appropriate in a monarchical world."[18]

In the Augustan period, two structures were built in the Agora: the Odeion of Agrippa, named for its Roman benefactor, evidences the Roman interest in Athens' cultural heritage in that it was a location for performances and orations;[19] and the Temple of Ares, which was relocated to the Agora, most likely from the deme of Pallene.[20] The positioning of these two buildings

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[15] Claude Mossé, *Athens in Decline 404–86 B.C.*, trans. Jean Stewart (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), 102–37.
[16] Such as the Stoa of Attalos and the Middle Stoa. Shear, "Provincial Town," 360.
[17] Shear, "Provincial Town," 361.
[18] S.R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 145–46.
[19] Construction was likely commenced between 23–13BCE, under the benefaction of M. Agrippa during his time as governor of Asia. Honorary inscriptions recording the Athenian *demos*' recognition of Agrippa as their "benefactor" (IG II^2 4122, 4123), probably refer to his provision of this building. For a detailed analysis of the date, see Homer A. Thompson, "The Odeion in the Athenian Agora," *Hesperia* 19, no.2 (1950): 31–141, esp. 84–89; Antony J. Spawforth, "The Early Reception of the Imperial Cult in Athens: Problems and Ambiguities," in *The Romanization of Athens*, 187.
[20] Camp, *Archaelogy of Athens*, 189. Shear had previously suggested it had come from Acharnai: "Provincial Town," 362.

follows a Roman, rather than Athenian, sense of urban design, suggesting that their construction was funded by Roman sources.[21]

There is some debate about the connection between the Temple of Ares and the imperial cult. On the basis of inscriptions found in Athens describing Gaius Caesar (son of Marcus Agrippa, grandson and adopted son of Augustus) as "νέον Ἄρη" and Drusus Caesar (son of Tiberius and great-grandson of Augustus) as "νέον θεὸν Ἄρη,"[22] Shear has argued that there was an Imperial cult connected with the Temple of Ares.[23] A range of opinions has been offered regarding these inscriptions: Shear is cautious, saying that the inscription to Drusus "is also possibly to be related to the temple in the Agora;" Winter states definitively that "[the temple] had an inscription hailing Gaius Caesar as the 'New Ares' … and Drusus Caesar as the 'new god Ares';" but Spawforth denies any connection, stating that "neither inscription is physically associated with the transplanted temple."[24]

Spawforth says that the imperial cult is unlikely to have been the original impetus of the relocation of the temple because the date of the relocation is too early to have coincided with the military commands held by Gaius or Drusus (2 BCE and 17–20CE respectively).[25] He proposes, rather, that the Temple of Ares, a god who had previously not had a prominent place among Athenian cults, reflected the emphasis on the Roman god Mars (Ares' counterpart) in Augustan ideology, and views the relocation as the Athenians following Roman prompting.[26] If this is the case, it is significant that the former centre of Athenian political discourse was crowded with a symbol of Roman military might, which in time also came to house an imperial cult.

While the transformation of the Agora into a museum of antiquity may have been the result of Roman intent to memorialise Athenian achievements while relegating the city-state to the past, it is possible that the Athenians subverted this by appropriating the monuments for precisely the opposite purpose. As Susan Alcock observes, "Nostalgia … served as a weapon

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[21] Spawforth, "Early Reception," 187.
[22] Gaius: IG II^2 3250, SEG 21:702; Drusus: IG II^2 3257.
[23] Shear, "Provincial Town," 362.
[24] Shear, "Provincial Town," 362; Winter, *Divine Honours*, 131–2; Spawforth, "Early Reception," 187.
[25] Spawforth, "Early Reception," 187.
[26] "Early Reception," 187.

in the ongoing Athenian maintenance of its cultural identity … Perhaps the famous itinerant temples moved in the Athenian Agora … should not only be considered as a 'sacred museum,' but as a kind of 'memory theater' for the inhabitants of Athens."[27]

This "weaponised nostalgia" can be seen in the Athenian bronze coinage throughout the period. The development of coinage in Athens from the first century BCE to the second century CE demonstrates the independent spirit of the city within the realities of the Roman Empire. Roman silver became the dominant coinage in use in the city, and throughout Greece, in the middle of the first century BCE. The city continued to mint smaller denominations of bronze coins in that period and from the second century CE, with no minting in the first century CE. John Kroll argues that though some of these bronze coins made reference to Roman figures, such as Antony and Augustus, they did so "in a typically oblique Greek manner."[28] He continues that the majority of the "Athenian coin iconography is traditionalist, and indeed is emphatically so" in the case of those bearing images of Athena's head on the obverse and an owl on the reverse.[29] Amongst the cities of the Greek East, both free and not, Athens maintained the "Greek" nature of its bronze coinage—in terms of iconography and denomination—as the rest gradually romanised.[30] As Kroll concludes his discussion of the bronze coinage: "One of several signs of the Athenians' pride in their uncontested heritage of cultural and historical preeminence, of a kind of equality if not in some sense superiority to Rome, the Athena-head coinage of Roman Athens also served as a tangible link to the glorious past."[31] The coinage shows, then, that the Athenians used the smaller denomination bronze coins to assert a traditional self-understanding which held to the glory of the pre-Roman city, even while the coinage primarily in use in the city's economy reflected the reality of Roman political and economic dominance.

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[27] Susan E. Alcock, "The Problem of Romanization, The Power of Athens," in *The Romanization of Athens*, 5.
[28] John H. Kroll, "Coinage as an Index of Romanization," in *The Romanization of Athens*, 144–145.
[29] Kroll, "Coinage," 145. The online catalogue of the American Numismatic Society supports this reading of Athenian bronze coinage. A search of Athenian coins in the first two centuries CE reveals that Athena's head was the dominant icon in use, with regular reference to other significant people from Athens' mythology and history, such as Theseus and Themistocles.
[30] Kroll, "Coinage," 145; Margaret Thompson, "Reflections on the Athenian Imperial Coinage," in *Studies in Athenian Architecture, Sculpture and Topography*, Hesperia: Supplement 20 (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1982), 164.
[31] Kroll, "Coinage," 146.

Winter has also commented on the complex relationship of the Athenians to Rome. He notes a juxtaposition in the architecture. The Roman Agora (The Market of Caesar and Augustus), built to the east of the ancient agora, was raised 3.5 metres above street level and overlooked the older market. Winter observes that the "elevated location would not be without significance for Roman propaganda purposes."[32] On the other hand, the diminutive size of the Temple of Roma and Augustus—dwarfed as it was by the Parthenon—may imply some reservation about the Athenians' enthusiasm for Roman symbolism.[33] Winter also notes the Athenians' lacklustre commitment to the honours they were expected to give to the emperors, including their deviation from common practice in that they did not prioritise business from Roman authorities in their assemblies, and the slow progress of construction of the temple of Olympian Zeus, which commenced in the sixth century BCE and was to be completed and dedicated to Augustus' *genius*, but was not completed until the time of Hadrian (cf. Suet. *Deified Augustus* 60).[34]

Anti-Roman attitudes waxed and waned depending on the reigning emperor's posture towards the city. Claudius seems to have been well received. A series of inscribed statue bases show his benefaction towards the city in returning, in 44/45CE,[35] numerous statues that had been confiscated by his predecessor Gaius.[36] The extant statue bases (eight in total)[37] mostly bear the same inscription:[38]

> Τιβέριος Κλαύδιος Κα[ῖσαρ Σεβαστὸς]
> Γερμανικὸς εὐεργέτη[ς τῆς πόλεως]

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[32] Winter, *Divine Honours*, 133.
[33] Winter, *Divine Honours*, 129. See also Stefanidou-Tiveriou, *Tradition*, 23: "The new divinities were placed on a level clearly inferior to that of the city's ancient gods; on the other hand, the choice of a monopteros enabled the work to be contracted out in a cost-effective way, which moreover affirms the Athenians' intention not to overstep the bounds in granting honours to the the Emperor."
[34] Winter, *Divine Honours*, 129.
[35] Geoffrey C.R. Schmalz, *Augustan and Julio-Claudian Athens: A New Epigraphy and Prosopography*, Mnemosyne Supplementum 302 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 198, 222–3. Schmalz argues that the return of the statues was overseen by the Roman quaestor Decimus Junius Silanus, who was honoured with a statue in Athens, most likely in 45CE.
[36] Dio Cassius *Roman History* 60.6.8.
[37] Paul Graindor, *Athènes de Tibère à Trajan* (Cairo: Imprimerie Misr, Société Anonyme Égyptienne, 1931), 9.
[38] IG II^2 5173–5177, 5179 bear the same inscription. 5178 differs.

ἐχαρίσατο καὶ ἀποκατέ[στησεν][39]

Claudius is here honoured as a benefactor (εὐεργέτης) because he "gave a gift" (ἐχαρίσατο) and "restored [the statue]" (ἀποκατέστησεν). As well as the restoration of these statues, Claudius' philhellenism, and interest in Athens in particular, can be seen in his high regard for the Greek language and commendation of Achaia to the senate (Suet. *Claud.* 42.1), his adoption of Greek dress when staying in Neapolis (Dio *Rom. Hist.* 60.61–2) and his attempt to relocate the Eleusinian Mysteries to Rome (Suet. *Claud*. 25.3).[40]

This reading of the Athenians' warm reception of Claudius, however, is tempered by the observation that numerous honorific activities happened at the direction of a certain Tiberius Claudius Novios of Oion. Novios was Hoplite General (*strategos*) a record eight times between 40/41CE and 60/61CE, and filled other civic roles such as gymnasiarch, *agonothetes*, herald of the Areopagus, priest of Delian Apollo and high-priest of Antonia Augusta. An inscription from 61/62CE lists the following roles and honours: *strategos* for the eighth time, high priest of Nero and Zeus Eleutherios, *epimeletes* of the city for life, priest of Delian Apollo, *epimeletes* of the temple of Delos, high priest of the house of Augustus, best of the Hellenes, and *nomothetes*.[41] He was a wealthy man, though it is not known from where his wealth came. In 41CE he personally sponsored new games in honour of Claudius' accession,[42] and in the same year erected an honorific statue to the provincial governor P. Memmius Regulus out of his own funds (ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων).[43] In either 47/48 or 51/52CE, he was the *agonothetes* of the "Great Panathenaia Sebasta and Caesarea Sebasta," which indicates not only his wealth, but that in this period the imperial cult had been incorporated into the Great Panathenaia, the major festival in the Athenian calendar for celebrating, and portraying to the world, Athens' unique relationship to the goddess Athena.[44] Later in his career, he directed building works in honour of Emperor Nero, including the refurbishments of the Theatre of Dionysius and a large

[39] IG II^2 5173.
[40] Graindor, *Athènes de Tibère à Trajan*, 11. Suetonius contrasts his interest in the Eleusinian Mysteries with the way that he "utterly abolished the cruel and inhuman religion of the Druids among the Gauls."
[41] IG II^2 1990.
[42] IG II^2 3270. That these were new games is seen by Novios being referred to as "τοῦ...ἀγωνοθέτου πρώτου τῶν Σεβαστῶν ἀγώνων."
[43] IG II^2 4174.
[44] IG II^2 3535.

inscription on the east architrave of the Parthenon honouring Nero.[45] Novios' connections with Rome and involvement in the imperial cult are obvious from the inscriptions, and he clearly held important roles in Athens. His reception of the honorific titles φιλοκαίσαρα and φιλόπατριν during his fourth hoplite generalship (most likely in 47/48 or 51/52CE)[46] suggests that his pro-Roman influence would have been part of the Athenian milieu when Paul arrived in the city.

Novios, however, though he "literally bought himself high civic status … appears not to have won his way into the city's traditional elite."[47] His championing of Rome also did not have a lasting legacy. One inscription with which Novios was involved was an honorific inscription for Nero, placed on the architrave of the Parthenon, after his victories in Armenia in 61/2CE.[48] The inscription was removed soon after Nero's death, and not replaced with another, indicating the Athenians lack of support for Nero. The inscription itself had honoured Nero as "Αὐτοκράτορα μέγιστον", in honour of his military victories, but not as benefactor or *archiereus* as the city had labelled Augustus and Claudius.[49]

The refurbishment of the Theatre of Dionysius, conducted under Novios' supervision,[50] also reflects some restraint on the part of the Athenians. The works included the construction of a parapet enabling the use of the theatre for gladiatorial games and a new *scaenae frons*. In comparison to other Greek theatres converted for the same use, the parapet was lower and less obtrusive than can be seen elsewhere, and the new *scaenae frons* incorporated some Roman features but still maintained many of the Greek elements of its predecessor.[51] Katherine Welch sees in this restraint evidence of the opposition to gladiatorial games expressed by Greek philosophers, citing criticism of the Athenians' zeal for these spectacles

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[45] IG II^2 3182 and SEG 32.251.
[46] IG II^2 3535. Daniel J. Geagan, "Tiberius Claudius Novius, the Hoplite Generalship and the Epimeleteia of the Free City of Athens," *AJPhil* 100, no. 2 (1979): 284.
[47] Schmalz, *A New Epigraphy*, 290.
[48] SEG 32-251.
[49] James H. Oliver, "Roman Emperors and Athens," *Historia* 30, no. 4 (1981): 417, 419.
[50] IG II^2 3182. While the name of the hoplite general is no longer extant, it should certainly be attributed to Novios because he is the only individual in this period to have held this role for the seventh time (στρατηγοῦντος ἐπὶ τοὺς ὁπλείτας τὸ ζ΄). Geagan, "Novios," 285; Katherine Welch, "Negotiating Roman Spectacle Architecture in the Greek World: Athens and Corinth," *Studies in the History of Art* 56, no. Symposium Papers XXXIV: The Art of Ancient Spectacle (1999): 141, n.9.
[51] Welch, "Negotiating Roman Spectacle," 128–29. Welch compares the Athenian Theatre to the second century theatres in Perge and Aphrodisias.

by Apollonius of Tyana (Philostratus, *VA* 4.22), Demonax (Lucian, *Demon.* 57), and Dio Chrysostom (31.121).[52] These writings attest to the popular support for these games, but also the opposition to them by some philosophers and Greek elites. Welch concludes:

> The objection on the part of Dio Chrysostom, Demonax, and Apollonius of Tyana to the use of the Theater of Dionysius for gladiators should then be situated in the larger context of politically conservative Greek opposition to Roman rule and its rituals. We may suggest that not only philosophers, but also some traditional Athenian nobles may not have been pleased by the new use of the Theater of Dionysius.[53]

Throughout the Julio-Claudian period, then, Athens wrestled with the possibilities of maintaining its own civic identity, traditions, and pride, while courting Roman imperial domination. Athens was a "free" city, but Roman presence was unavoidable. There is evidence, however, of resistance on the part of the Athenians.

2.3 A University Town

Athens is commonly thought of as a "university town," a centre of learning and culture. This is true of much of the city's history. Philosophy flourished in the city in the Classical and Hellenistic periods. It was the birthplace and home of the four major philosophical schools—Platonism, Aristotelianism, Epicureanism, and Stoicism—in the fourth and third centuries BCE, down to the end of the second century BCE, which drew students from around the Mediterranean and the East. The city regained its place as a leading city for philosophy and education in the second century CE, due to the building of the Library of Pantainos under Trajan, Hadrian's formation of the Panhellenion, and Marcus Aurelius' endowment of four chairs in philosophy, which effectively reinstated the philosophical schools.[54]

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[52] Welch, "Negotiating Roman Spectacle," 130–31.
[53] Welch, "Negotiating Roman Spectacle," 132.
[54] Christopher Gill, "The School in the Roman Period," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 35. Cf. Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, LXXI.31.3.

During the intervening period, spanning the first centuries BCE and CE, however, philosophy was in "virtual exile" from the city.[55] At the time of the Sullan attack, the four major philosophical schools, or their key leaders and libraries, relocated to other cities. Sulla relocated the Aristotelian library to Rome. Rome, Rhodes and Alexandria became the new homes of Platonism, Aristotelianism and Stoicism, whereas Philodemus the Epicurean made the unfortunate choice of moving the Epicurean library a little too close to Mt. Vesuvius at Herculaneum.[56]

Leading Stoic thinkers in this period were based elsewhere: Seneca (1BCE–65CE) lived in Rome and was tutor to the younger Nero before falling out of favour and committing suicide in 65CE. Musonius Rufus (c.30–100) was also based at Rome. Epictetus (c.50–130) studied under Musonius in Rome but established his own school in Nicopolis, drawing students from Rome and Athens.[57] Sedley notes that before the "decentralisation" of Stoic philosophy that marked the Imperial period, there seemed to be an attempted "recentralisation" of Stoicism to Rhodes, where there is evidence of a Stoic school that was significantly established enough to have drawn non-Rhodian participants. Sedley argues that this attempted move may have begun before 110BCE, under the leadership of Panaetius (head of the Athenian School until 110BCE) and Posidonius, a leading student of Panaetius who taught in Rhodes.[58]

The Platonic school was likewise a minor operation in Athens throughout these centuries. The Academy itself was destroyed in Sulla's attack (Plut. *Sulla* 12.1–3). Philo, the head of the Academy, had fled to Rome with an entourage of Athenians (Cic. *Brutus* 306). Cicero records that he studied in Athens under the Platonic philosopher Antiochus of Aschalon, in 79BCE (*De Fin.* 5.1). The dialogue recording these events is wistfully reminiscent, emphasising the ways that the ruins of the Academy reminded the men of the former great philosophers that had

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[55] David Sedley, "The School, from Zeno to Arius Didymus," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003): 8.
[56] Richard Sorabji, "Introduction," in *Greek and Roman Philosophy 100 BC – 200 AD: Volume 1*, ed. Richard Sorabji and Robert W. Sharples, Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies. Supplement 94. (London: Institute of Classical Studies, University of London, 2007), 2; Malcolm Schofield, "Introduction," in *Aristotle, Plato and Pythagoreanism in the First Century BC: New Directions for Philosophy*, ed. Malcolm Schofield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), xiv. An Epicurean school also developed in Rhodes: Sedley, "The School," 27.
[57] Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 366.
[58] Sedley, "The School," 26–27.

resided there.[59] Furthermore, one of Cicero's dialogue partners, Lucius, makes the comment that he wants to hear lectures on a topic that Antiochus is not interested in, but "there is no other lecturer to go to" (*De Fin.* 5.2).

Cicero clearly thought Athens was a worthwhile location for education, commenting to his son (who was studying under Cratippus in Athens around 44–43BCE) that in light of the "preeminence not only of your teacher but also of the city," Marcus "should be fully equipped with the practical precepts and the principles of philosophy" (*De Of*. 1.1.1).[60] However, he goes on to urge him to commit to both Greek and Latin studies, and particularly to read Cicero's own works (*De Of.* 1.1.1–3), which suggests that he did not view Marcus' Athenian education to be fully sufficient for his future life. Dillon notes regarding the Platonic school, however, that Antiochus was succeeded by Aristus (c.67–50BCE) and then Theomnestus of Naucratis (c.44BCE). Brutus attended lectures by Theomnestus before facing Antony.[61] After Theomnestus, there is no information about the Platonic school until Plutarch, who studied in Athens under Ammonius in 66–67AD (Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 8.3.1; 9.1.1). Plutarch also notes a Themistocles of Athens, a descendent of the Themistocles from the late sixth–early fifth centuries BCE, who was his fellow student in Ammonius' school (*Them*. 32.5). Dillon notes that even though Ammonius held the prestigious post of *strategos*, his philosophical school was not an elaborate or formally established instititution.[62] It seems as though the Platonic school was most significantly impacted in the Sullan era, had survived for a time until the instability of the Roman civil wars caused a further decline, and only then survived through the first century CE in an informal manner.

Later in the first century CE, according to Philostratus, Scopelianus of Clazomenae was teaching in Smyrna and drew "all the youth of Athens" to listen to him (*Lives* 1.21.518). He also notes that while Apollonius of Tyana visited Athens on his travels, ten youths of the city "fell in with him…and said… 'We were just coming down to Piraeus planning to sail to you in Ionia'" (*Vit. Ap*. 4.17). While Philostratus' works foreground Athens and the sophists

[59] "We hear mainly of past glories, along with some indication of what few philosophical lectures and classes remain available." Sedley, "The School," 26.
[60] Translation is that of Walter Miller, LCL 30.
[61] John M. Dillon, "The Academy in the Middle Platonic Period," *Dionysius* 3 (1979): 66.
[62] Dillon, "The Academy," 66–68.

connected to the city, especially after Herodes Atticus,[63] the busyness of the city as a sophistic destination is much more pronounced in the second century than in the first.

In light of the developments of the philosophical schools outlined above, it is perhaps not surprising that Strabo's assessment of the city's attitude towards learning, and Roman interest in it as an educational destination, is less than glowing. In his discussion of Tarsus, he says that the citizens of the Cilician city "have devoted themselves so eagerly, not only to philosophy, but also to the whole round of education in general, that they have surpassed Athens, Alexandria, or any other place…where there have been schools and lectures of philosophers" (*Geogr*. 14.5.13). He draws a contrast between the culture of education in the cities. In Tarsus, few foreigners come to the city for education, but the locals love learning in their home city, travel for further learning, and are happy to stay abroad.[64] He then says, "But the opposite is the case with the other cities I have just mentioned except Alexandria." Regarding these "other cities," "many resort to them and pass time there with pleasure, but you would not see many of the natives either resorting to places outside their country through love of learning or eager about pursuing learning at home." Alexandria is the exception, with many people coming to the city to learn, and many locals going abroad.

Strabo's critique of the "other cities" must be interpreted as primarily taking aim at Athens, since it is the only other named city. His comments paint a disappointing picture of its culture of education. The foreigners that come to the city are not described as pursuing an education, but rather they "pass time there with pleasure." The locals, rather than being paragons of education and learnedness, are not interested in seeking education either at home or abroad. His comments seem to parallel the characterisation of the city's residents and visitors in Acts 17:21. Elsewhere in his *Geography*, Strabo also notes that "the most notable of the Romans" (τοὺς γνωριμωτάτους Ῥωμαίων) were opting to pursue their foreign schooling in Marseilles (Μασσαλία) rather than Athens (4.1.5).[65]

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[63] Ewen Bowie, "Teachers and Students in Roman Athens," in *Fame and Infamy: Essays on Characterization in Greek and Roman Biography and Historiography*, ed. Rhiannon Ash, Judith Mossman, and Frances B. Titchener (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 243.
[64] This characterisation rings true of the Apostle Paul, a native of Tarsus and a Jew, whose foreign travel for education was in Jerusalem under the Pharisee Gamaliel (Acts 22:3).
[65] Philostratus mentions "youths that come to Athens from the whole world" (*Vit. Apoll.* VIII.15.2), referring to foreign young men enrolling in the Athenian *ephebeia*, but the popularity among non-Athenians of this training was a phenomenon of the second century AD—the era of Philostratus' own study in Athens—rather than one belonging to the first

While Sulla's attack on the city caused significant disruption to the continuation of the philosophical schools of Athens, leading to less formal expressions of education, the city continued to draw students and sophists throughout the first centuries BCE and CE. It was in competition, however, with a number of other urban centres to which leading Romans would go, or send their children, for educational and cultural purposes. It would not be until the Antonine period that Athens would again become a leading hub of philosophy. When the Apostle Paul visited the city, philosophical "schools" would have been low-key affairs, with a small group of students attending lessons and meals in the home of a single teacher. Furthermore, if Luke had Strabo's comments in mind, it is quite a striking scene for Paul *of Tarsus*, to dialogue with the philosophers in the Athenian agora.

2.4 Religion in Athens

2.4.1 Graeco-Roman Religion

The Athenians had the reputation of being particularly devout in their religious practice. John Camp has provided a thorough treatment on the various cults in the city and their temples, sanctuaries and other shrines.[66] Athena was of utmost importance, as patron deity of the city. She had three temples on the Akropolis, most notably the Parthenon, but was also worshipped in the agora alongside Zeus and Hephaistos.[67] Other Olympian deities that enjoyed some popularity included Demeter, Apollo, Artemis, Aphrodite and Hermes. Camp notes that "likenesses of Hermes were set up on tall square shafts in front of every Athenian house… [and were] a popular form of public dedication as well."[68] So many of these were set up at the northwest entrance to the agora that the area was called "the Herms",[69] a scene which may

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century AD setting of his *Life of Apollonius*. Anthony J. Papalas, "Studies in Roman Athens: 29 B.C. to A.D. 180" (PhD Diss., The University of Chicago, 1969), 182–83.

[66] John McK. Camp, *Gods and Heroes in the Athenian Agora* (Athens: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1980). Schnabel follows Camp in his summary of Athens: Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, 2 vols. (Downers Grove: IVP, 2004), 2:1175–77.

[67] Camp, *Gods and Heroes*, 6.

[68] Camp, *Gods and Heroes*, 12.

[69] Camp, *Gods and Heroes*, 12; Homer A. Thompson and R.E. Wycherley, *The Agora of Athens: The History, Shape and Uses of an Ancient City Center*, The Athenian Agora XIV (Princeton: The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1972), 95.

have contributed to the city's impression on Paul (Acts 17:16).[70] Hera, Ares, Hestia, and Poseidon were less popular in the city, though the god of the sea was worshipped in a temple on the headland of Cape Sounion.[71] The Athenians also had temples, statues, altars and shrines devoted to other gods, such as Dionysos and Asklepios; Egyptian deities; abstract concepts such as Democracy (Δημοκρατία), Justice (Δίκη), and Peace (Εἰρήνη); Roman emperors and other rulers; and ancient heroes of the city.[72]

The two main cultic centres in Athens itself were the agora (with such sites as the Hephaisteon, Metroon and Eleusinion) and the Akropolis (with the Parthenon and Temple of Roma and Augustus, among many others).[73] The two were linked by the Panathenaic Way, a street named for the procession which journeyed along it as part of the Panathenaia, the festival celebrating the city's patron goddess, Athena. Outside of the city, the most important cultic site was Eleusis, which was the location of the sanctuary dedicated to the Eleusinian Mysteries, a mystery cult devoted to Demeter and Kore.

Religious devotion was not limited to these cultic hot spots. Shrines and statues were erected in residential and industrial areas as well.[74] As elsewhere in the ancient world, religious practice was not a discrete or private element of Athenian life, but rather was enmeshed in political, economic and domestic life.[75] Two examples are illustrative of this reality. Firstly, Muriel Moser notes that, in the Roman period, the Athenians made a practice of reinscribing statues with honorific inscriptions for prominent Roman benefactors, to portray them "as energetic, godlike benefactors of Athens," so that they might secure further benefactions from them.[76] Secondly, Julia Shear has observed that the Panathenaia, ostensibly a festival in celebration of the goddess Athena, operated as a "vehicle for disseminating Athenian identity," including demonstrating the status of those who participated in the proceedings.[77]

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[70] Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, 2:1175, n.483.
[71] Camp, *Gods and Heroes*, 6–13.
[72] Camp, *Gods and Heroes*, 14–28.
[73] Thompson and Wycherley, *The Agora*, 168.
[74] Thompson and Wycherley, *The Agora*, 168.
[75] Thompson and Wycherley, *The Agora*, 117.
[76] Muriel Moser, "Reused Statues for Roman Friends: The Past as Political Resource in Roman Athens," in *Strategies of Remembering in Greece under Rome (100BC–100AD)*, ed. T.M. Dijkstra, et al. (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2017), 169–77.
[77] Julia Louise Shear, "Polis and Panathenaia: The History and Development of Athena's Festival" (PhD Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2001), 73.

That is, the Panathenaia was not simply an activity of worship, but a demonstration of what it meant to be an Athenian citizen.[78]

The Panathenaia offers one final consideration of the religious life in Athens, especially in the period of the Apostle Paul's visit to the city. The Panathenaia was an annual festival honouring Athena for her victory over the Giants, which was held toward the end of Hekatombaion, the first month of the year. The celebration of Athena's victory, and the Athenians' historical military victories as reflections of that of the goddess, was a focus of the festival throughout the Classical and Hellenistic periods.[79] Shear argues, however, that in the Roman era the Panathenaia emphasised Athens as a cultural centre.[80] The earlier emphasis on Athens' military successes could not be celebrated as a current reality for a city that was under Roman domination. The festival could only celebrate military victories, such as those over Persia, as a marker of the city's illustrious past.

This demonstration of Athens' subjection to Rome is also evident in an interesting development that occurred in the Panathenaia in the Claudian period. In the inscription marking the year that Tiberius Claudius Novios was *agonothetes*, the festival is called "The Great Panathenaia Sebasta" (τῶν μεγάλων Παναθηναίων Σεβαστῶν).[81] Shear notes that "since [Novios] is not described as the first agonothetes… it is likely that he did not introduce the new cult to the festival at this time."[82] Rather, "its inclusion should very probably be associated with a general reorganization of the city's imperial cult which was carried out during Claudius' reign by Novius."[83] Shear notes, "Since the title Panathenaia Sebasta is attested only here and on a contemporary inscription from Eleusis which may also refer to Novius' agonothesia, we do not know how long the imperial cult continued to be part of the festival for Athena; it may well have been part of the proceedings for some time."[84] While this may well be true, both the generally negative Athenian response to Nero, and Novios' inability to break into the Athenian elite, may suggest that the elements of the imperial cult could have been removed from the Panathenaia as early as Nero's reign. Regardless of the duration of

[78] Shear, "Polis and Panathenaia," 90.
[79] Shear, "Polis and Panathenaia," 31–38.
[80] Julia Louise Shear, "Polis and Panathenaia: The History and Development of Athena's Festival" (PhD Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2001), 634.
[81] IG II^2 3535.
[82] Shear, "Polis and Panathenaia," 636.
[83] "Polis and Panathenaia," 636.
[84] "Polis and Panathenaia," 637.

the inclusion of the imperial elements in the Athenian festival, it is significant to note the complex relationship of cultic practice, urban identity, and Romanisation that was at work in the city around the same time as Paul's visit to the city.

2.4.1 The Jewish Community

When Paul arrived in Athens in Acts 17, probably in 50CE,[85] there was an established Jewish community because he "reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons" (Acts 17:7). The presence of the "devout persons" (τοῖς σεβομένοις) suggests that the Jewish community had been present long enough to provide the opportunity for Greeks to have learned something of the Jewish faith and make some commitment to it.[86] Philo, writing at a similar time, boasted of Jerusalem's influence by listing the numerous locations in which Jewish communities, Jerusalem's "colonies" (τὰς ἀποικίας), had been established, including: Egypt, Phoenicia, Syria, Pamphylia, Cilicia, Asia, Europe, Thessaly, Boeotia, Macedonia, Aetolia, Attica, Argos, Corinth, the Peloponnese, Euboea, Cyprus and Crete.[87]

M. Stern asserts that "the diminished position of Greece during the imperial period is reflected in the history of the Jews in that country, who do not seem to have had any major impact of the Jewish world of those times. On the whole the country was in a state of economic stagnation with a relatively poor population unlikely to attract great numbers of Jews, but there were still some Jewish communities in the first century C.E."[88]

2.4.1.1 Inscriptions

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[85] Schnabel, *Acts*, 715.

[86] The meaning of "τοῖς σεβομένοις" in the Luke-Acts has been contested among scholars. Some argue that it is a technical term for Gentile adherents, whereas others argue that it is a general term that can be applied to both Jews and Gentiles. While there is evidence of the latter, the participial use set in partnership with "the Jews", as in Acts 17, suggests this is a group in some way distinct from ethnic and religious Jews. Shelly Matthews, *First Converts: Rich Pagan Women and the Rhetoric of Mission in Early Judaism and Christianity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 55–61.

[87] Philo. *Embassy to Gaius*, 281–282.

[88] M. Stern, "The Jewish Diaspora," in *The Jewish People in the First Century: Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural, and Religious Life and Institutions*, ed. S. Safrai, et al. (Assen: Van Gorcum & Co., 1974), 157–58.

Inscriptional evidence shows that Jews were in the city from as early as the second century BCE. An inscription regarding a Simon, the son of Ananias, dates to this period.[89] D.M. Lewis identifies the earliest known Jew in Greece to be the slave Moschos, son of Moschion the Jew (Μόσχος Μοσχίωνος Ἰουδαῖος).[90] An inscription regarding Moschos' manumission, which Lewis dates to 300–250BCE, was located in the Amphiareion of Oropos, a city nearby Athens which was occasionally under Athenian dominance.[91] The witnesses to the terms of manumission include three men of Oropos and two of Athens. The inscription states that Moschos himself set up the inscription because of a dream he had in which the gods Amphiaros and Health (ὁ Ἀμφιάραος καὶ ἡ Ὑγίεια) told him to "write it on stone and set it up by the altar."[92] Lewis asserts that this indicates that Moschos, though a Jew, was "thoroughly assimilated to his Greek environment,"[93] and that the evidence of this inscription "makes it likely that we should be prepared to reckon with Jewish slaves in mainland Greece at any time after the invasion of Palestine by Alexander."[94] The connection of this inscription to Athens suggests that while there may not have been a Jewish community in the city in the late fourth or early third century BCE, there were probably Jewish individuals.

Inscriptions also show that the Jewish community included migrants from other cities. Some from the first century CE indicate that the Jewish community in Athens included migrants from Jerusalem;[95] Antioch;[96] Aradus, the woman from here being the wife of a Sidonian;[97] Miletus;[98] and Marisa.[99] Irina Levinskaya notes that this is not surprising since "[a]liens from all parts of the world lived in Athens, and the proportion of people from Asia Minor and the Levant was very high."[100] Some Samaritans are also represented among the epitaphs.[101]

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[89] IG II^2 12609
[90] D.M. Lewis, "The First Greek Jew," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 2, no. 3 (1957): 264.
[91] "First Greek Jew," 264.
[92] "First Greek Jew," 264.
[93] "First Greek Jew," 265.
[94] "First Greek Jew," 266.
[95] IG II^2 8934
[96] IG II^2 8231, 8232
[97] IG II^2 8358
[98] IG II^2 9756
[99] IG II^2 9285. M. Stern admits that the "Theodorus" of this inscription only "may" have been Jewish. Stern, "Diaspora," 158.
[100] Irina Levinskaya, *The Book of Acts in Its Diaspora Setting*, ed. Bruce W. Winter, vol. 5, The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 158.
[101] IG II^2 10219, 10220

2.4.1.2 Josephus

Josephus refers to Athens in *Against Apion*, *Antiquities* and *The Jewish War*. In *The Jewish War*, he records Agrippa's speech seeking to dissuade the Jews from waging war against the Romans. In the speech, Agrippa includes the Athenians in a list of proud nations that had formerly had great victories but now wisely humbled themselves under Rome.[102]

In *Antiquities*, he records that the people of Athens paid honours to Hyrcanus II, who was high priest and ethnarch at the time of Antipater, the father of Herod the Great. The Athenians noted that he had "continued to show goodwill to our people … to manifest the greatest zeal on their behalf, and when any Athenians come to him either on an embassy or on a private matter, he receives them in a friendly manner and sends them on their way with precautions for their safe return."[103] They honoured him with a golden crown; with a bronze statue of him set up in the grounds of the temple of Demos; by announcing his award at a variety of festivals and games; and an offer of ongoing goodwill.[104] This account follows immediately after the account of Caesar's appointments of Hyrcanus to the role of high priest and Antipater as the Procurator of Judea.[105] At the end of the account regarding the Athenians, Josephus concludes, "What we have here set down concerning the honours paid to Hyrcanus by the Romans and the people of Athens seems sufficient."[106]

In *Against Apion*, Josephus uses Athens as an example to strengthen his arguments in defence of the Jews.[107] Responding to an accusation from Apion that the Jews were subservient to other nations because of their defective laws, he points to the "misfortunes of the Athenians [and] the Lacedaemonians, the latter universally said to be the most courageous of the Greeks, the former the most pious" (2.130) as evidence that national misfortune does not equate to deficiency in piety or character. Later, defending the Jews against an accusation from Apollonius Molon regarding their refusal to share fellowship with those who worship other

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[102] *JW* II.345–402. From Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War Books 1–2*, trans. H. St. J. Thackeray, LCL 203 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927).
[103] *Ant.* XIV.151–152. All references to Josephus' *Antiquities* XIV–XV from *Jewish Antiquities Books 14–15*, trans. Ralph Markus and Allen Wikgren, LCL 489 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1943).
[104] *Ant*. XIV.153–55.
[105] *Ant*. XIV.143–49.
[106] *Ant.* XIV.155.
[107] All references to Josephus' *Against Apion* are from Flavius Josephus, *Against Apion*, trans. John M.G. Barclay (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

gods, he recounts the instances when the Athenians executed, or very nearly executed, certain individuals because they held unacceptable views regarding the gods.[108]

The references to Athens found in Josephus' works do not give any information about the Jewish community in the city. Considering that the Athenians envisioned sending an embassy to Hyrcanus,[109] there was evidently travel between Athens and Judea in the first century BCE, but this information merely adds further context to the Jewish presence in Athens already attested to by inscriptions.

Josephus' writings do, however, provide two significant pieces of information regarding the city. Firstly, his use of Athens as an example in his argumentation, and his choice to include the Athenians' favour towards Hyrcanus, suggest that Athens had such a reputation that Josephus assumed his readers would be affected by its mention. His Roman readers evidently held Athens in such high regard that they would respond when its history and opinion was evoked. This is an interesting consideration in regard to Luke's choice to include an extended account of Paul's ministry in the city. Perhaps he was envisioning a readership that was interested to know how the classic intellectual capital of the world responded to the gospel message.

Secondly, Josephus' account of the Athenian rejection of those teaching a contradictory view of the gods is relevant to understanding why Paul was taken before the Areopagus. If the Athenians were still as cautious about the introduction of foreign gods into the city in Paul's day as they were in the centuries prior, the accusation that he seemed to be "a preacher of foreign divinities" (Ξένων δαιμονίων δοκεῖ καταγγελεὺς εἶναι, Acts 17:18) becomes significantly more threatening. This topic will be discussed further in the treatment of Acts 17 in chapter three.

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[108] *Ag. Ap.* 2.262–269. The five individuals mentioned are Socrates (4th C. BCE), Anaxagoras (5th C. BCE), Diagoras (5th C. BCE), Protagoras (5th C. BCE) and Ninos (4th C. BCE). Socrates was an Athenian, but the other four were all foreigners. The Athenians' protective attitude towards the correct worship of the gods is relevant to the question of why Paul gave his Areopagus speech, as argued by Winter, "On Introducing Gods to Athens: An Alternative Reading of Acts 17:18–20," *Tyndale Bulletin* 47, no. 1 (1996).

[109] *Ant.* XIV.154–55.

2.5 Conclusion

The investigation in this chapter has found that Athens was in a significantly depressed state in the first century CE. Dependent on benefactions from the emperor and other leading Romans, Romanisation became a significant cultural factor. This in turn was met with a kind of cultural resistance on the part of the Athenians: the city was a "conflicted space", in which its citizens wrestled with the tension of courting Roman favour while also asserting their own cultural identity as equal to or even greater than Rome.

The city was not a leading centre for philosophy or rhetoric throughout this period. There were some teachers in the city, who produced noteworthy students (such as Plutarch), but there are numerous accounts of the youths of Athens being drawn elsewhere to attend the lectures of more noteworthy philosophers and rhetors. It is surprising that Paul came to Athens, due to its lack of status at this time. It does not seem to be a strategic move. The Acts account is telling, however, in that it describes the apostle's coming to the city as a hurried escape with hastily thrown together plans (Acts 17:14–15). This is significant for how one understands Paul's engagement with the Stoics and Epicureans in the Athenian agora (Acts 17:18). However one construes Paul's speech to the Areapagus, it is unlikely that he should be seen as facing off against the the leading philosophers of his day.

3. ATHENS IN ACTS 17 AND THE PAULINE EPISTLES

3.1 The First Foray into the Greek Peninsula

According to Luke's depiction in Acts, Paul's missionary journey recorded in Acts 16–18 represents the first deliberate effort to take the Gospel message to the Greek peninsula. It is not until Acts 16 that early Christian missionary endeavours are recorded as having reached Europe. On his second missionary journey Paul travels through the Phrygian and Galatian region (τὴν Φρυγίαν καὶ Γαλατικὴν χώραν, Acts 16:6) and past Mysia, having been forbidden by the Spirit to preach in both Asia and Bithynia (v. 6–7). He reaches the city of Troas and receives a vision of a Macedonian man calling him to "Come over to Macedonia to help us" (v. 9). In response to the vision, which they conclude has come from God, Paul and his missionary band endeavour to cross over to Macedonia (v. 9). The missionary work of Paul in the following section includes ministry in Philippi, Thessalonica, Beroea, Athens and Corinth, with travel (and possibly ministry) through Amphipolis and Apollonia.

Visions mark numerous significant points in the expansion of the Christian mission in Acts. Peter receives a vision which makes him willing to preach to Cornelius (Acts 10:9–48). Paul's vision on the road to Damascus marks both his conversion to faith in Jesus and his call to the Gentile mission (most closely linked in the account he gives in Acts 26:12–18). Paul also received visions in Corinth, regarding the promised success of his ministry (18:9–11), and *en route* to Rome, guaranteeing that he would testify before Caesar (27:24).

Robert Sorensen identifies a parallel between Paul's vision in Acts 16 and visions experienced by Alexander the Great and Xerxes. The two rulers' visions urge them to pursue a military campaign, and they both require crossing between Asia and Macedonia in the same region that Paul was located; Alexander crossing from Macedonia to Asia, Xerxes in the opposite direction by bridging the Hellespont.[1] While Sorensen, and Witherington, go too far in suggesting that the "certain man from Macedonia" (ἀνὴρ Μακεδών τις; Acts 16:9) may have

[1] Herodotus, *Hist.* 7.12–18; Josephus, *Ant.* 11.332–334. Robert Sorensen, "Paul's Vision of 'a Certain Macedonian' in Troas: How Might Luke's Original Audience Have Heard the Narration of Acts 16:9?," *Logia* 21, no. 2 (2012): 13–14.

conjured visions of Alexander for Luke's original readers,[2] it is enough to note that Paul's vision highlights the significance of the expansion of the church into the Greek mainland, and identifies him as the man who will pioneer the work.

In chapters 16–18, Paul is portrayed as pioneering the church in the cities he visits. Aquila and Priscilla are the only people possibly identified as Christians who are in a city, in this case Corinth, before Paul's ministry begins.[3] However, when they are first introduced Luke does not mention any Christian faith, rather identifying them as Jews who worked the same trade as Paul and who had recently been expelled from Rome (Acts 18:2–3; Suet. *Claud*. 25.4).[4] It is only later, in 18:26, that they are seen engaging in Christian ministry (in Ephesus, having travelled there with Paul; 18:18–19). The list of nations in Acts 2 offers the possibility that the gospel arrived in Rome well before Paul's time, so it is possible that Aquila and Priscilla were already Christians on their arrival in Corinth.[5] This does not necessarily mean, however, that "it is probable that Aquila and Priscilla had a house-church in Corinth" and that Luke suppressed this in order to present Paul as a pioneer.[6] It should be noted that Acts 18:2 says that they had only "recently arrived" (προσφάτως ἐληλυθότα) from Italy. It is unlikely that they had already established a house church in the city. Since the couple's ministry is only mentioned after this period (Acts 18:26;[7] 1 Cor. 16:19; Rom. 16:3; 2 Tim. 4:19), it is likely that

[2] "Paul's Vision," 14; Witherington, *Acts*, 479–80.
[3] Though the ambiguity of Jason's relationship to Paul and his message in Thessalonica (Acts 17:5–7) makes him a possible prior Christian.
[4] The "disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus" to which Suetonius refers is probably tension between Jews and Jewish Christians. Keener, *Acts*, 3:2708–709.
[5] Witherington, *Acts*, 545. In support of this view, it can be noted that Paul does not include them in his list of people he baptised in Corinth (1 Cor. 1:14–15). If they were not yet Christians, but had been expelled from Rome over conflicts about Jesus, it would be surprising for them to offer hospitality to a Christian ministry. Edwin Judge argues against the expulsion of the Jews from Rome being in reference to Jesus, but rather to some other short-lived messianic figure: Judge, "Church at Rome," 449.
[6] Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 533, n.4.
[7] Even this trip to Ephesus may not have been for the purpose of ministry. Lampe infers from Paul's comments in 1 Cor. 11:9, "And when I was with you and was in need," and Aquila and Priscilla's short stay in the city (a bit over 18 months), that they may have moved on to Ephesus for financial reasons rather than ministry. This may accord with Acts 18:19, where Paul "left them" in Ephesus while he went into the synagogue to reason with the Jews. Lampe, *Christians at Rome*, 187–95, particularly 191–93.

their time with Paul was formative for their future activity, whether they were converted under his ministry or not.[8]

The narrative of Paul's call to and ministry in Macedonia and Achaia emphasises the point that Paul's ministry in Acts 16–18 was the first deliberate effort to take the Christian message to the Greek mainland. This suggests that it is unlikely that there was a Christian presence in Athens before Paul arrived in the late 40s CE. The Athenian crowd's response to Paul's preaching conforms with this understanding, since they considered him to be preaching "foreign divinities" (ξένων δαιμονίων, Acts 17:18) and bringing a "new teaching" (ἡ καινὴ…διδαχή, 17:19).

3.2 Acts 17: The Establishment of the Athenian Church

Acts 17:14–15 records that due to trouble stirred up by Jews from Thessalonica, Paul, accompanied by some of the brothers from Beroea, was sent to Athens by sea while Silas and Timothy stayed behind. The brothers conducted Paul to Athens and then left him there, with the apostle giving them instructions to tell Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible.[9] In the Acts narrative, Paul seems to be alone for the duration of his time in Athens and is reunited with his companions in Corinth in Acts 18:5. The relevance of 1 Thess. 2:17–3:5 will be discussed below, but Paul's comments in that passage suggest that his companions did at the very least meet him in Athens before being sent back to Thessalonica and Philippi.

Much of the scholarship on Paul's sojourn in Athens has focused on his speech before the Areopagus and its engagement with Stoic and Epicurean philosophy.[10] Questions surrounding

[8] Pervo comments that the couple "were evidently missionaries who specialized in the formation and nurture of house churches," but this is only evident after Paul's time in Corinth. Pervo, *Acts*, 451.

[9] Acts does not provide any information about where Paul might have stayed in Athens. Presumably, he was able to find some public lodgings, or perhaps the Beroean brothers knew some Jews resident in Athens who offered him hospitality. On the lodgings of Paul and his team in other cities, see Greg Stanton, "Accommodation for Paul's Entourage," *Novum Testamentum* 60, no. 3 (2018): 227–46.

[10] J.E. Atkinson, "St Paul's Encounter with Athenian Stoics and Epicureans," *Akroterion* 61 (2016): 43–58; Max Pohlenz, "Paulus Und Die Stoa," *ZNW* 42, no. 1 (1949): 69–104; N. Clayton Croy, "Hellenistic Philosophies and the Preaching of the Resurrection (Acts 17:18, 32)," *Novum Testamentum* 39, no. 1 (1997): 21–39; Renée Koch Piettre, "Paul and the Athens Epicureans: Between Polytheisms, Atheisms and Monotheisms," *Diogenes* 52, no. 1 (2005): 47–60.

the Graeco-Roman, Judaic, or Christian nature of the speech have been discussed at length.[11] Few scholars, however, have considered the Athenian narrative in the context of the tensions, discussed in chapter 2, between the romanisation of the city and the resistance to that change by traditionalist factions.

Two scholars who have sought to analyse the Athenian narrative in its religio-political context, as opposed to its religio-philosophical context, are Bruce Winter and Laura Salah Nasrallah. Where Winter notes the presence of Roman power, and the city's response to it, he does not analyse how that conflict may have affected how Paul's speech would have been heard by his audience. Nasrallah, on the other hand, considers the political edge of what Luke sought to do in Acts more generally, and in Acts 17 specifically.[12] She assesses the Athens narrative in the light of Hadrian's Panhellenion, a confederacy of cities in the Roman Greek East headed up by Athens. In the discussion below, similar conclusions will be drawn to those of Nasrallah, but rather than considering the text in a second-century context this discussion is concerned with Paul's speech in Athens as it would have been heard in the mid-first century.

3.2.1 Paul's Evangelistic Activities (17:16–18)

Paul arrived in Athens in the period when Novios[13] was pressing romanisation forward in the city. It seems that Paul originally did not intend to engage in missionary activity in Athens, but we are told that his "spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols" (v16–17). These idols would have included images of the Olympian gods like Athena or Hephaistos; deified abstract ideas like peace, justice and wealth; honorific statues of Imperial rulers such as Tiberius and Claudius; and the city's historical and mythological heroes. They were symbols of religious devotion but also of political manoeuvring and status attainment. They were statements of affiliation and benefaction and indebtedness.

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[11] Martin Dibelius, "Paul on the Areopagus," in *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Heinrich Greeven (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1956), 26–77; Bertil Gärtner, *The Areopagus Speech and Natural Revelation*, trans. Carolyn Hannay King (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1955); Kenneth D. Litwak, "Israel's Prophets Meet Athens' Philosophers: Scriptural Echoes in Acts 17.22–31," *Biblica* 85, no. 2 (2004): 199–216.

[12] Laura Salah Nasrallah, *Christian Responses to Roman Art and Architecture: The Second-Century Church Amid the Spaces of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 90–115.

[13] See §2.2 above.

Motivated by the idolatry of the city, Paul set about, as he had in the previous cities he had visited (cf. κατὰ δὲ τὸ εἰωθὸς τῷ Παύλῳ, 17:2), reasoning with the "Jews and devout persons" (τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις καὶ τοῖς σεβομένοις, 17:17) in the synagogue, and in the Agora with whoever happened to be there (τοὺς παρατυγχάνοντας, 17:17), preaching Jesus and the resurrection (v.16–18). "Reasoning" (διελέγετο, v.17) describes his activity in both settings. It has been noted that this verb is used to describe Socrates' didactic method, often with the application being made that Paul is being portrayed as a new Socrates,[14] but it is also used to describe Paul's method amongst Jewish and Christian audiences in other cities (Acts 17:2; 18:4; 19:8; 20:7), so the term is not used to develop any unique element of the Athenian scene.

The content of Paul's preaching was "Jesus and the resurrection," which his auditors took to be "foreign divinities" (v.18), and which led some of them to dismiss him as a "babbler" (σπερμολόγος).[15] Luke identifies some of his discussion partners as Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. These were the two most significant philosophical schools in Rome at that time but, as argued in chapter 2, Athens was no longer the home of the leading teachers in these schools.[16]

3.2.2 Paul's Appearance before the Areopagus (17:19–21)

On the basis of their realisation that Paul was preaching "foreign divinities," the Athenian philosophers took hold of him (ἐπιλαβόμενοί τε αὐτοῦ, v.19) and led him off to the Areopagus. The key question identified by interpreters regards what exactly was the nature of Paul's Areopagus speech. The two main options are that it was either a philosophical oration to a general crowd of Athenians located on the Areopagus hill, or it was speech in the context of some type of legal proceeding before the Areopagus Council. Three lines of argument suggest

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[14] Joshua W. Jipp, "Paul's Areopagus Speech as Both Critique and Propaganda," *JBL* 131, no. 3 (2012): 571; F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 376; Schnabel, *Acts*, 727; Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), 517.

[15] Dio Chrysostom (*Disc.* 32.9) dismissed Cynic philosophers in Alexandria as those who would post "themselves at street-corners, in alleyways, and at temple-gates, pass round the hat and play upon the credulity of lads and sailors and crowds of that sort, stringing together rough jokes and much tittle-tattle (πολλὴν σπερμολογίαν) and that low badinage that smacks of the market-place."

[16] Lorenzo Scornaienchi, "Paolo, Luca, Cicerone: Il Dibattito Sulla Natura Della Divinità E La Citiazione Di Arato Di Soli in Atti 17,28," *Protestantesimo* 63, no. 3 (2008): 210. Scornaienchi envisions the speech as a dialogue between Paul and the two schools, with only Paul's side recorded.

that Paul was facing some type of legal procedure: Luke's use of ἐπιλαβόμενοί in 17:19; the combination of prepositions used regarding Paul's movement in relation to the Areopagus in verses 19–21; and the role of the Areopagus in supervising the introduction of new cults into the city.

3.2.2.1 Ἐπιλαβόμενοί: Paul's arrest?

The verb ἐπιλαβόμενοί can mean simply to take hold of someone in order to lead them, like "taking them by the hand," without including any sense of threat (Luke 9:47; Acts 23:19). However, it is used elsewhere by Luke in the context of arrest or forced seizure (Lk 20:20; 23:26; Acts 16:19; 18:17; 21:33).[17] The parallels between Acts 16:19 and 17:19 are noteworthy here. In 16:19, the masters of the girl with the spirit of divination "seized" (ἐπιλαβόμενοι) Paul and Silas and dragged (εἵλκυσαν) them into the agora before the rulers (ἐπὶ τοὺς ἄρχοντας).[18] In 17:19, the Athenians "took hold of" (ἐπιλαβόμενοί) Paul and "brought" (ἤγαγον) him before the Areopagus (ἐπὶ τὸν Ἄρειον πάγον). In each case Paul is taken hold of and brought before a judicial council.[19] The only difference is in the degree of malice on the part of those who took hold of him: the slave-girl's masters "dragged" Paul and Silas, probably reflecting their anger at the loss of their source of financial income (16:19); the Athenians "brought" Paul, perhaps demonstrating that their actions were not motivated by personal concerns, but rather by respect for the Areopagus' jurisdiction in these matters.[20]

While ἐπιλαβόμενοί does not necessarily signify that Paul was arrested and brought to trial, the parallels between Acts 16:19 and 17:19 strongly suggest that Paul was not just being led politely away to a quiet spot for further discussion. Rather, it seems that Paul is led away in some kind of expression of conflict, but the nature of that conflict needs to be established by other considerations.

3.2.2.2 On, In and Out: Areopagus as Court or Hill?

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[17] Richard I. Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 428.
[18] This verse will be revisited below to discuss the prepositional phrase "ἐπὶ τοὺς ἄρχοντας".
[19] This will be discussed further below.
[20] It is possible that those who took hold of Paul were members of the Areopagus who had heard his interactions with the philosophers in the agora.

The question whether the Athenians led Paul away to the Areopagus council itself or to the hill on which the council traditionally met has been discussed at length by commentators.[21] The argument has been made that Luke is confused or vague on this point because on the one hand, "ἐπὶ τὸν Ἄρειον πάγον" (17:19) suggests that Paul appeared before his audience "on the Areopagus (hill)," but on the other, "ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ Ἀρείου πάγου" (v.22) and "ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν" (v.33) convey the sense of him standing in the midst of an assembly (cf. Acts 23:10).[22] Those that view Paul's speech as "on the hill" often note that the Areopagus Council no longer met in that location, thus portraying it as philosophical oration in quieter location than the bustling agora.[23] On the other hand, T.D. Barnes argued that the council continued to meet both in the Stoa Basileios and on the hill, and thus asserted the plausibility that Paul appeared "before the council sitting on the hill."[24] Colin Hemer, however, has argued that the Archon Basileus presided over the Areopagus in matters regarding religion, and in these cases the council would likely meet in that official's "seat," the Stoa Basileios.[25] As it was this topic that was in view in the case of Paul it seems most likely that, even if the Areopagus council occasionally met on the hill, in this case it probably met in the Stoa.[26]

The preposition "ἐπί", however, does not need to imply that Paul was "on the hill." In Acts 16:19, where Paul and Silas are dragged before the authorities in Philippi, Luke notes that the owners of the slave girl "seized" (ἐπιλαβόμενοι) the missionaries and dragged (εἵλκυσαν) them into the agora "ἐπὶ τοὺς ἄρχοντας," which in this case clearly means "before the rulers".[27] This use of "ἐπί + the name of an authority" to describe the appearance before a court or council also appears in Luke 21:12, 23:1, Acts 17:6 and 24:20.[28] Therefore, if the

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[21] T.D. Barnes, "An Apostle on Trial," *JTS* 20 (1969): 407–19; Colin J. Hemer, "Paul at Athens: A Topographical Note," *NTS* 20 (1974): 341–50.
[22] Cf. Clare K. Rothschild, *Paul in Athens: The Popular Religious Context of Acts 17*, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 51–52.
[23] Jürgen Roloff, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1988), 258, 67.
[24] Barnes, "An Apostle on Trial," 410.
[25] Hemer, "Paul at Athens," 345.
[26] Hemer notes the location of the Stoa near the area of the "Herms", in the north-west corner of the Agora near the main entry point from the Piraeus, which was a particularly popular spot for erecting "herms", small pillars with the head of Hermes mounted on the top. While this close location might seem convenient for the themes and brief narration of Luke's account, as Hemer argues, it is not conclusive for arguing for the location of Paul's speech. "Paul at Athens," 349–50.
[27] Compare with 17:19: ἐπιλαβόμενοί … ἐπὶ τὸν Ἄρεον πάγον … ἤγαγον.
[28] Atkinson notes the parallels between Acts 17:19, 16:19 and 17:6, but then wrongly (in my opinion) concludes that while Luke "may have intended the reader to assume that there was some formal hearing … the reality may still have been that a group of philosophers took Paul

spacial indicators in 17:22 and 17:33 were not there, it would be justifiable to interpret 17:19 as referring to being "on the Areopagus (hill)," but since they are there it makes sense to interpret "ἐπὶ τὸν Ἄρειον πάγον" as another occurrence of Luke referring to an appearance before a council. The corollary of this for the assessment of Luke's historiography is that it is entirely plausible, as per Barnes, that the council could have met on the hill. It is also plausible that Luke was only interested in reporting that Paul appeared before the Areopagus council, and one does not need to read any specific locative information regarding the hill or the Stoa into his use of prepositions.

3.2.2.3 The Areopagus and the Introduction of New Gods

The Council of the Areopagus (ἡ βουλὴ ἡ ἐξ Ἀρείου πάγου) was the foremost council of the three councils of the Athenian polis, the other two being the Council of the 500 (or 600) and the *Demos*. Numerous inscriptions record the dedications made by either the Areopagus Council alone, or by the three together (including the formula ἡ βουλὴ ἡ ἐξ Ἀρείου πάγου καὶ ἡ βουλὴ τῶν ἑξακοσίων καὶ ὁ δῆμος).[29] Daniel Geagan observes that dedications made by the three councils together "comprised a group in which Roman citizens predominated and many members of the imperial family were in evidence."[30] In those made by the Areopagus alone, however, "Athenians without Roman citizenship predominate, and only two members of the imperial family appear."[31]

Winter has argued that the scenario described in Acts 17 is neither a formal trial nor simply a presentation before an interested crowd. Instead, in light of the recognition by some in the crowd that Paul was heralding new "gods," Paul was called before the Areopagus Council[32] (as well as an interested crowd) for a primary hearing which would help the Council to determine if further proceedings were required in order to accept this new god into, or reject it from, the Athenian Pantheon.[33] Winter says, "This was not an adversarial procedure or a trial … It sought only to ascertain several matters: Had there really been an epiphany of the divinity? Was

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up onto the Areopagus for what amounted to a public debate." Atkinson, "Paul's Encounter," 48.

[29] E.g. IG II^2 3270, 3271,

[30] Daniel J. Geagan, *The Athenian Constitution after Sulla*, Hesperia Supplement XII (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1967), 41. Cf. IG II^2 4044.

[31] *Athenian Constitution*, 41.

[32] He does not discuss whether the meeting is in (or near) the Agora or on the hill itself.

[33] Winter, "Introducing Gods," 83.

official recognition to be given? What divine honours and statues would be appropriate? When would the annual official feast day be?"[34]

He supports this proposal with three lines of argument. Firstly, he establishes that in the Julio-Claudian period the Council of the Areopagus had an integral role in the recognition of the imperial family as gods in Athens. Drawing a comparison with an inscription recording the decision of the "magistrates and councillors and people" of Acraephia "to worship him [Nero] at the altar dedicated to Zeus the Saviour,"[35] Winter observes that similar inscriptions in Athens cite the Council of the Areopagus, the 600, and the *demos*.[36] He goes on to suggest that "the imperial high-priest may have been the person who moved the motion [to acknowledge a member of the imperial family as a god]… but the Council of the Areopagus would have been the body responsible for initiating action for the assimilation of the new god."[37] This understanding of the council's role is supported by the portrayal of Paul as a "herald" (Acts 17:19–20) alongside their interest in him.[38]

Secondly, Winter re-examines the Athenians' response to Paul. While some scoffed at him and labelled him a "babbler" (σπερμολόγος, v.18), others perceived him as a "herald" (καταγγελεύς, v.18) of foreign deities (ξένων δαιμονίων, v.18). Winter argues that "the term καταγγελεύς was used in the time of Augustus of 'a herald' of the imperial cult."[39] The crucial aspect of Winter's understanding of the Athenians' response, however, is found in their question in verse 19b (δυνάμεθα γνῶναι τις ἡ καινὴ αὕτη ἡ ὑπὸ σοῦ λαλουμένη διδαχή;). The question is commonly translated as "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?" (NRSV, ESV). Winter argues that "δυνάμεθα can be translated as a present indicative, 'we have the power,'"[40] and, "γνῶναι can also be translated as 'to form a judgement'."[41] Therefore, he concludes, "Paul was not being asked to provide an explanation. Instead, the Council was informing him initially 'we possess the legal right to judge what this

[34] "Introducing Gods," 72.
[35] SIG^3 814; "Introducing Gods," 75–76.
[36] IG II^2 3182; IG II^2 3238. One inscription (IG II^2 3257) refers only to "The Council and the *Demos*," but a comment from Cicero clarifies which council is referred to: "when one says 'the Athenian state is ruled by the council,' the words 'of the Areopagus' are omitted." Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*; "Introducing Gods," 76–77.
[37] "Introducing Gods," 79.
[38] "Introducing Gods," 79.
[39] "Introducing Gods," 80.
[40] "Introducing Gods," 81.
[41] "Introducing Gods," 82.

new teaching is that is being spoken by you'."[42] Winter then notes that the tone of the exchange is polite because the representatives of the council were aware that (in normal circumstances) the foreign god could well be accepted by the people and included amongst the pantheon, and therefore their interaction with this "herald" potentially had ongoing religio-political significance.[43]

Thirdly, Winter demonstrates how understanding Paul's appearance before the Areopagus in these terms relates to his speech itself. He observes that his speech undercuts their expectations for heraldic proposals of new gods, which would have included the demonstration that: "(1) the herald was the deity's representative, (2) the god was eager to set up residence in Athens, and (3) some benefit [out of the god's goodwill] had already accrued to the Athenians."[44] Paul was not introducing a new god but explaining one to whom they already had an altar (17:23). Paul had no need of land for a sacred site because "God…does not live in shrines made by human hands" (17:24); and there was no need for an annual feast "because he has no need of anything, since it is he who gives life and breath and all things to all of his creation (17:25)."[45] Paul also had no need to prove a theophany because he could marshall the support of the Greek poets, who "spoke with divine authority."[46] To finish off, Paul does not seek the approval of his God by the Areopagus, but rather proclaims that God was commanding the council, and the wider audience, to repent in light of the coming day of judgement by His appointed man, Jesus (17:30–31).[47]

Joshua Jipp disagreess with Winter's suggestion that this investigation by the Areopagus would have been polite in tone.[48] He argues that the "resonances of this story with the last days of Socrates should be enough to remind Luke's reader of this fact."[49] While it is unwise to ignore the threat implied by this scene's echo of Socrates' condemnation on the basis of introducing "other newfangled divinities" (ἕτερα δαιμόνια καινά, Plato, *Apol.* 24b), it is also important not to overemphasise it. Jervell downplays the parallels between Paul and Socrates,

[42] "Introducing Gods," 82.
[43] "Introducing Gods," 83.
[44] "Introducing Gods," 88.
[45] "Introducing Gods," 84.
[46] "Introducing Gods," 85.
[47] "Introducing Gods," 86.
[48] Jipp, "Areopagus Speech," 572, n.22.
[49] "Areopagus Speech," 572.

saying that they are "about such general things."[50] Rothschild even argues that Luke may be portraying Paul in *contrast* to Socrates, noting that where Socrates was falsely accused, Paul was in fact a preacher of a new religion.[51] It is true that the parallels are not exact. Socrates' "crimes" also included "corrupting the young" (Σωκράτης φησὶν ἀδικεῖν τούς τε νέους διαφθείροντα, Plato, *Apol*. 24b), an accusation not leveled at Paul. The parallel that Jipp notes between Paul and Socrates' dialogical method (διελέγετο, v.17) cannot bear much weight either.[52] Paul is described as using this method in the synagogues of Thessalonica (Acts 17:2), Corinth (18:4) and Ephesus (19:8), and amongst Christians in Troas (20:7); it is not unique to the Athenian context. Furthermore, it is significant to note that the examples of individuals being executed (or barely avoiding execution) on account of introducing foreign gods to Athens all belong to the fifth and fourth centuries BCE (Josephus *Ag. Ap.* 2.262–269; cf. the records of opposition to the introduction of the foreign cults of Cybele, in Julian's *Or*. 5.159, and Dionysos, in Euripides' *Bacchae* 256–59). The increase in introduction of foreign cults in Athens (Egyptian cult of Isis, etc.) during the Hellenistic and early Roman periods may suggest that this threat had waned somewhat.

3.2.2.4 Conclusion

It is difficult to ascertain what level of animosity Paul faced from his audience, and whether he was in any danger because of his preaching. There are elements of the Athens narrative, discussed below, that suggest that Paul had to leave the city in a rush, possibly in negative circumstances. Verses 19–21 do not give a strong sense of Paul being under threat, but the responsibility of the Areopagus to oversee religious concerns in the city, and the historical examples of these issues leading to execution, or the threat of execution, suggests that Paul's speech was a fraught moment. Paul was on trial, in a way, in Athens, and his speech was shaped by the requirements of the Areopagus' enquiry. He was still able, though, to turn these requirements to his own purpose: the proclamation of Jesus and the resurrection.

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[50] "Man hat hier Parallelen zu Sokrates sehen wollen, nicht nur dass er auf dem Markt predigte, sondern auch in der Auseinandersetzung mit den Philosophen...Es geht aber um derart allgemeine Dinge, dass man nicht von Parallelen reden sollte." Jacob Jervell, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1998), 443, n.210.
[51] Rothschild, *Paul in Athens*, 88.
[52] Jipp, "Areopagus Speech," 571.

3.2.3 Paul's Speech

It was argued in Chapter 2 (Athens in the First Century CE) that Athens was a contested space, wrestling with the tension of courting Roman power and maintaining their classical identity. This is the contextual frame through which I will proceed to analyse Paul's speech before the Areopagus. There are three elements of Paul's speech that would have taken on a particularly strong note in a contested Athens: 1) his contextualised approach, in which he used well-known elements of Athenian culture and history in order to engage his audience; 2) the political language, regarding "times and boundaries," that Paul utilises in Acts 17:26–28; and 3) the presentation of Jesus as new righteous ruler.

3.2.3.1 Paul's Athenian Contextualisation

To begin with, it can be noted that Paul's speech is contextualised to his Athenian audience,[53] and makes use of elements of Athenian and broader Greek traditions that could be seen as appealing to Athenian pride. Commentators have noted the many points of contact between his speech and Stoic and Epicurean philosophy, by which Paul engaged his audience on their own terms.[54] Paul begins with a *captatio benevolentiae*, commending his audience for their religiosity (δεισιδαιμονεστέρους, 17:22). The term could be used positively, in the sense of being "pious," or negatively, "superstitious." In the historical moment of Paul's speech, it is highly unlikely that he would have intended to offend his audience by taking the negative approach.[55] Even though Paul will ultimately critique the Athenians' religious practices, his argument depends upon their religiosity (in that he appeals to the altar to the unknown god) and acknowledges God's design that humans seek him (which is reflected, though misguidedly, in their religiosity).[56]

[53] Although the speech recorded in Acts is not the full speech that Paul would have given, I understand it to be a Lukan summary that is faithful to Paul's original speech.
[54] Schnabel offers a concise summary: Schnabel, *Acts*, 745–48.
[55] Pervo, *Acts*, 433; Schnabel, *Acts*, 729.
[56] It is likely, though, that Luke and his readers would have noted the irony of the word.

Paul also refers to the traditions of Epimenides of Crete, including the altar to the "unknown god,"[57] that Paul uses as the starting point for his speech,[58] and possibly Paul's statement in v.28, "In him we live and move and have our being." The tradition surrounding Epimenides was an important foundational narrative of Athens, and had specific connection to the Areopagus.[59] Clare Rothschild recently argued that Luke used the numerous traditions of *Epimenidea*[60] to shape Paul's *Areopagitica*. In doing so, Rothschild believes, Luke portrayed Paul as a "cult-transfer" icon, a new Epimenides. While she is right to identify many elements of *Epimenidea* in the Athens narrative, it goes too far to claim Epimenides as the primary reference shaping the account.

Rothschild's argument is most convincing where she identifies *Epimenidea* within Paul's speech itself. When she argues for references to Epimenidean myths in the narrative frame (Acts 17:16–21, 32–34), however, the evidence does not support her assertions.[61] For example, she states that Paul, like Epimenides, is characterised three times as "foreign" (ξένος), citing his proclamation of foreign divinities (ξένων δαιμονίων) in Acts 17:18, his "strange" or "foreign" (ξενίζοντα) sounding message (17:20), and the "foreigners" (οἱ ἐπιδημοῦντες ξένοι; 17:21) dwelling in Athens.[62] The third of these references is irrelevant to Paul because he is not identified in this instance with the Athenians and resident foreigners who were so fascinated with novel ideas. The first two more particularly refer to Paul's message, rather than Paul himself, as foreign. The identification of "foreign divinities" and the

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[57] In his analysis of the material and literary evidence for an altar to an "unknown god", Pieter van der Horst concluded that while altars with the address in the singular would be much rarer than those with the plural, literary references suggest it is possible that the singular did occur. Paus. *Descr. Gr.* 1.1.4; Diog. Laert. *Lives* 1.1.10; Phil. *Vita Ap.* 6.3; Pieter W. van der Horst, "The Altar of the 'Unknown God' in Athens (Acts 17:23) and the Cults of 'Unknown Gods' in the Graeco-Roman World," in *Hellenism - Judaism - Christianity: Essays on Their Interaction* (Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing House, 1994), 170–71, 95. Van der Horst notes two inscriptions that should be reconstructed to include "ΘΕΙΟΙΣΑΓΝΩΣΤΟΙΣ": 1) From Pergamon, published by Hugo Hepding in 1910 (Hugon Hepding, "Die Arbeiten zu Pergamon 1908–1909. II: Die Inschriften," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung* 35 (1910): 401–493, esp. 454–457).

[58] When Epimenides purified Athens, he sent black and white sheep loose in the city and region, and told the Athenians to follow them and when the sheep lay down to build an altar and sacrifice the sheep to the god that had caused the pestilence. Since they did not know which god was responsible, these altars were left without names on them (βωμοὺς ἀνωνύμους; Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 1.1.10).

[59] Rothschild, *Paul in Athens*, 53.

[60] The myths and history of Epimenides of Crete and his involvement with Athens.

[61] Rothschild, *Paul in Athens,* 81–107.

[62] Rothschild, *Paul in Athens,* 81.

"foreign sounding message" provide the reason for his "arrest" and appearance before the Areopagus, the council with the authority to allow or disallow the introduction of new cults. The presence of *Epimenidea* in Paul's speech but not in the narrative frame suggests that Paul used these themes as a rhetorical strategy in his speech to the Athenians. The apostle's appeals to these traditions would have resonated with the Athenian interest in asserting their traditional status.

3.2.3.2 Paul's Political Language (Acts 17:26–27)

The section of Paul's speech that most clearly picks up the themes related to the political and ideological tensions in Athens, however, is found in verses 26–27. In these verses, Paul continues the theme of God's creation of the world (ὁ ποιήσας τὸν κόσμον, 17:24), focusing on his creation and superintendence of humanity (ἐποιήσέν…ἀνθρώπων, 17:26). Here we find three elements that relate to Athens' conflicted context.

Firstly, Paul's notion that all humanity was created from "one [person]" (ἐξ ἑνὸς, 17:26) reflects the Jewish perspective based on the early chapters of Genesis.[63] On the basis of this shared origin, Paul presents a unity of mankind under God. This unity would have presented a challenge to Athenian convictions that they had "sprung from the soil of their native Attica," and Greek claims to superiority over barbarians more broadly.[64] On the other hand, Paul makes a more primordial claim than any Roman rhetoric regarding their rule over many nations in the Roman *oikoumene*.[65] The sovereign rule of the God he proclaims has not come about by military victory and cultural expansion; it is a constant based on his creation of and providence over humanity from its very beginning.

Secondly, Paul gives the first of two reasons for which humanity was created.[66] Humanity was created "to dwell on all the face of the earth" (κατοικεῖν ἐπὶ παντὸς προσώπου τῆς γῆς), with

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[63] While most commentators identify the "one" as Adam, Laura Nasrallah suggests that the "one" could be the united humanity that preceded the division of languages at Babel. Nasrallah, *Christian Responses*, 115.
[64] Bruce, *Acts: Greek*, 382.
[65] Polybius, *Histories* 1.1.5; 6.50.6; 15.9.5. IG II^2 3273, a dedication to Claudius on the occasion of the Great Panathenaia Sebasta and Kaisarea Sebasta (47–48 or 51–52CE), praises Claudius as "Saviour of the World" (σωτῆρα τοῦ κόσμου).
[66] Interpreters have debated the relationship between the verb ἐποίησεν and the infinitives κατοικεῖν (v.26) and ζητεῖν (v.27) Jacob Jervell notes two possibilities, the second of which is the most preferable: (1) "Der Infinitiv κατοικεῖν kann von ἐποίησεν abhängig sein und von

God allotting the determined times and boundaries of this dwelling (ὁρίσας προστεταγμένους καιροὺς καὶ τὰς ὁροθεσίας τῆς κατοικίας αὐτῶν). Two interpretations have been proposed for the phrase "ὁρίσας προστεταγμένους καιροὺς καὶ τὰς ὁροθεσίας τῆς κατοικίας αὐτῶν" (17:26). The first, a natural-philosophical approach, interprets προστεταγμένους καιρούς as the annual seasons with their relevant weather patterns, and τὰς ὁροθεσίας τῆς κατοικίας as the "habitable zones" of the earth. In this view, scholars highlight the parallels between Paul's statements to the Lystrans (Acts 14:17), Old Testament texts such as Psalm 74:17 (73:17LXX)[67] and Job 38:8–10, and Graeco-Roman sources such as Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* 1.28.[68] The second approach is historical-political, interpreting the καιρούς and ὁροθεσίας as the epochs of the nations throughout history and their political boundaries.[69] This view finds support in Luke's broader use of "times" (Luke 21:24; Acts 1:7; 3:20), Old Testament passages such as Deut. 32:8, Dan. 2:37–45 and Ezek. 29:1–6, and the assertion that προστεταγμένους suits an historical-political, rather than a natural-philosophical, reading.[70]

While it is wise not to divorce completely these two understandings of the "times and boundaries," considering the scriptural attestation of God's sovereignty over both the natural and political spheres, it is best in this case to understand the historical-political as being in the foreground.[71] The reference to "fruitful seasons" (καιροὺς καρποφόρους) in Acts 14:17 shows

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dieser Konstruktion wieder der finale Infinitiv ζητεῖν: Gott liesse das ganze Menschengeschlecht aus einem Einzigen auf der ganzen Erde wohnen… damit sie Gott suchen sollen" (Cf. Jürgen Roloff who describes the relationship between the two infinitives as "cause and consequence" (Grund und Folge), and Martin Dibelius, who asserts, "God has made the καιροί and appointed the ὁροθεσίαι τῆς κατοικίας in order that men should *seek* him." Roloff, *Apg*, 262; Dibelius, "Areopagus," 32.); and (2) "Oder: ἐποίησεν steht selbständig, „er schuf", und davon hängen asyndetisch die Infinitive κατοικεῖν und ζητεῖν ab: Er schuf aus Einem die ganze Menschheit, damit sie auf der ganzen Erde wohne, und damit sie Gott suchen" (Cf. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 523; Rudolf Pesch, *Die Apostelgeschichte, Teilband 2* (Zürich: Benziger Verlag, 1986), 137.) Jervell, *Apg.*, 447.

[67] Text from the LXX is from Gregory R. Lanier and William A. Ross, eds., *Septuaginta: A Reader's Edition*, 2 vols. (Peabody/Stuttgart: Hendrickson/Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2018).

[68] Pesch, *Apg, 2*, 137–38; Dibelius, "Areopagus," 31–34; Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 524.

[69] Keener, *Acts*, 3:2648–51; Pervo, *Acts*, 436; Schnabel, *Acts*, 734–35; Nasrallah, *Christian Responses*, 115.

[70] Though Dibelius argues the exact opposite regarding προστεταγμένους, citing the use of the term in the context of the regular cycles of sacrifice in 1 Clem. 40.4 to argue that the fixed nature of the seasons is in view. Dibelius, "Areopagus," 34.

[71] Keener, *Acts*, 3:2649. Marguerat, who identifies the historical-political argument as "Jewish" and the natural-philosophical as "Greek", suggests that there is a deliberate ambivalence here whereby Paul could appeal to his Greek listeners and yet not contradict his Jewish worldview. Fitzmyer probably overstates his caution when he says the difference

that Paul could use the natural-philosophical line of argumentation in his presentation of the Christian message, but it is important to note the differences in the purpose and content of the two speeches. Paul was explicitly offering a proof for God to the Lystrans, stating that God gave them rains and fruitful seasons so that he would not be *without witness* (οὐκ ἀμάρτυρον, Acts 14:17). In Acts 17, on the other hand, Paul's argument begins with the assertion that the Athenians already worship the God he proclaims, though unknowingly, and thus he is not proving that God exists, but rather explicating his character.[72]

The contexts of the two speeches are also different. In Lystra Paul was declaring the nature of God in the context of trying to stop the Lystrans from identifying Barnabas and Paul as Zeus and Hermes because of the healing miracle that Paul performed (14:8–13). His appeal to God's position as creator and his providential management of the seasons, along with the apostle's emphatic declaration of his own humanity, shows that the miracle was performed by the power of the God that Paul proclaims, and that the greater divine action is God's superintendence over the created order. In Athens, however, Paul is in a judicial context in which he must explain why the Athenians should allow the "new" God that he proclaims to be received by the city.[73] God's sovereignty over political boundaries speaks more pertinently to the issue at hand in the context in which Paul finds himself when facing the Areopagus.

The appeal to Psalm 74:17 (73:17LXX) demonstrates that the natural-philosophical argument could be in view, at least in part. The linguistic parallels, however, are stronger between Acts 17:26 and Deuteronomy 32:8 (LXX). In Psalm 74, the "boundaries" (τά ὅρια) are delimitations of certain areas of "the earth" (τῆς γῆς). Deuteronomy 32 bears closer resemblance to Acts 17:26 because the boundaries relate to the "nations" (ἔθνη, ἐθνῶν in Dt. 32:8; πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων in Acts 17:26). Moreover, in response to the appeal to Psalm 74:17, Keener cites at least seventy occurrences of the noun ὅριον, the closest cognate of ὀροθεσίας that is found in the LXX (including the two passages cited above), which refer to political or property ownership boundaries.[74]

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between the two interpretations "is idle." Daniel Marguerat, *Les Actes Des Apôtres (13–28)*, Commentaire Du Nouveau Testament 5b (Genève: Labor et Fides, 2015), 159–60; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 609.

[72] This line of argument is relevant in assessing Dibelius' reliance on Cicero. While Cicero was arguing proofs for God, Paul is not engaged in that type of argumentation at this point.

[73] Winter, "Introducing Gods."

[74] Keener, *Acts*, 3:2649, n.3487.

Paul emphasises his God's sovereign appointment of nations and their boundaries. This takes on a particular significance in the light of the Athenian context outlined earlier. With the expansion of Roman authority across the Mediterranean a new epoch has dawned and the boundaries have shifted. Paul's statement here to some degree validates the romanisation of Greek East—God has allowed this new empire to dawn—but at the same time it diminishes Imperial claims. Rome may hold hegemony, but it does so under the authoritative hand of the creator God that Paul is proclaiming. These boundaries are "ordained for the present [but they] are not permanent."[75] Rome is only instrumental in God's plans.[76]

Thirdly, we see a second purpose for which humanity was created: Humans are to search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him. Here again Paul engages with the question of religiosity. He had begun, in verse 22, with the recognition that the Athenians were very pious and here he notes that the search for God is inherent in all people, by God's design. Other philosophical traditions would have agreed with this sense of inherent desire for the divine, but would have been more optimistic than Paul was about the outcome.[77] Paul's conditional clause—"and perhaps grope for him and find him"—expresses a strong doubt in the possibility of humans ever finding the one they are searching for. Indeed, the Athenians were famous for their efforts in this search, whether philosophical or cultic, and yet Paul is highlighting the deficiencies of their efforts. Where the pro-Roman segments of the crowd may have been chastened by the assertion of this foreign God's sovereignty over national epochs and boundaries, perhaps the Athenian traditionalists would have bridled at this particular critique.

3.2.3.3 A Man Whom He Had Appointed (Acts 17:31)

Paul's assertion of God's "appointment" (ὁρίσας, 17:26) of the "times and boundaries" leads to his announcement of the man whom God "appointed" (ὥρισεν, 17:31) to be his agent of

[75] Rothschild, *Paul in Athens*, 65.
[76] Dibelius argues that humanity's purpose to seek God is dependent upon his appointment of times and boundaries—understood by him in the natural-philosophical sense—that is, God appointed the times and boundaries as a witness to himself that human "seekers" could follow. Dibelius, "Areopagus," 32. If we were to understand that God used the historical-political appointment of national "times and boundaries" to facilitate the search for God, the salvation-historical significance of Rome's role as God's instrument would be emphasised further.
[77] Cf. Keener, *Acts*, 3:2651–53; Pervo, *Acts*, 436–37.

righteous judgement.[78] God's appointment of a man to judge the earth has roots in the Hebrew Scriptures, namely in Daniel 7:13, in which a "son of man" receives from the Ancient of Days "the dominion and honour and kingship, that all peoples, tribes, and tongues should serve him."[79] This "Son of Man" imagery is applied by the Gospel writers to Jesus, and incorporates his suffering, death, and resurrection (Matt. 17:9, 12, 22; 26:2; Mark 8:31), as well as his role in the future judgement (Matt. 13:41; 16:27–28; 19:28; 24:39; 25:31–46; Mark 13:26–27; Luke 9:26; 18:8; John 5:27). Bruce notes that while Paul has an eye to the "Son of Man," he substitutes this Semitism for "the ordinary word ἀνήρ."[80]

The judgement of humans by appointed men would not have been a foreign idea to Paul's Greek audience, considering Plato's assertion that the world will be judged by Minos, Rhadamanthys and Aeacus (Plato, *Gorgias* 523C–524A).[81] In this narrative a complaint is brought before Zeus because the appointed judges had been giving false judgements regarding the final destination of other men. Zeus acts to correct the situation, saying:

> Nay … I will put a stop to these proceedings. The cases are now indeed judged ill; and it is because they who are on trial are tried in their clothing, for they are tried alive. Now many…who have wicked souls are clad in fair bodies and ancestry and wealth, and at their judgement appear many witnesses to testify that their lives have been just. Now, the judges are confounded not only by their evidence but at the same time by being clothed themselves while they sit in judgement, having their own soul muffled in the veil of eyes and ears and the whole body. Thus all these are a hindrance to them, their own habiliments no less than those of the judged (523C–D).

In light of this, Zeus first of all rules that humans will be judged after their death, rather than having foreknowledge of their time of death (523D), and continues, "Next they must be stripped bare of all those things before they are tried; for they must stand their trial dead.

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[78] Paul states that God had set a day "ἐν ᾗ μέλλει κρίνειν τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ ἐν ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὥρισεν." The phrase ἐν ἀνδρὶ is instrumental: Darrell L. Bock, *Acts* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 570.
[79] F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (London: The Tyndale Press, 1951), 340; Bock, *Acts*, 570.
[80] Bruce, *Acts*, 340.
[81] The Athenian apologist Athenagoras refers to this tradition, but states that Minos, Rhadamanthys, and Zeus himself will be subject to the judgement of Christ (*Leg.* 12.2).

Their judge also must be naked, dead, beholding with very soul the very soul of each immediately upon his death, bereft of all his kin and having left behind on earth all that fine array, to the end that the judgement may be just" (523E). It was a requirement, therefore, that both the judges and those to be judged needed to be dead in order to give unclouded judgements. Finally, he reports that he has appointed three of his sons to act as judges after their deaths: Minos and Rhadamanthys of Asia, and Aeacus from Europe (523E–524A):

> These, when their life is ended, shall give judgement in the meadow at the dividing of the road, whence are the two ways leading, one to the Isles of the Blest, and the other to Tartarus. And those who come from Asia shall Rhadamanthus try, and those from Europe, Aeacus; and to Minos I will give the privilege of the final decision, if the other two be in any doubt; that the judgement upon this journey of mankind may be supremely just (524A).

This text from Plato and the reference to Jesus as God's agent of judgement share a similar concern, namely, the justice or righteousness of judgement. Zeus, according to Plato, effected these changes in order that the "judgement" (ἡ κρίσις) may be "supremely just" (δικαιοτάτη, 524A). Jesus, likewise, is the agent by which God is going to "judge the world in righteousness" (κρίνειν τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, Acts 17:31).

The aspect of Paul's declaration regarding Jesus that the Athenians found disagreeable was not that he was appointed to judge, but rather that he had risen from the dead. The typical Greek understanding of the afterlife is found on the lips of Apollo in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*: "When once a man has died, and the dust has sucked up his blood, there is no rising again" (647–648).[82] Upon hearing about the resurrection of the dead, "some mocked" (Acts 17:32). Others, however, expressed an interest in hearing from Paul again, though this could also be interpreted as "a polite brush-off."[83]

Richard Pervo has noted the parallelism between "the objections of some members of the Areopagus with those of some members of the Sanhedrin (23:6–12)."[84] In Acts 23:6–9, Paul declares before the Sanhedrin that he is on trial "in respect to the hope and the resurrection

[82] Translation of Alan H. Sommerstein (LCL 146). Cf. Schnabel, *Acts*, 742.
[83] Pervo, *Acts*, 441.
[84] *Acts*, 441.

of the dead" (v.6). This statement caused a dissension (στάσις, v.7) to arise between the Pharisees and Sadducees because (γὰρ, v.8) the two groups held different beliefs regarding the resurrection and the spirit (v.8). The interesting element of this scene is that Paul, based on his perception of the factions within the council (implying his knowledge of their beliefs; v.6), seems to exploit this factionalism in order to extricate himself from the precarious position in which he found himself.[85] Paul could be seen to be doing the same thing before the Areopagus council, that is, emphasising the resurrection in order to divide his audience. If this was the case, it would strengthen the picture of him being more formally on trial and looking for opportunities to ensure a favourable outcome. The weakness of this suggestion, however, is that Paul was preaching "Jesus and the resurrection" earlier in Athens (Acts 17:18), and thus his more formal presentation of his "new teaching" would by necessity include this element. It is fair to conclude, then, that even though Paul did not use the doctrine of the resurrection merely for a "cheap lawyer's trick", its divisive effect did prove to be useful when he found himself in judicial contexts. Considering the divisive nature of the earlier elements of his speech, noted above, Paul's teaching regarding Jesus' resurrection was the "straw which broke the camel's back".

3.2.3.4 Conclusion

With this declaration of Jesus as God's agent of judgement, Paul brought his speech to bear on the Athenian crowd. The Athenians had been engaged in a pursuit of God that actually led them away from him. Considering the Athenian context outlined above, at least some of the crowd were pursuing status and security by courting the power of Rome and engaging the benefaction of the emperor. For others, their lot was thrown in with the traditional history of Athens: its religion, philosophy, and military glory. The Areopagites were active players in this tension: many were Roman citizens and yet the council had a particular interest in maintaining the integrity of Athens as Athens, negotiating new cults and participating in bestowing honours on Athenian citizens. But Paul calls his audience to a third way: repentance to the God he proclaimed and his appointed man, Jesus the resurrected one. In his call to repentance, then, Paul not only calls the Athenians out of ignorant worship, but out of their

[85] Pervo: "Paul engages in what his admirers would have labeled a deft political manoeuvre and detractors, a cheap lawyer's stunt" (*Acts*, 574). Against this position, see Bruce: "It is overscrupulous to blame Paul for his action on this occasion…as…a disingenuous claim" (*Acts: Greek*, 466); Schnabel: "Paul's statement is not a clever legal tactic but the succinct formulation of the 'main question' of the case against him" (*Acts*, 928).

pursuit of status, security, wealth, identity, and whatever else they may be seeking in their courtship of Rome and their glorification of Athens. The living God is not *known* through these things but only through the resurrected Jesus.

3.2.4 Κολληθέντες and the Establishment of the Athenian Church in Acts 17

Paul's speech receives mixed responses (17:32), but Luke records that "some of them joined (κολληθέντες) him and believed (ἐπίστευσαν), including Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them" (17:34). Reading these verses at face value we seemingly have the foundation of the Christian community in Athens.[86] Some commentators, however, have disputed this. Alexander Weiß and Teresa Morgan have both noted—though without further elaboration—that κολληθέντες may indicate the formation of a Christ-group in the city.[87] After a brief discussion of the inconclusive nature of the evidence used by those who dispute the establishment of the Athenian church, I will analyse Luke's use of the participle κολληθέντες in Acts 17:34 in light of the term's usage in the Septuagint, early Christian writings, and other relevant texts.

3.2.4.1 Arguments against the establishment of the Church in Athens

1 Cor. 16:15 and the Achaian "Firstfruits"

Citing Paul's note about the household of Stephanas being the "firstfruits" (ἀπαρχή) of Achaia, Ben Witherington states, "There is no evidence of an ongoing vital Christian community being

[86] Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 317.

[87] Weiß says, "Schaut man sich den griechischen Text an, sieht man, dass dort für diejenigen, die sich Paulus ,,anschlossen", das Partizip κολληθέντες steht, das von κολλάω stammt, was wortlich „kleben" oder „anhaften" bedeutet. Was soll damit gemeint sein, wenn nicht eine soziale Zugehörigkeit zur christusgläubigen Gemeinde?" Morgan comments in her note on κολληθέντες, "Here [ie. 17:34] and at 17.4, where the people of Thessalonica and Beroea 'throw in their lot' with Paul and Silas (προσεκληρώθησαν), Luke uses two colourful words which express rather more than that the converts just 'join' the apostles." Alexander Weiß, *Soziale Elite und Christentum: Studien zu ordo-Angehörigen unter der frühen Christen* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 97; Teresa Morgan, *Roman Faith and Christian Faith: Pistis and Fides in the Early Roman Empire and Early Churches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 382, n.117.

founded in Athens at this time, as is shown by 1 Cor. 16:15."[88] Pervo cites this verse as proof of the ahistorical nature of the Acts account.[89] Schnabel and Keener admit it is possible that Paul's comment shows that the first church was established in Corinth, but that some conversions occurred in Athens.[90] There are, however, other possible explanations for the seeming contradiction. One suggestion is that "Achaia" particularly refers to Corinth as the capital of the province,[91] though this does not seem to fit with Paul's greeting in 2 Corinthians, "To the church of God in Corinth, with all the saints who are in Achaia." Another is that Athens, as a free city, was not technically part of Achaia.[92] This suggestion raises the questions of how closely Paul followed technicalities of Roman governance in his use of terminology, and whether this implies the Athenian Christ group's participation (or not) in Paul's Jerusalem collection (Rom. 15:26). The most convincing proposal is that ἀπαρχή may not primarily have a temporal emphasis, but rather carry the sense of being a "model."[93] The context of 1 Cor. 16 supports this last sense because Paul is urging the Corinthians to "be subject to such as these" (1 Cor. 16:16). Their leadership, maturity and service are clearly the primary characteristics in view.[94] The present tense ἐστὶν also suggests a focus on Stephanas and his household's status as "firstfruits" at the time of Paul's writing, rather than their early conversion. In light of these arguments, 1 Cor. 16:15 should not be appealed to in order to disprove categorically the establishment of a church in Athens.

No Baptisms

Ernst Haenchen and F.F. Bruce both express doubts about the establishment of a church in the city, noting that no baptisms are mentioned.[95] Luke's silence in this regard, however, does not allow any conclusions to be drawn about the fledgling Christian community. Baptisms are recorded at Philippi (Acts 16:15, 33) and Corinth (18:8), but they are not recorded in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1–9) or in the Galatian region (Acts 13–14) though we have testimony

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[88] Ben Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 533.
[89] Pervo, *Acts*, 442.
[90] Keener, *Acts*, 3:2677; Schnabel, *Acts*, 743.
[91] Schnabel, *Acts*, 743.
[92] Craig S. Keener, "Note on Athens: Do 1 Corinthians 16.15 and Acts 17.34 Conflict?," *JGRChJ* 7 (2010): 139.
[93] For points 1 and 3, see Schnabel, *Acts*, 743.
[94] Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 1338.
[95] Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 526.

to the churches there in Paul's letters.[96] The "partial and elliptical"[97] nature of the accounts of Paul's time in Athens, recorded in Acts 17 and 1 Thess. 3, should caution against making any arguments from silence.

These arguments against the establishment of a Christian community in Athens do not categorically disprove such an establishment. The limited reports that Luke gives on any of the cities of Paul's mission should lead to caution in arguing against the beginnings of a church in Acts 17. It still remains, however, to argue positively that a viable church resulted from Paul's ministry in Athens. Below, Luke's use of the participle κολληθέντες ("joined"; Acts 17:34) in his description of those who "believed" (ἐπίστευσαν, v.34) will be investigated in the light of broader use of the term, to argue that something more than an odd assortment of believers was established in the city. This argument will be further supported by comparison with Luke and Paul's records of Paul's ministry.

3.2.4.2 Use of κολλάω by Luke, other NT writers, the Septuagint, and Graeco-Roman sources.

A search for κολλάω and its cognates in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*[98] produces 2521 occurrences of the word-family in texts ranging from the sixth century BCE to the nineteenth century CE. The Septuagint and the New Testament have thirty-seven and twelve occurrences, respectively.[99] Roughly half of the total number of references are found in texts that can clearly be identified as Christian.[100] In order to narrow the scope of enquiry for the purpose of this study, Christian and non-Christian Greek texts from the first and second centuries will be prioritised alongside the Septuagint and New Testament. Of the occurrences of the word-

[96] Weiß, *Soziale Elite*, 77.
[97] Witherington, *Acts*, 510.
[98] Thesaurus Linguae Graecae® Digital Library. Ed. Maria C. Pantelia. University of California, Irvine. http://www.tlg.uci.edu.simsrad.net.ocs.mq.edu.au (accessed Sept. 15, 2018). Search URL: http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu.simsrad.net.ocs.mq.edu.au/Iris/inst/tsearch.jsp#s=5.
[99] The cognate προσκολλάω occurs seventeen times in the LXX: Gen. 2:24; Lev. 19:31; Num. 36:7, 9; Deut. 11:22; 13:17; 28:21; Jos. 23:8; Judg. 20:45; Ruth 2:21, 23; 2 Sa. 23:10; Esth. 8:1; Job 41:17; Ps. 73:28; Ez. 29:4; Dan. 2:43; and twice in the NT: Mk. 10:7; Eph. 5:31. It operates in much the same way as κολλάω: cf. the parallels between Gen. 2:24 and 1 Cor. 6:16; Mark 10:1, Matt. 19:5 and Eph. 5:31; Ruth 2:8 and 2:21, 23.
[100] That is, they deal with biblical texts, church practices, the lives of former saints, etc. By my count, 1274 occurrences of the word family (not including the biblical texts) can be identified as Christian.

family in non-Christian Greek texts, medical works are the most common text type, and some philosophical works also have relevant content.[101]

The broad meaning of κολλάω is "to join", and it will be seen that this takes different nuances depending on the context in which the word is used. Commentators are correct in saying that it is not a technical term for conversion, but can denote proximity or association.[102] In Acts 17:34, it is the word "believed" (ἐπίστευσαν) that conveys the understanding that some of Paul's hearers were converted. The primary interest of this investigation, though, is whether the "association" that Luke has in view in Acts 17:34 lends itself to being understood as the establishment of the church in Athens. In light of this primary interest, while it is necessary to assess some of the broad usage of the κολλάω word-family, the particular focus of analysis of other occurrences of the word will be on contexts where group dynamics or social relationships are in view.

New Testament

Κολλάω appears twelve times in the New Testament, including seven times in Luke-Acts of which five are in Acts.

Luke

The references in Luke's Gospel do not directly relate to the type of context found in Acts 17. Luke 10:11 refers to clinging dust, and Luke 15:15 refers to the prodigal son, in his destitution, hiring himself out to the citizen of the foreign country.[103] In the case of the prodigal son (Luke 15), the son entered into indentured labour (ἐκολλήθη, Lk. 15:15) with the citizen, a type of labour in which he voluntarily (though out of need) entered into a contractual agreement with the landowner whereby he would do whatever the landowner required of him until the end of the timeframe stipulated in the contract. If he were to break the contract, he likely would

[101] In the top ten "highest use by author", nos. 1, 6, 7 and 8 are authors of medical texts: Galen, Oribasius, Aëtius, and Paulus. http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu.simsrad.net.ocs.mq.edu.au/Iris/inst/stat.jsp#srch_type=lemma&ac_q=&q_lemma=KOLLA%2FW&s_lemma=KOLLA%2FW&varia_incerta=true&lemma=κολλάω&usr_input=greek&c=2&min=-8&max=20

[102] Bock, *Acts*, 230; Schnabel, *Acts*, 291; Witherington, *Acts*, 225.

[103] The image in this parable is of παραμονή (indentured labour), rather than slavery or agricultural employment. J. Albert Harrill, "The Indentured Labor of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:15)," *JBL* 115, no. 4 (1996): 714–17.

have had to face serious repercussions if he was caught.[104] Though not the same type of association as envisioned in the early Christian communities in Acts, the expectation of commitment is similar to other uses of κολλάω that will be discussed below.

Acts

Κολλάω occurs five times in Acts: 5:13; 8:29; 9:26; 10:28; 17:34. Four of these clearly appear in the context of social relations; the fifth (8:29) should probably be interpreted as a reference to proximity.[105]

Acts 5:13

Acts 5:13 τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν οὐδεὶς ἐτόλμα **κολλᾶσθαι** αὐτοῖς

None of the rest dared **to join** them

Acts 5:12–13 records that the apostles were performing many signs and wonders, and the Christians were gathering together in Solomon's Portico, and "the rest" did not dare to join them but still held them in high esteem. Verses 14–16 continue on to say that "more than ever believers were added to the Lord," and these believers would bring out the sick to be healed by Peter.[106]

Daniel Schwartz proposes that there is a tension between verses 13 and 14, and questions how to resolve whether people were keeping their distance from the Christian community or

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[104] "Indentured Labor," 716. Harrill cites a παραμονή contract from the early second century CE, in which a couple borrowed money from a landowner and the husband indentured himself to the landowner for a year in order to pay the money back. The contract included a clause stipulating that if the man left before the end of the year he would have to pay back double.

[105] The D text of Acts also includes κολλώμενοι at Acts 14:4. While this reference will not be discussed at length in this chapter, it is worth noting Theodor Zahn's comment: "The expression κολληθέντες αὐτῷ, especially according to the text Acts 14,4, signifies an adherence to Paul produced by his ongoing preaching, as opposed to only a temporary contact with him." (Der Ausdruck κολληθέντες αὐτῷ zumal nach dem Text *A* 14,4 bedeutet eine durch fortgesetzte Predigt des Pl bewirkte Anhänglichkeit an seine Person im Gegensatz zu nur vorübergehender Berührung mit ihm.) Theodor Zahn, *Die Apostelgeschichte Des Lucas*, 2 vols. Kommentar zum Neuen Testament (Leipzig: Deichert, 1921), 629.

[106] There is some debate surrounding the various pronouns in this passage and who they refer to. I think Craig Keener's explanation of the text is the best. Keener, *Acts*, 2:1197–200.

whether they were converting in droves.[107] The solution he suggests relies on the story of Ananias and Sapphira that immediately precedes these verses. Acts 4:32–37 records how the Christian were of "one heart and soul" (ἦν καρδία καὶ ψυχὴ μία, v.32) and "had everything in common" (ἦν αὐτοῖς πάντα κοινά, v.32). Barnabas even sold a field and gave the money to the apostles (v.37). Ananias and Sapphira do a similar thing, except they only give a portion of the money they made from the sale while claiming to give the full amount. They couple fall down dead (πεσὼν ἐξέψυξεν, 5:5; ἔπεσεν… καὶ ἐξέψυξεν, 5:10) immediately after being rebuked by Peter (5:5, 10), which results in great fear coming upon all who hear about it (5:5, 11). Schwartz suggests that after the Ananias and Sapphira episode, there was a growing body of people who believed in the Christian message but would not "join" (κολλᾶσθαι) them in the sense of sharing their property with the community.[108] He notes that in the Qumran community, "it was the transfer of property to the community which constituted entrance into full membership."[109]

Two aspects of Schwartz's argument need qualification. Firstly, nowhere in Acts is it stated that the transfer of property was required to join the Christian community. Rather, in response to the question, "What shall we do?" Peter had answered, "Repent and be baptised" (Acts 2:38). The common sharing of goods and property was an action done by those who had *first* "believed" (Acts 2:47; 3:32), making "belief" the marker of belonging and the sharing of goods an expression, but not necessarily a requirement, of fellowship. It would be wrong, then, to understand the use of κολλάω to refer *necessarily* to the common sharing of goods in these community texts. The connection Schwartz makes between 5:13–14 and the Ananias and Sapphira episode, however, highlights the significance of the decision to join the community. The non-believers in Acts 5 had witnessed the death of two members of the believing community, considered the group's practice of shared property, hesitated to join them publicly, but then finally joined (as is suggested by their belief; 5:14).

Secondly, Schwartz overstates the "tension" in these verses. The public context of these events—Solomon's Portico—makes sense of the tension Schwartz is concerned with. The non-believers who are present do not want to be mistaken for believers, but they cannot avoid

[107] Daniel R. Schwartz, "Non-Joining Sympathizers (Acts 5:13–14)," *Biblica* 64, no. 4 (1983): 550.
[108] "Sympathizers," 553.
[109] "Sympathizers," 553–54.

hearing and seeing the Christian community and proclamation. Some, despite their original fear or hesitation, eventually believe and join. This scenario resonates strongly with that in Athens: Paul publicly proclaimed the Christian message (Acts 17:17); people were interested but not convinced (17:18–20); Paul proclaimed further (17:22–31); some were convinced and joined while others were not and so did not join (17:32–34).

The scenario that Schwartz describes for 5:13 should not colour every other use of κολλάω in Acts. The situation in 9:26, where Paul tries to join the disciples, does not mention property at all, and neither does 17:34. His proposal does, however, add extra weight to the present argument that this verb is used in 17:34 to describe the formation of a Christian community in Athens. Joining the Christian community did not require a financial commitment, as Schwartz suggests, but it was a *public* commitment. Joining the Christian group did include inevitable identification as one who was among the group meeting in the public assembly in Solomon's Portico. Furthermore, this "joining" may have cost an individual more than a simple financial outlay, as the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira demonstrated, and thus those who joined recognised the "whole-of-life" nature of the commitment.

Acts 8:29

Acts 8:29 εἶπεν δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα τῷ Φιλίππῳ· Προσέλθε καὶ **κολλήθητι** τῷ ἅρματι τούτῳ.

The Spirit said to Philip, "Go and **join** this chariot."

This verse is an outlier amongst the other verses in Acts in which κολλάω appears. Whereas the others envision people joining people, this verse has Philip being instructed to approach and join the *chariot* of the Ethiopian eunuch. Since it is the chariot, not the Ethiopian eunuch, who is the object of the verb, it seems that κολλήθητι is operating simply as a reference to proximity rather than joining in a communal sense. The context provides further confirmation of this interpretation, in that the remote location (αὕτη ἐστὶν ἔρημος, 8:26), Philip's immediate and miraculous departure (v.39–40), and the eunuch's continuation of his journey (v.39) deny any suggestion of community formation or ongoing relationship.

Acts 9:26

Acts 9:26 Παραγενόμενος δὲ εἰς Ἰερουσαλὴμ ἐπείραζεν **κολλᾶσθαι** τοῖς μαθηταὶς

When [Saul] had come to Jerusalem, he attempted **to join** the disciples.

Where Acts 5:13 had presented the population of Jerusalem as hesitating to join the Christian community, Acts 9:26 presents the now-converted Paul as desiring to join the disciples in Jerusalem. The disciples' fear could be explained by a "proximity" understanding of κολλᾶσθαι, because if Paul's conversion was not genuine (as they expected), then his presence would be a threat to the believers, as it was in 8:1–3.[110] The context, however, shows that Paul had been genuinely converted (9:1–19), had already engaged in missionary efforts in Damascus (9:19–25), and, after "joining" the Jerusalem community under Barnabas' sponsorship (9:27), was "boldly speaking in the name of the Lord" (παρρησιαζόμενος ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου, 9:28). Paul's conflict with the Hellenists (9:29), a group to which he used to belong (6:9; 7:58–8:1), demonstrates most dramatically how his "joining" the Jerusalem Christians was evidence of his changed affiliation, faith and life direction. Again, the type of association in view in this passage is one centred around shared belief and practices that differentiate the group from those around it. Paul, the former Hellenist and zealous persecutor of the church, was converted and as a result no longer associated with the Hellenists but rather with his former victims.[111]

Acts 10:28a

Acts 10:28a ὑμεῖς ἐπίστασθε ὡς ἀθέμιτόν ἐστιν ἀνδρὶ Ἰουδαίῳ **κολλᾶσθαι** ἢ προσέρχεσθαι ἀλλοφύλῳ

You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to **associate with** or to visit a gentile.

This verse records the beginning of Peter's speech to those gathered at Cornelius' house in Caesarea, in which he explains that despite the "unlawful" (ἀθέμιτόν) nature of Jewish-Gentile association, he was willing to accept Cornelius' invitation because God had made it clear to Peter in a vision (10:10–16) that he should not view anyone as "unclean" (10:28–29). While the Hebrew scriptures and pre-rabbinic texts did not view Gentiles as ritually impure—that is, causing defilement through contact—they did give strong discouragements from associating

[110] For commentators' differing opinions on why the Jerusalem Christians would fear Paul, cf. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 335; Bock, *Acts*, 369; Keener, *Acts*, 2:1689.

[111] Cf. Pervo: "This irony pointedly illustrates the full circle Saul has traversed, from an ally of Stephen's opponents to the top of their 'most wanted dead or alive' list." Pervo, *Acts*, 247.

closely with Gentiles because of their moral impurity caused by sexual immorality and idolatry (*Jub*. 22:16–22; 30:7; *Jos. Asen*. 8:5; *Let. Aris.* 139, 142).[112] These warnings particularly centred on eating with (*Jub*. 22:16–22) and intermarrying with (*Jos. Asen.* 8:5) Gentiles. In the first century CE, however, the lines of ethnic separation seemed to be strengthening. In the Mishnah, Gentile homes are declared to be, at least in some cases, unclean (M. Ohalot 18:7).[113] Later Talmudic sources claimed that scribal decrees at "the time of the students of Shammai and Hillel" (ie. the first century CE) declared "prohibitions with regard to Gentiles' bread and their oil, their wine and their daughters… [which] were all decreed upon due to the concern that Jews might participate in idol worship with Gentiles as a result of intermingling with them" (B. Avodah Zarah 36b; cf. B. Shabbat 17b).[114] The vision recorded in Acts 10 and the accusation by those of the "circumcision party" who heard about Peter's actions (11:2–3) makes it clear that food and mixed dining were key considerations in the context of Peter's visit to Cornelius. Even though Cornelius was a "God-fearer" and well spoken of by the Jews (10:22), his role as centurion would have created the possibility of practices that would have compromised Peter's Jewish sensibilities.

The kind of "association" that is in view in this statement by Peter, then, is not likely to be merely proximity, as avoiding proximity with Gentiles would be all but impossible in the Roman world and ideas of Gentile ritual impurity were only in an early stage of development.[115] Rather, the concern is whether the close relationship in the context of hospitality may lead to idolatry.[116] Schnabel notes that the present tense of the infinitive verbs κολλᾶσθαι and προσέρχεσθαι indicates "a continuous, extensive association."[117] While the sense of duration may be significant, I would suggest that the primary concern is whether the association is going to significantly impact on the Jewish individual's ability to remain faithful to God. The "association" that is "unlawful" is one that changes the individual's behaviour and

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[112] Jonathan Klawans, "Notions of Gentile Impurity in Ancient Judaism," *AJS Review* 20, no. 2 (1995): 288–302.
[113] "Gentile Impurity," 304. While the Mishnah is less uniform in its assertions about Gentile ritual and moral purity (compare M. Ohalot 18:7 and M. Toharot 7:6 with M. Avodah Zarah 5:5; 2:1), the Tosefta developed a much more uniform position that Gentiles were ritually impure (T. Ahilot 9:2; T. Toharot 8:9; T. Niddah 5:5), and thus contaminating via contact, even though they were "not susceptible to Israelite impurities" ("Gentile Impurity," 308).
[114] Klawans concludes from this that the idea of Gentile ritual impurity was in an early stage of development in the first century CE. "Gentile Impurity," 310–12.
[115] "Gentile Impurity," 310.
[116] "Gentile Impurity," 301.
[117] Schnabel, *Acts*, 496.

practice of their Jewish faith. While this may not exactly align with the picture of joining an established community in 5:13 and 9:26, the same idea of a shift in practice is in view in all three instances.

Peter's use of this term in the context of his visit to Cornelius' house, then, is relevant to the context of Acts 17:34. Even though he is speaking negatively about "associating" with Gentiles, the point of his statement is that he has learnt that his former understanding needed to change. The Christian community was now to include both Jews and Gentiles (who had now been made clean). The aspect of the association that was formerly problematic, that the religious practices of the two disparate groups would become more unified, is precisely the positive aspect of the new scenario: Jews and Gentiles are united under Christ by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 17:34 records the outcome of Paul's ministry in the Synagogue, Agora, and Areopagus: Jews and Greeks "joining" the herald of the new faith.

Acts 14:4

Acts 14:4 [D 05] οἱ δὲ σὺν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις **κολλώμενοι** διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ

and some with the apostles, **joining** them on account of the word of God.

Acts 14:1–4 records the division (ἐσχίσθη, v.4) amongst the populace of Iconium on the basis of Paul and Barnabas' preaching, the conversions that resulted from it, and the actions of the "unbelieving Jews" who "stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers" (v.1–2). Verse four states that some sided with the Jews, and others with Paul and Barnabas. The D text of Acts includes a further elaboration in Acts 14:4, saying that those who had sided with the missionaries "joined (κολλώμενοι) them on account of the word of God." Although the "secondary character"[118] of this text means that it should not bear too much weight in this argument, the nature of the "joining" reflects the situations already seen above. Those who joined Paul did so publicly, on the basis of his Christian proclamation, in the context of conversion. Zahn refers to this additional text in his comments on Acts 17:34, noting, "The expression κολληθέντες αὐτῷ, especially according to the text A 14,4, signifies an adherence

[118] Bruce, *Acts*, 277; Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary of the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2000), 371.

to Paul produced by his ongoing preaching, as opposed to only a temporary contact with him."[119]

Other NT Authors

Occurrences of the κολλάω word group elsewhere in the New Testament testify to the breadth of contexts in which the term can be used. They include sexual/marital union (Matt. 19:5; 1 Cor. 6:16), commitment to "what is good" (Rom. 12:9), union with the Lord (1 Cor. 6:17), and the piling up of sins (Rev. 18:5). In each of these instances, there is a weighty sense of the union. Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 6:6–17 points to the fact that sexual union with a prostitute and spiritual union with the Lord are not fleeting unions. Rather, the dramatic imagery of the two becoming one highlights the seriousness of the union. Stanley Porter has argued that the economic use of the verb in Luke 15 should be incorporated into the interpretation of 1 Cor. 6:16–17, and suggests translating ὁ κολλώμενος as "he who sells himself into bondage (obligates himself)."[120] Understanding the term in this way is helpful because it: 1) identifies a congruence between the mixed images of sexual and spiritual union (i.e. both are obligating oneself to another); 2) provides continuity with the economic imagery in 1 Cor. 6:20, "You were bought with a price;" and 3) is rhetorically effective in conveying the gravity of these relationships.

Septuagint

The occurrences of the κολλάω word family in the Septuagint show a similar breadth of contexts as seen in the New Testament examples. As observed regarding the New Testament examples, some of the uses of κολλάω do not shed a great amount of light on Luke's use in Acts. The sexual/marital context appears again (3 Kgdms 11:2; Tob. 6:19; Sir. 19:2), and a number of references speak of things clinging to one another as a negative result of sin, grief, or God's judgement. For example, Psalm 101:6 (102:5 LXX) says, "From the sound of my

[119] „Der Ausdruck κολληθέντες αὐτῷ zumal nach dem Text *A* 14,4 bedeutet eine durch fortgesetzte Predigt des Pl bewirkte Anhänglichkeit an seine Person im Gegensatz zu nur vorübergehender Berührung mit ihm." Zahn, *Apg.*, 2:629.

[120] Stanley E. Porter, "How Should ΚΟΛΛΩΜΕΝΟΣ in 1 Cor 6:16–17 Be Translated?," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 67, no. 1 (1991): 105.

groaning, my bones cling to my flesh" (ἀπὸ φωνῆς τοῦ στεναγμοῦ μου, ἐκολλήθη τὸ ὀστοῦν μου τῇ σαρκί μου).[121]

What is noteworthy is that in a number of instances of one of the cognates of κολλάω being used to describe the joining of someone or something to another, the statement is made emphatic by the contrast drawn between joining and not joining, or clinging and not clinging. The examples are provided below:

Ruth 2:8 καὶ εἶπεν Βοος πρὸς Ρουθ Οὐκ ἤκουσας, θύγατηρ; μὴ πορευθῇς ἐν ἀγρῷ συλλέξαι ἑτέρῳ, καὶ σὺ οὐ πορεύσῃ ἐντεῦθεν· ὧδε **κολλήθητι** μετὰ τῶν κορασίων μου·

And Boaz said to Ruth, "Did you not hear, daughter? Do not go to glean in another field, and do not go from here, but **stay close** to my young women.

2 Kgdms. 20:2 καὶ ἀνέβη πᾶς ἀνὴρ Ισραηλ ἀπὸ ὄπισθεν Δαυιδ ὀπίσω Σαβεε υἱοῦ Βοχορι, καὶ ἀνὴρ Ιουδα **ἐκολλήθη** τῷ βασιλεῖ αὐτῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ Ιορδάνου καὶ ἕως Ιερουσαλημ.

And all the men of Israel rose up from following David and followed Sheba the son of Bichri. But the men of Judah **followed** their king **steadfastly** from the Jordan to Jerusalem.

4 Kgdms 3:3[122] πλὴν ἐν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ Ιεροβοαμ υἱοῦ Ναβατ, ὃς ἐξήμαρτεν τὸν Ισραηλ, **ἐκολλήθη**, οὐκ ἀπέστη ἀπ᾽αὐτῆς.

However, he **clung to** the sin of Jeroboam son of Nabat, which he caused Israel to sin, and did not turn from it.

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[121] Further examples of this type are: Ps. 43:26 (44:25); Ps 118:25 (119:25); Lam. 2:2

[122] A very similar version of this verse appears in extended end to Ahaziah's regnal resume in 4 Kingdoms 1:18a-d(particularly 18c): καὶ ἀπέστησεν τὰς στήλας τοῦ Βααλ, ἃς ἐποίησεν, ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ· καὶ συνέτριψεν αὐτάς· πλὴν εν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις οἴκου ιεροοαμ ὃς ἐξήμαρτεν τὸν Ισραηλ **ἐκολλήθη**, οὐκ ἀπέστη ἀπ᾽ αὐτῶν. "And he turned from the pillars of Baal, which his father had made, and destroyed them. But he **clung to** the sins of the house of Jeroboam, which he had caused Israel to sin, and did not turn from them." Cf. Lanier and Ross, *Lxx*, 1:1006.

4 Kgdms 18:6 καὶ **ἐκολλήθη** τῷ κυρίῳ, οὐκ ἀπέστη ὄπισθεν αὐτοῦ καὶ εφύλαξεν τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ, ὅσας ἐνετείλατο Μωυσῇ

and he **held fast** to the LORD, he did not turn from following him and he kept the commandments he had given Moses.

Sirach 2:3 **κολλήθητι** αὐτῷ καὶ μὴ ἀποστῇς ἵνα αὐξηθῇς ἐπ᾽ ἐσχάτων σου

Cling to him and do not depart, so that your last days may be prosperous

These references show that the joining has an ongoing and exclusive nature. Boaz emphatically instructs Ruth twice not to go elsewhere, but urges her to join his young women (Ruth 2:8). The fickle nature of the men who abandon David serves to highlight the faithfulness of the men who continued to follow him (2 Sam. 20:2). The condemnation of Jehoram is that in clinging to the sins of Jeroboam he would not turn from them (4 Kgdms 3:3). Conversely, Hezekiah is praised for clinging to the LORD and not departing from him (4 Kgdms 18:6).

The examples, such as 4 Kingdoms 18:6 (above), of κολλάω referring to clinging to the Lord regularly mention turning from other gods. The instruction for the Israelites to cling to the Lord in Deuteronomy 6:13 is followed immediately by the command, "You shall not go after other gods," in 6:14.[123] So even though these instances of κολλάω which refer to "clinging to the Lord" do not lead us to interpret κολλάω in Acts as a technical term for conversion, they do suggest something more than mere proximity or an unspecified association. The type of association in view here is an exclusive commitment which includes a turning from former, or potential other, associations in order to commit to the association of choice.

The idea of a permanent or committed union is developed in the examples above through the contrast with not joining another group or god. Other occurrences of κολλάω, however,

[123] Cf. Deuteronomy 10:20, with 11:16 giving the negative warning in this context; Psalm 119:29–31 (Ps. 118: for putting away "false ways" in order to cling (ἐκολλήθην; V.31) to the testimonies of the LORD.

develop the same sense in different ways. The description of the Leviathan in Job 41 uses the term to describe the impenetrable nature of the beast's scales and flesh, with κολλῶνται, προσκολληθήσεται, and κεκόλλενται appearing in verses 16, 17 and 23. If the term did not carry some sense of permanence or solidity, the rhetorical force of the poetic imagery would fall down.

Finally, the term is also used a number of times to describe the way that curses from the Lord have clung to a family or the nation of Israel for a long time. For example, when Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, deceived Naaman to get some payment from him (which Elisha had previously refused), the prophet cursed him, saying, "And the leprosy of Naaman **shall cling to** you and your descendants forever," with the result that "he went out of his presence a leper, like snow" (4 Kgdms. 5:27).[124]

Early Christian Sources

Many of the occurrences of κολλάω in the early Christian sources are quotations of the biblical texts found in sermons and commentaries. There are some, however, that are concerned with social relations like the references in Acts 5, 9, 10 and 17. *The Epistle of Barnabas*[125] and *1 Clement* provide some relevant examples to compare with the social context found in Acts 17:34.

The Epistle of Barnabas

A cluster of uses of κολλάω is found in chapter 10 of the *Epistle*, which discusses the correct interpretation of the Mosaic dietary laws.[126] Here, Barnabas interprets the laws allegorically, explaining that the different unclean animals represent types of people to whom the Israelites were commanded to "cling" or "not cling":

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[124] For further examples like this, see Deut. 28:60; 29:20; Baruch 1:20; 3:4.

[125] Most likely written in the 130s CE. James Carleton Paget, "The Epistle of Barnabas," *The Expository Times* 117, no. 11 (2006): 443; Bart D. Ehrman, ed. *The Apostolic Fathers, Volume II: The Epistle of Barnabas. Papias and Quadratus. Epistle to Diognetus. The Shepherd of Hermas.*, LCL 25 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 7; Ferdinand Prostmeier, "Barnabas, Epistle Of," in *Brill's New Pauly Supplements I - Volume 2: Dictionary of Greek and Latin Authors and Texts*, ed. Manfred Landfester and Brigitte Egger (2011).

[126] Barn. 10:3, 4, 8, 11. In G and L (G = a collection of nine defective manuscripts (11th C.); L = 17th C. Latin version) 10:5 includes κολλώμενος, but it is absent from Codex Sinaiticus (4th C.) and Codex Hierosolymitanus (11th C.).

Barn. 10:3 οὐ μὴ **κολληθήσῃ**, φησίν, ἀνθρώποις τοιούτοις, οἵτινές εἰσιν ὅμοιοι χοίροις· τουτέστιν ὅταν σπαταλῶσιν, ἐπιλανθάνονται τοῦ κυρίου, ὅταν δὲ ὑστεροῦνται, ἐπιγινώσκουσιν τὸν κύριον

"You must not **cling**," he says, "to such people, who are like pigs." That is to say, when they live in luxury, they forget the Lord, but when they are in need, they remember the Lord.

Barn. 10:4 [regarding the eagle, hawk, kite and crow as unclean birds] οὐ μὴ, φησίν, **κολληθήσῃ** οὐδὲ ὁμοιωθήσῃ ἀνθρώποις τοιούτοις, οἵτινες οὐκ οἴδασιν διὰ κόπου καὶ ἱδρῶτος πορίζειν ἑαυτοῖς τὴν τροφήν, ἀλλὰ ἁρπάζουσιν τὰ ἀλλότρια ἐν ἀνομίᾳ αὐτῶν

"You must not," he says, "**cling** to such people or be like them, people who do not know how to procure food for themselves through toil and sweat, but by their lawless behaviour seize food that belongs to others."

Barn. 10:8 [regarding the weasel] οὐ μὴ, φησίν, γενηθῇς τοιοῦτος, οἵους ἀκούομεν ἀνομίαν ποιοῦνας ἐν τῷ στόματι δι᾽ ἀκαθαρσίαν, οὐδὲ **κολληθήσῃ** ταῖς ἀκαθάρτοις ταῖς τὴν ἀνομίαν ποιούσαις ἐν τῷ στόματι

"You must not," he says, "be like those who are reputed to perform a lawless deed in their mouth because of their uncleanness, nor **cling** to unclean women who perform the lawless deed in their mouth."

Barn. 10:11 **κολλᾶσθε** μετὰ τῶν φοβουμένων τὸν κύριον, μετὰ τῶν μελετώντων ὃ ἔλαβον διάσταλμα ῥήματος ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ, μετὰ τῶν λαλούντων τὰ δικαιώματα κυρίου καὶ τηρούντων

Cling to those who fear the Lord, to those who meditate on the special meaning of the teaching they have received in their heart, to those who meditate on the special meaning of the teaching they have received their heart, to those who discuss and keep the upright demands of the Lord.

While 10:8 may more closely reflect 1 Cor. 6:16 in the type of "clinging" that is in view, the entire thrust of the passage is that the dietary laws should be interpreted as instructions not to "cling to" or associate with unrighteous peoples, and not to be like them. In this instance, the association in view is not a fleeting connection, but one that would shape the lifestyle and practices of the Israelites. Clinging to lawless and unrighteous people is placed in stark contrast to clinging to God, his commandments and the people who follow them closely. This type of clinging is no mere proximity, but rather a close relationship that shapes the lifestyle and community that one adopts.

1 Clement

Clement of Rome uses κολλάω with the same kind of emphasis in his first letter to the Corinthian church, a letter concerned with the need for unity rather than fractiousness in the Christian community.[127]

1 Clem. 15:1 τοίνυν **κολληθῶμεν** τοῖς μετ᾽ εὐσεβείας εἰρηνεύουσιν, καὶ μὴ τοῖς μεθ᾽ ὑποκρίσεως βουλομένοις εἰρήνην.

Therefore we should **cling** to those who keep the peace with piety, not those who wish for peace out of hypocrisy.

1 Clem. 30:3 **κολληθῶμεν** οὖν ἐκείνοις, οἷς ἡ χάρις ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ δέδοται· ἐνδυσώμεθα τὴν ὁμόνοιαν ταπεινοφρονοῦντες, ἐγκρατευόμενοι, ἀπὸ παντὸς ψιθυρισμοῦ καὶ καταλαλιᾶς πόρρω ἑαυτοὺς ποιοῦντες, ἔργοις δικαιούμενοι καὶ μὴ λόγοις.

We should, therefore, **cling** to those who have been bestowed with God's gracious gift; we should be clothed with harmony, being humble in mind, showing self-restraint, distancing ourselves from all gossip and slander, acquiring an upright character through deeds, not just words.

1 Clem. Τοιούτοις οὖν ὑποδείγμασιν **κολληθῆναι** καὶ ἡμᾶς δεῖ, ἀδελφοί. [2] γέγραπται

[127] 1 Clem. 15:1; 30:3; 46:1, 2, 4. 1 Clem. Other uses of κολλάω include 19:2, clinging to God's gifts; 31:1, clinging to God's blessing; 49:5, "love binds us (κολλᾷ ἡμᾶς) to God"; 56:2, bound to God's will; 2 Clem. 14:5, Holy Spirit clinging to human flesh.

46:1–4 γάρ· κολλᾶσθε τοῖς ἁγίοις, ὅτι οἱ κολλώμενοι αὐτοῖς ἁγιασθήσονται… [4] κολληθῶμεν οὖν τοῖς ἀθῴοις καὶ δικαίοις· εἰσιν δὲ οὗτοι ἐκλεκτοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ.

And so, we too must **cling** to these examples, brothers. For it is written, "Cling to those who are holy; for those who cling to them will themselves be made holy"… Therefore we should cling to those who are innocent and upright, for these are God's chosen.

As in the Epistle of Barnabas, the type of association envisioned here by Clement is one where the lifestyle and character of the members will be shaped by their association. He exhorts his readers to cling to those who exhibit godly character. This type of godly character expresses itself most notably in peace and harmony (15:1; 30:3) because it is one of God's "superior gifts" to which the Christians should cling (19:2). The connection between the individual's commitment to God and the need for peace and unity is developed at a number of points. In 49:5, the love that "binds us (κολλᾷ ἡμᾶς) to God" is also the love that "has no schism" and "creates no faction." In 56:1, the Corinthians are urged to pray for "those caught up in any unlawful act," so that they might "yield themselves … to the will of God." The progression in 56:2, encouraging the believers to welcome discipline, links the "will of God" and his loving discipline. Discipline, including rebuking one another (56:2), "binds us (κολλᾷ γὰρ ἡμᾶς) to the will of God.

First Clement, then, uses κολλάω to highlight two relationships. Firstly, the Christians are to cling to or be bound to God, the God of peace. Secondly, they are urged to cling to other godly people, who work for peace, and against schism. While he is not using κολλάω to describe the formation of a community, as I am suggesting Luke does in Acts 17, he is describing the type of relationship needed to ensure the ongoing health and godliness of the established church in Corinth. The Corinthians need to cling to God, and cling together as God's godly people, in order that a schism-free and factionless community may remain.

Non-Christian Texts

Κολλάω is very common in Greek medical writings. Galen alone used the word one hundred and sixty times.[128] A selection of medical uses of the terminology is provided below, with examples from Galen (second century CE) and Dioscorides Pedanius (first century CE):

Galen

Art med. 385 ἵνα δ᾽ αὐτὴ γένηται μόνιμος, ἡ ἐπίδεσις ἡ συνάγουσα τὰ διεστὼτα, καὶ ἀγκτῆρες καὶ ῥαφαὶ χρήσιμοι· **κολλᾷ** μὲν οὖν τὰ διεστῶτα καὶ τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἕνωσιν ἀποδίδωσιν ἡ φύσις·

For binding or joining the coapted parts to become secure, fistulae and sutures are useful, but it is Nature that **colligates** those things that are separated and restores the original unity.[129]

Ad. Glauc. 2.127 Αἱ δὲ τὰ πρόσφατα καὶ ἔναιμα τραύματα **κολλῶσαι**, κἂν ἧττον τούτων ξηραίνωσι, **κολλῶσι** τὰ χείλη τῶν τραυμάτων.

The **conglutinants**, in the case of a fresh and bloody wound, even if they dry less than these, **conglutinate** in the margins of the wounds. (In the context of talking about healing "sinuses" and "fistulae")

Dioscorides Pedanius

De mat. med. 1.64 **κολλᾷ** δὲ καὶ τὰ ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ τραύματα

It also **seals** head wounds.

De mat. med. 3.111.2 καὶ τραύματα **κολλᾷ** καὶ ἕλκη παλαιὰ ἀνακαθαίρει καὶ απουλοῖ σὺν μέλιτι.

With honey, it **seals** wounds and draws infection, clearing it completely, and forms a scar.

While only a few examples are provided here from the large corpus of medical texts, they sufficiently serve to demonstrate the medical use of κολλάω in these contexts. The term is

[128] According to a TLG statistics search on "κολλάω", Galen uses the word 169 times.
[129] Translation from the Loeb edition (LCL 523).

commonly used to describe the healing of wounds. The significance of the imagery is that the separated parts of flesh are made whole (one) again. It is a physiological parallel to the permanent and ongoing nature of union that has been seen in other uses of the term above. Arguments have been made that the author of Luke-Acts uses medical language, including κολλάω, and thus betrays himself as a physician.[130] Perhaps more importantly, they note that the general trend of the medical writers being Asiatic Greeks, along with the traditional understanding of Luke as an Antiochene Greek, provides geographical and professional relationships between the texts that explains their shared terminology.[131] Some have rejected these arguments,[132] while others find in them supportive evidence of the early Christian tradition surrounding Luke.[133] It is tempting to suggest that Luke's experience as a physician may be showing through in his description of the church—perhaps building on Paul's "body" imagery (Rom. 12:4–5)—but these medical texts are not as close to Luke's imagery of social cohesion as are the texts cited above from the Septuagint. Any conclusion regarding Luke borrowing from medical terminology must remain a "maybe".

Plutarch

A closer Graeco-Roman parallel can be found in Plutarch's *On Having Many Friends* (*De amicorum multitudine*), which offers an interesting comparison with Luke's use of κολλάω in the context of social relations. Plutarch, having just extolled the benefits of good friendships and the terrible situation of a bad friendship, says:

> We ought therefore not to accept readily chance acquaintances, or **attach** [**κολλᾶσθαι**] ourselves to them, nor ought we to make friends of those who seek after us, but rather we should seek after those who are worthy of friendship. For one should by no means take what can be easily taken. In fact we step over or thrust aside bramble and brier, which seize hold upon us,

[130] William K. Hobart, *The Medical Language of St. Luke* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2004 (1882)); R.J. Knowling, "The Medical Language of St. Luke," *The Biblical World* 20, no. 4 (1902): 260–71; "The Medical Language of St. Luke. II," *The Biblical World* 20, no. 5 (1902): 370–79. See Hobart, p. 128–29, for his brief comments on κολλᾶσθαι.
[131] Hobart, *Medical Language*, xxxi; Knowling, "Medical Language II," 378–79.
[132] Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 3.
[133] I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 34; Alfred Plummer, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1922), xiii.

> and make our way onward to the olive and the vine. Thus it is always an excellent thing not to make an intimate acquaintance of the man who is ready with his embraces, but rather, of our own motion, to embrace those of whom we approve as worthy of our attention and useful to us. (Plut. *De am. mult.* 4)

It is clear in this instance that, in Plutarch's opinion, attaching oneself to someone else in friendship ought to be a considered commitment, not something one enters into simply because the other person offers himself in friendship. This is because the three main aims of friendship are "virtue as a good thing, intimacy as a pleasant thing, and usefulness as a necessary thing" (*De am. mult*. 3). Each of these three goals is restricted if a person flits from one new friend to another or seeks a multitude of friends.[134] Taking one example to illustrate, while Plutarch affirms that a mutual "usefulness" is a necessary aspect of friendship, this is likely to cause negligence or offense if a person has too many friends. Imagining that all of your many friends called on you at the same time to help in various aspects of life, Plutarch says, "It is impossible to be with them all, and unnatural to be with none, and yet to do a service to one alone, and thus to offend many, is a source of vexation" (*De am. mult.* 6). The same can be said for the desired "intimacy"; intimacy with one person necessitates a loss of intimacy with another.

For Plutarch, then, "true friends … are rare, for they must be constant and loyal."[135] (p.81) As he states in the penultimate sentence of this particular treatise on friendship, "Friendship seeks for a fixed and steadfast character which does not shift about, but continues in one place and in one intimacy" (Plut. *De am. mult.* 9). His use of κολλᾶσθαι should be understood in the context of his broader philosophy on friendship. To join or associate with someone in friendship is to commit oneself to a long-term, faithful companionship that perseveres through, even shares, both the victories and afflictions of one's friends (*De am. mult.* 7).

Greek Magical Papyri

[134] Edward N. O'Neil, "Plutarch on Friendship," in *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship*, ed. John T. Fitzgerald (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 108.
[135] Alicia J. Batten, *Friendship and Benefaction in James*, ed. Vernon K. Robbins and David B. Gowler, Emory Studies in Early Christianity (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017), 81.

Κολλάω occurs in a number of love incantations found in Greek magical papyri, in which an infatuated man (predominantly) will seek to inflict certain torments on the object of his desire until she comes to him.[136] The usage is similar to that found in 1 Cor. 6, that is, it is in reference to sexual union. PGM 36.69–101, 36.102–33, and 36.134–60 use a similar formula, one example of which is included below:

PGM 36.147–151 σὺ δὲ Ἶσι καὶ Ὄσιρι καὶ χθονὸς [δαίμονες] … ἐγείρεσθε, οἱ ἐκ τοῦ βάθους, καὶ ποιήσατε τὴν δεῖνα, ἣν ἔτεκεν ἡ δεῖνα, ἀγρυπνεῖν, ἀεροπετεῖσθαι, πεινῶσαν, διψῶσαν, ὕπνου μὴ τυγχάνουσαν, ἐρᾶσθαι ἐμοῦ τοῦ δεῖνα, οὗ ἔτεκεν ἡ δεῖνα, ἔρωτι σπλαγχνικῷ, ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ καὶ τῆν θηλυκὴν ἑαυτῆς φύσιν τῇ ἀρσενικῇ μου **κολλήσῃ**.

But you, Isis and Osiris and [daimons] of the chthonic world … arise, you who are from the depth, and cause her, NN, whom NN bore, to be sleepless, to fly through the air, hungry, thirsty, not finding sleep, to love me, NN whom NN bore, passionately with passion in her guts, until she comes and **glues** her female pudenda to my male one."[137]

Regarding this type of spell, David Martinez notes, "Hidden beneath the lover's desire that his beloved experience love sickness for him is his tormented longing to produce his own experience in her … the notion of 'transference' is important. Put simply, it is the operator who in reality is bound in hopeless passion, an illness which has robbed him of sleep and taken away his will to eat and drink."[138]

3.2.4.3 Paul and Luke's Records of Church Establishment

The analysis of κολλάω that has been conducted above shows that, in the context of social relationships, the term describes a relationship that is long-lasting and committed, requires a

[136] I am grateful to Prof. Greg Stanton who alerted me to these papyri.
[137] Translation follows that of Hans Dieter Betz: Hans Dieter Betz, ed. *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 272. Greek text: Karl Preisendanz and Albert Henrichs, eds., *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri* (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1974), 167.
[138] David Martinez, ""May She Neither Eat nor Drink": Love Magic and Vows of Abstinence," in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, ed. Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 354.

deliberate move away from other relationships and associations, will likely shape one's beliefs and practices, and (in the case of the references in Acts) has a public dimension. These elements would suggest that Luke's use of the word in Acts 17:34 is a deliberate, shorthand way of describing the foundation of a Christian community in Athens. It is necessary, however, to assess how Luke's narration of the events in Athens differs from his treatment of other locations of Paul's missionary work, and what conclusions may be drawn from such a comparison.

Where are the "brothers"?

One way in which the Athenian narrative stands apart from the other reports of Paul's mission in Macedonia and Achaia, and which possibly argues against the establishment of a viable church in Athens, is the lack of any mention of "brothers." Ἀδελφοί ("brothers" or "brothers and sisters"), reserved only for Jews and Jewish believers in the first fourteen chapters of Acts, is applied to believers of Gentile origins after the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15.[139] Before this point, Gentile believers and mixed-race churches are referred to as "disciples" (μαθηταί, Acts 9:25; 11:26, 29; 13:52; 14:20–22, 28).[140] The letter from the Jerusalem council to Gentile believers marks the watershed shift in recognition. It is addressed, "The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the brothers of Gentile origin in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia" (15:23).

After the Jerusalem Council, the term is used repeatedly in relation to the multi-ethnic churches of Paul's mission (Acts 16:2 (Lystra, Iconium); 16:40 (Philippi); 17:6, 10 (Thessalonica); 17:14 (Beroea); 18:18 (Corinth), 27 (Ephesus); 28:14–15 (Rome)). In the Macedonian and Achaian churches of Acts 16–17, the term is used in a context that gives some picture of functioning of the Christian community. In Philippi, Paul visits the "brothers" before departing from the city (16:40). In Thessalonica, some of the "brothers" are brought before the authorities (17:6). In Thessalonica (17:10) and Beroea (17:14), the "brothers" are instrumental in getting Paul out of the city and away from the Jews who were continuing to cause problems. In Corinth, Paul takes leave of the "brothers" (18:18). In each case, the

[139] Note the use of "brothers" in 15:1, referring to the church in Antioch, which precedes the Jerusalem Council but introduces the change that is coming. Paul Trebilco, *Self-Designations and Group Identity in the New Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 51–52.

[140] Jewish believers are referred to as both "disciples" and "brothers".

"brothers" indicate a group of believers that can act on behalf of Paul or for his benefit, and that he can take leave of without them losing their identity as a group. The contrast is noticeable in Athens where there is no mention of a group of "brothers", or even "disciples."

Two pieces of evidence argue against the absence of "brothers" being decisive against the establishment of a church. Firstly, Luke records that some who had heard Paul's preaching "believed" (ἐπίστευσαν, Acts 17:34). In Acts, πιστεύω is important as a response to the preaching of the word (Acts 4:4; 8:12), and is regularly connected to salvation, baptism or joining the Christian community.[141] Morgan notes, "*Pistis* in Acts is once again almost exclusively a divine-human relationship … Luke almost always describes *pistis* as arising either as a result of preaching, or of signs and wonders performed by the apostles, or both. And when *pisteuein* is used of conversion, it almost always either has no object, or people are described as putting their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ."[142] That some people in Athens "believed" indicates that there were conversions in the city, and suggests that, like elsewhere, those believers would have formed some kind of faith community.

Secondly, the narrative of Paul and Barnabas' ministry in Cyprus provides a helpful comparison with the Athens narrative. Luke records the missionaries traveling through Cyprus, proclaiming the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They have a run-in with the false prophet Bar-Jesus/Elymas, and Sergius Paulus *believed* (ἐπίστευσεν, 13:12) in response to the preaching of the word and the demonstration of God's power in blinding Bar-Jesus.[143] In the Athens and Cyprus narratives, similar elements appear—preaching, conflict, and belief—but neither include the terms "disciples" or "brothers". However, after the Jerusalem Council, Paul and Barnabas intend to "return and visit the brothers in every city" where they had proclaimed the word (Acts 15:36). When they separate on account of their disagreement regarding Mark, Barnabas goes back to Cyprus (15:39). Presuming that he still intended to visit the "brothers" as they had originally discussed,[144] it is evident that the lack of any mention of "disciples" or

[141] Salvation: 13:48; 16:31. Baptism: 8:12; 18:8. Community: 2:47; 4:32.
[142] Morgan, *Faith*, 381–82.
[143] That Sergius Paulus' belief is linked to the miracle *and* "the teaching of the Lord" shows that his faith was directed towards the Lord, not towards Paul as a wonder-worker (Weiß, *Soziale Elite*, 75–77; Morgan, *Faith*, 383). For discussion of the irrelevance of the lack of Sergius Paulus' baptism in this understanding of his conversion, see section 3.3.4.1 above. See Weiß, *Soziale Elite*, 51–80, for a discussion on the "historical plausibility" of the conversion of Sergius Paulus.
[144] F.F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 302.

"brothers" on Cyprus during the original mission, and only the mention of one "believer", does not mean that no Christian communities were established during Paul and Barnabas' time on the island.[145]

When is a church a church?

Commentators have noted that while Luke records conversions in Athens, there is no establishment of a church.[146] However, Luke's record of Paul's previous missionary efforts is instructive for how to read the Athenian narrative. In the first missionary journey, having spent some time on Cyprus, Paul and Barnabas preach the gospel in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:13–32), Iconium (14:1–5), and Lystra and Derbe (14:6–20). In Paul and Barnabas' first visits to these cities, Luke records positive and negative responses to Paul's preaching. Keeping the positive responses in focus, in Antioch "many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas … and as many as had been destined to eternal life believed (ἐπίστευσαν)" (13:43, 48); in Iconium, "a great number of both Jews and Greeks became believers (πιστεῦσαι)" and some of the residents of the city sided with Paul and Barnabas against the oppositional unbelieving Jews (14:1,4); in Lystra and Derbe, Paul and Barnabas preach the gospel (14:7, 15–16, 21) with many disciples being made in Derbe (14:21), but none recorded for Lystra.

Even though new converts are recorded in these accounts, Luke does not explicitly mention the establishment of an organised church in any of these cities. It is only in 14:22–23, when Paul and Barnabas retrace their steps from Derbe through Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, that Luke records that they were "strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith … and when they had appointed elders for them *in every church* (κατ' ἐκκλησίαν) … they committed them to the Lord" (14:22–23; italics added).[147] Even though

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[145] In light of Paul's later association with Barnabas (1 Cor 9:6) and Mark (Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11), it seems unlikely that, as Luke Timothy Johnson comments, Barnabas committed "a kind of apostasy" and "has, simply, taken his relative/friend, and gone home." Johnson, *Acts*, 288. Cf. Pervo, who favours the idea of that "the division has resulted in an expansion … of the mission," but recognises the possibility of Johnson's argument. Pervo, *Acts*, 387, n.8.

[146] Witherington, *Acts*, 533; I. Howard Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction and Commentary* (Leicester: IVP, 1980), 291.

[147] Some have dismissed Luke's record here as anachronistic because Paul never refers to "elders" (πρεσβύτεροι) in his undisputed letters, but the term does appear in the Pastoral Epistles: cf. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 436; Pervo, *Acts*, 362. Even if the terminology is Lukan, which is by no means the only explanation considering the Jewish

these may have been fledgling communities, originally without any appointed leadership, Luke still considered the Christian groups in these cities to be "churches". The same was most likely true on the island of Crete, if Paul's instruction to Titus, "appoint elders in every town" (Tit. 1:5) is to be understood as appointing elders in the churches in each town. It is possible, then, that Luke would not have found it necessary to explicitly describe the formation of a Christian church in Athens. The simple fact that a few people responded in faith and joined Paul, like those that followed him in Pisidian Antioch, could easily constitute a church community.

If one was to require the appointment of elders to constitute the church (which Luke does not in Acts 14), there was ample opportunity for Paul to return to Athens again and appoint elders if he did not already do that on his first visit.[148] He could have done this during his eighteen-month sojourn in Corinth (Acts 18:11), or his later travel through Macedonia and Greece (Acts 20:1–3). Furthermore, though it is unlikely that Paul appointed Dionysius the Areopagite as the first *bishop* of the Athenian church, as the tradition claims, it may be the case that this tradition developed around Dionysius' appointment as one of the first group of elders of the church, or the use of his house for church gatherings.

3.2.4.4 "Κολληθέντες" in Acts 17:34

The above analysis of the usage of κολλάω in biblical, Christian and Graeco-Roman sources has revealed that, in social contexts, the verb points to a union or community that is noteworthy for its exclusive commitment. The type of relationship encapsulated by this verb is ongoing, publicly identifiable, and works to the betterment of all parties, including one's progress in holiness (as in the Epistle of Barnabas and 1 Clement, and the equivalent in Plutarch, "virtue"). In the Christian context, it is primarily defined by a shared faith and it leads to a "change in allegiances", such as Paul's radical shift from being one of the more aggressive Hellenistic Jerusalem Jews to identifying with the Jerusalem church.

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background to the term and its use in the Jerusalem church (Acts 11:30; 15), the appointment of "elders" is consistent with Paul's concern for the establishment of and respect towards leadership within his churches (1 Cor. 16:15–18; Gal. 6:6; Phil. 1:1; 2:29; 1 Thess. 5:12–13). Bruce, *Acts*, 280; Witherington, *Acts*, 429.

[148] Pervo notes that "a subsequent visit is not very likely, for Athens plays no part in Paul's collection." This may be true but it is by no means certain. Pervo, *Acts*, 442.

Acts 17:34 appears to record, in shorthand form, the formation of a Christian community in Athens. One point needs to be discussed about this particular context, however. Schneider and Pesch both emphasise that κολληθέντες is an aorist participle, and thus the Athenians joined Paul to hear more, and then subsequently believed "after further instruction."[149] Schnabel notes the two verbs but his comment portrays ἐπίστευσαν as a punctiliar event,[150] "they put their trust in Jesus," while κολληθέντες is more of an ongoing process, "they 'joined' Paul by associating themselves with him, becoming disciples who continued to listen to Paul's teaching and began to form a community of believers."[151] It is significant to note that the group that "joins and believes" does both of the actions; there is no group, in Luke's record, that joins Paul but does not go on to believe. This group, then, is differentiated from the other two responding groups, those who mock and those who express further interest. In the context, it seems that it is unnecessary to make a hard chronological distinction between the joining and believing of this group. These Athenians joined Paul and believed the message.

For Luke to pick up this language of "joining" in his description of the new Christian community, he is painting the picture of a new group that is fused together by their shared new faith; they are publicly recognisable as a community; there is an expectation that they will share one another's burdens and help one another; and there is an expectation of exclusivity, they have left other social groups to join Paul and the other new believers. This action of κολληθέντες is an appropriate verb to use in the context of a "conflicted Athens". The new believers, previously involved in the tug-of-war between romanising and traditionalist impetuses in the city, join Paul in forming a new community of faith in the living God's appointed man, the resurrected one. No longer to court Roman favour, or hearken back to a glorious past, but to *know* the One in whom they live and move and have their being.

3.2.4.5 Conclusion

At the outset of this study, it was noted that commentators have often acknowledged the small number of conversions from Paul's preaching in Athens, and have doubted whether a church was established in the city. The two main arguments against establishment, Paul's comments about "the firstfruits of Achaia" and the lack of recorded baptisms, were both

[149] Gerhard Schneider, *Die Apostelgeschichte. II. Teil* (Freiburg: Herder, 1982), 244; Pesch, *Apg, 2*, 141.
[150] "Punctiliar" is my description of his comment, not a word he used.
[151] Schnabel, *Acts*, 743.

shown to be inconclusive. A broader analysis of the term "κολληθέντες" (joined), showed that in the context of social relationships the term is used to denote an ongoing union that is characterised by an exclusive commitment, and which effects a change in the joined parties, particularly in religious and ethical practice. Its earlier use in Acts, in the context of the Jerusalem church and in the ethnic boundary crossing in the conversion of Cornelius, demonstrates the term's use to describe an individual's inclusion in the Christian community. Furthermore, other considerations regarding the Athenian narrative, such as the lack of the mention of terms "brothers" or "church", were demonstrated not necessarily to indicate the lack of the establishment of a Christian community.

Luke's summary statement, "Some men joined him and believed," therefore should be read as a shorthand description of the establishment of a church in Athens. Admittedly, this group was small in comparison to those founded in other cities, but Luke's use of κολλάω suggests that something more than "scattered conversions"[152] resulted from Paul's ministry in Athens. This community was centred around Paul and marked by a shared faith (ἐπίστευσαν), which in the context must have been centred on Paul's preaching of Jesus and the resurrection (v.17–18, 31), and his exhortation to repentance on the basis of God's appointed judgement (v.30–31). The response in Athens may seem meagre in comparison to the city-rattling growth of the church in Jerusalem or Ephesus, but it is justifiable to say that Luke's use of the participle κολληθέντες shows that he understood that a church was established in the city of Athens at the end of Acts 17.

3.2.5 The First Christians of Athens

It was established above that in Acts 17:34 Luke records the establishment of the first Christian community in Athens. In his list of the Athenian converts, Luke notes a larger collective, "some men" (τίνες ἄνδρες), which included (ἐν οἷς) Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris (γυνὴ ὀνόματι Δάμαρις), and others with them (ἕτεροι σὺν αὐτοῖς). Even though this brief account does not offer much information about this assembly, it is important to consider the recorded names and groups in order to clarify what these details reveal about the Athenian church.

[152] Keener, *Acts*, 3:2677.

Interpreters who view the Athens account as a literary invention tend to discredit the historicity of Dionysius and Damaris. In an often-cited article, David Gill argues that Dionysius and Damaris are both fabricated, with names intended to evoke Classical Athens. He supports this with the following six points:[153] 1) If one assumes that Luke fabricated the whole Athenian narrative, as Gill does, there's no reason to assume that Luke didn't also invent these two people; 2) The fact that "Dionysius" is the most common male name attested in Athens suggests that Luke chose it because it "specifically evokes a well-known Athenian institution;"[154] 3) The questions regarding Paul's speech and the Areopagus are best answered "in the fact that the Areopagus was the oldest, most aristocratic, and most respectable civic institution at Athens;"[155] 4) Dionysius only appears once in the tradition after Acts, in Eusebius' reference to a no longer extant letter of Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, who mentions the Areopagite (*Hist. eccl.* 4.23.3); 5) The name "Damaris" is extremely rare, and is "just the right *kind* of name for the context… calculated to sound ancient and respectable;"[156] and 6) There are numerous examples throughout Acts of people with "names that lend color, detail, and significance to key moments in the story but which are just a little bit off and cannot be independently verified," such as Sergius Paulus, Lydia and Cornelius.[157]

Gill's approach is overly sceptical, and his six points do not build as strong a case as he claims. Firstly, while point 1) is a logical assertion, not all commentators agree that Luke has fabricated the entire scene. Gill's argument relies upon this unfounded assumption, but if one does not begin with this assumption the text does not necessarily lead to Gill's conclusions.[158] Secondly, his arguments regarding the two names (points 2 and 5) are inconsistent. Citing one common name and one rare name does not prove anything, especially when the names are not symbolic.[159] In considering Luke's practice of recording the names of converts (point 6), it should be noted firstly that he does not always record names. This is the case in Acts 17:12, where he notes the high status converts without noting names. Also, while he does have an obvious interest in those with high status (Acts 8:27; 10:1–2; 13:7–12; 17:4, 12) and women (Acts 16:14; 17:4, 12, 34), named individuals are often those who offered hospitality to the

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[153] He notes that "no one reason is conclusive in itself, but together they make a strong case." David Gill, "Dionysius and Damaris: A Note on Acts 17:34," *CBQ* 61, no. 3 (1999): 484.
[154] "Dionysius and Damaris," 485.
[155] "Dionysius and Damaris," 486.
[156] "Dionysius and Damaris," 487.
[157] "Dionysius and Damaris," 487–89.
[158] Bock, *Acts*, 571. Bock argues that "the disjunction here is for authenticity, not against it."
[159] *Acts*, 571; Keener, *Acts*, 3:2676–77, n.3789.

missionaries and the fledgling Christian communities (Cornelius: Acts 10:1–48; Sergius Paulus: 13:7–12;[160] Lydia: 16:15; Jason: 17:5).[161]

Thirdly, while it is true that commentators continue to wrestle with the question regarding in what sense Paul stood "ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ Ἀρείου πάγου" (point 3), simply claiming that Luke made it up is too convenient an avoidance of the issue. It was noted above that the Areopagus Council was still operating in the first century CE, that it had responsibilities regarding the oversight of religious concerns in the city, and that Luke's varying prepositions in 17:19, 22 and 32 do not pose any significant difficulties. This sufficiently argues for the historicity of Paul's appearance before the court, even if the location of the assembly is harder to pinpoint.[162]

Fourthly, that Dionysius is only referenced once in later tradition simply demonstrates that he was not significant enough an individual to be referenced by many later writers. Many people who are named in Acts do not appear anywhere else, and it may be the case that they were noteworthy for one reason or another for Luke's audience, but less so for later generations.[163] The mention of Dionysius in the late second century suggests he was significant on a local level, because he is mentioned in the context of a letter exhorting the Athenian Christians back to the faith after they had scattered due to persecution (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 4.23.3).[164] What is noteworthy about Eusebius' report on this letter is that he differentiates between the report

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[160] Even if Sergius Paulus did not offer ongoing hospitality to Saul and Barnabas in Salamis, beyond what is implied by his summoning of them so he might hear the word (Acts 13:7), it is likely that he played some part in organising their travels to Pisidian Antioch. Stanton, "Accommodation," 230.

[161] Joshua W. Jipp, *Divine Visitations and Hospitality to Strangers in Luke-Acts: An Interpretation of the Malta Episode in Acts 28:1–10* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 240–47.

[162] See the discussion on Winter's arguments above. It seems that Gill either ignored, or was not aware of, Winter's article.

[163] Colin J. Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 209.

[164] It is true that caution here is wise since Dionysius of Corinth's letters are no longer extant, and we cannot check Eusebius' use of the bishop Dionysius' letter to see how faithful he is to the original document. However, if Eusebius is guilty of misrepresenting Dionysius' letters, it is more likely to be in his emphasis on the Areopagite as the first bishop of Athens rather than in a wholesale manufacturing of the tradition surrounding him. This letter will be discussed further in Chapter 8. Cf. Cavan Concannon's discussion of the necessity of care when disentangling Eusebius' sources from his use of those sources. Cavan Concannon, *Assembling Early Christianity: Trade, Networks, and the Letters of Dionysios of Corinth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 9–19.

of Dionysius the Areopagite's conversion "according to the narrative in the Acts" (κατὰ τὰ ἐν ταῖς Πράξεσιν δεδηλωμένα, Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 4.23.3), and the further tradition that he was the first bishop of the Athenian diocese.

Although the historical existence of Dionysius and Damaris cannot be confirmed by sources other than the record of Acts, the sceptical view which flatly denies their historicity is problematic. It is more likely that there were individuals of these names in the earliest Christian community in Athens, and Luke knew of them through Paul's testimony or some other tradition. The question is, then, what picture of the Athenian church is presented to the reader if Dionysius and Damaris are taken as genuinely historical converts of Paul's Athenian ministry?

3.2.5.1 Dionysius the Areopagite

While some of the new converts may have come from Paul's ministry in the syngagogue or agora, the identification of Dionysius as an "Areopagite" indicates that he heard and responded to Paul's speech.[165] Claire Rothschild has raised concerns about whether, and how, the term ὁ Ἀρεοπαγίτης was in use in Luke's day. She notes that most occurrences subsequent to Acts appear in references to classical Athens, either in biographies of ancient figures (Plut. *Solon* 19.5.8; 19.3.5; *De gloria Atheniensium* 345C–351B; Ps. Plut. *Vitae decem oratorum* 832B–852E), or in works set in classical Athens, following the atticising interests of the Second Sophistic (Lucian *Anach*. 19.24, 25, 39; 21.19; *Scy.* 2.2). From this Rothschild proposes an archaising tendency in Luke's construction of Acts 17, saying, "If Luke used the adjective … as many of his contemporaries did, then the word makes most sense as a deliberate anachronism, hearkening back to a time when the Areopagus Court was in session on the hill."[166]

Rothschild makes fair observations about the literary usage of ὁ Ἀρεοπαγίτης, but there is epigraphic evidence for the term throughout this period that problematises her conclusions. A mid-third century CE honourific inscription from a statue of Claudius (Leonticus) Illyrius refers to the honorand's father Teres (Τήρεντος), who was an eponymous archon and

[165] Pervo, *Acts*, 428.
[166] Rothschild, *Paul in Athens*, 92–93.

Areopagite (Ἀρεο[παγ(ε)ί]την).[167] Colin Hemer notes IG III.1.704, which references a "δόγματι Ἀρεοπαγιτῶν" ("decree of the Areopagites").[168] Other inscriptions list a κῆρυξ Ἀρεοπαγιτῶν ("herald of the Areopagites"; IG II^2 2336; 102/1–95/4 BCE) and instructions given καθ᾽ ὑπο[μν]η[ματισ]μὸν Ἀρεοπα[γιτῶν] ("according to the decree of the Areopagites"; IG II^2 4245; 1st C. CE). The letter from Marcus Aurelius to the Athenians (174/5 CE) references an (unlawfully appointed) "Areopagite" (Ἀρεοπαγείτης, l.27), and "Areopagites" (οἱ Ἀρεοπαγεῖται, l.31), as well as the more formal terminology for the council (Ἄρειον πάγον, l.59; ἐν Ἀρείωι πάγωι βουλῆς, l.70).[169]

This epigraphic evidence suggests that even if writers of the Second Sophistic chose classical settings for their texts, following their atticising interests, it does not follow that every use of ὁ Ἀρεοπαγίτης is *necessarily* archaising.[170] Even if the two-word form (ἡ ἐξ Ἀρείου πάγου βουλή) was the more common, or more formal, form that was used, the single-word form was demonstrably in use from the first century BCE through to the third century CE. In this period, the term is used to describe those who belonged to the Areopagus council, the leading civic and judicial council in Athens,[171] which, in the inscriptions noted above, passed down decisions on such things as the approval of dedicatory inscriptions (IG II^2 4245)[172] or an individual's rights to Athenian citizenship (as seen in Marcus Aurelius' letter).[173] Dionysius, then, held a significant role of civic leadership in the city.

As an "Areopagite", Dionysius would have previously served as an archon of the city.[174] In the Roman period the archonships had lost much of their administrative function, but they did carry a great deal of prestige and "were becoming increasingly important as liturgies."[175] One

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[167] IG II^2 3689; 3690; 13263. Frantz, *Late Antiquity,* 9.
[168] Colin J. Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 119.
[169] Cf. Translation and commentary in James H. Oliver, *Greek Constitutions of Early Roman Emperors from Inscriptions and Papyri* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1989), 366–388.
[170] The emphasis in the Second Sophistic on "Greekness" and Greek education probably plays a part here.
[171] Cf. Geagan, *Athenian Constitution*, 32-61.
[172] Geagan notes: "Dedicatory monuments erected according to a *hypomnematismos* must have all been requested by and built by a third party." Geagan, *Athenian Constitution*, 42.
[173] Oliver, *Greek Constitutions*, 369, l.31.
[174] Geagan, *Athenian Constitution*, 5, 56; William Scott Ferguson, "Researches in Athenian and Delian Documents III," *Klio* 9 (1909): 328–30.
[175] Geagan, *Athenian Constitution*, 3.

outworking of this was that the original system of appointment to the archonship by lot was being replaced by election. The roles were increasingly held by wealthy men who sought or accepted the opportunity, and could afford the benefactions that were expected of them.[176] The role of eponymous archon, whose name would become the main dating identifier for the year, was particularly prestigious, even being held by emperors and other notable Roman officials.[177]

These developments relating to the archons strongly suggest, though admittedly do not conclusively prove, that Dionysius would have been a man of significant wealth and education.[178] In the archon lists reported by Sterling Dow and Paul Graindor, no individuals named Dionysius appear in this period.[179] This does not mean that the Acts record should be dismissed as contradicting the material evidence. The records of archons are incomplete, especially regarding the archons other than the eponymous archon or archon basileus, such as the flute player (αὐλητής) or archon's herald (κῆρυξ ἄρχοντος/κηρυκίσκος).[180]

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[176] Two examples of benefactions given by eponymous archons are: Tiberius Claudius the hierophant, who "held the magistracy for a *medimnos* and fifteen *drachmai*" (IG II^2 3546); and "Marcus Ulpius Eubiotos, who supplied grain in a time of famine" (IG II^2 3697, 3698). *Athenian Constitution*, 6.

[177] Roman Emperors who served as eponymous archon included Domitian (87/8CE), Hadrian (pre-accession, 111/2CE), Commodus (188/9CE) and Gallienus (264/5CE). Graindor suggests that the Athenians may have actively pursued such figures to take on the honorary role. Paul Graindor, *Chronologie des archontes athéniens sous l'empire* (London: Forgotten Books, 2018 (1922)), 13. Cf. Sean G. Byrne, *Roman Citizens of Athens*, Studia Hellenistica (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 507–10.

[178] In the fifth century CE, a Neo-Platonic theologian wrote his works under the pseudonym Dionysius the Areopagite. Scornaienchi takes this as a "clue to argue that these people [ie. Dionysius and Damaris] are people from the Greek philosophical world." While this is certainly possible, the late antique theologian may have found Dionysius' name attractive because it provided links with Athens, the ancient home of philosophy; it was enshrined in scripture; and it did not carry much other tradition with which he would have to compete. Eric Perl suggests, however, that "his choice of pseudonym… links him both with the idea of 'the unknown God' and with the integration between Greek philosophy and Christianity which is at play in Paul's sermon." Scornaienchi, "Paolo, Luca, Cicerone," 211; Eric Perl, "Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite," in *The Cambridge History of Philosophy in Late Antiquity, Volume 2*, ed. Lloyd Gerson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 767. Cf. Keener, *Acts*, 3:2680.

[179] Sterling Dow, "The Lists of Athenian *Archontes*," *Hesperia* 3, no. 2 (1934): 177–79; Graindor, *Chronologie*, 64–91.

[180] Geagan, *Athenian Constitution*, 2. In the two archon lists Geagan records dated 50/1-52/3 and mid-second century, respectively, the lesser archonships are either not recorded or lost (IG II^2 1735, 1736).

A few pieces of circumstantial evidence may offer an interesting suggestion regarding Dionysius. Graindor and Dow both note that the demes of Marathon, Phaleron and Melite were over-represented among the eponymous archonships held by Athenians.[181] These three demes were "particularly rich or populated."[182] The deme of Melite lay to the west of the agora,[183] and was the most populous of the urban demes.[184] It was the location of some public buildings, and numerous large houses were found on the higher ground (The Hill of the Nymphs). In the lower region near the the western edge of the agora there was an industrial district with "lesser houses, commercial establishments, and workshops."[185] The industrial district housed many metic artisans, particularly marble-workers.[186] Young discusses two Roman-era houses in this area, Houses N and O.[187] The houses measure 334.95m^2 and 272.25m^2 respectively,[188] which is significantly larger than the average Athenian house size of 130–160m^2, and the design of the house includes a central courtyard surrounded with a number of rooms or chambers.[189]

In the first centuries BCE and CE, there was a "moderately prominent Dionysios family of Melite."[190] One member of the family, Dionysius (V) son of Athenagoras (V) of Melite,[191] dated

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[181] Graindor, *Chronologie*, 13; Dow, "Lists," 182.
[182] Graindor, *Chronologie*, 13: "C'est le plus souvent dans des dèmes comme Mélité, Phalère et Marathon que se recrutent ces magistrats, c'est-à-dire, parmi des dèmes particulièrement riches ou peuplés."
[183] Gerald Lalonde describes it in the following way: "Its shape was roughly that of an isosceles trapezoid with its nonparallel sides diverging from the Agora, one from its southwest corner over the Nymphs/Pnyx saddle, the other from its northwest corner out the Panathenaic Way. The shorter parallel side was contiguous and practically coextensive with the west side of the Agora, while the longer western side was perhaps roughly parallel and proximate to the Themistoklean city wall but not necessarily on its line." Gerald V. Lalonde, "Ig I3 1055 B and the Boundary of Melite and Kollytos," *Hesperia* 75, no. 1 (2006): 116.
[184] Rodney S. Young, "An Industrial District of Ancient Athens," *Hesperia* 20, no. 3 (1951): 142.
[185] "Industrial District," 140, 42.
[186] "Industrial District," 142. Cf. Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, "Demotika Der Attischen Metoeken. I," *Hermes* 22, no. 1 (1887): 107–28.
[187] Young, "Industrial District," 272–77.
[188] Based on Young's measurements of 20.3m by 16.5m for House N and 16.5 by 16.5m for House O. "Industrial District," 274, 276.
[189] Frantz, *Late Antiquity*, 37.
[190] Geoffrey C.R. Schmalz, *Augustan and Julio–Claudian Athens: A New Epigraphy and Prosopography*, Mnemosyne Supplementum 302 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 59, no.72.
[191] For the family tree, including the records of Athenagoras I–V and Dionysios III–V, see Élias A. Kapetanopoulos, "Leonides VII and His Family," *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 92, no. 2 (1968): 497–99, Stemma A.

to the first quarter of the first century CE, was honoured by the Demos in two inscriptions, one in Eleusis (IG II^2 3913) and the other acknowledging him as a *pyloros*, or gatekeeper of the Acropolis (IG III 3914). It is impossible to argue that the Dionysius of Acts 17 belonged to this family, but it would be the kind of family to which he probably would have belonged. If one placed Dionysius within this family (in an act of "historical imagination"),[192] an interesting set of possibilities regarding the Athenian Christ-group would emerge. Firstly, as noted above, it is a common feature of Acts that Luke records the names of converts that extend hospitality to the Christian missionaries or early Christian communities.[193] As mentioned above, some Roman-era houses in Melite were of larger proportions, offering the potential of hosting reasonably sized groups, such as a house church. If Dionysius resided in Melite, and if he did indeed have the wealth suggested above, his house could have been like the Roman-era houses noted above. His house would have been conveniently located to offer a venue for the first enquirers or converts to meet with Paul. Melite bordered the Agora and thus was centrally located in the city.

Secondly, considering the high population of metic tradespeople that resided in Melite, it is very possible that some of those who Paul engaged with in the synagogue and agora lived in the area. It is worth noting that in the Acts 17 narrative, the author highlights the prominent individuals—Dionysius and Damaris—and does not explicitly suggest a diverse, multi-ethnic faith community. However, Paul's ministry within the synagogue and the reference to foreigners dwelling in Athens (οἱ ἐπιδημοῦντες ξένοι, 17:21) hint at the multi-ethnic makeup of Paul's original audience. Lampe's research into early Christianity in Rome showed that the earliest Christian communities in that city were found in Trastevere and Appia, areas which were the arrival points of the city, the locations of tradespeople, and had large immigrant populations.[194] Melite shares a number of these characteristics, as mentioned above, and it is worth noting that this deme bordered on the Panathenaic way near the Dipylon gate, the main entry to the city for those, like Paul (Acts 17:14), arriving by sea to the Piraeus harbour.[195] Again, this is speculative, but it is plausible that in Athens, as in Rome, the Christian community

[192] Concannon, *Assembling Early Christianity*, 156.
[193] Jipp, *Divine Visitations*, 240–47.
[194] Lampe, *Christians at Rome*, 43–56.
[195] Hemer, "Paul at Athens," 349.

first developed primarily among foreign immigrants, including the Jewish community, before making much headway in the upper classes.[196]

Finally, as noted above, Dionysius is mentioned in a letter from Bishop Dionysius of Corinth to the Athenian church (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 4.23.3). According to Eusebius, the Corinthian bishop reminds the Athenians that Dionysius was converted by Paul, according to the Acts narrative, and also that he was the first bishop of Athens. This statement suggests that the Corinthian Dionysius was referencing both the text of Acts and a separate local tradition that had sprung about Dionysius' role as bishop.[197] Monepiscopal church government developed much later than Paul's visit to Athens, so Dionysius' claims cannot be accurate. It is likely that the Areopagite played a significant role in the newly founded community, and this could well have included involvement in spiritual oversight. Zahn notes that in light of Dionysius of Corinth's use of this tradition, "In Athens, as in Corinth, it must have been considered a sure fact that Dionysius the Areopagite had taken a leading position among the presbyters of the community of Athens during the first years of their existence."[198] On the basis of the discussion above, it can be suggested that Dionysius would have had a large enough house to accommodate the gatherings of the new Christian community and thus his prominence included his role as a host.

3.2.5.2 Damaris

Damaris has posed a problem for interpreters, because her name is very rare, her relationship to Dionysius is unclear, and her social status is not stated. John Chrysostom asserted that Damaris was the wife of Dionysius (*Sac.* 4.7), but while it is true that γυνή could be interpreted in this way, there is no possessive in Acts 17:34 that would suggest the relationship.[199] It is also unlikely that a married Athenian woman would have been present at a public assembly such as the Areopagus. Athenian citizen-women were not completely housebound, but they did not have the freedom of movement enjoyed by other classes of women in the city.

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[196] Dionysius would be in the minority in this case. The close relationship between the Christian and Jewish communities in Athens will be discussed in relation to Quadratus the Apologist, in chapter 6.
[197] He does not claim that Paul appointed the Areopagite to the role of bishop. The claim about his appointment to this role must come from a separate tradition. Zahn, *Apg.*, 2:630.
[198] *Apg.,* 2:630.
[199] Pervo, *Acts*, 442, n.161.

It has also been suggested that Damaris was a ἑταίρα (often translated "courtesan").[200] This term denotes a class of women whose precise position in society is hard to pinpoint. Usually foreign women, ἑταῖραι were often unmarriageable. While this unmarried status did offer ἑταῖραι freedom from social, sexual and educational restrictions experienced by married Athenian women,[201] it also meant that they did not enjoy the legal protections enjoyed by citizens. While these women could often become courtesans, this was not the only possible course they could take. Many were highly educated.[202] They could also be foreign women, married to Athenian citizens, who acted according to their "foreign", as opposed to Athenian, standards of women's behaviour.[203] Clare Rothschild discusses the possibility that Paul's use of the verb in the sense of sexual union in 1 Cor. 6:16 seems "suggestive" that Damaris was a courtesan.[204] She seems to want the use of κολλάω to support the hypothesis, but says that "it is impossible to determine whether κολλάω in Acts 17:34 suggests courtesan relationships."[205] The discussion of κολλάω, above, argues against reading sexual allusions into this text. Luke never uses the term to refer to sexual union.

Ultimately, Acts 17:34 does not give enough detail to securely identify Damaris as a ἑταίρα. It does, however, clearly label her as a γυνή, "woman". It is, therefore, necessary to look more closely at named women in Luke-Acts to gain a greater understanding of Luke's portrayal of Damaris and her role in the Christian community. Rothschild notes three relevant categories of women noted in Luke-Acts. Firstly, god-fearing women of high standing are noted at Acts

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[200] Witherington, *Acts*, 533; Pervo, *Acts*, 442, n.161.

[201] Athenian citizen women were usually married at a young age and the separation of gender roles meant that their daily life was centred around domestic concerns. The image of total seclusion of Athenian citizen women is overstated by Donaldson. Note the discussion and sources cited by Cohen. The difficulty for this discussion lies in the unfortunate situation that most sources cited for this aspect of Athenian society come from the Classical period. It is difficult to ascertain what changes may have been occurring in the daily expression of Athenian gender roles in the Roman period. James Donaldson, *Woman: Her Position and Influence in Ancient Greece and Rome, and among Early Christians* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907), 49–76; David J. Cohen, "Seclusion, Separation, and the Status of Women in Classical Athens," *Greece & Rome* 36, no. 1 (1989): 7–9.

[202] Ben Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 7.

[203] Rebecca Futo Kennedy, "Elite Citizen Women and the Origins of the *Hetaira* in Classical Athens," *Helios* 42, no. 1 (2015): 61–79.

[204] Rothschild, *Paul in Athens*, 103.

[205] *Paul in Athens*, 103.

13:50, 17:4 and 17:12.[206] In 13:50, these women are mobilised by the Jews opposing Paul in Pisidian Antioch, but the other references are to those who believed Paul's message in Thessalonica (17:4) and Beroea (17:12). Rothschild does not note that in each of these cases, the collective group of women is alongside a counterpart collective of men.[207]

Secondly, she notes the occurrences of γυνή where a woman's name is in close proximity to a man's and includes some possessive construction—usually with a definite article (ἡ), the word woman/wife (γυνή), and a genitive pronoun (μου, σου)—that clearly indicates a marital relationship.[208] An example of this can be seen in the narrative of Zechariah and Elizabeth: "But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife (ἡ γυνή σου) Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John'" (Luke 1:13).[209]

Thirdly, she notes occurences of γυνή where a woman's name is in close proximity to a man's name, but without the possessive article to suggest a marital relationship.[210] She considers this final category to potentially refer to women in courtesan relationships with the named men. In this group she includes Luke 8:3, "Ἰωάννα γυνὴ Χουζᾶ," and Acts 17:34, "Διονύσιος ὁ Ἀρεοπαγίτης καὶ γυνὴ ὀνόματι Δάμαρις." The problem with Rothschild's argument at this point is that the possessive is present in Luke 8:3 in the genitive form of "Χουζᾶ". The lack of an articular construction here, in comparison to articular constructions in relation to Elizabeth and the others, could be explained by the fact that in the other examples the man is the primary subject of the passage, and thus the woman is the "wife of him." In Joanna's case, she is the main subject (or one of the group of women that make up the main subject) and thus her relationship to Chuza is expressed by a simple genitive construction. In Luke 8, the stress

[206] *Paul in Athens*, 100, 04. Rothschild erroneously notes that 13:50 shows elite women joining Paul's movement.
[207] Acts 13:50: "τὰς σεβομένας γυναῖκας τὰς εὐσχήμονας καὶ τοὺς πρώτους τῆς πόλεως"; Acts 17:4: "τῶν τε σεβομένων Ἑλλήνων πλῆτος πολύ, γυναικῶν τε τῶν πρώτων οὐκ ὀλίγαι"; Acts 17:12: "τῶν Ἑλληνίδων γυναικῶν τῶν εὐσχημόνων καὶ ἀνδρῶν οὐκ ὀλίγοι."
[208] Rothschild, *Paul in Athens*, 100–01. Elizabeth: Luke 1:5, 13, 18, 24. Sapphira: Acts 5:1, 7. Priscilla: Acts 18:2. Drusilla: Acts 24:24.
[209] Other examples include: Elizabeth: Luke 1:5, 13, 18, 24; Sapphira: Acts 5:1, 7; Priscilla: Acts 18:2; Drusilla: Acts 24:24.
[210] *Paul in Athens*, 101–03.

is on the fact that there was a group of women acting independently of their husbands or households in support of Jesus' ministry.[211]

A comparison of the sentence structure in these verses that refer to groups of followers reveals strong similarities. In Luke 8:2–3, there is a general description of the group (γυναῖκες τινες αἳ ἦσαν τεθεραπευμέναι ἀπὸ πνευμάτων πονηρῶν καὶ ἀσθενειῶν… αἵτινες διηκόνουν αὐτοῖς ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχοντων αὐταῖς), followed by a list of individuals Luke considered worth naming (Μαρία…Ἰωάννα…Σουσάννα),[212] each separated by "καί", followed by another catch-all phrase (ἕτεραι πολλαὶ). Acts 17:34 includes a general description (Τινὲς δὲ ἄνδρες κολληθέντες αὐτῷ ἐπίστευσαν), followed by the named individuals (Διονύσιος ὁ Ἀρεοπαγίτης καὶ γυνὴ ὀνόματι Δάμαρις), each separated by "καί", followed by a catch-all phrase (ἕτεροι σὺν αὐτοῖς). This seems to be a standard structure that Luke has utilised to record a particular group of people that included noteworthy individuals. The "καί" that separates each name on the list does not specify a particular unity between individuals except for their shared membership in the group. Therefore, this sentence structure does not require us to understand γυνή as implying that Damaris was Dionysius' wife.

A further consideration of relevance concerns the reference to Lydia in Acts 16:14. While this verse does not include any reference to a man's name,[213] it is thematically similar to the list of women in Luke 8 because she acts as a host to Paul and his team just as the women ministered to Jesus' needs. The reference to Lydia also provides some parallel to that of Damaris in that the introductory phrase is almost identical: 1) "Καί τις γυνὴ ὀνόματι Λυδία" (16:14); 2) "καὶ γυνὴ ὀνόματι Δάμαρις" (17:34). Again, the sentence structure does not suggest any particular relationship to Dionysius at all, except that they both belonged to the new group of believers.

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[211] "Joanna's husband is mentioned, but otherwise these women appear in the narrative without any connection to husband or household… Whether as unmarried women or widows, or as married women operating independently of their household sytem, the women are present in the itinerant band of Jesus' followers." John T. Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 182.

[212] For instance, Joanna, the wife of Chuza who is procurator (ἐπίτροπος) in Herod's court, seems to be included because her presence shows that Jesus' ministry was having an influence in the higher strata of society. John Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20* (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), 367–68; François Bovon, *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1–9:50*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 301.

[213] Though the narrative of the Philippian jailer provides a male parallel. Witherington, *Women*, 148.

In light of the analysis of other instances of named women in Luke-Acts, either in groups or alongside men, the following can be affirmed about Damaris. Firstly, since there is no possessive construction in Acts 17:34, the reference to Damaris should be considered a parallel to Dionysius,[214] as in the cases of the leading Greek women in Thessalonica and Beroea, rather than as (narratologically) subordinate, as in the case of the wives of Zechariah, Ananias, and Aquila.

Secondly, if Damaris was a ἑταίρα, it does not necessarily follow that she was a prostitute. Rather, it would have meant that she was an unmarriageable woman, most likely because she was a non-citizen or foreigner. This identification of Damaris would fit with the hypothetical scenario suggested above of the Athenian church finding a foothold in the Melite district. Damaris' unmarried status would have meant that she inhabited a more precarious position in society. Whether this was a significant factor in Damaris' coming to faith in Jesus or not, the new Christian community would have offered a new social network in which Damaris could offer and enjoy certain "social securities."

Finally, the parallels with Joanna and Lydia suggest that Damaris was a benefactor of some sort to the community of believers in Athens. Luke's naming of her amongst these converts follows his interest in noting leading women and those who acted as benefactors

3.2.5.3 Size of this Christian group?

The "others with them" that Luke mentions alongside Dionysius and Damaris may be members of their households, including clients, that possibly came to faith through the mediation of the two named individuals.[215] If this is the case, we may be able to suggest some more detail regarding the size of the Christian community in Athens.

In his discussion of household sizes and the Christian population of Corinth, L.L. Welborn notes that Roman households "might include slaves, hired workers, freedmen, friends, and lodgers, in addition to the owner and his extended family."[216] A moderately sized household, such as

[214] *Women*, 144.
[215] Winter, "Introducing Gods," 86; Pesch, *Apg, 2*, 141; Witherington, *Acts*, 532.
[216] L.L. Welborn, *An End to Enmity: Paul and the "Wrongdoer" of Second Corinthians*, BZNW (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 322–35.

that of Stephanas, might have numbered ten to fifteen persons, whereas the larger household of Gaius could have conceivably consisted of twenty persons.[217] Considering the wealth required to attain the position of an Athenian archon, and thus qualify for a place on the Areopagus Council, it can be safely assumed that Dionysius would have had a household of at least moderate size. If, as it was suggested above, Damaris was a wealthy foreigner, it is possible that she too would have had a household of a moderate size, if perhaps a bit smaller. If the members of their households followed them into their new faith,[218] the Athenian church could number anywhere from twenty to forty persons from this earliest stage. If the "others with them" (17:34) were not members of their households,[219] but rather extra converts from the synagogue, agora, or Areopagus,[220] this twenty to forty could be expanded even further. On these considerations, the Athenian church may have numbered from twenty-five, as a conservative estimate, up to fifty as a more hopeful one. By comparison, Welborn suggests that the Corinthian church could have numbered close to 100 individuals in Paul's day.

3.2.6 Paul's Departure from Athens

Luke records that after having gathered the small group of new believers, Paul left Athens and went on to Corinth. William Ramsay makes the assertion that there is a negative tone to Paul's departure. On the one hand, he views Paul's time in Athens as unsuccessful, and sees the

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[217] *End to Enmity*, 323–24. Note, however, Kloppenborg's recent treatment of the identity of Gaius in Rom. 16:23 and 1 Cor. 1:14. He argues that the Gaius of Romans 16 was not an extremely wealthy host to the whole church in Corinth, but rather a Roman who was a guest of Paul and the church in Corinth. Kloppenborg's argument is convincing, and so for my suggestions regarding the size of the community I have kept to the "moderate" estimate represented by Stephanas' household. John S. Kloppenborg, "Gaius the Roman Guest," *NTS* 63, no. 4 (2017): 534–49.

[218] Welborn says, "There is no reason to doubt that Gaius and Erastus would also have brought their households along with them; indeed, it is difficult to imagine that family members and dependents of men such as these could have refused to share the religious affiliation of their paterfamilias, given the hierarchical organization of the Roman household" (*End to Enmity*, 323). Some caution should be exercised here though, in light of Onesimus' place in Philemon's household before his conversion (Phlm 11–16) and the arguments of second-century Christians that slaves did not automatically convert on this basis (Athenagoras *Leg.* 35.3; Aristides *Apol.* 15).

[219] Winter notes that the "others with them" "could imply that they were members of the households of Dionysius and Damaris which in the case of the former possibly included clients who accompanied their patron in public." Winter, "Introducing Gods," 86. Witherington comments that this suggestion is "plausible." Witherington, *Acts*, 532.

[220] Keener prefers this to Winter's suggestion. Keener, *Acts*, 3:2680.

apostle as leaving the city downcast by the results.[221] The argument for the establishment of the church, above, provides some rebuttal to Ramsay's position in that regard. More significantly, Ramsay notes that the term for "left" in 18:1—"Paul left Athens" (χωρισθείς)—is the same term used in the very next verse for Claudius' order for the Jews "to leave" (χωρίζεσθαι) Rome.[222]

The term is not all that common in the New Testament, occurring only thirteen times. It seems to be something of an antonym to κολλάω, discussed above. It appears in the discussions regarding divorce, where the position is predominantly in opposition to separation (Matt. 19:6; Mark 10:9; 1 Cor. 7:10, 11; a concession provided in 1 Cor. 7:15). In Rom. 8:35 and 39, Paul discusses whether anything can "separate" (χωρίσει/χωρίσαι) the believer from the love of Christ, in the sense of a violent and damaging removal of the believer from the security of Christ's saving love.[223] Philemon 15 refers to Onesimus being "separated" from Philemon for a time (ἐχωρίσθη πρὸς ὥραν).[224] Again, this separation is by no means amicable or even neutral, considering Paul's description of Onesimus as "formerly useless" (τόν ποτέ σοι ἄχρηστον, v.11) and his allusion to Onesimus having possibly wronged Philemon (εἰ δέ τι ἠδίκησέν σε ἢ ὀφείλει, v.18). Even if the passive form, ἐχωρίσθη, used in this verse indicates God's agency in the background of the separation, the separation itself is still to be construed as a negative event which is only fully realised as good if or when Onesimus and Philemon are reunited in their new Christian kinship (Phlm 16).[225] The term also appears in Heb. 7:26 to describe Jesus as "separated from sinners" (κεχωρισμένος ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν) as part of his qualification as a greater high priest.[226] These contexts outside of Acts in which the term is

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[221] William M. Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1902), 252.
[222] *St. Paul the Traveller*, 240–41.
[223] Robert Jewett, *Romans* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 543. Thielman notes a linking theme between Rom. 8 and Acts 18:2, observing that "hardships…had often separated people from their loved ones, something that at least some Jewish Christians in Rome knew firsthand from their own experiences of expulsion from the city under Claudius." Frank Thielman, *Romans*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 425.
[224] Dunn describes the separation as a "breach." James D.G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 333.
[225] F.F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 216, n.81; David W. Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 393–94; Eduard Lohse, *Colossians and Philemon*, trans. William R. Poehlmann and Robert J. Karris, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 202.
[226] F.F. Bruce notes, "The high priest of Israel, while not personally free from sin, was ceremonially set apart from his fellows for the proper discharge of his sacred functions." F.F.

used, therefore, suggest that a particularly violent, undesirable, or unassailable separation is in view: the tearing up of a marriage, the violent removal of the believer from Christ's love, the flight of a disobedient slave, or Jesus' unique, high priestly, holy separation from sinners.

Luke uses the term three times in Acts, all in relation to people leaving cities. In Acts 1:4, Jesus commands his disciples not to leave Jerusalem (ἀπὸ Ἰεροσολύμων μὴ χωρίζεσθαι). The reasoning behind this is that they have to "wait for the promise of the Father" (περιμένειν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πατρὸς) which is the Holy Spirit (v.4–5). The necessity not to leave is strengthened by Jesus linking the promised Spirit to his own prior teaching ("which … you heard from me"; v.4), John the Baptist's prophetic foretelling of their baptism with the Spirit by Jesus (v.5), and their need for the Holy Spirit to empower them for their global witness (v.8).

Finally, Luke uses the term to describe Paul's departure from Athens (Acts 18:1), and Aquila and Priscilla's departure from Rome (18:2). The negative sense of χωρίζεσθαι is clear in relation to the latter pair. The move from Rome was not of their own volition, but rather enforced by Claudius' edict.

The overwhelming evidence from the New Testament usage of the term suggests that it bears a negative connotation. It is used when the separation is viewed as a negative or undesirable event.[227] If this negative connotation is to be applied to Paul's departure from Athens, the important question to answer is in what sense is the departure negative? Ramsay argues that Paul had been intending on staying in Athens until Silas and Timothy returned from their brief missions to Macedonia (after having been sent from Athens; 1 Thess. 2:17–3:5), but that χωρισθείς contains "the idea of a sudden, premature departure" that was "a violation of the intended plan under the compulsion of events."[228] Paul's comments in 1 Thess. 2:18 may add some further insight. He declares to the Thessalonians, "We wanted to come to you—I, Paul,

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Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 176, n.88. BDAG, χωρίζω 2c: "The meaning can include not only that Christ has been *separated from sinful humans* by being exalted to the heavenly world…but also that because of his attributes…he is *different* from sinful humans." Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, eds., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2000), 1095.

[227] Heb. 7:26 bucks this trend, but in that case the separation is unassailable. Jesus' holy separation sets him apart as uniquely qualified as high priest.

[228] Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveller*, 241.

again and again—but Satan hindered us." If Paul, writing from Corinth, is referring to multiple experiences of hindrance, and not just using a rhetorical flourish, he may well be referring to trouble in Athens. In this interpretation, the multiple hindrances would include the Jews following him to Beroea and then an otherwise undisclosed problem in Athens which could include his appearance before the Areopagus or perhaps a problem that arose afterwards. Even though the details elude us, there does seem to be some indication that Paul's time in Athens was cut short by some unforeseen circumstance.

Luke's use of both κολληθέντες in 17:34 and χωρισθείς in 18:1 may be indicative of his use of Paul's reflections on his time in Athens. These two terms are used by Paul in the context of marriage (or sexual union)[229] and divorce,[230] an image that he also applies to the church (Eph. 5). It was argued above that Luke uses κολληθέντες to describe the formation of the Christian community in Athens. The description of Paul's abrupt departure from Athens as being "separated" (χωρισθείς) from the city adds even more suggestion that there was such a community that had formed under his preaching ministry. His abrupt departure tore him away (divorced him?) from this new group of believers.

[229] 1 Cor. 6:16; προσκολληθήσεται in Eph. 5:31.
[230] 1 Cor. 7:10–15.

3.3 Evidence for Athens in the Pauline Epistles

The relationship between the Paul of Acts and the Paul of the Epistles is an ongoing conversation in the scholarship. This was touched upon briefly in the discussion about the Achaian firstfruits of 1 Cor. 16:15, above in section 4.1.4.1. Two further portions of Paul's letters need to be examined in order to assess his ministry in Athens. 1 Thessalonians 2:17–3:5 is the only place where Paul explicitly mentions Athens, and this passage reveals some further details, regarding the movements of the missionary team, that the Acts account does not include. Secondly, 1 Corinthians 2:1–4 has been marshalled as evidence of the "failure" of Paul's mission in Athens. This passage needs to be examined in order to ascertain whether there is a conflict between Paul's record and that of Acts.

3.3.1 1 Thessalonians 2:17–3:5

The Athens narrative in Acts 17 suggests that Paul was alone for the entire duration of his time in Athens. In his first letter to the Thessalonians, however, Paul gives different but not necessarily contradictory information regarding his and his co-workers' movements. He says that because of his strong desire to know that they were continuing in the faith despite facing persecution, "we decided to be left alone in Athens; and we sent Timothy, our brother and co-worker for God in proclaiming the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you for the sake of your faith" (1 Thess. 3:1–2). The crucial question is whether the first-person plural in these verses is a genuine plural, inclusive of Paul and Silas,[231] or whether it is an epistolary plural referring only to Paul.[232]

Eugene Boring asserts that "the emphasis on being alone … and the twice-used singular 'I,' suggests that Silvanus had not accompanied Paul to Athens."[233] He continues, "The statement

[231] F.F. Bruce, *1 & 2 Thessalonians* (Waco: Word, 1982), 61; Gary S. Shogren, *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 131; Samuel Byrskog, "Co-Senders, Co-Authors and Paul's Use of the First Person Plural," *ZNW* 87 (1996): 236–38.
[232] M. Eugene Boring, *I & II Thessalonians* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), 115; Abraham J. Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 190; Charles A. Wanamaker, *The Epistles to the Thessalonians*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 126–27. Witherington opts for *via media*, stating, "While this is not quite a true plural, it is also not merely an epistolary plural." Ben Witherington, *1 and 2 Thessalonians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 92.
[233] Boring, *I & II Thessalonians*, 115.

in 1 Thess 3:1–2 can be read in such a way that Timothy was not in Athens, that it was in Athens that Paul was *left alone*, but the *decision* was made elsewhere; Paul decided in Beroea or someplace else in Macedonia to send Timothy back to Thessalonica, and went on alone to Athens."[234] The question is important, he says, because it "impinges on the question of how much confidence can be placed in Acts as an accurate historical source for illuminating … 1 Thessalonians."[235] It would seem, however, that Boring has brought a pre-existent lack of confidence in Acts to his interpretation of 1 Thess. 3.

If the decision was made elsewhere for Paul to send Timothy back while he proceeded alone, the language Paul uses seems quite strange. In his other letters, Paul narrates his past movements from one place to another using various cognates of ἔρχομαι (ἐξῆλθον, 2 Cor. 2:13; ἀνῆλθον, ἀπῆλθον, Gal. 1:17; ἀπῆλθον, 1:18; ἦλθον, 1:21). He does not, in this case, indicate that he had sent Timothy and then moved on to Athens. Rather, that Paul (along with Silas) is "left behind" or "abandoned" (καταλειφθῆναι, 3:1)[236] suggests that Timothy "abandons" them from the place in which they remain, namely, Athens. The flip-side of this abandonment—that Paul and Silas "sent" Timothy (ἐπέμψαμεν, 3:2)—is also most naturally understood to mean that Paul and Silas sent him from where they then remained, Athens.

This understanding also makes the most sense of Paul's instructions in Acts 17:15. That Paul sent the Beroean brothers back to Beroea with a message for Timothy and Silas to come to him as soon as possible suggests that Timothy had not yet been sent to Thessalonica but was still "remaining" in Beroea. Even though Luke does not record these events in Acts 17, it makes most sense of what both passages *do* say to understand that Silas and Timothy met Paul in Athens before being sent off again.[237]

Those in favour of reading the plurals in this passage as epistolary plurals have highlighted Paul's shift to the first person singular in 2:18 and 3:5 as a warning against reading them as real plurals.[238] The shift, however, should be understood as revealing Paul's eagerness to

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[234] *I & II Thessalonians*, 115. Italics original.
[235] *I & II Thessalonians*, 115.
[236] Echoing the sentiment of Paul having been "orphaned" (ἀπορφανισθέντες, 2:17). Gordon D. Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 113; Malherbe, *Thessalonians*, 190.
[237] Zahn, *Apg.,* 2:630.
[238] Wanamaker, *Thessalonians*, 127.

affirm to the Thessalonians the depth to which he personally desired to visit them, even though he had been forced by Satanic opposition (2:18) to send Timothy in his place.[239] While the group made collective decisions at this point (from Athens), Paul interjects to make it absolutely clear that he desired to come to them.

The "partial and elliptical"[240] accounts in Acts 17 and 1 Thess. 3 do not allow for a detailed reconstruction of the movements of Paul and his co-workers in this period. They do, however, highlight the selective nature of Luke's account. This is significant when assessing the results of Paul's ministry in Athens. Luke's narrative suggests that Paul was in the city for only a short time, and departed quickly after the Areopagus address. If the reconstruction above is accurate, however, Paul must have been in the city long enough to allow the Beroeans to travel back to Beroea to convey his message, for Silas and Timothy to finish their business in the city "as soon as possible", and for Silas and Timothy to travel from Beroea to Athens.

Based on the reconstructions available on Stanford University's ORBIS mapping platform,[241] travel between the two cities would have taken between three days by sea and sixteen days by land. The comparative costs of the different modes of travel—80–100 denarii for one person by boat or 650 denarii for one person by carriage—would suggest that the missionaries would have made these journeys by sea (as Paul did; Acts 17:14).[242] Paul, then, would have had at least six days alone in Athens, but this may well have been longer if Silas and Timothy were not able to depart immediately upon receiving the message. That Paul sends the message with the returning Beroeans who had conducted him to Athens suggests that Silas and Timothy were not intending on going back to Thessalonica and Philippi directly from Beroea.

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[239] Jeffrey A.D. Weima, *1–2 Thessalonians*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 215; Gene L. Green, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, Pntc (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 164.

[240] Witherington, *Acts*, 510.

[241] Walter Scheidel and Elijah Meeks, "Orbis: The Stanford Geospatial Network Model of the Roman World," http://orbis.stanford.edu. While ORBIS does not have data for travel to and from Beroea, I have assumed here that the data for travel between Thessalonica and Athens would be comparable to that between Beroea and Athens.

[242] The cost data provided here is not suggesting that this would have been the actual cost for the missionaries. It should be taken as indicative of the relative difference between travel by land and sea.

Once the two missionaries had joined Paul in Athens, there is another undisclosed length of time during which Paul repeatedly and unsuccessfully tried to return to Thessalonica (1 Thess. 2:18), before sending Timothy to investigate and report back about the state of the church (1 Thess. 3:1–2).[243] That Paul had repeatedly tried to return to Thessalonica may suggest that Athens was not the only location from which he had tried to return.[244] In light of the likelihood that Paul wrote the letter to the Thessalonians from Corinth,[245] it may be that the "again and again" (καὶ ἅπαξ καὶ δίς, 1 Thess. 2:18) alludes to his desire to return that kept being foiled as he kept running into trouble, firstly in Beroea (Acts 17:13–14) and then again in Athens (17:19ff.). Ramsay observes that the one term used for Paul's departure from Athens (χωρισθεὶς ἐκ τῶν Ἀθηνῶν, 18:1) and Claudius' command for the Jews to "leave Rome" (χωρίζεσθαι…ἀπὸ τῆς Ῥώμης, 18:2) suggests that Paul's departure was "a violation of the intended plan under the compulsion of events."[246] Such a reading would suggest that Paul's interaction with the Areopagus was more than a "friendly" debate or oration; it was a judicial process that was a hindrance to his movements as much as it was an opportunity to proclaim the Christian message, and that it did not end as amicably as might be expected.

In light of the discussion above, a harmonisation of the two accounts may go as follows:

After the Thessalonian Jews stirred up trouble in Beroea (17:13), Paul was conducted to Athens and left there alone while Silas and Timothy stayed in Beroea (17:14). The Beroean "brothers" who travelled with Paul returned to their home town and passed on the message to Silas and Timothy to go quickly to Athens (17:15). During this time, Paul was evangelising and dialoguing in Athens (as recorded by Luke; 17:16ff.) but was also increasingly concerned about the plight of the Thessalonians (as recorded by Paul; 1 Thess. 2:17; 3:1). At some point during Paul's time in Athens, Silas and Timothy join him in the city, but Luke does not record this detail, and Paul only obliquely so. Paul is somehow stopped from returning to Thessalonica. Paul and Silas (1 Thess. 3:2) send Timothy to Thessalonica to encourage the believers and to bring back a report (1 Thess. 3:1–2, 5). Some time after sending Timothy, Paul

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[243] Suggestions regarding what specifically hindered Paul's return to Thessalonica include a legal prohibition implicit in the bond which Jason posted (Acts 17: 9; Shogren, *Thessalonians*, 133) and illness (Wanamaker, *Thessalonians*, 122).
[244] Cf. Fee, *Thessalonians*, 107.
[245] Winter, *Philo and Paul*, 150.
[246] Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveller*, 240–41. Contra Schnabel, who notes that in Athens, "no opposition or persecution is reported." Eckhard J Schnabel, "The Persecution of Christians in the First Century," *JETS* 61, no. 3 (2018), 538.

also sends Silas on an undisclosed mission, possibly to Galatia or Phillipi or both, which at the very least has Macedonia as its last location before he and Timothy return to Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:5; possibly Philippi – cf. Phil. 4:15–16; 2 Cor. 11:9).[247] Paul is left alone in Athens for an undisclosed time. The two men meet him again in Corinth (Acts 18:5). While neither Paul nor Luke gives any details regarding how Silas and Timothy knew to meet him there rather than at Athens, the reconstruction outlined above would suggest that they made these plans together as a group before Timothy was sent to Thessalonica.

3.3.2 1 Corinthians 2:1–4

Some have suggested that 1 Cor. 2:1–4, in which Paul describes his coming to Corinth—reminding the Corinthians of the message he proclaimed (v.2) and his method of proclamation (v.3–4)—demonstrates that Paul's ministry strategy in Corinth was shaped in large part by the "failure" of his approach in Athens. Three examples will illustrate the argument. C.S.C. Williams is cautious about overemphasising any failure on Paul's part in Athens, but he notes that "it is true that he went to Corinth 'in fear and trembling' and that at Corinth he fell back on the central fact of Christ crucified."[248] Simon J. Kistemaker comments that "Paul arrived in Corinth in a downcast mood that resulted from his encounters with philosophers and the unfavorable response to his message in Athens."[249] Gardner is not quite so direct in his assessment of the influence that Athens had on Paul, but he notes, "Paul is thus both criticizing the elitism of their wisdom and its content. Paul's own encounter with the heart of this civilization at the Areopagus in Athens would probably have continued to influence his thinking here (Acts 17:16–34). There he had talked to Epicureans and Stoics and many others."[250]

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[247] Witherington cites Phil. 4:15–16 (cf. 2 Cor 11:9) to suggest that Silas was sent to Philippi and brought a financial gift from the Philippian church to Paul in Corinth. Phil. 4:15–16 says that the Philippian church supported Paul in Thessalonica and after he had left Macedonia. Allan Wainwright proposed the idea that Silas was sent to South Galatia with Paul's *Epistle to the Galatians.* Ben Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 510, n.175; Allan Wainwright, "Where Did Silas Go? (and What Was His Connection with *Galatians*?)," *JSNT* 8 (1980): 66–70. Cf. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, 2:1169.

[248] C.S.C. Williams, *A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, 2nd ed. (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1964), 206.

[249] Simon J. Kistemaker, *Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 71.

[250] Paul Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 100. In using the word "continued," Gardner acknowledges that Paul's ideas about Hellenistic wisdom and

This view of the impact that Athens had on Paul is rightly rejected by many commentators[251] for the following reasons. Firstly, the argument does not do justice to the text of Acts 17. There is no clear indication at the end of the Athens narrative that either Luke or Paul deemed his time in the city as a failure.[252] Luke's note that some people "believed" (ἐπίστευσαν) and joined (κολληθέντες) Paul indicate that his preaching met with some success (Acts 17:34).[253] As Conrad Gempf observes, "The response, in fact, does not appear markedly different to responses in other cities, but rather conforms to the pattern set there."[254]

Furthermore, while Paul engaged with Stoic and Epicurean philosophers in the agora, and his Areopagus address engages with Hellenistic philosophy, the narrative does not describe his approach to ministry in the city as any different to his efforts elsewhere. In Athens—as in Pisidia (Acts 13:14, 44), Iconium and Lystra (14:1, 11), and Philippi (16:13, 16–18); and later in Corinth (18:4, 6–7) and Ephesus (19:8–9; 20:20)—Paul preached in the synagogue and in the public spaces of the city (17:17).[255] His message, summarised by Luke as "preaching Jesus and the resurrection" (17:18), aligns with the message he resolved to know at Corinth, "Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2), and was consistent with his preaching elsewhere.[256] That the

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rhetoric were not entirely formed by his experiences in Athens, but he does still suggest that Paul's Athenian experience does shape his approach with the Corinthians.

[251] Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), 526; C.K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1971), 63–64; Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, trans. James W. Leitch, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 54, n.15; Colin J. Hemer, "The Speeches of Acts II. The Areopagus Address," *Tyndale Bulletin* 40, no. 2 (1989): 257–58; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 97; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 212.

[252] "There is no hint that [Paul] felt disillusioned": James Moffatt, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1938), 22.

[253] "We may be confident that Luke did not intend to describe a lapse on the part of his hero": Barrett, *1 Corinthians*, 63.

[254] Conrad Gempf, "Before Paul Arrived in Corinth: The Mission Strategies in 1 Corinthians 2:2 and Acts 17," in *The New Testament in Its First Century Setting: Essays on Context and Background in Honour of B.W. Winter on His 65th Birthday*, ed. P.J. Williams, et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 133.

[255] The accounts of Paul's time in Thessalonica and Beroea do not argue against this point since his stays were cut short by him being harried out of town by the oppositional Jews (Acts 17:1–15).

[256] Pisidia: Jesus, his death, and his resurrection (Acts 13:23, 28–29, 30–39); Philippi: "Believe in the Lord Jesus" (Acts 16:30); Thessalonica: "explaining and proving that it was necessary

reference to the resurrection comes very late in Paul's Areopagus address led Dibelius to label Acts 17:30–31 as "the *only Christian* sentence" in an otherwise "*hellenistic* speech about the true knowledge of God."[257] The "late" introduction of the theme can be explained, however, by both the interruption that came from the scoffing of the crowd, which seems to have brought the proceedings to an end, and the fact that Paul was on trial and needed to respond to specific requirements regarding the introduction of a new religion to the city.[258]

Conrad Gempf observes that if Paul adjusted his strategy anywhere, it was in Athens rather than Corinth. It can be seen from Paul's correspondence with the Thessalonians, as well as the Corinthians, that he sought to set his own practices apart from the sophists of the day. In his letters to the Corinthians and the Thessalonians, Paul describes his "coming" (ἐλθὼν, 1 Cor. 2:1) or "entry" (εἴσοδος, 1 Thess. 2:1) to the cities in terms that contravened expected sophistic conventions.[259] Winter summarises a number of sophistic conventions that can be identified in the sources, including the expectation that a city's reception of a sophist would be a mutually enriching relationship; a public oration including an *encomium* in which the orator would praise the city, a διάλεξις in which he would declare his own reputation, and an original declamation on a topic given to him by the crowd.[260] Rather than offering a flattering *encomium*, Paul claims that he "never came with words of flattery" (1 Thess. 2:5). Nor did he seek financial gain or the praise and glory of men, two benefits which the sophists certainly did seek.[261] In 1 Cor. 2:1–4, "Paul disclaims any 'excessive' reliance upon speech or wisdom, and pinpoints 'persuasiveness' as the particular excess he wishes to avoid."[262]

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for the Messiah to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, "This is the Messiah, Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you" (Acts 17:3).

[257] Emphasis in the original. Martin Dibelius, "Paul on the Areopagus," in *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Heinrich Greeven (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1956), 56–57.

[258] See the discussion in the section treating Acts 17.

[259] Bruce W. Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists: Alexandrian and Corinthian Responses to a Julio-Claudian Movement*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 150–64; Gempf, "Before Paul Arrived," 141–42.

[260] Winter, *Philo and Paul*, 144–47.

[261] *Philo and Paul*, 153.

[262] E.A. Judge, "The Reaction against Classical Education in the New Testament," in *The First Christians in the Roman World*, ed. James R. Harrison, WUNT 229 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 714; Winter, *Philo and Paul*, 155–159.

Abraham Malherbe offers further analysis by placing 1 Thess. 2 alongside Dio Chrysostom's critique of the various kinds of Cynic philosophers and orators.[263] Dio notes that these charlatans "fear the *hybris* of the crowd"; avoid the *agōn* of life; have empty (*kenos*) speech; and "deceive (*apatōsin*) their hearers and lead them in error (*planē*)." More positively, he argues that the ideal philosopher speaks with boldness or frankness (*parrēsia*); "speaks with purity of mind (*katharōs*) and without guile (*adolōs*)"; does not preach for glory (*doxēs*), personal gain, or as a flatterer (*kolakōn*); is divinely directed to speak; and is gentle (*ēpios*) rather than harsh (*barys*). Paul utilises the same galaxy of terms in his defense of his ministry and conduct in Thessalonica. He had suffered violence (*hybristhentes*) in Philippi, but his time in Thessalonica was not empty (*kenē*) (1 Thess. 2:1–2); he spoke boldly (*eparrēsiasametha*) in a great struggle (*en pollō agōni*) (v.2); he did not preach out of error (*ouk ek planēs*), uncleanness (*ouk ex akatharsias*), guile (*dolō*), greed (*pleonexias*), or for glory (*zētountes … doxan*), or using flattery (*kolakeias*) (v.3–6); he was directed to speak by God (v.4), and was gentle (*ēpioi*) with the Thessalonians (v.6–7). The shared terminology between the two apologies is striking, but Malherbe is careful to note that the similarity "does not imply that he understood these words in the same way."[264] Indeed, Winter presses back on Malherbe's thesis, noting that Paul was not portraying himself as an "ideal philosopher" in a general sense—as Dio was since he was not responding to any particular critique[265]—but was adopting a specifically "anti-sophistic stance" against the teachers who were already in Thessalonica.[266] Furthermore, however much Dio may denounce flattery and financial gain through oratory, these were established and expected conventions of oratorial practice.[267]

The fact that Paul was conscientiously shaping his proclamatory practice in such a way as to differentiate himself from the traveling sophists *both* before *and* after Athens, shows that the emphasis on avoiding "lofty speech or wisdom" (1 Cor. 2:1) was a standard element of Paul's method rather than an innovation after Athens. The question that Gempf poses, then, still

[263] Dio *Discourse* 32.8–12. Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 35–48. For the summary below, refer particularly to pages 47–48. Malherbe's transliteration of the Greek has been maintained.
[264] *Paul and the Popular Philosophers*, 48.
[265] *Paul and the Popular Philosophers*, 37.
[266] Winter, *Philo and Paul*, 155. Though Dio's critique of the Cynics seems to include both those who would consider themselves philosophers *and* the charletan sophists/orators that Winter has in view here.
[267] *Philo and Paul*, 152–53.

remains: "What made [Paul] alter his usual approach for Athens?"[268] The answer, though, is simple: Nothing. Paul did not change his strategy in Athens or Corinth. He entered both cities preaching Jesus crucified and resurrected, in the synagogue and in public. In Athens, we hear that Epicureans and Stoics dialogue with Paul (Acts 17:18), but the relationship of subject and object is significant here. Paul is not portrayed as seeking to engage in the public sport of sophistry and oratory, but rather in an all-encompassing manner to "reason … in the marketplace every day *with those who happened to be there*" (17:17). It is the philosophers who approach him and subsequently carry him off to the Areopagus for further examination of this new cult they thought him to be introducing (17:19). Even on the Areopagus, Paul is not demonstrating sophistic or rhetorical prowess, but rather answering to the requirements of the introduction of a new cult. That he engages with philosophical and literary argumentation is not evidence of adopting a new evangelistic method but rather of adopting an appropriate language for the context.

In short, Paul's address to the Areopagus, while still evangelistically effective (17:34), is not an indication of him modifying his evangelistic strategy to appeal to the philosophers of Athens, but rather of him adopting appropriate forms and language in a judicial context. That is, the Areopagus speech is more akin to his defence speeches later in Acts (24:1–27; 26:1–32) than his "free" evangelistic preaching in Corinth or even earlier in Athens in Acts 17:17. It is noteworthy that in the cities to whom Paul offers a defence of his anti-sophistic practice—Thessalonica and Corinth—Luke makes a particular note that Paul had been spared from having to offer any sort of formal defence in a judicial context (Acts 17:6; 18:14). What we see, then, is that Paul was able to use rhetorical forms and language, and did so when the context required him to, such as in judicial situations.

3.4 Conclusions

The above discussion has demonstrated that the reference to Athens in 1 Thessalonians and Paul's comments in 1 Cor. 2 do not stand in conflict with the Acts account of Paul's time in Athens. It is an unfortunate truth that there is no extant Pauline "Letter to the Athenians", but the two passages considered above demonstrate: 1) that Paul spent a more extended period of time in Athens than the brief Acts narrative suggests; and 2) Paul did not view his Athenian experience as a failure and did not change his missionary method as a result.

[268] Gempf, "Before Paul Arrived," 142.

Having examined Acts 2, 16, and 17, and Paul's epistles, we can confidently assert that by the middle of the first century CE there was a Christian community in Athens that had a Pauline foundation. As this thesis moves on to examine the Athenian church in the second century, it will be of interest to consider whether, and how, this Pauline influence continues in the life of the church.

4. ATHENS FROM NERO TO HADRIAN

After the establishment of the Athenian church, inferred from Acts 17, there is no record of Athenian Christianity in the remainder of the first century. For the most part, Athens' fortunes did not change much in this period either. As noted in chapter two, it is under Hadrian that a radical transformation of Athens' status occurred, driven by his financial interventions, building program, and the formation of the Panhellenion with Athens at its heart. There were some developments in the city that indicate an increasing interest in the city as early as Trajan's reign, but it is under Hadrian that the transformation of the city was realised.

4.1 From Nero to Trajan

4.1.1 Nero's grant of freedom to Achaia

In 66/67CE,[1] Nero granted all Achaia and the Peloponnesus "freedom with no taxation" (ἐλευθερίαν ἀνισφορίαν),[2] a gift which earned him the title "Greece-loving Nero, Zeus the Deliverer" (φιλέλλην γενόμενος [Νέρων] Ζεὺς Ἐλευθέριος).[3] Oliver notes that this generous gift would have been detrimental to Athens' position in the region, since its status as a free city would not longer be quite so unique, but it is uncertain whether Nero intended this to be the effect.[4] The emperor avoided both Athens and Sparta, a decision that Suetonius and Dio Cassius both attribute to a combination of his desire to become a περιοδονίκης,[5] and his avoidance of the Eleusinian Mysteries due to his murder of his mother.[6]

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[1] The scholarship is divided on which year to date Nero's visit. In favour of 66CE: T.D. Barnes, "Emperors on the Move," *JRA* 2 (1989): 252–53; K.W. Arafat, *Pausanias' Greece: Ancient Artists and Roman Rulers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 140. In favour of 67CE: James H. Oliver, "Roman Emperors and Athens," *Historia* 30, no. 4 (1981): 417; Robert K. Sherk, ed. *The Roman Empire: Augustus to Hadrian*, vol. 6, Translated Documents of Greece and Rome (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 110, no. 71.
[2] ἀνισφορίαν: ἀνεισφορίαν in line 44/5.
[3] IG VII 2713, lines 14 and 41. Nero's decree and the responding decree, by Epameinondas the "high-priest of the Augusti for life and of Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus," are both recorded in the same inscription.
[4] Oliver, "Emperors and Athens," 417.
[5] i.e. Victor in each of the Pythian, Olympic, Nemean, and Isthmian games; 62.8.3.
[6] Dio 62.14.3; Suetonius, *Nero* 22.3; 34.4; Oliver, "Emperors and Athens," 417; Barnes, "Emperors," 253. Arafat has suggested that a positive reading of Nero's "snub" of Athens is that on account of his immoral actions he did not want to disrespect the ancient mysteries nor undergo a close examination of his actions. Arafat, *Pausanias' Greece*, 143–45.

Nero's declaration of freedom for Greece was apparently troublesome to put into effect, and was later revoked by Vespasian (Paus. *Descr. Gr.* 7.17.3–4; Phil. *Vit. Ap.* 5.41). An honorific statue from Epidauros records the Panachaian League celebrating the secretary of the League, Titus Statilius Timokrates, on account of his willingness "in times of the most burdensome and perilous difficulties" to undertake "tasks and services greater than (should be asked) of one man", by which he "administered our affairs well and placed on a firm basis our still shaky conditions of freedom."[7] Unfortunately, the inscription does not go into detail about what was causing the "shaky conditions", but it still testifies to some challenges in the execution of Nero's edict.[8]

4.1.2 Vespasian's Revocation of Freedom and Grants to Teachers

Whatever the nature of the challenges faced by the implementation of Nero's edict, Pausanias reports that "the Greeks were not to profit by the gift. For in the reign of Vespasian … they became embroiled in a civil war; Vespasian ordered that they should again pay tribute and be subject to a governor, saying that the Greek people had forgotten how to be free" (*Descr. Gr.* 7.17.4). A "civil war" no doubt would have caught the attention of the emperor, but it is also likely that Vespasian took the opportunity to renew taxation in Greece in order to recoup funds expended in military efforts such as the suppression of the Jewish revolt in Judaea.[9]

Vespasian was, however, more generous in relation to rhetors, doctors and teachers. He established chairs of Greek and Latin rhetoric with an annual stipend of 100,000 sesterces (Suet. *Vesp*. 18). Barbara Levick states, but does not provide sources, that these were located in Athens and Rome.[10] Richard Enos locates them both in Rome.[11] It is noteworthy that Vespasian endowed chairs in rhetoric, but not philosophy. This is likely because of the criticism

[7] IG IV^2 80–81, ll. 10–14, trans. Sherk, *Augustus to Hadrian*, 113, n.73.
[8] Arnaldo Momigliano, "The Cambridge Ancient History," *JRS* 34 (1944): 115–16.
[9] Phiroze Vasunia, "Plutarch and the Return of the Archaic," in *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text*, ed. Anthony Boyle and William J. Dominik (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 387; Arafat, *Pausanias' Greece*, 155.
[10] Barbara Levick, *Vespasian* (London: Routledge, 1999), 76.
[11] Richard Leo Enos, "The Effects of Imperial Patronage on the Rhetorical Tradition of the Athenian Second Sophistic," *Communication Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (1977): 5.

he and other emperors received from (particularly Stoic and Cynic) philosophers.[12] In 74/5CE, Vespasian issued an edict that gave doctors and teachers freedom from tax and the freedom to meet as associations in temples and shrines.[13] This edict was likely an effort to bolster numbers in these professions by making them more financially attractive prospects. In the case of teachers, more were needed to effectively train "future administrators and statesmen."[14] It is conceivable that those engaged in education in Athens would have benefited from such an edict. Later, however, Domitian removed these privileges since he deemed the profits that some teachers were making from the education of slaves to be inappropriate.

4.1.3 Construction under Trajan

Relatively few new buildings were constructed in Athens after the reign of Claudius until Trajan ascended the throne. Under Trajan, two projects were undertaken at a local level—that is, they were not imperially sponsored—that give evidence of the changing tide of Athens' fortunes, and signal the beginnings of the reinvigoration of education, philosophy and rhetoric in the city.

4.1.3.1 The Library of Pantainos

The first of these projects was the construction of the Library of Pantainos around 100CE.[15] The dedicatory inscription that marks the construction reads:

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[12] Levick, *Vespasian*, 76; Christopher Gill, "The School in the Roman Period," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 34–35.

[13] The edict, and Domitian's revocation of it, were both inscribed on the same stone in Pergamum. Greek (Vespasian)/Latin (Domitian) text: M. McCrum and A.G. Woodhead, *Select Documents of the Principates of the Flavian Emperors* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 135–36, no.458. English translation: Sherk, *Augustus to Hadrian*, 127–28, no.84.

[14] M. St. A. Woodside, "Vespasian's Patronage of Education and the Arts," *TAPA* 73 (1942): 128.

[15] Arthur W. Parsons, "A Family of Philosophers at Athens and Alexandria," in *Hesperia Supplements, Volume 8. Commemorative Studies in Honor of Theodore Leslie Shear* (Princeton: The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1949), 270–72; T. Leslie Shear, "The Campaign of 1933," *Hesperia* 4, no. 3 (1935): 330–32.

> To Athena Polias and Imperator Caesar Augustus Nerva Trajan Germanicus and to the city of the Athenians; the priest of the Philosophic Muses, T. Flavius Pantainos, son of Flavius Menandros the Successor, with his children Flavius Menandros and Flavia Secundilla, dedicated out of his own funds the outer stoas, the peristyle, the library with the books and all the decorations in the building.[16]

It was noted in chapter two that some Athenian philosophical schools had been "exiled" in the first century BCE, with the result that philosophical education in the city took on a less institutional form. The successorships of the schools—that is, the appointment of a successor (διάδοχος) as leader of a school, both as teacher and a means of legally protecting the school's property—are not attested throughout the first century BCE and the first half of the first century CE. The schools apparently did not have the organisational structure or official recognition needed to establish this type of legal protection.[17]

The first mention of a διάδοχος in the Roman period is in the dedicatory inscription of the Library of Pantainos, where Flavius Menandros, Pantainos' father, is designated a "successor". That no demotic is given for Pantainos suggests (though does not conclusively indicate) that he was not an Athenian citizen at the time of this benefaction. However, the archon Pantainos of Gargettos, recorded in an ephebic list around 102CE (IG II^2 2017), should be identified with the figure who built the library. If he was not a citizen at the time of his euergetism, it is likely that he received citizenship as a result of it.[18]

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[16] Ἀθηνᾷ Πολιάδι καὶ Αὐτοκράτορι Καίσαρι Σεβασστῷ Νέρβᾳ Τραιανῷ Γερμανικῷ καὶ τῇ πόλι τῇ Ἀθηναίων, ὁ ἱερεὺς Μουσῶν Φιλοσόφων Τ. Φλάβιος Πάνταινος, Φλαβίου Μένανδρου διαδόχουυἱός, τὰς ἔξω στοάς, τὸ περίστυλον, τὴν βυβλιοθήκην μετὰ τῶν βυβλίων, τὸν ἐν αὐτοῖς πάντα κόσμον, ἐκ τὼν ἰδίων, μετὰ τῶν τέκνων Φλαβίου Μενάνδρου καὶ Φλαβίας Σεκουνδίλλης, ἀνέθηκε.

[17] James H. Oliver, "The Diadoche at Athens under the Humanistic Emperors," *The American Journal of Philology* 98, no. 2 (1977).

[18] Parsons, "A Family of Philosophers," 269. Camp has suggested that Pantainos' contribution may not have been the building itself, but rather the additional features such as the stoas and library which were intended to better equip the original building for the purpose of education. He suggests that the original building was already functioning as the school of which Flavius Menander was the Successor. John McK. Camp, "The Philosophical Schools of Roman Athens," in *The Greek Renaissance in the Roman Empire: Papers from the Tenth British Museum Classical Colloquium*, ed. Susan Walker and Averil Cameron (London: Institute of Classical Studies, 1989), 51.

It is clear that Pantainos' family received their Roman citizenship under one of the Flavian emperors, and this may have been contemporaneous with Menandros' appointment as successor.[19] An exchange between the Emperor Hadrian and his adoptive mother Plotina, in 121CE, reveals that the διάδοχοι were required to be Roman citizens.[20] This requirement was probably motivated by a desire to exercise some control over the political activities of the schools.[21] Plotina interceded for the Epicurean school, arguing that the requirement of Roman citizenship be removed. Hadrian granted the request; a grant which, if the requirement for Roman citizenship did signify imperial control of the philosophical schools, signified their increasing freedom.

The Library of Pantainos is significant for the consideration of the church in Athens for one other reason. In his article discussing this dedicatory inscription, Arthur Parsons argues that the Pantainos who is connected to the Christian school in Alexandria in the late second century is likely to be the grandson of T. Flavius Pantainos and great-grandson of Flavius Menandros the Successor. On this basis, and Eusebius' record that the later Pantainos was a Stoic philosopher before his conversion (*HE* V.10.1–2), he suggests that Flavius Menandros was a διάδοχος of the Stoic school.[22] If this is the case, it would lend support to the claims made by, and about, the Apologists that they had connections to the philosophical schools.

4.1.3.2 The "Broad Street"

The second building project in the Trajanic era is related to the first. The Demos dedicated a monumental thoroughfare, described as a "broad street" (πλατεῖα), that connected the ancient and Roman agoras. The dedicatory inscription notes that the street, which was paved with marble, was funded "from private resources" (IG II^3 4 15). Shear notes that the costly material and stately arches provided "a wholly fitting approach to the great marble market."[23]

The portico on the southern side of the street was also one of the "outer stoas" that comprised the Library of Pantainos. The close relationship between these constructions, the unusual

[19] Oliver, "Diadoche," 163.
[20] IG II^2 1099. "Diadoche," 165.
[21] "Diadoche," 165; "Emperors and Athens," 418. Oliver suggests that it was likely Vespasian who applied this restriction, but that Domitian is also a possibility.
[22] Parsons, "A Family of Philosophers," 270–71.
[23] T. Leslie Shear, "The Athenian Agora: Excavations of 1972," *Hesperia* 42, no. 4 (1973): 390.

choice by the demos to use as costly a material as marble, and the prominent placement of the dedicatory inscription, suggests that the city was keen to display a lavish response to Pantainos' benefaction.[24] Considering that this section of the city had been a vacant block for over a century, its sudden redevelopment would have brought a striking change to the use of this precinct.[25] The new πλατεῖα would have unified four significant buildings and spaces: the ancient agora to the west, the Roman agora to the east, the Library of Pantainos to the south, and the Stoa of Attalos to north. In effect, it demonstrated a type of unity between the Classical, Hellenistic and Roman eras, with the Library highlighting the significance of philosophy and education to Athens' place on the imperial stage.

4.1.4 Trajan's Rescript

The correspondence between Pliny and Trajan (*Letters* 10.96.7), when the former was governor of Bithynia-Pontus, indicates the legal consequences that Christians faced in the first decades of the second century. Pliny ennumerates three categories of accused: those who admitted being Christians, those who admitted that they were but claimed they were not anymore, and those who claimed they never had been. The first were either executed immediately if they were not citizens, or sent to Rome for punishment if they were citizens. The second and third groups would be set free, but only after sacrificing to the gods to prove their non-Christian religious position.

Barnes observes that Trajan's rescript reveals that the "crime" of being a Christian was totally unique: "What is illegal is being a Christian: the crime is erased by a change of heart. The function of the sacrifice is to demonstrate that, even if a man has been a Christian, his change of heart is genuine."[26] The apologist Athenagoras, writing to Emperors Marcus Aurelius and Commodus later in the century, began by highlighting the injustice that Christians were persecuted merely for their name—"Christian"—while names cannot indicate the nature of a person's behaviour, only their actions can (*Leg.* 1.2; 2.1).

Trajan's rescript is significant for its formalisation of the legal treatment of Christians in the empire, but it may also have had a more direct influence in Athens itself. In the late-first or

[24] "Athens: From City-State to Provincial Town," *Hesperia* 50, no. 4 (1981): 371–72.
[25] See §2.1
[26] Barnes, "Legislation," 37.

early-second century, Pliny had written a letter to his friend Maximus, who had been appointed as *corrector* of Athens, regarding the appropriate way to treat a free but no longer preeminent city (*Ep*. 8.24). It is uncertain how long Maximus remained as *corrector*, but it is plausible that Pliny could have relayed the message of Trajan's rescript to him.

4.2 Hadrian

It was under Hadrian that Athens' fortunes radically improved. As a general policy, Hadrian did not engage in any major conflicts to expand the reaches of the Roman Empire, but instead engaged in a widespread program of benefaction.[27] In the words of his biographer: "In almost every city he built some building and gave public games." (*HA Hadrian* XIX.2–3). His treatment of Athens, however, was unique and lavish. The city responded in kind, honouring him by adding a thirteenth tribe, "Hadrianis"; and by including a statue of Hadrian on the Altar of the Eponymous Heroes—which included images of the classical heroes and Hellenistic kings after whom the Athenian tribes were named—an act which Camp notes was "the highest honor they could bestow" on a foreign ruler.[28] In this sense he was counted as a second founder of the city.[29]

Hadrian served as the eponymous archon in 112CE, before his accession. Once emperor, he made three further visits to the city in 124/5, 128/9, and 131/2. His interactions with the city as emperor began before his official visits: the Athenians invited him in 121CE to renew the city's constitution; a young Herodes Atticus was sent to appear before him in Pannonia; and, as mentioned above, the Epicurean school (via Plotina's intercession) appealed to Hadrian to change the limitations on *diadochoi*.[30] Below, it will be argued that Quadratus' *Apology* was

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[27] Cf. Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cities*, 3–17.

[28] Camp, *Gods and Heroes*, 25.

[29] Hadrian's Arch, which demarcated an area newly developed by Hadrian from the older city, had "This is Athens, the former [or old] city of Theseus" inscribed on the west side facing the Acropolis, and "This is the city of Hadrian, not of Theseus" on the east, towards the section of the town reportedly referred to as "Hadrianopolis" (*HA Had.* XX.4–6). Camp, *Archaeology of Athens*, 201.

[30] Constitution: Dio Cass. 69.16.2; Jer. *Chron.* 280.6; Daniel J. Geagan, "Roman Athens. Some Aspects of Life and Culture I. 86 BC – AD 267," *ANRW* 2, no. 7.1 (1979): 392–394; William C. Rutherford, "At the Origins of Christian Apologetic Literature: The Politics of Patronage in Hadrianic Athens," in *Stones, Bones, and the Sacred: Essays on Material Culture and Ancient Religion in Honor of Dennis E. Smith*, ed. Alan H. Cadwallader (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 134–141. Herodes Atticus: Phil. *Vit. Soph.* 565; Birley, *Hadrian*, 89.

also likely to be sent to Hadrian during this earlier period of Hadrian's reign, and thus belongs with this early cluster of Athenian communication. Further connections will also be seen between Hadrian's activities and the apologists' works, one of which being Aristides' use of the "lawgiver" theme in his *Apology*.

Hadrian's benefactions in Athens included financial interventions, buildings, the establishment of games, and religious participation, a selection of which will now be discussed.

4.2.1 Hadrian's Financial Interventions

4.2.1.1 Oil Law

Hadrian established a law during his visit to Athens in 124/5CE that controlled the sale of olive oil, which was an important industry in Attica.[31] The law stipulated that growers had to sell one third of their oil to the state, at market price, although certain land-holders—those who owned portions of the land confiscated from Hipparchus—only had to sell one eighth of their produce (l.1–9). There were further requirements for growers (l.10–20), exporters (l.21–27), and merchants (l.42–46). If the producers or merchants did not follow the requirements, punishments could include the confiscation of the oil, with payments being made to informers.

The law itself was designed to achieve two ends. Firstly, it was a means of controlling the market to provide a sufficient and affordable oil supply for the city. Secondly, the necessity of declaring what one's relationship to the harvest was—owner, tenant, or contracted middleman (l.18–21)—indicates that there was a concern to ensure that middlemen were not profiting while producers were shortchanged.[32] The oil law shows a surprising level of personal interest on the part of Hadrian. It references the emperor at two points: 1) In the case of a merchant escaping the city without following correct protocol, the demos were required to report it to the home city of the merchant and also to Hadrian himself (γραφέσθω

[31] Greek text and English translation: James H. Oliver, *Greek Constitutions of Early Roman Emperors from Inscriptions and Papyri* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1989), 232–38, no.92.
[32] John Day, *An Economic History of Athens under Roman Domination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942), 192.

καὶ τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου κἀμοί, l.46–47); 2) Hadrian is listed, alongside the proconsul, as one avenue of appeal (ἐὰν δὲ ἐκκαλέσηταί τις ἢ ἐμὲ ἢ τὸν ἀνθύπατον, l. 55–56).[33]

4.2.1.2 Money, Grain and Land Revenue

Dio Cassius records three benefactions that Hadrian bestowed on the Athenians: "He granted to the Athenians large sums of money, an annual dole of grain, and the whole of Kephallenia" (χρήματά τε πολλὰ καὶ σῖτον ἐτήσιον τήν τε Κεφαλληνίαν ὅλην τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις ἐχαρίσατο, *Rom. Hist*. LXIX.16.2). The annual grain dole is of note because, other than Rome iself, Athens is the only city to have received an ongoing grain supply. Grain shortages were not uncommon among Greek cities, and cities often received grain contributions from Rome, but only Athens received the ongoing dole.[34] Spawforth and Walker reasonably suggest that this particular favour towards Athens was related to "the city's new role in relation to the Panhellenion."[35] The increasing influx of foreign officials and their retinues would no doubt have put further pressure on the city's food supply, and this annual dole contributed to meeting the increased need.

It is also possible that the revival of the offerings of firstfruits at Eleusis by member cities of the Panhellenion might have coincided with Hadrian's annual grain dole.[36] Clinton argues for it on the grounds of Hadrian's extraordinary interest in Eleusis, and on numismatic grounds: a series of silver coins depicts Hadrian as the god Ploutos, the god that Demeter and Kore would send to humans to bring them wealth, holding grain (RIC II Hadrian 532). He also notes an Eleusinian inscription that celebrates the "ploutos" that Hadrian bestowed upon all cities, and especially on Athens, the city of "famous Kekropia" (κλεινῆς δ' ἔξοχα Κεκροπίης, IG II^2 3375).[37] Spawforth and Walker argue against this possibility, since the one dateable inscription

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[33] Mary T. Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cities of the Roman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 91.
[34] A.J. Spawforth and Susan Walker, "The World of the Panhellenion. I. Athens and Eleusis," *JRS* 75 (1985): 90; Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cities*, 92.
[35] Spawforth and Walker, "Panhellenion I," 90.
[36] IG II^3 4 215, 216.
[37] Kevin Clinton, "Hadrian's Contribution to the Renaissance of Eleusis," in *The Greek Renaissance in the Roman Empire: Papers from the Tenth British Museum Classical Colloquium*, eds. Susan Walker and Averil Cameron (London: Institute of Classical Studies, 1989), 57–58.

regarding the firstfruits is dated to 177–189CE (IG III 4 216).[38] They note, however, that the benefit of the firstfruits offering in the Classical era was that it "created an accessible reserve of grain at Eleusis." Clinton's hypothesis is the more likely, but if not, perhaps Hadrian's grain dole was discontinued by a later Antonine emperor and the member cities of the Panhellenion contributed to Athens' grain needs by this new mechanism.

The other grant that Dio Cassius records was that Hadrian gave "all of Kephallenia" (την τε Κεφαλληνίαν ὅλην) to the Athenains (*Rom. Hist* LXIX.16.2). This claim is exaggerated to some degree because Pale, a city of Kephallenia, made a dedication to Hadrian in Athens in which they described their city as "ἐλευθέρα καὶ αὐτόνομος" ("free and autonomous"; IG II^2 3301). It seems that Hadrian, rather than granting Athens total ownership of the island, allowed them to take certain revenues from it.[39] Mary Boatwright notes the unusual nature of such land grants—Hadrian only gave these grants to six or eight cities—and sensibly proposes that the grant, alongside that to Sparta, reflected the importance of the cities in Hadrian's mind because of their roles in preserving the Greek heritage and the development of the Panhellenion.[40]

4.2.2 Buildings

As well as the provisions discussed above, Hadrian instigated a very active building plan in Athens.[41] Only two will be discussed below: the aqueduct and the Library of Hadrian. These were chosen for their relevance for the consideration of the Athenian apologetic literature.

4.2.2.1 The Aqueduct

Hadrian began work on a new aqueduct for Athens and its surrounding areas. The water was collected from Mount Parnes, north of Athens, and then travelled over twenty kilometres—much of this underground—to a reservoir on Mount Lykabettos, which lay just to the northeast of the city. From this reservoir, the water was distributed to various points in the

[38] Spawforth and Walker, "Panhellenion I," 100.
[39] Day, *Economic History*, 188; Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cities*, 84.
[40] *Hadrian and the Cities*, 84.
[41] Extensive treatments of his building works can be found in work of Spawforth and Walker, "Panhellenion," 92–100; Camp, *Archaeology of Athens*; and Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cities*.

city, most notably a nymphaeum and fountain at the southeast corner of the agora, not far from the Library of Pantainos.[42] The aqueduct was completed and dedicated by Antoninus Pius in 140CE (*CIL* III 549).

It is likely that the aqueduct was primarily constructed to provide water for the many baths and fountains being built in the city throughout the Roman period, rather than for drinking water.[43] In this sense, it both validated the Romanisation that had already occurred in the city, and promoted the further adoption of Roman cultural elements. However, the numerous smaller conduits cut into the aqueduct suggest that it also delivered water to rural areas around the city.[44] This may relate to Hadrian's interest in controlling, and supporting, the Attic olive oil industry. Aristides references human manipulation of water via aqueducts (*Apol*. 5.1), so Hadrian's aqueduct will be considered again later.

4.2.2.2 The Library of Hadrian

The Library of Hadrian was constructed "just north of the Roman Agora."[45] It included five rooms at the eastern end: the central room for the storage of scrolls; two smaller rooms; and two larger rooms with sloped floors that would have been lecture halls. Boatwright suggests that Hadrian used the library to demonstrate both his own patronage over intellectual life, and the Athenians' role as essential transmitters of Greek learning and culture. She notes: "I suspect that from its beginning Hadrian intended the Library for education at Athens … [the Library] served as a repository for Athens's cultural heritage, a place for rising and established sophists to declaim, and a locale for the privileged leisure made possible by the *pax Augusta*."[46] It was not simply built for the Athenians though. The Athenian libraries gained an international reputation for excellence, and the grand size of Hadrian's Library suggests that it was "not only the intellectual center for Athens, but also makes Athens the center of a larger broadcasting area."[47]

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[42] Camp, *Archaeology*, 204–05; Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cities*, 167; Birley, *Hadrian*, 183–84.
[43] Camp, *Archaeology*, 206; Shawna Leigh, "The Aqueduct of Hadrian and the Water Supply of Roman Athens" (PhD Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1998), 221.
[44] "Aqueduct," 37–39, 220.
[45] Birley, *Hadrian*, 184.
[46] Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cities*.
[47] Ael. Ar. *Panath.* 246 (Oliver): "There are veritable treasuries of books such as appear nowhere else on earth and constitute indeed a native, home-grown glory of Athens"; "Die Einrichtung ist nicht nur geistiger Mittelpunkt für Athen, sondern macht Athen zum

4.2.3 Games

Hadrian established three quinquennial games in Athens—the Panhellenia,[48] Hadrianeia, and Olympieia—which complemented the ancient Athenian festival, the Panathenaia.[49] All four of these were given the status of "sacred contests."[50] Geagan suggests that these four would have each been held on a different year in a four-year cycle, similar to the *periodos* of the Olympic, Pythian, Isthmian and Nemean Games.[51]

This cycle transformed Athens into "the agonistic centre of the Greek world" since "no other city [played] host to as many as four 'sacred' festivals."[52] The significance of this is that "the city then was guaranteed an annual influx of poets and musicians, orators and athletes to compete as well as men of means and culture to be spectators."[53] This ongoing influx of international visitors no doubt provided a valuable injection into the local economy,[54] as is demonstrated by a series of coins minted between 134–138CE. On the reverse, they bear the legend "RESTITVTORI ACHAIAE", with an image of Hadrian holding out his hand to help a seated "Achaia" to stand.[55] Between the two figures is a jar with a palm frond, symbolising the athletic games.[56]

For the Christian community in the city, this influx could have provided an ideal opportunity. This is particularly the case for the apologists who, at least in part, were seeking to promote

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Mittelpunkt in einem grösseren Ausstrahlungsbereich." Dietrich Willers, *Hadrians panhellenisches Programm: Archäologische Beiträge zur Neugestaltung Athens durch Hadrian* (Basel: Vereinigung der Freunde antiker Kunst, 1990), 20.

[48] Dio Cassius *Rom. Hist.* LXIX.16.2.

[49] Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cities*, 100.

[50] That is, games which provided victors with "substantial privileges in their native cities, including immunity from local liturgies." Spawforth and Walker, "Panhellenion I," 91; Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cities*, 95.

[51] Geagan, "Roman Athens," 397–98.

[52] Spawforth and Walker, "Panhellenion I," 91.

[53] Geagan, "Roman Athens," 397–98.

[54] Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cities*, 98.

[55] This image appeared on gold aurei, bronze sestertii, and bronze asses: RIC II Hadrian 377, no.321; 463, nos.938–39.

[56] L. Rochetti: "Entre ella y Adriano hay un gran vaso panatenáico del cual emerge un ramo de palma, símbolo de la atención dada por este a los juegos atléticos durante su estancia en Atenas." Quoted in J Garzón Blanco, "Las Series Commemoratives De Los Viajes De Adriano: Adventus, Restitutori Y Exercitus En Las Acuñaciones Del Emperador," *Analecta Malacitana* 13 (1990): 190.

the Christian faith to, or defend it from, a pagan audience. Presenting their writings, perhaps in public performances, to an international crowd would have increased the likelihood of a broad dispersal of their works.

4.2.4 Religion and Conflict under Hadrian

The Panhellenion

The most significant development enacted by Hadrian in Athens was the establishment of the Panhellenion. The Panhellenion was a league of cities, headed by Athens, established by Hadrian around 132CE, in relation to which participating cities would send "representatives to Athens to engage in cultic, cultural and diplomatic activities."[57] The three elements that a city required to join the league were "their cities' Greek ancestry, their histories of good relations with Rome, and Hadrian's benefactions."[58] The requirement of Greek ancestry (γένος Ἑλληνικόν) was not only aimed at culture but particularly at racial descent, as demonstrated by a city's origin as a colony of the ancient Greek city states.[59] The league included at least twenty-eight cities across the provinces of Achaia, Macedonia, Thrace, Crete-and-Cyrene, and Asia.[60]

The Panhellenion had certain cultic elements. It was responsible for the cult of Hadrian Panhellenius at Athens, centred in the Panhellenion (another of Hadrian's building projects in Athens), but also had close connections with Eleusis.[61] Hadrian's benefactions to Athens worked together to develop the city in order for it to take on its new role as a leading city in the Roman world. The establishment of the Panhellenion raised the city's political importance; and the related construction and refurbishment of sites dedicated to cultural and religious

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[57] Laura Salah Nasrallah, *Christian Responses to Roman Art and Architecture: The Second-Century Church Amid the Spaces of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 96–98.
[58] *Christian Responses*, 99.
[59] However, Greek ancestry could be claimed on tenuous grounds. Cibyra in Phrygia claimed to be "Ἡ Κιβυρατῶν πόλις ἄποικος Λακεδαιμονίων καὶ συγγενὶς Ἀθηναίων," even though Strabo had deemed it not to be of Greek foundation. Spawforth and Walker, "Panhellenion I," 82, citing OGIS 11, no. 497, and Strabo XIII.4.7; Ilaria Romeo, "The Panhellenion and Ethnic Identity in Hadrianic Greece," *Classical Philology* 97, no. 1 (2002): 21–40.
[60] Spawforth and Walker, "Panhellenion I," 79–80.
[61] As noted above in relation to the offering of firstfruits. "Panhellenion I," 82–83; Alessandro Galimberti, "Hadrian, Eleusis, and the Beginning of Christian Apologetics," in *Hadrian and the Christians*, ed. Marco Rizzi (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 72.

pursuits also raised the profile of the city to a greater degree than it had enjoyed at any other point in the Roman period.

Eleusis

Hadrian was initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries, probably at his visit in 125CE but possibly earlier. He participated in the mysteries during each of his visits to Athens. As well as his participation, he also offered benefactions which helped raise the profile of the mystery cult. One of his building projects was a new bridge allowing the Sacred Way, the road from Athens to Eleusis, to cross the Kephisos river more safely. His possible reinstatement of the firstfruits offering, noted above, was a further step in support of the cult.

Jews and Christians

While in the early years of the Christian movement the Christians were perceived as a sect within Judaism, by the late first/early second century the two groups were increasingly perceived as separate by Roman officialdom.[62] From the perspective of Roman literature, "the label 'Christian' was in a different category than the label 'Jew' in the Roman mind of the late first/early second century … The 'Jews' are an alien superstition, following an ethnic tradition, the 'Christians' are a novel superstition embraced by a criminal cabal."[63] Evidence of this is seen in the criminal trials of Christians as demonstrated in the correspondence between Trajan and Pliny, noted above. Hadrian maintained much the same posture towards the Christians—adherence to the Christian faith was still illegal—except that he instructed that those who brought false accusations were to be punished.[64] In this context, the Christians increasingly felt the need to demonstrate the differences between the Jews and Christians—by producing anti-Jewish literature—and to provide a defence of the Christians' public identity in their apologetic literature.[65]

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[62] Markus Bockmuehl, *Jewish Law in Gentile Churches: Halakhah and the Beginning of Christian Public Ethics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 178.
[63] John M.G. Barclay, "'Jews' and 'Christians' in the Eyes of Roman Authors c.100CE," in *Jews and Christians in the First and Second Centuries: How to Write Their History*, eds. Peter J. Tomson and Joshua J. Schwartz (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 325.
[64] Justin, *1 Apol.* 68; Eus. *Hist. eccl.* IV.9. Barnes, "Legislation," 37.
[65] Bockmuehl, *Jewish Law*, 183; Lieu, *Image and Reality*, 160.

Early in the second century the Jews were involved in two revolts. The first was the revolt in the Diaspora, late in Trajan's reign (116–117CE), which impacted Egypt, Cyrene, and Mesopotamia (Eus. *Hist. eccl*. IV.2). The second, the Bar Kochba rebellion in 132–135CE, was instigated at least in part by Hadrian's rebuilding of Jerusalem as a Roman colony named Aelia Capitolina—including a temple to Jupiter—and a ban on circumcision. The conflict led to the deaths of over five hundred and eighty thousand Judeans (Dio Cassius 69.12–14; deaths: 69.14.1).[66] Even though Hadrian was required to provide rebuilding works in North Africa after the earlier revolt, it seems that he had not expressed any personal antagonism against the Jews in the early years of his reign, and the Judean Jews may even have expected some benefactions from him.[67] His response to the Bar Kochba revolt, however, was brutal, and it is likely that it resulted in an influx of refugees in Asia Minor and Greece.[68]

[66] Birley, *Hadrian*, 268–270.

[67] Francesco Ziosi, "'He will Bear the Name of a Sea': Jewish Expectations of Hadrian and His Imperial Strategy before 130CE," in *Jews and Christians in the First and Second Centuries: The Interbellum 70–132CE*, eds. Joshua J. Schwartz and Peter J. Tomson (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 134–141.

[68] Lieu argues for an influx of refugees in Asia Minor, but it is likely that this would have extended to Greece and probably Rome. Lieu, *Image and Reality*, 160.

5. THE ATHENIAN APOLOGISTS UNDER HADRIAN

It was in the context, outlined in the previous chapter, of the rising importance of Athens in the politics of the Roman Empire; the city's re-emergence as a centre of learning; the benefaction towards traditional and mystery cults; and the raised tensions with Judaism, that the earliest Athenian apologists wrote their works. Eusebius records that Quadratus and Aristides both presented their apologies to Hadrian. This is traditionally dated around 125CE, but the discussion below will argue that it is likely that Quadratus wrote earlier, closer to the beginning of Hadrian's reign, and Aristides wrote later, in the early 130s.

This chapter will examine Quadratus' and Aristides' Apologies in light of the context outlined in the previous chapter. This will help to build an understanding of the Athenian church in the first half of the second century.

5.1 Quadratus

Eusebius associates two men named Quadratus with the church in Athens in the second century CE. The first, an apologist whom Eusebius describes as "the disciple of the Apostles" (*Chron.* ad ann. Abrah. 2140) wrote a defence of the Christian religion to the Emperor Hadrian (*Hist. eccl.* 4.3) sometime between 117 and 125CE. Paul Foster accurately notes that "while the *Historia Ecclesiastica* gives no clue to the geographical locale in which the apology was composed, the *Chronicon* links the composition with Athens."[1] Eusebius' description of Quadratus as "the disciple of the Apostles" was also used later by Jerome (*Lives* XIX), but this epithet is more likely an indicator of his apostolic orthodoxy than his personal knowledge of any of the apostles. The second is a Bishop Quadratus, who assumed the role after the previous bishop, Publius, was martyred. Bishop Quadratus held office c.180–200CE.[2] Eusebius preserves a fragment of the earlier Quadratus' *Apology*, and summarises the content of a

[1] Paul Foster, "The Apology of Quadratus," in *The Writings of the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Paul Foster (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 55.
[2] "Apology," 55. Foster cites the succession lists given on the official website of the Church of Greece: Demetrius Kiminas, "The Bishops of Athens," The Church of Greece, http://ecclesia.gr/English/EnArchdiocese/EnArchdiocese_bishops.html.

letter which the Bishop Dionysius of Corinth addressed to the Athenian Christians concerning Bishop Quadratus.[3]

It will be argued below that Quadratus appeals to eyewitness testimonies of Jesus' miracles to establish the Christians as different from the Jews involved in the recent revolts during Trajan's reign.

5.1.1 Unravelling Eusebius' Quadratuses

Eusebius records three men named Quadratus in his *Ecclesiastical History*. There is a Quadratus mentioned twice within discussions about early Christian prophets and the Montanist controversies (*Hist. eccl.* 3.37; 5.17); a second who wrote a defence of the Christian religion to the Emperor Hadrian (*Hist. eccl.* 4.3.2), and who was elsewhere identified as an Athenian and called "the disciple of the Apostles" by Eusebius (*Chron.* ad ann. Abrah. 2041); and a third who succeeded Publius as bishop of Athens (*Hist. eccl.* 4.23). These three Quadratuses have been variously understood as one, two or three historical persons.[4]

Jerome unites the apologist and the bishop in his paragraph on Quadratus in *Lives of Illustrious Men* (XIX) and in *Epistle* 70.4, in both texts locating him in Athens/Eleusis at the time of Hadrian's initiation at Eleusis, but makes no mention of the prophet.[5] Dom P. Andriessen combines all three Quadratuses, and, citing *Hist. eccl.* 3.37.1–2, presents him as "one of the … missionary bishops, who contented themselves with founding new communities in foreign

[3] This letter will be discussed in chapter eight.

[4] The Lexicon of Greek Personal Names (LGPN) records eighteen individuals named Quadratus (Κοδρᾶτος): eight from Attica (Vol. 2A); five from Central Greece (Vol. 3B); three from Macedonia/Thrace (Vol. 4); one from the Aegean islands, Cyprus, and Cyrenaica (Vol. 1); and one from the Peloponnese, Western Greece, Sicily and Magna Graecia (Vol. 3B). None are recorded for Coastal Asia Minor (Vol. 5). While none of these individuals listed in LGPN are the Quadratuses under investigation here, this distribution indicates that Attica and Central Greece are the most likely places to find individuals named Quadratus, further supporting the likelihood that Quadratus the apologist wrote from Athens. Neither of LGPN Volumes 5B *Coastal Asia Minor* and 5C *Inland Asia Minor* contain an entry for Κοδρᾶτος. Note, however, the references to individuals of this name in Pergamon (MDAI(A) 37 (1912) 287, 14; second century) and Phrygia (SEG 40:1248; third century). P.M. Fraser and E. Matthews, eds. *A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*. 8 Volumes (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987–2018).

[5] That Jerome has the same Quadratus(es) in mind as Eusebius can be seen in the adoption of the description "disciple of the apostles" and the connection between his apologetic efforts and Hadrian's Athenian visit.

countries."[6] This missionary bishop was "gifted with the charism of prophecy and, when he presented his *Apology*, bishop of Athens."[7] Clayton Jefford repeats Andriessen's unification of the three Quadratuses without any critical comment.[8] Paul Foster and Eugene Fairweather both separate the apologist and the bishop but do not mention the prophet, though Fairweather's insistence that Quadratus was in Asia Minor suggests he may view the prophet and the apologist as one individual.[9] Robert M. Grant treats the three as three distinct individuals.[10]

It seems clear that Quadratus the Apologist and Quadratus the Bishop are not the same person. Quadratus the Apologist wrote to Hadrian somewhere between 117–125CE, but Bishop Quadratus held office c.180–200CE after Publius' leadership from 161–180CE.[11] As Foster has said, even if one argues that Quadratus wrote his *Apology* in his youth and then held office as an elderly man in his eighties, "this fails to take into consideration the fact that the most natural way to read Jerome's account is to assume that the apology was composed subsequent to Quadratus being installed in the episcopal office. Hence, it seems that Jerome has incorrectly conflated traditions about two separate figures named Quadratus."[12] From this evidence, it is certain that the apologist and the bishop are two separate Quadratuses.

Eusebius' references to the prophet Quadratus are more difficult to navigate. He quotes an anonymous text[13] which states that Montanus and the women with him were claiming to have received the prophetic gift from Quadratus (and Ammia of Philadelphia) in some way—perhaps as a direct predecessor (εἰ γὰρ μετὰ Κοδρᾶτον καὶ τὴν ἐν Φιλαδελφίᾳ Ἀμμίαν, ὥς φασιν, αἱ περὶ Μοντανὸν διεδέξαντο γυναῖκες τὸ προφητικὸν χάρισμα, *Hist. eccl.* 5.17.4). This

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[6] Dom P. Andriessen, "The Authorship of the Epistula Ad Diognetum," *Vigiliae Christianae* 1 (1947): 131.
[7] "Authorship," 131.
[8] Clayton N. Jefford, ed. *The Epistle to Diognetus (with the Fragment of Quadratus)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 21–22.
[9] Foster, "Apology," 55–56; Eugene R. Fairweather, "The So-Called Letter to Diognetus, Introduction and Books," in *Early Christian Fathers*, ed. C.C. Richardson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953), 207.
[10] Robert M. Grant, "Quadratus, the First Christian Apologist," in *A Tribute to Arthur Vööbus: Studies in Early Christian Literature, and Its Environment, Primarily in the Syrian East*, ed. Robert H. Fischer (Chicago: The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 1977), 180–81.
[11] Foster, "Apology," 55.
[12] "Apology," 56.
[13] By one of the "many learned men of that time" (πλείους τῶν τηνικάδε λογίων ἀνδρῶν; *Hist. eccl.* 5.16.1).

may suggest the prophet Quadratus was active up to c.170CE (placing him closer in chronology to Quadratus the Bishop).

On the other hand, Eusebius suggests, in two ways, an earlier date for the prophet: (1) he includes Quadratus in lists of "New Testament prophets" alongside Agabus, Judas, Silas, the daughters of Philip and Ammia of Philadelphia (*Hist. eccl.* 5.17.3); and (2) he says Quadratus was famous at the time of Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp of Smyrna and Papias of Hierapolis (*Hist. eccl.* 3.36.1–3; the three together suggesting a date earlier in the second century CE), and includes him in the group of those who "take the first rank in the Apostolic succession" and who "built in every place on the foundations of the churches laid by the Apostles" (*Hist. eccl.* 3.37.1). As Andriessen observed, Eusebius' comments in *Hist. eccl.* 3.37.1–2 describe Quadratus as a prophet and an evangelist who would travel and "preach to all who had not yet heard the word of the faith."

The best solution is that the prophet Quadratus was active in the late first/early second centuries. It is possible that he is the same Quadratus as the Athenian apologist, but Eusebius does not make that link explicit.[14] This Quadratus' connection with Ammia of Philadelphia and the Montanists (*Hist. eccl.* 5.17.4) suggests that he was located in Asia, and thus was not the Athenian Quadratus; but if he was a travelling evangelist he could conceivably have ended up in Athens.[15] Later in the second century, the Montanists seem to have declared some affinity with this Quadratus to legitimate their claim to the prophetic office, but they are unlikely to have had any direct contact with him.

In sum, we can confidently say that Quadratus the Apologist was active in the second or third decade of the second century, and a different Quadratus, the Bishop, held office some time

[14] Though the designations "disciple of the apostles" (*Chron.* ad ann. Abrah. 2041), given to Quadratus the Apologist, and "[one] who take[s] the first rank in the Apostolic succession" (*Hist. eccl.* 3.37.1), given to the prophet, are very similar. If Eusebius did not consider them to be the one individual, they certainly belong to the same generation by his reckoning. Peterson argues against unifying the two Quadratuses on the basis that the prophet was unlikely to use the "rhetorical and legal language" that the Apologist uses: Erik Peterson, "Quadrato," in *Enciclopedia Cattolica* (Vatican City: Libro Cattolico, 1953), 362. Cf. Bernard Pouderon, "Les Écrits Apologétiques," in *Histoire De La Littérature Grecque Chrétienne. Tome 2: De Paul Apôtre À Irénée De Lyon*, ed. Bernard Pouderon and Enrico Norelli (Paris: Cerf, 2008), 664–65.

[15] Eugene Fairweather asserts that Quadratus the Apologist was from Asia Minor and wrote the *Epistle to Diognetus* (including the fragment of Quadratus which Eusebius preserves) in that region. Fairweather, "Diognetus," 206–07, 209–10.

in the final two decades of the second century. The other Quadratus, the prophet, may or may not be the Apologist, but is no longer relevant for the considerations of this chapter.

5.1.2 Quadratus the Apologist

Eusebius says that Quadratus' *Apology* demonstrates "the clear proof of his intellect and apostolic orthodoxy," and his "early date" (*Hist. eccl.* 4.3). While the small extract of the *Apology* that Eusebius quotes does not contain enough material from which to establish either his intellect or his orthodoxy, the argument presents his "early date" through the claim that some who had been healed or raised from the dead by Jesus had survived 'even till our own time' (εἰς τοὺς ἡμετέρους χρόνους, *Hist. eccl.* 4.3). As Foster has noted, "The verbal aspect of the entire description implies that such survivors from the time of Jesus had died by the time of the composition of the apology. However, there were people among the current generation of Christians who could remember those who claimed to have received dominical healing."[16]

Eusebius gives the (approximate) time and an occasion for Quadratus' *Apology*: "When Trajan had reigned for nineteen and a half years Aelius Hadrian succeeded to the sovereignty. To him Quadratus addressed a treatise, composing a defence for our religion because some wicked men were trying to trouble the Christians" (*Hist. eccl.* 4.3). Foster argues that since the section on Quadratus sits between an account of a Jewish uprising which was suppressed by Trajan in 117CE (*Hist. eccl.* 4.2), and the account of the death of Bishop Alexander of Rome in 120CE (*Hist. eccl.* 4.4), Quadratus' *Apology* can likely be dated between these two events. He does acknowledge, though, that Eusebius' *Chronicon* places it later, in 124–5CE when Hadrian visited Athens.[17] Hadrian had been eponymous archon of the city in 112CE and was an honorary citizen.[18] It is possible that Quadratus' treatise was written and sent to Hadrian before his visit. Perhaps Quadratus banked on Hadrian's established relationship with the city to encourage a warm reception. Any point from 117CE to 125CE seems reasonable, but the earlier date would suggest that Quadratus sent a written treatise, while the later date opens up the possibility of the apologist seeking an audience with the emperor.

[16] Foster, "Apology," 57.
[17] "Apology," 55.
[18] IG II^2 2024; Oliver, "Emperors and Athens," 419.

5.1.3 Quadratus' Argument

The fragment of Quadratus' *Apology* is as follows:

> But the works of our Saviour were always present, for they were true, those who were cured, those who rose from the dead, who not merely appeared as cured and risen, but were constantly present, not only while the Saviour was living, but even for some time after he had gone, so that some of them survived even till our own time (*Hist. eccl.* 4.3).

The basic line of argument is clear: Jesus' works, including healing people and raising people from the dead, were shown to be true because they lasted beyond his lifetime, with some of the recipients of his work surviving down to Quadratus' lifetime. Scholars have disagreed, however, regarding whom the apologist is comparing to Jesus.

J.C.T. Otto (in 1872) and Robert M. Grant (in 1977) both argued that Quadratus was comparing the works of Jesus with false claims to miraculous works by Christian groups that Quadratus deemed heretical.[19] They both appeal to Irenaeus' argument against the Carpocratians and followers of Simon Magus in *Against Heresies* 2.32.3–4. Grant notes that Irenaeus makes the same argument as Quadratus, and quotes *AH* 2.32.4, "the dead even have been raised up, and remained among us for many years," but he does not acknowledge that this quote is about miracles performed in Jesus' name by Christians in, or closer to, Irenaeus' day.[20] The main problem with this argument is that it is unlikely that an internal dispute amongst those claiming to be Christians would be addressed to the emperor.[21]

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[19] J.C.T Otto, *Corpus Apologetarum Christianorum Saeculi Secundi*, vol. 9 (Jena: Mauke, 1872), 339–40; Grant, "Quadratus," 182.

[20] "Quadratus," 182. Cf. Irenaus *AH* 2.31.2.

[21] Foster, "Apology," 58. Grant, "Quadratus," 183, points out that Justin (*Apol*. 1.26.6–7) "attacked heretics in order to establish the political and social reliability of orthodox Christians," and labels this an "intra-Christian fight." Justin's argument is interesting here though, because he swiftly dismisses Simon and Marcion as *not* Christian, even though they may be called "Christians" (*Apol* 1.26), and groups them with pagan mythologies like Hercules (*Apol.* 1.54). The case of Paul of Samosata in the third century CE, in which the Christians in Antioch appealed to Aurelian to intercede when Paul refused to vacate the church-owned house after being judged a heretic, also should not be appealed to in this regard. Paul's case followed Gallienus' Edict of Toleration, and it seems that in the late third century the church was given more credence by Roman officials, until the persecutions under Diocletian in the early fourth century. Fergus Millar, "Paul of Samosata, Zenobia, and Aurelian: The Church,

In 1988 Grant offered another possible explanation: "Quadratus could be writing in the context of pagan religion, in which the Savior's miracles would naturally be compared with those of some deified son of a god."[22] While this is a possible solution, I will argue in a different direction below.

Foster suggests that Quadratus may have used the non-specific language of "some wicked men" to describe the Christians' tormenters because they were Roman officials and the apologist did not want to directly accuse them of wickedness.[23] Foster must be assuming here that Eusebius borrows the phrase "some wicked men" from Quadratus, since it is in his framing of the quote rather than the quote itself. Peterson argues that this is the case, and says the phrase "defence for our religion" is also taken directly from Quadratus' text.[24] This seems reasonable because: 1) Eusebius would probably specify which heresy was in view if the *Apology* was responding to specific heretical ideas; and 2) Eusebius claimed to have a copy of the *Apology* (*Hist. eccl.* 4.3).[25] Foster's suggestion that the "wicked men" are Roman officials accords with my argument below regarding parallels between Eusebius/Quadratus and Josephus.

5.1.3.1 Quadratus and the Jewish Uprising

It is possible, however, that Eusebius' ordering of events in *Hist. eccl.* 4.2–3 alerts us to the context in which Quadratus wrote. In 4.2, he describes an uprising of the Jews in the final

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Local Culture and Political Allegiance in Third-Century Syria," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1971): 15; Daniëlle Slootjes, "Bishops and Their Position of Power in the Late Third Century CE: The Cases of Gregory Thaumaturgus and Paul of Samosata," *Journal of Late Antiquity* 4, no. 1 (2011): 111–12.

[22] Grant, *Greek Apologists*, 36. He says that the intra-Christian context and the Christian-Pagan context could both be possible.

[23] Foster, "Apology," 58. Wilhelm Pratscher argues along these lines: "An appeal to the emperor makes sense only if one can expect him to use his influence as a result. Such a case is surely far less likely to be denigration by private citizens than squabbles with the authorities." Wilhelm Pratscher, "Quadratus," in *The Apostolic Fathers: An Introduction*, ed. Wilhelm Pratscher (Waco: Baylor, 2010), 185.

[24] Peterson, "Quadrato," 362. "La frase in Eusebio: 'Apologia per la nostra religione' è presa forse dal testo come anche la frase seguente: 'perché alcune persone cattive cercavano di molestare (ἐνοχλεῖν) i nostri'."

[25] Parvis' claim that the text (σύγγραμμα) in Eusebius' possession was not the same document as the "λόγον/ἀπολογίαν" which Quadratus addressed to the emperor is not ultimately convincing. Parvis, "Justin Martyr," 120.

years of Trajan's reign (116–117CE), led by the "leader" (ἡγουμένου, *Hist. eccl.* 4.2.3) and "king" (βασιλεύς, *Hist. eccl.* 4.2.4) Lucuas.[26] This uprising had originated in Cyrene and Egypt, but had possibly spread further east, as Eusebius records that the emperor ordered Lucius Quintus to "clean [the Jews] out of the province [of Mesopotamia]" (ἐκκαθᾶραι τῆς ἐπαρχίας αὐτούς, *Hist. eccl.* 4.2.5). According to Eusebius, "Marcius Turbo… killed many thousands of Jews" in Cyrene and Egypt (*Hist. eccl.* 4.2.4), and Quintus "murdered a great multitude of Jews" in Mesopotamia (*Hist. eccl.* 4.2.5). While Roman reports of Jewish violence may be exaggerated,[27] epigraphic evidence testifies to the destruction of civic buildings, temples and roads at the hands of the Jews.[28] These inscriptions, namely SEG 17.804 and 9.168, record Hadrian's instructions c.118–119CE to rebuild the Temple of Hecate and the Caesareum, the dates of which would accord with an earlier date for Quadratus' *Apology*.

At the beginning of *Hist. eccl.* 4.3, Eusebius briefly notes the end of Trajan's reign and Hadrian's succession after him, then mentions Quadratus' *Apology*. The placement of these events alongside each other suggests a chronological link. Eusebius' claim to have had a copy of the *Apology* (*Hist. eccl.* 4.3.1) heightens the likelihood that his placement of these two events next to each other explicates the context of the text. If that is the case, it is possible that the 'wicked men' were identifying the connection between the Jewish and Christian communities, conflating that with the Jewish rebellion, and accusing the Christians of seditious behaviour.

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[26] Dio Cassius records the leader as "Andreas" (*Hist.* 68.32.1).

[27] Dio Cassius records that the Jews "would eat the flesh of their victims, make belts for themselves of their entrails, anoint themselves with their blood and wear their skins for clothing … In all two hundred and twenty thousand persons perished… There [in Cyprus], also, two hundred and forty thousand perished" (*Hist.* 68.32.1–3).

[28] SEG 17.800; 17.804; 9.168; all three from Cyrene. Cyrene would later be accepted into the Panhellenion—of which Athens was the chief city—and seems to have been of good standing in the eyes of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius: Joyce Reynolds, "Hadrian, Antoninus Pius and the Cyrenaican Cities," *JRS* 68 (1978): 111–121; Ilaria Romeo, "The Panhellenion and Ethnic Identity in Hadrianic Greece," *Classical Philology* 97, no. 1 (2002): 26–27. Zeev cites a Hadrianic milestone commemorating the restoration of the road between Cyrene and its port, Apollonia, "which had been overturned and smashed up in the Jewish revolt (*CZJC* 24, 25)." Miriam Pucci Ben Zeev, "The Uprisings in the Jewish Diaspora, 116–117," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism. Volume 4: The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period*, ed. Steven T. Katz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 94; R.G. Goodchild and J.M. Reynolds, "The Temple of Zeus at Cyrene. Part 1. Epigraphic Evidence for the History of the Temple During the Roman Period," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 26 (1958): 31–34.

This suggestion can be strengthened by an interesting linguistic parallel found in Josephus' *Antiquities* (12.257–261). Josephus records a petition that the Samaritans sent to Antiochus IV Epiphanes when they saw the suffering of the Jews under the Seleucid king. They acknowledge that the king had "dealt with the Jews as their wickedness deserves" (σοῦ δὲ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τῆς πονηρίας αὐτῶν ἀξίως χρησαμένου, 12.260) but they claim that they, the Samaritans, were being caught up in similar charges. They request that Antiochus, as their "benefactor and saviour" (εὐεργέτην καὶ σωτῆρα, 12.261), order his representatives in the region to not "molest" (ἐνοχλεῖν, 12.261) them by laying these charges against them, "since we are distinct from them both in race and in customs" (ἡμῶν καὶ τῷ γένει καὶ τοῖς ἔθεσιν ἀλλοτρίων ὑπαρχόντων, 12.261).

Grant rejected the relevance of the term ἐνοχλεῖν for understanding Quadratus' *Apology*, saying that it "proves more about Eusebius than Quadratus."[29] He did not, however, consider the broader linguistic parallels between these sections in Josephus and Eusebius. It is evident that Eusebius was aware of Josephus' writings (*Hist. eccl.* 2.26), and it is plausible that Quadratus himself could have had access to Josephus and used him as a model. Pratscher also dismisses the relevance of ἐνοχλεῖν, noting its common use by Eusebius and concluding, "It is rather improbable that Eusebius relies on a phrase in Quadratus for this description." It is to be noted, however, that in each of the other appearances of ἐνοχλεῖν in *Ecclesiastical History*, the term is found within quotes of official edicts and letters commanding the end of the persecution of Christians (*Hist. eccl.* 5.13.6; 7.13; 7.30.7; 9.1.5; 10.5.15). It is clearly a term that would have been appropriate for Quadratus to use in his *Apology*.[30]

When Eusebius introduces the account of the insurrections of the Jews, he contrasts the Jews' experiences and the way that "the teaching of our Saviour [τοῦ σωτῆρος] and the church were flourishing daily and moving on to further progress." After describing the slaughter of many Jews on account of their rebellion, Eusebius moves on to note Quadratus' *Apology*, saying that it was on account of "some wicked men" (τινες πονηροὶ ἄνδρες, 4.3) who were "trying to trouble" (ἐνοχλεῖν ἐπειρῶντο, 4.3) the Christians. In the text of the *Apology*, Quadratus appeals to the "works of our Saviour" (τοῦ δὲ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν τὰ ἔργα, 4.3).

[29] Grant, "Quadratus," 178.
[30] Pratscher, "Quadratus," 185, n.22.

While the referents are not exactly the same, clear parallels can be seen between Josephus' and Eusebius' accounts. In Josephus, the Samaritans align themselves with a "saviour" (σωτήρ), Antiochus, in order to distance themselves from the Jews who were suffering for their "wickedness" (πονηρία), so that they would avoid "molestation" or "trouble" (ἐνοχλεῖν). In Eusebius, the Jews had (perhaps justly) suffered for their rebellious actions, and Quadratus appeals to a "saviour" (σωτήρ) in order to avoid "trouble" (ἐνοχλεῖν). Though the Samaritans labelled the Jews "wicked" to show their agreement with Antiochus, the "wicked men" for Eusebius were those causing trouble for the Christians. Similarly, though Antiochus was the "saviour" for the Samaritans, Eusebius and Quadratus would only apply that title to Jesus.

It can be argued, therefore, that Eusebius placed this account of the rebellious Jews alongside that of Quadratus because the apologist was (or Eusebius perceived him to be) distancing the Christians from the Jews, on account of this rebellion, by claiming the works of Jesus in contrast to the actions of the Jews and their "king" Lucuas. At the very least, the contrast of "teaching of our Saviour" and the plight of the Jews, followed by the reference to the "works of our Saviour" in Quadratus' fragment ties these events together.[31]

If this context for Quadratus' *Apology* is correct, the question arises why an Athenian, rather than Alexandrian, Christian would have written it. Athens would have been a more fitting place than Alexandria for the origin of this document, for the following reasons. Firstly, Orosius records that Alexandria was severely affected by the conflict and that Hadrian relocated people from elsewhere to repopulate the region.[32] Even if this report is an overstatement, it does not seem likely that Christians would be drawing much attention at this time. Presumably, Alexandrian authorities would have been able to accurately differentiate between Jewish insurrectionists and other minority groups. The same may not be said for authorities in a distant city such as Athens, who may be more subject to the distortion of facts and identities. Secondly, from the late first century CE, Athens had been regaining its reputation as an educational destination. While no foreign students were

[31] It is noteworthy that Irenaus and Justin, when arguing for the authenticity of Jesus' miracles in contrast to heretical or pagan claims, never use the term "Saviour" for Jesus. Their term of choice is "Lord". It seems that the use of "Saviour" in Quadratus (and Eusebius) is deliberate.
[32] Orosius, *Hist. Adv. Pag.* 7.126; Pucci Ben Zeev, "Uprisings," 98.

recorded as enlisted in the Athenian *ephebeia*[33] from 38BCE to 85CE,[34] this began to change in the late first and early second centuries. It is possible that the Library of Pantainos was built in 100CE specifically to attract foreign students to the city.[35] One ephebic inscription dated to 116CE lists four local Athenian students and around forty foreign students enrolled in the *ephebia*.[36] The resurgent interest in, and migration to, the city, demonstrated by records such as this one, and that was turbocharged by Hadrian's favour towards the city, creates a context in which events elsewhere in the empire may come to influence Athens in a much more direct way. The extent of the conflict in North Africa makes it likely that knowledge of the event was widespread. Any visitors to Athens from the region would surely have spoken of it, fostering localised pressure on the Jewish community and the Christians who were mistakenly identified with it. Thirdly, Hadrian's interest in Athens is well known. He was an archon of the city in 112CE and an honorary citizen.[37] He had also been ordering the restoration of buildings and roads in North Africa, the records of which blame the Jews for the damage,[38] so the North African revolts were a live issue for him, not a past issue dealt with by Trajan. It may be that Quadratus hoped that the emperor's involvement in resolving lingering issues relating to the revolts, and his favourable posture towards the city of Athens, would make him favourably disposed to an Athenian apologist.

5.1.3.2 Identity Formation

Adopting this understanding of Quadratus' *Apology* in the context of the Jewish insurrections allows us to assess the apologist's use of the testimonies of Jesus' miracles. The first thing to be said is that Quadratus' argument is defensive. There is no suggestion that there was any

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[33] The *ephebeia* was a program of military training and service for young Athenian men. In the Roman period it became increasingly non-military in nature. Non-Athenian young men could enrol in the ephebeia, and upon completing the program would be eligible for Athenian citizenship. Iain Spence, "Ephebes, Ephebeia," in *Conflict in Ancient Greece and Rome: The Definitive Political, Social, and Military Encyclopedia. Volume 1: A-R, Greek Section*, ed. Iain Spence, Douglas Kelly, and Peter Londey (Denver: ABC-CLIO, 2016), 260; O.W. Reinmuth, "The Ephebate and Citizenship in Attica," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philology Association* 79 (1948): 211–31.

[34] Anthony John Papalas, "Studies in Roman Athens: 29 B.C. To A.D. 180" (University of Chicago, 1969), 183.

[35] "Roman Athens," 190–91.

[36] IG III 1098. Ephebic inscriptions list the young men enrolled in any given year in the *ephebeia*.

[37] IG II^2 2024; Oliver, "Emperors and Athens," 419.

[38] Noted above in n.24.

formal legal procedure in process, but Eusebius' framing of the text suggests that Quadratus was petitioning Hadrian to intervene in response to the "trouble" caused by the "wicked men". He is aiming to prove that the Christians are not involved in any seditious behaviour.

The argument included in this fragment refers to the miracles of Jesus. It is necessary for Quadratus to prove the veracity of these miracles for the argument to have any rhetorical force. To do so he appeals to eyewitness testimony: people who had been healed and raised from the dead lived down to Quadratus' own time. It is important to note that Quadratus highlights Jesus' benevolent works: healing and resurrection. It is unlikely that the fragment of Quadratus belongs in the lacuna in *The Epistle to Diognetus* 7.6–7,[39] but those who make this argument point out that chapter 7 of the *Epistle* says that Jesus came "with gentleness and meekness, as a king sending his own son, he sent him as a king; he sent him as a god; he sent him as a human to humans. So that he might bring salvation and persuasion he sent him, not to coerce" (*Ep. Dg*. 7.4).[40] Quadratus is making a similar argument here. Jesus healed and raised people from the dead; he did not lead an uprising.

This contrast of activities is reflected in the terminology used to refer to Jesus and Lucuas. Jesus is "our Saviour", whereas Lucuas is a "king" and "leader". Though Hadrian was honoured as "Saviour", this term was also applied to other gods because of their benevolent treatment of people.[41] By labelling Jesus as "Saviour", Quadratus is able to announce the divinity and leadership of Jesus in a way that does not directly usurp the authority of the emperor. Identifying Lucuas as "their King" (βασιλεῖ αὐτῶν) and "their leader" (ἡγουμένου αὐτῶν), on the other hand, highlights his seditious behaviour, setting himself up against the right rule of the emperor.

Furthermore, the various connections proposed above suggest that the Athenian church had a more significant Jewish element in this period than may be assumed from the account of its foundation in Acts 17. In Acts, Paul preaches in the synagogue and the Agora, and then delivers his speech to the Areopagus, and it is only after the Areopagus speech that Luke mentions any converts, with the two named converts being of Gentile background—Dionysius the

[39] Foster, "Apology," 60; Grant, "Quadratus," 178.
[40] Andriessen, "Authorship," 130.
[41] IG II^2 3293. Cf. Grant's discussion of "saviour" in relation to Hadrian and Asclepius: Grant, "Quadratus," 180–81.

Areopagite and the woman Damaris. Schnabel has rightly said that we should presume that the converts come from Paul's pre-Areopagus ministry as well, since the converts are mentioned after Paul has left the council.[42] The sequencing in the text, however, makes it natural to assume the converts were auditors of his speech.

5.1.4 Conclusion

Quadratus the Apologist, therefore, uses early Christian reports of the miracles of Jesus to defend the Christians by positioning them alongside the benevolent, life-giving works of Jesus, "our Saviour". This contrasts with the seditious activity of the Jewish insurrectionists and their (false) king Lucuas.

[42] Schnabel, *Acts*, 743.

5.2 Aristides

5.2.1 Aristides, an Athenian Philosopher

The second Athenian apologist who appeared in the reign of Hadrian was Marcianus Aristides. Eusebius describes him as "a man of faith and devoted to our religion" (πιστὸς ἀνὴρ τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς ὁρμώμενος εὐσεβείας, *Hist. eccl.* 4.23). Aristides' rhetorical strategies develop a slightly more nuanced picture than this. For most of the *Apology*, Aristides presents himself as a philosopher and distances himself from the Christians. In the greeting, he describes himself as "an Athenian philosopher" (ܐܬܝܢܝܐܝܐ ܦܝܠܣܘܦܐ; *Apol* 1), an identity that he establishes with a series of verbs describing his process of attaining an understanding of God: contemplated, beheld, was amazed, comprehended, understood, investigate, dispute, and the adjective "reasonable." It is later, in chapter 16, that he admits, "[S]ince I read in their writings I was fully assured of these things as also of things which are to come. And for this reason I was constrained to declare the truth" (*Apol* 16). Even after that point, however, he continues to refer to "the Christians," and does not use personal pronouns (we, us) that would include him with the Christians. For example, in his closing paragraph he says, "And verily whatever is spoken in the mouth of *the Christians* is of God; and *their* doctrine is the gateway of light" (*Apol* 17; italics mine). Aristides, then, presents himself as being convinced by Christian teaching because of its reasonable and superior qualities that he discovered through rigorous investigation, but his rhetorical style includes distancing himself from the Christians in order to maintain the posture of a (trustworthy) philosopher.[43]

Jerome's note that Aristides was "a most eloquent Athenian philosopher, and a disciple of Christ while yet retaining his philosopher's garb" (*de Vir* XX) seems to reflect Aristides' rhetoric. If the comment is accurate, Aristides joins other "Christian philosophers" in maintaining the clothing of a philosopher.[44] Justin Martyr dressed in the philosopher's mantle, as did Tertullian.[45] Lampe says that "Justin's philosophical education corresponds to his claim to be understood and seriously accepted as a philosopher … This claim is signalled to the

[43] Cf. William C. Rutherford, "Citizenship among Jews and Christians: Civic Discourse in the *Apology* of Aristides," in *Studia Patristica Volume LXV: Papers Presented at the Sixteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies Held in Oxford 2011* (Leuven: Peeters, 2013).
[44] Lattke maintains an agnostic position on this point. *Aristides*, 20.
[45] Tertullian *De pallio* VI; Peter Lampe, *Christians at Rome*, 259; Paul Parvis, "Justin Martyr," in *Early Christian Thinkers: The Lives and Legacies of Twelve Key Figures*, ed. Paul Foster (Downers Grove: IVP, 2010), 3.

people on the street through the philosopher's mantle and is indicated by the choice of the literary genres."[46] The apologetic genre was particularly aimed at influencing educated pagans.[47]

In his short treatise on philosophers, Tertullian has the Mantle say, "A philosopher, in fact, is heard so long as he is seen. My very sight puts vices to the blush … Grand is the benefit conferred by the Mantle, at the thought whereof moral improbity absolutely blushes." After the Mantle lists other disciplines with which it is an associate—teachers, grammarians, rhetoricians, poets—Tertullian adds, "I confer on it likewise a fellowship with a divine sect and discipline… A better philosophy has now deigned to honour thee, ever since thou hast begun to be a Christian's vesture" (*de Pall.* VI). This final chapter of the treatise demonstrates two things. Firstly, the philosopher's mantle could be worn for the purpose of adding further weight to one's arguments. Secondly, Christians had chosen to wear the mantle because they believed that Christianity could stand amongst, even above, the other philosophical schools as a "better philosophy."

If Jerome's comments about Aristides are correct, then the Athenian philosopher joins Justin and Tertullian in this practice. In the same way that he presents himself as a philosopher in his writings, he also presented himself as one in the way that he dressed. It is impossible to ascertain whether Aristides would have been accepted as a philosopher by the residents of Athens, but his clothing is noteworthy in that it signifies an attempt to engage the surrounding society and place the Christian faith in the public domain.

5.2.1.1 Hyginus, an Athenian Bishop of Rome

The *Liber Pontificalis* (X) notes that Hyginus was "by nationality a Greek, previously a philosopher of Athens." The record is confused in its chronology here, saying that he was "bishop in the time of Verus and Marcus" (161–169CE), "from the consulship of Magnus and Camerinus [138CE] until the year when Orfitus and Priscus were consuls [149CE]." Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* IV.10.1) notes that Hyginus became bishop in the first year of Antoninus Pius' reign

[46] Lampe, *Christians at Rome*, 272.
[47] *Christians at Rome*, 272.

(138CE), which accords with the earlier consular dates given in the *Liber Pontificalis*, but also that the bishop died in the fourth year of his episcopate, i.e. 141CE rather than 149CE.[48]

Unfortunately, no further detail is available regarding Hyginus' early life and conversion. If he had been resident in Athens reasonably recently to his appointment as bishop in Rome, it is likely that he would have been a contemporary of Aristides. It is noteworthy, though perhaps not surprising, for Hyginus to have been described as both "Athenian" and a "philosopher". It is impossible to claim Hyginus as a convert through Aristides' evangelistic exhortations (*Apol*. 16–17), but the Roman bishop may be evidence that Aristides was not a lone intellectual in the Athenian church in the early second century. Perhaps there was something of a Christian "school", however formally or informally imagined, developing around philosophically trained converts.

It seems that in his brief episcopacy, Hyginus was active against unorthodox teachers. Eusebius quotes Irenaeus' record that in the time of Hyginus the heretics Valentinus and Cerdo came to Rome. Irenaeus had said:

> For Valentinus came to Rome under Hyginus, flourished under Pius, and lasted until Anicetus. Cerdo, who was before Marcion, also lived under Hyginus, who was the eighth [Eus.: ninth] bishop. Though he often came into the church and [confessed], he finished thus: sometimes teaching in secret, sometimes [confessing], finally convicted for what he wrongly taught and removed from the community of the brothers (Iren. *Adv. haer.* 3.4.3).[49]

Even though Hyginus' episcopacy is given as the date of arrival of the two false teachers in Rome, the report does not particularly highlight any failure on the part of the bishop. If anything, Hyginus is cast in a more positive light than his successors. Valentinus arrived in Hyginus' time, but "flourished" (ἤκμασεν, Eus. *Hist. eccl.* IV.11.1) under Pius. Cerdo, whose false teaching was adopted and developed by the better-known Marcion, seems to have been condemned for false teaching before Marcion's rise. Lampe notes that Marcion broke with

[48] Birger A. Pearson, "Eusebius and Gnosticism," in *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism*, ed. Harold W. Attridge and Gohei Hata (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992).
[49] Trans.: Robert M. Grant, *Irenaeus of Lyons* (London: Routledge, 1996), 96. I have changed Grant's "did penance/doing penance" to "confessed/confessing".

Roman Christianity in 144CE, but previously had "lived for some time in communion with Roman Christians."[50] It is reasonable to conclude that Cerdo was removed from the "community of the brothers" before Marcion became a significant influence. Translators have differed on whether to translate ἀφιστάμενος (excommunicated/apostatised) as a middle or passive.[51] If reading it as a passive is correct, a stronger image is given of Cerdo's expulsion from the community. If that is correct, and presuming that Hyginus was a part of that process, it would seem that the bishop was active in opposition against unorthodox teachers.[52]

5.2.1.2 Philosopher, Bishop, Apologist

An interesting aspect of the "Christian school" proposed above is that the two known participants seem to have taken two different ecclesiastical paths. On the one hand, Aristides presents himself primarily as an objective observer of the Christians, whereas Hyginus entered into a more formalised position of ecclesiastical leadership.

Lampe argues that monepiscopal church government did not develop in Rome until the second half of the second century. He notes, however, that those who were "harbingers of and transitional figures toward a monarchical episcopacy"—figures who appear in the later bishops lists, such as Anicetus (c.155–166) and Soter (c.166–175)[53]—"appear in the few contemporary notes that are extant concerning them always in this role of a 'minister of external affairs'."[54] This "minister of external affairs" acted as representative of the "*totality* of the Roman house communities to the outside world,"[55] specifically in managing ecclesiastical letters to and from Rome, and the sending of aid to Christian communities elsewhere. Hyginus' connections to Athens, and the city's strong connections to Asia Minor on account of the Panhellenion, would no doubt have been useful for this role.

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[50] Lampe, *Christians at Rome*, 241.
[51] Grant: "removed" (passive); Unger: "apostatised" (middle); Lake: "separated" (unclear). Irenaeus, *Against the Heresies (Book 3)*, trans. Dominic J. Unger, ACW (New York: Newman Press, 2012). Lampe reads it as middle ("withdrew"; *Christians at Rome*, 394), but does not discuss the passive/middle difficulty.
[52] This would seem to contradict Lampe's claim that unorthodox groups were tolerated in Rome until later in the century. Lampe, *Christians at Rome*, 395–408.
[53] Dates from Lampe, *Christians at Rome*, 101, 241.
[54] The following discussion summarises Lampe's argument in *Christians at Rome*, 402–04.
[55] i.e. Geographically outside of Rome, not the pagan world "outside" the church.

The rhetorical nature of apologetic writing makes Aristides' role in the Christian community hard to determine, but he seems not to have taken a formal ecclesiastical role. As explained above, in his writing he distances himself from the Christians. When he confesses his own belief (*Apol*. 16.4), he notes that he did not write his treatise about these things on his own instigation, nor did he act as an advocate for the Christians, but rather he felt compelled to share this truth (that he had just come to believe) with those who desired it.[56]

5.2.2 Aristides' *Apology*

Aristides' *Apology* survives in full in a Syriac version (Sy); a Greek version that was edited to fit into John of Damascus' *Barlaam and Joasaph* (Ba);[57] two fourth century Greek papyri (Π^1= P. Oxy. XV.1778; Π^2= *Lit. Lond.* 223); and an Armenian fragment preserved in four manuscripts (Ar).[58] It is not entirely clear how closely any of these different manuscript traditions reflects the original text. It is generally acknowledged that the Syriac is the closest, though in translation, to the original, albeit with its own editorial idiosyncrasies.[59] The Greek in *Barlaam*

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[56] Pouderon and Pierre: "Prenez donc leurs livres, lisez-les, et voici: vous trouverez que ce que j'ai exprimé ne vient pas de moi-même, et que je ne l'ai pas exposé en tant qu'avocat. Mais j'ai affirmé ce que j'ai lu dans leurs livres, même ce qui est à venir. C'est ce qui m'a contraint à manifester la vérité à ceux qui la désirent et qui cherchent le monde à venir." Lattke: "Nehmt also ihre Schriften und lest in ihnen, und siehe, ihr werdet finden, dass nicht von mir aus dieses vorgebracht oder als ihr Anwalt dieses gesagt habe. Vielmehr habe ich als einer, der in ihren Schriften gelesen hat, diese Dinge geglaubt und auch die, die zukünftig sind. Und deshalb war ich gedrängt, die Wahrheit denjenigen kundzutun (aufzuzeigen), die ihr zustimmen und die zukünftige Welt suchen."

[57] Material from the *Apology* appears in two discourses included in *Barlaam and Joasaph*: 1) the shorter and more fragmentary *Discourse of Barlaam* (§§44–56); and 2) the longer and more complete *Discourse of Nachor* (§§239–255). These two discourses are not dependent on one another, but rather represent two editorial treatments of one Greek source text of the *Apology*. Recent scholarship has preferred to attribute *Barlaam and Joasaph* to Euthymius the Georgian. William C. Rutherford, "Reinscribing the Jews: The Story of Aristides' *Apology* 2.2–4 and 14.1b–15.2.," *HTR* 106, no. 1 (2013): 66–67; Bernard Pouderon and Marie-Joseph Pierre, eds., *Aristide: Apologie*, SC 470 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2003), 110–17.

[58] *Apologie*, 107–41. For the purposes of this study I have consulted the critical edition (with French translation) of Pouderon and Pierre; the 1893 English translation of J. Rendell Harris; and the recent German translation and commentary by Michael Lattke. I follow the chapter divisions and subdivisions in Pouderon and Pierre, unless otherwise noted. J. Rendel Harris, *The Apology of Aristides on Behalf of the Christians. From a Syriac Ms. Preserved on Mount Sinai* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2004 (1893)); Michael Lattke, *Aristides "Apologie"*, KfA (Freiburg: Herder, 2018).

[59] Judith M. Lieu, *Image and Reality: The Jews in the World of the Christians in the Second Century* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 164–65; Pouderon and Pierre, *Apologie*, 148.

and Joasaph has clearly been edited to fit the narrative context into which it has been inserted. The two Greek papyri—which consist of *Apology* 4.3–6.2 and 15.4–16.2 respectively—are helpful in this regard, though only fragmentary, since they generally show a closer phraseology to the Syriac than the Greek of *Barlaam and Joasaph*. This suggests that they offer closer glimpses at the original Greek text.[60]

Ascertaining an accurate date for Aristides' *Apology* is notoriously problematic. Eusebius claims that Aristides, like Quadratus, addressed the apology to the Emperor Hadrian (*Hist. eccl.* 4.3). This claim is supported by the Armenian version. The Syriac, however, includes a title which states that the apology is addressed to "the Emperor Hadrian," but then the treatise itself is addressed to Antoninus Pius, Hadrian's successor. Accordingly, the scholarship is divided on whether to place it under Hadrian or Antoninus Pius.[61] Judith Lieu notes that either an earlier date in Hadrian's more conciliatory (i.e. towards the Jews) period, or a later date during the time of his harsh reprisals of the Bar Kochba revolt, could also shape how the *Apology* should be read.[62] Grant navigated the challenge of dating by arguing that the *Apology* was originally addressed to Hadrian, but it was later expanded, including the condemnation of homosexual acts (which may have been a reference to Hadrian and Antinous), and addressed to Antoninus Pius.[63] The weakness of the *Apology*'s imperial address and its likely status as an "open letter", discussed in §1.4.2, would suggest that the production of two "editions" of the apology is very possible.

Lattke follows Seeberg in arguing that a date in Antoninus Pius' reign, but as close as possible to Hadrian's, is preferable.[64] They propose a date close to 140CE. It will be suggested below

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[60] For a detailed discussion of alignments and deviations between Sy, Ba and Π^2, see *Apologie*, 143–50.

[61] Hadrian: *Apologie*, 37; Graindor, *Athènes sous Hadrien*, 172–73; Galimberti, "Hadrian," 78–82. Antoninus Pius: Harris, *Aristides' Apology*, 6–19; Lattke, *Aristides*, 20; "Die Herkunft der Christen in der Apologie des Aristides: Baustein zu einem Kommentar," in *Christians Shaping Identity from the Roman Empire to Byzantium*, ed. Geoffrey Dunn and Wendy Mayer (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 48; Reinhold Seeberg, *Der Apologet Aristides. Der Text seiner uns erhaltenen Schriften nebst einleitenden Untersuchungen über dieselben.* (Erlangen: Deichert, 1894), 279; Birley, *Hadrian*, 184.

[62] Lieu, *Image and Reality*, 160.

[63] Grant, *Greek Apologists*, 45. Pouderon and Pierre find this suggestion possible: "Nous acceptons pleinement la datation d'Eusèbe (124–125), même si nous ne rejetons pas entièrement l'hypothèse d'une seconde rédaction contemporaine du principat d'Antonin (138–161)." Pouderon and Pierre, *Apologie*, 37.

[64] Lattke, *Aristides*, 20; Seeberg, *Apologet*, 279.

that there likely were connections between Hyginus, bishop of Rome from 138 to 142CE, and the Athenian church. It is tempting to infer that a version of Aristides' *Apology* (whether a first or second edition), addressed to Antoninus Pius, made its way to Rome via the connections between the apologist and the bishop in the early years of Pius' reign. If this did occur, there is the possibility that Aristides' *Apology* could be connected in some way to the letters that Pius supposedly wrote to the cities of Athens, Larisa, Thessalonica, and to all the Greeks, in which he ordered them not to take any "new [or violent] measures" against the Christians (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* IV.26.10; citing Melito of Sardis). The instruction to "take no new [or violent] measures" (μηδὲν νεωτερίζειν) alludes to the rescripts of Trajan and Hadrian which provided guidelines for judicial action against Christians; apparently Pius also "forbade pogroms of Christians without proper trial."[65] Melito claims that these letters were written when Marcus Aurelius was "joined with [Pius] in the administration of the world" (καὶ σοῦ τὰ σύμπαντα διοικοῦντος αὐτῷ, *Hist. eccl*. IV.26.10). Marcus received the title "Caesar" in 140CE, so there is a possible overlap.[66]

Related to the question of dating is that of purpose, but it is also difficult to ascertain precisely what caused Aristides to write his *Apology*. The treatise does not contain an explicit statement in this regard. There are only a couple of mentions of Christian suffering, and these are not emphasised as the main purpose for writing.[67] In 15.7, he alludes to times when some of their number were "imprisoned or oppressed for the name of their Messiah"; and in 17.2–3 he mentions how the the Greeks "ridicule" the Christians and "mistreat" (ܡܬܩܦܣܝܢ)[68] them. Lattke notes that the term for mistreatment does not imply "executions" ("Hinrichtungen"), but rather forceful opposition and perhaps violence.[69]

Greek Orthodox tradition claims that Narcissus was bishop of Athens during Hadrian's reign: "he taught the Gospel of truth, and because of this he received various tortures and so

[65] Barnes, "Legislation," 37.
[66] Anthony R. Birley, *Marcus Aurelius: A Biography* (London: Routledge, 2000), 56.
[67] Nils Arne Pedersen, "Aristides," in *In Defence of Christianity: Early Christian Apologists*, ed. Jakob Engberg, Anders-Christian Jacobsen, and Jörg Ulrich (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2014), 42.
[68] Pouderon and Pierre: "oppriment" (*Apologie*, 249); Lattke: "misshandelt" (*Aristides*, 365).
[69] He notes that ܡܬܩܦܣܝܢ is used to translate κολαφίζειν, τύπτειν, and καταπονεῖν. Lattke, *Aristides*, 365.

through martyrdom completed the race of his apostleship."[70] Again, the dating is problematic. The tradition claims that this Narcissus was one of the seventy sent out by Jesus (c.30 CE);[71] was the Narcissus whose household was mentioned in Romans 16:11 (late 50s CE); and was ordained bishop by the Apostle Philip when he toured through Athens (no later than 80s CE). However, Narcissus is also believed to have been bishop in the 120s.[72] While the first three elements could well be true of the same person—apart from the anachronistic sense of a monepiscopal appointment—the late dating of his episcopacy can hardly be applied to the same individual. If there is any truth to the four different dating elements, perhaps it could be explained by there being two individuals named Narcissus whose lives were conflated in the development of the tradition. This creates the possibility that the persecution of Christians in Athens in the 120/130s CE was more intense than Aristides admits.

Scholars have argued that Aristides' apologetic efforts are related in some way to Hadrian's interest in Eleusis. Graindor argued that Hadrian's zeal for pagan cults encouraged the Athenians to persecute the Christians.[73] Alessandro Galimberti, on the other hand, suggests that Hadrian's support of Eleusis, alongside his supposed intent to build temples that were dedicated to Christ and did not have any sacred images (HA *Alex. Sev.* 43.5–6), represented the opening of an opportunity for the Christians. He says, "Since his initiation at Eleusis, Hadrian … opened new perspectives for the various cults of the empire, including Christianity … that did not hesitate to enter into this new framework … in order to emphasise aspects of identity to distinguish themselves from other religions, especially Judaism."[74]

If Grant's proposal of a "second edition" of the *Apology*, produced in the reign of Antoninus Pius, is to be accepted, it would seem that a date earlier in the 130s would be the most likely

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[70] "ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἐδίδασκε τὴν ἀλήθειαν τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου, διὰ τοῦτο ἔλαβε διάφορα βάσανα καὶ οὕτω διὰ Μαρτυρίου ἐτελείωσε τὸν δρόμον τῆς ἀποστολῆς του." Matthias Lagges, *Ο Μεγας συναξαριστης της ορθοδοξου εκκλησιας: Τομος Ι΄: Μην Οκτωβριος* (Athens: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1975), 692.
[71] Ps. Hippolytus, *On the Apostles and Disciples* 30.
[72] Giorgio Fedalto, *Hierarchia Ecclesiastica Orientalis. 1. Patriarchatus Constantinopolitanus* (Padova: Edizioni Messagero, 1988), 489; R. Janin, "Athènes (Archevêché Orthodoxe et Archevêché Latin)," in *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques. Tome 5: athéisme–azzon*, ed. Albert De Meyer (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1931), Col. 17.
[73] Paul Graindor, *Athènes sous Hadrien* (New York: Arno Press, 1973), 172: "Mais la présence d'Hadrien à Athènes, son zèle pour les cultes païens et particulièrement son initiation aux Mystères d'Éleusis, encouragèrent les Athéniens à persécuter de nouveau les chrétiens mais sans y être autorisés par l'empereur."
[74] Galimberti, "Hadrian," 73.

for the text's first writing. The foundation of the Panhellenion in 132 would have been a context which Aristides' ethno-religious discourse, discussed below, would have suited. The Bar Kochba revolt, and the likely flow of Jewish refugees into Asia Minor and Greece, would have again raised the necessity to consider Christianity's relationship with Judaism. This does not, however, necessarily mean that Aristides should have taken a harsher stance against the Jews. The Jewish contingent in the Athenian Christian community, alluded to in Quadratus' *Apology*, would not likely have disappeared in the decade or so between the two texts. Furthermore, if Aristides' wanted to emphasise the philanthropic elements of the Christians' practices, such as welcoming strangers or meeting the needs of the poor (*Apol.* 15.6–7),[75] a belligerent attitude against an in-part refugee community would strike a jarring note.

5.2.2.1 Critique of Barbarian, Greek and Jewish Religion

Aristides opens his *Apology* with a description of his contemplation regarding the "Mover" responsible for the creation and ordering of the world. This "Mover", who is "God of all", the apologist understood to be "not begotten, not made; a constant nature, without beginning and end; immortal, complete and incomprehensible … there is no deficiency in Him, and He stands in need of nought … He has no likeness, nor composition of members … Error and forgetfulness are not in his nature … He asks no sacrifice and no libation" (*Apol.* 1.1–2). This understanding of God then becomes his standard for his assessment of the religions he goes on to critique.

Aristides presents the Christians as one of the four (Sy) or three (Ba) races of humanity. In the Syriac, the four "races" are Barbarians, Greeks, Jews, and Christians. The Greek has three: Polytheists (including Chaldeans, Greeks, and Egyptians), Jews, and Christians. Frances Young has stated that the tripartite division of the Greek more closely reflects the structure of the treatise as a whole, no doubt because of the inclusion of the Egyptians in *Apology* 12.[76] However, the fact that Aristides inserts his treatment of Egyptians *within* his treatment of the Greeks, and returns to the Greeks in chapter thirteen before moving on to discuss the Jews, suggests that the four-race structure is correct. It will be argued below that Aristides'

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[75] Pouderon and Pierre: Lorsqu'ils voient un réfugié, ils l'introduisant dans leurs demeures, et s'en réjouissent comme d'un vrai frère.

[76] Frances Young, "Greek Apologists of the Second Century," in *Apologetics in the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews, and Christians*, ed. Mark Edwards, Martin Goodman, and Simon Price (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 102, n.35.

manoeuvre with the Egyptians is evidence of his participation in a broader literary conversation that was happening during the Second Sophistic. In any case, this structural concern ultimately does not change the argument that the Barbarians/Chaldeans, Greeks, Egyptians, and Jews were all in error regarding their understanding and worship of God.[77]

The apologist identifies three "constitutive symbols" of each race: ethical practice, cultic performance, and constitutional figures.[78] The various gods model behaviours or give commands, and these are mediated to the races through a constitutional figure or "lawgiver". Rutherford highlights the description of Moses as the Jews' "lawgiver" (*Apol.* 2.3), and notes that the Barbarians had their philosophers (*Apol.* 3.2), the Greeks and Egyptians their "mythopoets" (9.3; 10.1, 2; 12.1, 4), and the Christians have Christ who rightly interprets the commands of God (ie. the commands that the Hebrews originally received but deviated from; 2.4; 15.3, 8).[79]

The importance of this "lawgiver" theme to the argument of the apology is particularly noteworthy in light of Hadrian's activity as νομοθέτης on behalf of Athens. Aristides critiques all other cultural and religious identities, establishing the Christ as the ultimate lawgiver and the Christians as the only group to have come to a right knowledge of God (*Apol.* 15.3; 17.2). While the Athenians were benefiting from the benefactions of their "lawgiver", Aristides was promoting Christ as the ultimate lawgiver. This type of argument is not too dissimilar to Paul's speech to the Areopagus. Where the apostle called the Athenians to repent and believe in the creator God and his appointed judge, Aristides appeals to his audience to follow the one who truly establishes the right way to live.

Barbarians – Worshipping the elements

Aristides' main concern with Barbarian religion is that Barbarians mistakenly worship the created elements rather than the Creator God (ἐπλανήθησαν ὀπίσω τῶν στοιχείων καὶ ἤρξαντο σέβεσθαι τὴν κτίσιν παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα αὐτούς, *Apol.* 3.1 (Ba)).[80] The decisive argument against such worship is that the elements—earth, water, fire, wind—are created things, corruptible and changeable (4.1). Earth is ploughed and excavated, receives defiling

[77] Rutherford, "Reinscribing."
[78] Rutherford, "Citizenship," 14.
[79] "Citizenship," 11–14.
[80] Cf. Rom. 1; Ath. *Leg.* 16.3

material such as blood and faeces, and can be rendered infertile (4.3). Water can be contaminated, frozen, and redirected by people to serve different purposes (5.1). Fire is "in many ways … made subject to [men]" and can be extinguished (5.2). The winds can be fickle, but ultimately are under the control of the one who rules them, and humans have devised means to utilise them for purposes such as sea trade (5.3). For these reasons and more, each of these elements are "creatures of God" (ܒܪܝܬܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ; 4.3) or "works of God" (ܥܒܕܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ, 5.1, 3 (Sy); ἔργον θεοῦ, 4.2, 3; 5.1, 2, 3 (Ba)) and thus it is erroneous to worship them.[81] He levels similar arguments against the Barbarians' worship of the sun and of human ancestors (6–7).

Aristides' argumentation against the Barbarians' worship of the elements of water and wind takes on a fresh significance when considered in relation to Hadrian's benefactions to the city. Water, the apologist says, "is compelled by workmen, by means of the compulsion of channels, to flow and be conducted against its own will, and to come into gardens and other places, so as to cleanse and carry out all the filth of men, and wash away all defilement, and supply man's need of itself" (*Apol.* 5.1). Aristides also notes the work of artisans (ܐܘܡܢܐ; *Apol.* 5.1), directing the elements by means of channels and aqueducts.[82] Geffcken observes that "Verehrer des Wassers waren besonders die Ägypter;"[83] but the residents of Athens would have been able to observe the construction of the new Hadrianic aqueduct.

Similarly, his comments regarding the wind are reminiscent of the recently established grain dole. The winds "were created by God … that they might transport ships upon the sea; those ships which bring to men their necessary things, from a place where they are found to a place where they are not found" (*Apol.* 5.3). The grain dole, driven by the precarious nature of Athens' grain source and the need for constant supply in light of its new role in the empire, is a prime example of a "necessary thing" being transported to a place where it is not found. Aristides' emphasis that the wind is "created by God" for this purpose, and that it only functions "according to the nod of Him who rules it", situates this necessary element of Hadrian's benefaction squarely under the superintendence of the God of the Christians.

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[81] Philo made a similar argument: "The elements themselves are lifeless matter incapable of movement of itself and laid by the Artificer as a substratum for every kind of shape and quality" (*Vit. con.* 472.4).
[82] Lattke, *Aristides*, 135.
[83] Geffcken, *Zwei griechische Apologeten*, 55

These two examples—aqueducts and sea-trade—are by no means restricted only to Athens. Aristides' use of them in the period where the two elements are tied up in Hadrian's program of benefactions to the city, however, imbues them with more significance. The benefactions, which the Athenians clearly received with gratitude, are here being used to support the apologist's claims for the Christian God.

Greeks

Aristides considers the Greeks to be wiser than the Barbarians; but this means that the Greeks had "erred even more than the Barbarians, in that they have introduced many gods that are made" (*Apol.* 8.1). The apologist's critique follows three cycles of description followed by an assessment of the impact of such beliefs about the gods. Firstly, he gives an overview of the critical problem with the gods, namely that they are morally corrupt, being drawn into sexual immorality, jealousy, thievery and drunkenness; and that they were able to be maimed, imprisoned, and suffer all sorts of other calamities. This flawed morality and susceptibility to change was proof enough for Aristides that the Greek gods "are no gods" (8.2).

What is worse, however, is that the celebration of corrupt characters leads to immorality on the part of those that worship them: "Hence, men have taken occasion to commit adultery and fornication, and to plunder and do everything that is wicked and hateful and abominable" (8.2). Furthermore, Aristides takes an accusation that is commonly laid against the Christians—that their impiety caused all sorts of trouble for society (Tert. *Apol*. XL.1–2)—and turns it against the Greeks, saying that "there have happened to men frequent wars and mighty famines … they do not perceive in their conscience that because of their error these things happen to them" (8.2). This line of argumentation may be derived from 1 Enoch 6–8, which describes the fallen angels teaching humans to make weaponry and makeup leading to godlessness, and Wisdom of Solomon 14.27–28, which states that "the worship of unnamed idols is the beginning, cause and end of all evil."[84]

The second cycle recounts the immorality of Kronos and Zeus. The first had many children, and began to eat them in response to an oracle. He was later bound and castrated by Zeus

[84] Wis. 14:27 – ἡ γὰρ τῶν ἀνωνύμων εἰδώλων θρησκεία παντὸς ἀρχὴ κακοῦ καὶ αἰτία καὶ πέρας ἐστίν. Pouderon and Pierre, *Apologie*, 348.

(9.1). Aristides notes that the followers of Kronos sacrifice their children to him (9.1). Though he does not counter this practice with the Christian opposition to abortion and exposure, as does Athenagoras (*Leg.* 35.6), his later statement about the Christians' celebration of the birth of a child leans in this direction (*Apol*. 15.9). Zeus is deemed unfit for worship because of his many sexual misadventures (9.2). Aristides notes that many people have imitated these gods and committed adultery, incest, homosexuality and patricide (9.3).

The third cycle recounts various traditions concerning other Greek gods, highlighting their moral failings and other ungodlike attributes (10.1–11.6). Each account is punctuated with a statement about how the god's story disqualifies them from being considered a god: for example, regarding Hephaestus, "Is then this god so much in need? Whereas it is impossible for a god to be needy or lame; otherwise he is very weak" (10.1). Again, he finishes with a statement about the corruption of humanity that comes about through such religion (11.7). This concern about "morality from divine imitation is a consistent line of argumentation, both in the negative sense in regards to pagan practice and positive sense in regards to Christian practice."[85]

Egyptians

Within the discussion of the Greeks, Aristides includes a brief excursus on Egyptian religion (*Apol*. 12).[86] In doing so, the apologist engages a common theme that had been used by Greek, Roman, and Jewish writers for centuries before him.[87] The Egyptian cult, particularly its deification of animals, was often targeted as particularly foolish or debased (Philo *Decal*. 76–80; Dio Cass. L.24.6). This did not mean, however, that these cults did not enjoy popularity and acceptance around the Roman world. Rather, as Eric Orlin argues in his article on Octavian's seemingly contradictory banning of foreign cults from the Roman *pomerium* and

[85] Coleman M. Ford, ""They Share Their Food but Not Their Wives": Sexual Holiness as Christian Apologetic in the Second Century," *JDFM* 5, no. 1 (2015): 29.
[86] Bockmuehl notes that Aristides' discussion of the Egyptian gods in connection with the Greek, rather than Barbarian, gods is a sign of their "increasingly respected status." Bockmuehl, *Jewish Law*, 206, n.91.
[87] The most extensive treatment of this theme is K.A.D. Smelik and E.A. Hemelrijk, "'Who Knows Not What Monsters Demented Egypt Worships?' Opinions on Egyptian Animal Worship in Antiquity as Part of the Ancient Conception of Egypt," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt. Teil 2. Band 17.4. Religion (Heidentum: römische Götterkulte, orientalische Kulte in der römischen Welt [Forts.])*, ed. Wolfgang Haase (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1984), 1852–2001.

rebuilding of sancturies even in Rome itself, the condemnation of foreign (particularly Egyptian) cults occurred in the context of social boundary marking.[88] Octavian was careful to demonstrate Rome's welcoming incorporation of a newly conquered region, while also clearly delineating what was, and was not, "Roman".[89]

Another example of this can be found in Plutarch, who expressed ridicule towards the Egyptians (here aligned with "barbarians") because they deified the field-mouse for a "ridiculous reason", namely, that it was blind (*Table Talk* IV.5.2). His posture towards Egypt was part of his efforts to recast the relationship between Greece and Egypt in order to establish Greece's cultural primacy. The relationship between Egyptian and Greek religion, as to who could claim to be the source of wisdom, was a live debate in the period of the Second Sophistic. Herodotus (fifth century BCE) had been favourable towards Egypt, and presented the image of a cultural transmission *from* Egypt *to* Greece (*Persian Wars* II.4, 49, 58, 171).[90] Plutarch accused Herodotus of being "φιλοβάρβαρος", in part because of the historian's claim of Egyptian precedence in religious matters (*Mal. Her.* 12–13 (*Moralia* 857A–E)). The Herodotean narrative was thus challenged by those who would want to champion Greek claims, such as Plutarch (*De Defec. Orac*. 410B–411E) and Philostratus (*Vit. Ap.* 6.11). They portray Greek sages as "exporting" Greek wisdom to places such as Egypt and India, in contrast to Herodotus' narrative of Greeks inheriting wisdom from Egypt, in order to demonstrate the essential Greekness at the centre of the Roman *oikoumene*.[91]

By embedding the Egyptian excursus within his discussion of the Greek religion, Aristides is able to achieve two things. Firstly, in contrast to Plutarch, by placing Egypt within the analysis of Greek religion, Aristides emphasises the close relationship between the two. Whatever the relationship between Greek and Egyptian (barbarian) culture, they are related. For the Christians, who were also tarred with the barbarian brush, the closeness of Egypt to Greece should pave a path of acceptance.

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[88] Eric M. Orlin, "Octavian and Egyptian Cults: Redrawing the Boundaries of Romanness," *AJPhil* 129, no. 2 (2008).
[89] "Egyptian Cults."
[90] Smelik and Hemelrijk, "Demented Egypt," 1873–76.
[91] Daniel S. Richter, *Cosmopolis: Imagining Community in Late Classical Athens and the Early Roman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 192–206.

Secondly, by placing the two alongside one another, Aristides is able to make use of an "if so, how much more" argument in regards to the Greeks: "The Egyptians have erred with a great error, above all peoples … But it is a matter of wonder, O King, concerning the Greeks, whereas they excel all the rest of the peoples … how they have thus gone astray" (*Apol.* 13.1). If the Egyptians are so bad, how much worse is it for the Greeks to have erred in much the same way?

Aristides' utilisation of this critique demonstrates that he was directly engaging the literary and philosophical arguments of his time. Whether his *Apology* ever made it to the emperor or not, he intended it to be more than a popular-level pamphlet. Rather, it was aimed to engage with educated Athenian society.

The Jews

The Greek and Syriac textual traditions differ significantly at the point of Aristides' discussion of the Jews. The Syriac is more positive towards them, acknowledging points of theological agreement: God as one, Creator, omnipotent, and alone worthy of worship (*Apol*. 14.3). He acknowledges that "they appear to be much nearer to the truth than all the peoples" because they worship God but not his works. However, he critiques them on the basis of their observance of the Torah, including "sabbaths and new moons and the passover and the great fast" (14.4).[92]

The Greek, on the other hand, offers an overview of their history, noting their descent from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; their settlement in Egypt; and God's deliverance of them with his "mighty hand and outstretched arm" (ἐν χειρὶ κραταιᾷ καὶ ἐν βραχίονι ὑψηλῷ, *Apol.* 14.2 (Ba)) through Moses their "lawgiver" (νομοθέτου).[93] However, he then enumerates their failings in strong terms: their forgetfulness and lack of gratitude, demonstrated by frequently worshipping (πολλάκις ἐλάτρευσαν) foreign gods, and murdering (ἀπέκτειναν) the prophets and righteous men who were sent to them; and their rejection of Jesus and delivery of him to

[92] Matthew J. Thomas, *Paul's 'Works of the Law' in the Perspective of Second Century Reception* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 131.

[93] Pouderon and Pierre argue that while this historical background does not appear in the Syriac, its presence in both the speech of Barlaam and the speech of Nachor argues for its presence in the original. This seems questionable since the author of *Barlaam and Joasaph* could simply have inserted information from a separate source at both locations. Pouderon and Pierre, *Apologie*, 372–74

Pilate for execution, regardless of his good works and miracles. His conclusion following this is that the Jews still worship the one almighty God, but without knowing him because they reject Christ and are "like the nations" (εἰσὶ παρόμοιοι τοῖς ἔθνεσι, *Apol*. 14.3).[94]

It is noteworthy also that Aristides designates the Jews as "Jews", but notes that their "Lawgiver" (Moses) called them "Hebrews" "but at last they were named Jews" (*Apol.* 2.3 Sy). This seems to be another instance of someone claiming that primordial "Hebrews" were of a purer type of religion, while the "Jews" were corrupted and no longer represented the original.[95] The differentiation between "Hebrews" and "Jews" allows Aristides to acknowledge that Jesus had a Hebrew ethnic origin—he was born to a "Hebrew virgin" (2.4 Sy)—but not let him be tarred with the religious failings of the "Jews".[96] Rather, Jesus is the mediator of the correct understanding of God's commandments, whereas the Jews only fulfil the Law in part but fail to truly know God (*Apol*. 14; 15.3, 8).[97]

This is another instance in which the Jews are critiqued as a corrupted form of an ideal primeval religion. Eusebius expresses this idea when he claims that the Christians share the religion of faith, by which Abraham received a good testimony, which predated Moses' Law: "It must clearly be held that the announcement to all the Gentiles, recently made through the teaching of Christ, is the very first and most ancient and antique discovery of true religion by Abraham and those lovers of God who followed him" (*Hist. eccl.* 1.4.10; cf. Rom. 4:1–12). These ancient saints "had no care for bodily circumcision … the keeping of Sabbaths … nor for

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[94] Pouderon and Pierre (*Apologie*, 58) argue that both the more positive approach to the Jews in the Syriac and the highly critical approach in the Greek were included in the original *Apology*. Rutherford rightly argues against this, saying: "The internal juxtapositions between a favorable analysis of contemporary Jewish morality and confession (14.3 Sy) and a Narrative of Past Jewish Disobedience and blatant rebellion against God (14.2b *Ba*) would have been far too severe to have produced an internally coherent text." Rutherford, "Reinscribing," 83 (capitalisation original).

[95] Lieu, *Image and Reality*, 169–70; Abraham Arazy, "The Appellations of the Jews (IOUDAIOS, HEBRAIOS, ISRAEL) in the Literature from Alexander to Justinian," PhD Diss. (New York University, 1977), 135–37.

[96] Later in 2.4: "This Jesus, then, was born of the tribe of the Hebrews … He was pierced by the Jews." Pouderon and Pierre note this distinction, but question whether it was in the original or a later editorial edition that made it into the Syriac and Armenian textual traditions. *Apologie*, 57, n.3.

[97] Rutherford, "Citizenship."

symbolic ceremony," which only began with Moses (*Hist. eccl.* 1.4.7–8).[98] Aristides aims his critique of the Jews at these same practices: "They too have gone astray from accurate knowledge, and they suppose in their minds that they are serving God, but in the methods of their actions their service is to angels and not God, in that they observe sabbaths and new moons and the passover and the great fast, and the fast, and circumcision, and cleanness of meats" (*Apol*. 14.4 Sy).

This same theme also appears in Strabo's work. He speaks favourably of Moses and describes his successors who followed the same course as "acting righteously and being truly pious" (Οἱ δὲ διαδεξάμενοι … ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς διέμενον δικαιοπραγοῦντες καὶ θεοσεβεῖς ὡς ἀληθῶς ὄντες, *Geogr*. XVI.2.37). Unfortunately, he describes the appointment of superstitious men and tyrants which led to a corruption of the originally praiseworthy religion.[99]

5.2.2.2 Description of the Christians

Despite presenting himself as philosopher, and establishing his definition of God along purely philosophical lines, Aristides' presentation of Christianity is not primarily as a philosophy.[100] After a brief introduction of the Christians in chapter two of his *Apology*, Aristides provides a longer description of them in chapter fifteen. Where the Barbarians, Greeks and Egyptians, and Jews had all fallen short of true knowledge of God, the Christians are those who "know and believe in God, the Maker of heaven and earth, in whom are all things and from whom are all things," furthermore, they "have received [from him] those commandments which they have engraved on their minds, which they keep in the hope and expectation of the world to come" (*Apol.* 15.1). That is, the Christians both know the true God and imitate him rightly.

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[98] Eusebius is not entirely dismissive of Moses, however, since he later numbers him among those who had encountered God: "The Christ of God … appeared to Abraham, addressed Isaac, spoke to Israel, and conversed with Moses and the later prophets" (*Hist. eccl.* 1.4.8).
[99] Strabo's account differs from that found in Exodus–Deuteronomy, but whether his knowledge of the history and traditions is accurate is not relevant to the observation here that he uses the theme.
[100] Pouderon and Pierre, *Apology*, 54–55. Note, however, Aristide's comment that the Christians found the truth by "going about and seeking" (*Apol.* 15.1), language which is echoed in Justin Martyr's description of his philosophical pursuits (*Dial.* 1–9). Marco Rizzi, "Conclusion: Multiple Identities in Second Century Christianity," in *Hadrian and the Christians*, ed. Marco Rizzi (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 144.

Use of Scripture in the Description of the Christians

Aristides' description of the Christians' practices and lifestyle reflects teachings from the Hebrew Scriptures and the teaching of Jesus. He does not explicitly quote any texts, but the language clearly alludes to the Decalogue and the Sermon on the Mount.[101] David Rensberger argued that there are no clear references to Pauline literature in the *Apology*, but Paul Foster has recently argued the case more positively.[102] Foster argues that Aristides likely referenced Rom. 1:23–25 in his critique of the Barbarians (*Apol.* 3.1; 4.1), and Col. 1:16, 17 in his description of God (*Apol.* 1.2).[103] Pouderon and Pierre also identify an echo of Acts 14:15 and 17:24 in the apologist's description of God as "τὸν θεὸν κτίστην καὶ δημιουργόν τῶν ἁπάντων" (God the creator and craftsman of all; *Apol*. 15.3 Ba).[104] These references allow the conclusion that Aristides' thinking was influenced by Paul's writings, and he likely had copies of his letters.[105] These Pauline references are used in his arguments about the nature of God, but not in his description of the Christians.[106]

Teachings from the Old Testament include: "They do not commit adultery or fornication, nor bear false witness, nor embezzle what is held in pledge,[107] nor covet what is not theirs. They honour father and mother … They do not worship idols (made) in the image of man."[108] Jesus' teaching is evident in the statements that, "whatsoever they would not that others should do unto them, they do not to others[109] … And their oppressors they appease and make them their friends; they do good to their enemies."[110] Aristides also claims that "of the food which is consecrated to idols they do not eat, for they are pure" which echoes Paul's teaching regarding food offered to idols in 1 Cor. 10:14–22.

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[101] Pouderon and Pierre, *Apology*, 384–390.
[102] David K. Rensberger, "As the Apostle Teaches: The Development of the Use of Paul's Letters in Second-Century Christianity" (PhD Diss., Yale University, 1981), 105–107; Paul Foster, "The Pauline Writings and the Apology of Aristides," in *The Apologists and Paul*, eds. Todd D. Still and David L. Wilhite (London: Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, forthcoming).
[103] Foster, "Pauline Writings."
[104] Pouderon and Pierre, *Apology*, 385.
[105] Foster seems to favour a "maximalist" position that Paul had Romans and Colossians in their entirety. "Pauline Writings."
[106] By contrast, Athenagoras makes extensive use of Paul in his description of the Christians as well as the more polemical attacks on Greek religion. See §7.3.2.
[107] Deut. 24:10–13; Ezek. 18:7, 12.
[108] Ex. 20:3–17; Deut. 5:7–21.
[109] Matt. 7:12; Luke 6:31.
[110] Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:27

Evidence of New Testament teaching can be found among the comments regarding the treatment of the poor and marginalised. That they "do not turn away their esteem" from widows echoes Paul's instruction to Timothy to "honour widows who are really widows" (1 Tim 5:3), but concern for widows and orphans is found more generally elsewhere (Ex. 22:22; Deut 10:18; Acts 6:1–3; James 1:27). Similarly, the second century Christians emulated the church of the apostolic era by meeting the needs of those who were "imprisoned or afflicted on account of the name of the Messiah" (2 Tim 1:16–17; Heb 10:34; 13:3). Their attitude towards slaves, strangers and children who are fellow believers reveals a unity despite socio-economic differences because they "call them brethren without distinction … brethren after the spirit and in God."

The language of "brothers" (ἀδελφοί, *Apol.* 15.5b [Π^2]; ܐܚܘܬܐ, *Apol.* 15.5b [Sy]) is the most common term that Christ-followers use for one another in the New Testament.[111] Trebilco notes that the "high frequency of ἀδελφοί language was because their powerful experience of community as 'a new family' was also to be distinguished from that of other groups."[112] Philip Harland has also shown that "ἀδελφός/ἀδελφοί" was already used in associations as an indication of group belonging, citing inscriptions from "Greece, Asia Minor, the Greek cities of the Danube and Bosporus, as well as papyri from Egypt."[113] He argues, in reference to Plutarch's *On Brotherly Love*, that "these Greco-Roman family ideals of solidarity, goodwill, affection, friendship, protection, glory, and honour would be the sorts of values that would come to the minds of those who drew on the analogy of family relationships to express connections with other members of the group."[114] This fictive kinship became particularly important in the context of associations because many in the merchant and artisan classes were removed from their natural families due to their relocation or travel, and thus the associations provided a means of connectedness and performance of religious cult.[115]

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[111] Rom. 1:13; 1 Cor. 1:10; 2 Cor. 1:8; Gal. 1:11; Eph. 6:23; Phil. 1:12; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:4; 2 Thess. 1:3; Heb. 13:22; Jas 1:2.

[112] Paul Trebilco, *Self-Designations and Group Identity in the New Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 16–67, here 65–67.

[113] See his extensive discussion of sources in Philip A. Harland, *Dynamics of Identity in the World of the Early Christians: Associations, Judeans, and Cultural Minorities* (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 68–80.

[114] *Dynamics of Identity*, 80–81.

[115] Jonathan Z. Smith, "Here, There, and Everywhere" (unpublished conference paper), quoted in Richard S. Ascough, "A Question of Death: Paul's Community-Building Language in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18," *JBL* 123, no. 3 (2004): 519.

The Need to Read the Scriptures

An important element in Aristides' *Apology* is the call for his audience to read the Christian writings. This call takes two forms. Firstly, he cites Christian texts, especially the Gospels, as powerful sources which should be explored. After giving a summary of Jesus' incarnation, he notes, "This is taught from that Gospel which a little while ago was spoken among them as being preached; wherein if ye also will read, ye will comprehend the power that is upon it" (2.4 Sy).[116] Later, in his concluding chapters, he says, "But their sayings and ordinances … and the glory of their service … thou art able to know from their writings … For truly great and wonderful is their teaching to him who is willing to examine and understand it" (16.3).

Secondly, Aristides points to the reading of the Scriptures as instrumental in his conversion: "but as I have read in their writings, these things I firmly believe" (*Apol.* 16.4). Ian Mills has recently discussed this rhetorical feature of early apologetic texts. In his conclusion, he notes that "the empire was not Christianized by books but by neighbors and, perhaps, the occasional wonder worker. Nevertheless, a variety of ancient testimonia indicate that Christian books did circulate in some philo-barbarian circles of pagan literati."[117] The significance of this is that Aristides' urging of his pagan audience to read the Christian texts is not merely a rhetorical flourish. If he had examined the Christian texts and come to believe them, then it is possible that others would too. This final point highlights an evangelistic element to Aristides' *Apology* that will not be seen in Athenagoras'. While the later apologist more clearly seeks a legal intervention in favour of the Christians, Aristides seems to expect that his "open letter" may encourage the Athenians to faith in God; failing that, at least a more positive opinion of the Christians.

Christians and Associations

[116] Trans. Harris, 36. The Greek text in Barlaam and Joasaph reads: "the glory of whose coming thou mayest learn, O king, by the reading of the holy Scripture, which the Christians call the Gospel, shouldst thou meet therewith." (οὗ τὸ κλέος τῆς παρουσίας ἐκ τῆς παρ᾽ αὐτοῖς καλουμένης εὐαγγελικῆς ἁγίας Γραφῆς ἔξεστί σοι γνῶναι, βασιλεῦ, ἐὰν ἐντύχῃς, *Barl.* 253)

[117] Ian N. Mills, "Pagan Readers of Christian Scripture: the Role of Books in Early Autobiographical Conversion Narratives," *Vigiliae Christianae* 73, no. 5 (2019), 505.

Beyond the possible link in relation to filial language, noted above, there are two further aspects to Aristides' description of the Christians that seem to draw parallels between the church and Graeco-Roman associations.

The Christians and Funerals

Aristides comments on the funerary practices of the Christians, stating that "whenever one of their poor passes from the world, each one of them according to his ability gives heed to him and carefully sees to his burial" (*Apol*. 15.7 Sy and Π^2).[118] This is a parallel to the comment about Jewish burial practices in 14.3: "They have compassion on the poor and ransom the captive and bury the dead."[119] The ethical importance to the Jews of not leaving a corpse unburied can be seen in Josephus' *Against Apion* 2.211, where he notes that included in the "duty of sharing" (ἡ μετάδοσίς ἐστιν ἀναγκαία) was the requirement to "not leave a corpse unburied" (ἄταφον μὴ περιορᾶν). Philo similarly notes "things which belong to unwritten customs and institutions or are contained in the laws themselves," which include that a man "must not debar dead bodies from burial, but throw upon them as much earth as piety demands" (μὴ ταφῆς νεκρὸν ἐξείργειν, ἀλλὰ καὶ γῆς αὐτοῖς ὅσον γε εἰς τὴν ὁσίαν προσεπιβάλλειν, *Hypoth.* 7.7).

The concern within the Christian community for the funerals of their members also reflects the practices of the associations that were a staple feature of ancient civic life. Though some were specifically designated as "funerary associations" (*collegia funeraticia*), these were "a 'legal fiction,' a way of gaining legal recognition to meet as a group while another purpose (usually social) was the primary interest of the group."[120] It was the case, however, that most associations played some role in the funerals of their members. Three Athenian inscriptions honouring certain association officials praise them for fulfilling their responsibilities well, including taking "responsibility for those who had died" (IG II^2 1277; 278 BCE), contributing "the prescribed burial expenses" (IG II^2 1278; 272BCE), and "[paying] immediately the burial expenses for those who have died" (IG II^2 1323; 194BCE). Members of the cult of Meter in the

[118] Opponents of Christianity acknowledged the importance of burial for the Christians, and used this against them by withholding bodies or disposing of them in cruel ways (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.59–63 (Gallic Martyrs); *Mart. Pol.* 17.2). Min Seok Shin has recently argued for the existence of Christian funerary associations by the middle of the third century. Min Seok Shin, *The Great Persecution: A Historical Re-Examination* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2019), 36–40.
[119] Pouderon: "pratiquant la miséricorde envers les pauvres … ensevelissant les morts."
[120] Ascough, "Death," 510–11.

Piraeus also contributed to a common burial fund.[121] As these inscriptions suggest, these associations could pay funerary costs out of the group's funds paid by the members themselves.

This association-sponsored funerary plan was not necessarily a case of generous benefaction. In an inscription of a *collegium* in Lanuvium dedicated to Diana and Antinoüs, in which the rules for members are recorded, "the club granted a fixed amount for the funeral of a paid-up member, with a fee for participants in the funeral procession."[122] The inscription states, "If anyone has not paid his dues for six consecutive months and the common lot of humankind befalls him, his claim to burial shall not be considered, even if he has provided for it in his will."[123]

In contrast to the Lanuvium association's requirement for a "paid-up" membership, Aristides claims that the Christians were particularly concerned to organise the burial of their poor members, even though it meant paying out of their own means. "When one of their poor passes from the world, and any of them sees him, then he provides for his burial according to his ability" (*Apol.* 15.7). A similar action by the treasurer of an association in Piraeus is recorded in a decree from the early second century BCE (IG II^2 1327).[124] Hermaios, the treasurer, is said to have "continually acted piously towards the gods" (εἴς τε τοὺς θεοὺς εὐσεβῶς διατελεῖ, l.5), and generously toward the association members (l.6). One example of this piety and generosity was that "he has paid for the tomb for some who had died when the treasury had no money, so that the deceased might be treated decently even in death" (l.9–12). The association notes that they will honour Hermaios so that others will emulate his behaviour (l.20–22).[125] The Christians, Aristides notes, make a common practice of this type of euergetism. It seems that he would have wanted his audience to understand this action to be one of great piety.

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[121] Lynn E. Roller, *In Search of God the Mother: The Cult of Anatolian Cybele* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 218–24.
[122] Valerie M. Warrior, *Roman Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 35. The inscription she cites is *CIL* 14.2122.
[123] John S. Kloppenborg, "Regulations of the Worshippers of Diana and Antinoüs (136 CE), Lanuvium - Campania," http://www.philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/?p=4043.
[124] Ascough, *Death*, 518; John S. Kloppenborg, "Decree of Sacrificing Associates of the Mother of the Gods (178/177BCE)," http://philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/20-decree-of-the-sacrificing-associates-of-the-mother-of-the-gods/.
[125] ὅπως ἂν ἐφάμιλλον εἶ καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς τοῖς βουλομένοις φιλοτιμεῖσθαι εἰδότας ὅτι χάριτας ἀξίας κομιοῦνται ὧν ἂν εὐεργετήσωσιν τὸ κοινὸν τῶν ὀργεώνων.

Valerie Warrior notes that the provision of funerals for members was particularly significant for those who were not wealthy enough to afford their own burial.[126] Kloppenborg, however, has suggested that this is not necessarily the case. He notes that while the cost of a "normal burial" may range from "100 to 1000 sesterces (i.e. 25–250 denarii)," "burials in simple funerary urns set in the ground … would be even less costly."[127] The association from Lanuvium would pay 250 sesterces for funeral costs of a paid-up member,[128] which suggests the funerals were neither lavish nor budgeted according to the range cited by Kloppenborg. The important outworking of this is that individuals did not only join associations for the benefit of funerary funds—they essentially paid for their own burials through membership fees—but rather for "connectivity and a sense of belonging."[129]

The importance of this sense of belonging is evident in another aspect of assocations' funerary practices. Rules of associations also show that, as well as some financial provision for funerals discussed above, attendance at funerals was an obligation that members were expected to fulfil. The rule of the Iobakchoi (IG II^2 1368), an association devoted to the cult of Bacchus/Dionysos, states, "If an Iobakchos dies, let there be a wreath up to the cost of five denarii and a single jar of wine shall be provided for those who attend the funeral. But no one who is absent from the funeral (itself) shall have any wine." Those who are absent from the funeral miss out on the gift of wine which was included in the formalities. Kloppenborg notes, "The requirement of attendance at a funeral probably … served to reinforce group solidarity and to advertise to onlookers the extent to which *collegiati* could be depended upon for support, in life and in death."[130]

There is some similarity, then, between the Christians and associations in relation to funeral practices. The emphasis in Aristides' statement is on the radical piety and generosity of the Christians paying for those who were unable to cover funerary costs.[131] This sacrificial giving to the needy is also seen in the way that even though some may not have spare food, they

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[126] Warrior, *Roman Religion*, 34.
[127] John S. Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations: Connecting and Belonging in the Ancient City* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 273.
[128] *CIL* 14.2122 l.24–25.
[129] Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations*, 273.
[130] *Christ's Associations*, 267.
[131] Cf. Tert. *Apol.* 39.6. Funds are collected by the church, among other things, "to support and bury poor people."

would "fast two or three days in order to supply to the needy their lack of food" (*Apol*. 15.7). However, the fact that funerary participation signalled the support available within an association is probably relevant to Aristides' choice to mention it in this context. The Christian community's exceptional commitment to its members, that they would pay sacrificially for other members, is meant to impress upon the outside reader the benefits of being part of this Christian group.

"Judges" and the Socio-economic Makeup of the Christian Community

Aristides' description of the Christians shows that the community was made up of representatives from the diverse strata of society. Some were wealthy enough enough to have households which included slaves. Others were not destitute, but if they wanted to share their goods to meet others' needs, they had to go without themselves. Finally, there were the poor, whose needs the Christian community met, including those who had ended up in prison for their faith. The household is a significant part of this description as it praises faithful monogamy within marriage, the honour shown to mothers and fathers, modest daughters, and children and slaves.

One claim that Aristides makes about the Christians is, "When they are judges, they judge uprightly" (*Apol*. 15.4 [Sy]). The Greek text [Ba] reads simply, "They judge uprightly" (δίκαια κρίνουσιν). This statement, in its Syriac form, led Reinhold Seeberg to argue that some of the Christian community held public or civic roles in which they operated in a judicial capacity.[132] He rejects any sense of "internal jurisdiction in the church" because the treatise is "calculated for the understanding of the emperor."[133] Instead, he suggests Aristides would have had in mind the variety of Attic courts, such as those listed by Pausanias who notes different courts for greater or lesser crimes (*Descr. Gr.* 1.28.8).[134]

Geffcken strongly disagreed with Seeberg, contending that "there must have been quite a few Christian judges at the time of Aristides, in order to make such a commendation," but that this

[132] Reinhold Seeberg, "Die Apologie des Aristides," in *Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons und der altkirchlichen Literatur. 5.2*, ed. Theodor Zahn (Erlangen: Deichert, 1893), 299.
[133] "interne Gerichtsbarkeit innerhalb der Gemeinde … für das Verständnis des Kaisers berechneten." Seeberg, "Apologie," 299.
[134] Seeberg, "Apologie," 299, n.1.

would be unlikely because of the "Christian abstinence from all worldly matters."[135] Geffcken may have overclaimed regarding "abstinence" here. Christian texts from the very beginning were quick to note prominent members of society that joined the community of faith, with a stand-out example being Dionysius the Areopagite, one of the first members of the Athenian church.[136]

However, Geffcken also notes that a comment about public offices seems out of place in a list of "purely private virtues."[137] This argument is more telling than the first one mentioned for three reasons. Firstly, the shorter Greek text—δίκαια κρίνουσιν (*Apol*. 15.4 [Ba]) lacks the suggestion that the "judge" role was a formal position.[138] Secondly, the injunction to judge justly has clear precedence in the Scriptures. While references in the Hebrew Scriptures tend to assume a formal authority on the part of the judge (Prov. 31.9, Deut. 1:16–17, Lev. 19:15), the New Testament emphasises judging with right judgement as opposed to judging by appearance (John 7:24; Jas 2:1–7). These assume a moral/relational context rather than a civic/judicial one, and it is worth noting the early Christians were expected to be able to make "legal" judgements among themselves (1 Cor. 6:1–8). Thirdly, the injunction to judge righteously (κρινεῖς δικαίως) also appears in *The Didache* 4.3, in the context of instructions to seek out the community of faith, not to cause division, and to work with their hands; and in *The Epistle of Barnabas* 19.11, similarly in the context of seeking Christian community, working with their hands, and avoiding division.[139]

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[135] "Seeberg, der umständlichen syrischen Übersetzung folgend: 'und wenn sie Richter sind, so richten sie in Gerechtigkeit' gibt sich große Mühe nachzuweisen, daß ein Christ wohl einmal trotz der christlichen Abstinenz in allen weltlichen Angelegenheiten hätte Richter sein können." J. Geffcken, *Zwei griechische Apologeten* (Leipzig/Berlin: B.G. Teubner, 1907), 88.

[136] Neither Lattke nor Pouderon engages this discussion in their commentaries on the *Apology*. Lattke explicitly notes his avoidance of the issue: "In die Diskussion von Seeberg und Geffcken über das Problem, ob in der letzten Feststellung von Richtern "im öffentlichen Sinn des Wortes" (so Seeberg) oder "nur von dem immer wiederkehrenden rein privaten κρίνειν" die Rede ist (so Geffcken), mische ich mich nicht ein." Lattke, *Aristides*, 332.

[137] "Das kann nun angesichts aller der hier aufgezählten reinen Privattugenden kaum möglich sein." Geffcken, *Apologeten*, 88.

[138] Though Seeberg suggests the Greek reconstruction from the Syriac would read, εἰ δὲ κριταὶ, δίκαια κρίνουσιν. He argues that the longer is original because it is more likely that the Greek would drop the first part rather than the Syriac invent it: "Daß der erste Teil des Satzes, der bei G [Ba] fehlt, unecht sei, kann nicht wol angenommen werden, die Auslassung durch G liegt viel näher als eine völlig zwecklose Einschaltung durch den Übersetzer S [Sy]." Seeberg, "Apologie," 298–99.

[139] *Did.* 4.3: κρινεῖς δικαίως, οὐ λήψῃ πρόσωπον ἐλέγξαι ἐπὶ παραπτώμασιν. *Barn.* 19.11: κρινεῖς δικαίως.

The parallels between the passages in *The Didache* and *The Epistle of Barnabas* both reflect the "Two Ways" tradition, a source which both make use of.[140] Aristides' *Apology* does not share the same close parallels, and thus should not be seen to be necessarily dependent on the others. However, concern for "right judgement" within the Christian community in these texts—which are chronologically close to the *Apology*—should lead us to prefer Geffcken's reading over Seeberg's. At this point, Aristides is not saying that some Christians held civic judicial roles—though he is not denying such a situation—but rather he is commenting on the impartiality shown within the Christian community.

It is possible though, as noted above with the concerns about funeral practices, that the reference to judges is another indicator that the Christians operated in some ways like an association. The rule of the Iobakchoi (IG II^2 1368) cites two instances in which a judgement would need to be passed down. The first scenario was if a member was not fulfilling his obligations to meet at appropriate times, to contribute to the funds for wine, and to "speak and act and be zealous for the association" (ἕκαστος ἢ λέγων ἢ ποιῶν ἢ φιλοτειμούμενος, l.45–46). If found guilty he would be excluded from the gathering. In unusual circumstances, such as the member travelling or being in mourning, the priests would render a judgement (κρεινάντων τῶν ἱερέων, l.53).

The second scenario was "if someone comes to blows" (ἐὰν δέ τις ἄχρι πληγῶν ἔλθῃ, l.84). In such a situation, the Iobakchoi would meet and "judge by a vote" (ψήφῳ οἱ ἰόβακχοι κρεινέτωσαν, l.86–87). The penalty was a period of exclusion and a fine up to 25 silver denarii which was to be paid into the common treasury. Those who could receive the penalty included: the offender; the victim if he pursued the issue in the public courts (δημοσίᾳ ἐνκαλέσαν); and the officer in charge of order if he did not remove (ἐκβαλόντι) the pugilists (l.91–95). The second category suggests that the concern was not only for internal order and solidarity, but also for how the association would be perceived by the wider society. This is particularly true for the internal judicial activities themselves, but the more general mimicry

[140] Jonathan Draper notes that "the Two Ways tradition predates its use in both the Didache and Barnabas. However … the relation between the two works … may be more complex than a simple accident of unconnected utilization of the same source." Jonathan A. Draper, "Barnabas and the Riddle of the Didache Revisited," *JSNT* 58 (1995): 112; Michael W. Holmes, ed. *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 247.

of civic roles and institutions that was a common feature of associations was designed to demonstrate the groups' "compliance with civic values."[141]

Drawing these threads together, while Seeberg viewed Aristides' comments to indicate that some Christians were civic judges, it seems more likely in light of New Testament and contemporaneous early Christian texts that he was referring to internal practices. He may have had communal relational dynamics in view, such as the favouritism which was rebuked in James 2:1–7. If the longer reading (in the Syriac) is correct, however, then it is more likely that a formal judicial process is in view. If this is the case, Aristides was using a strategy which was commonly used by associations and guilds. The Christian community had upright judicial processes which, on the one hand, operated to maintain clear communal boundaries and, on the other, functioned rhetorically in his *Apology* to dispel any concerns that the Christians were a subversive group.

Christian access to the wealthy in Asia

The discussion above is not intended to claim that the Christian community in Athens did not have members from the higher levels of Athenian society. Aristides' claim that the Christians had slaves (*Apol*. 15.5) suggests that some of the Christians had some means. Christians were engaging the higher classes in Asia Minor in this period. Oliver makes the argument that Aelius Aristides' *Panathenaic Oration* was shaped in part by the increasingly influential Christian presence in Smyrna, his city of residence.[142] Earlier in the second century, Ignatius of Antioch had stopped in Smyrna on his journey (accompanied by Roman soldiers) to his execution in Rome. The number of letters that he sent during this period—four from Smyrna and three from Troas—shows his active networking among the churches of Asia. It is possible that Lucian's later satire of Christianity, *The Death of Peregrinus*, was in part based on Ignatius, which indicates that his activities on this journey were well known enough beyond Christian circles.[143] Moreover, in his final greetings in his *Letter to Polycarp*, Ignatius says, "I salute …

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[141] Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations*, 279–82, here 280.

[142] The following discussion summarises James H. Oliver, *The Civilizing Power: Study of the Panathenaic Discourse of Aelius Aristides against the Background of Literature and Cultural Conflict, with Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society: Vol 58, Pt 1 (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1968), 34–37.

[143] Cf. McKechnie, *Christianizing Asia Minor*, 75; Allen Brent, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Martyr Bishop and the Origin of Episcopacy* (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 54.

the wife of the procurator," indicating that Ignatius had been in contact with a high-status household in Smyrna, and expected that Polycarp had enough contact to be able to pass on his greetings.[144]

Paul McKechnie argues that Polycarp's access to the higher strata of Smyrnaean society, and beyond, was not limited only to the abovementioned family of the procurator. A letter from Irenaeus to Florinus reveals that both the sender and recipient of the letter had been students of Polycarp, and that at the time Florinus had been "doing outstandingly in the royal palace" (λαμπρῶς πράσσοντα ἐν τῇ βασιλικῇ αὐλῇ, Eus. *HE* 5.20.5). McKechnie notes that, considering Florinus' outstanding performance, "it may be right to surmise that he had a responsible and well-rewarded job."[145]

Another member of the Christian community in Smyrna from a prominent family was a woman named Alce (Ἄλκη). This woman, in her younger years, was spoken highly of by Ignatius who noted that hers was "a name dear to me" (τὸ ποθητόν μοι ὄνομα, *Smyrn*. 13.2; *Pol*. 8.2). In the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 17.2, Alce is revealed to be the aunt of Herodes, the police chief (εἰρήναρχος) who arrested Polycarp; and the sister of Nicetus, who "petitioned the magistrate not to hand over [Polycarp's] body," ostensibly so that the Christians would not "desert the one who was crucified and begin to worship this one." The rarity of the name Alce, and the fact that she and her family are not given much introduction in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, strongly suggest that the earlier and later references to Alce are to the same individual. It seems that Alce was from a family with the wealth and influence for Herodes to take on the civic role that he held; she was converted at some point in her youth; and was well regarded by Ignatius and presumably Polycarp. Her uncle and nephew were strongly opposed to the Christian community, possibly because of Alce's conversion, and yet there is no hint that she abandoned the church in order to fulfil the role of the wealthy Greek woman. As Christine Trevett summarises, Alce "had trodden the boundaries of the Christian and pagan worlds and survived."[146]

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[144] Following here the translation of "τοῦ ἐπιτρόπου" as refering to the title of the Roman official, "of the Procurator", rather than a personal name, "of Epitropus". McKechnie, *Christianizing*, 75–76; Christine Trevett, *Christian Women and the Time of the Apostolic Fathers (AD C.80–160): Corinth, Rome and Asia Minor* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2006), 221–22.
[145] McKechnie, *Christianizing*, 84.
[146] Trevett, *Christian Women*, 223–26, here esp. 226; McKechnie, *Christianizing*, 84.

The strengthening network between Athens and Asia Minor in this period, by way of the Panhellenion, raises the possibility that there may have been some movement of Christians between the different cities. It is possible that Asian Christians may have come Athens and had some influence at various levels of society.

5.3 Conclusion

The early second century was a time of radical transition for Athens. Having been in a depressed state for the first century, benefactions during the Trajanic period, and then much more substantially under Hadrian, reestablished the city as a political and cultural hub. The rise of the early apologists Quadratus and Aristides seems to reflect the development of the city. Aristides in particular entered into the cultural conversation about race and religion in order to favourably present Christianity to his audiences both within and outside the Christian community.

Both apologists were concerned to differentiate the Christians from the Jews. Their concern about this reflects the recent Jewish revolts in 115CE and 132CE, which would have reflected poorly on those with connections to Judaism and Judaea, and which likely caused an influx of refugees from Judaea into Asia Minor and Greece. Quadratus treated this issue in much more defensive terms, trying to clearly demonstrate that the Christians should not be identified with the Jews involved in the Diaspora revolt.

Aristides' purpose was broader than simply differentiating the Christians from the Jews, so they became only one part of his larger project of placing Christianity as superior to all other forms of religion. It was noted above that Aristides utilised language that reflected that of the associations that were common in the cities of the Roman world. Whether the Christian community in Athens was actually modelled along these lines is hard to say, but the apologist certainly seems to have adopted this characterisation in order to present the Christians as an orderly group that would be of benefit to society more broadly.

6. ATHENIAN APOLOGETICS UNDER MARCUS AURELIUS AND COMMODUS

6.1 Introduction

After Hadrian's extensive involvement in Athens, and the crop of apologetic literature that was produced in his reign and early in that of Antonius Pius, another quiet period in the Athenian church—in the sense that we have no extant evidence—lasted from the 140s through to the 170s. Antoninus Pius was far less involved in the city than his predecessor had been. He was honoured by the Athenians around 140CE as a benefactor (IG II^2 3390), possibly for his completion of the aqueduct in that year; it seems that he was the only Antonine emperor not to be initiated in the Eleusinian Mysteries.[1] He wrote a letter to the Athenians around the same time as the inscription was made, but unfortunately the content is lost.[2] Finally, he may also have been responsible for the endowment of a chair of rhetoric,[3] but this may have occurred under Hadrian.[4]

The 160s and 170s were a tumultuous time for the empire more broadly and this was also true for Athens and Attica. For the Christians, it was a time of widespread persecution. The Athenian church suffered along with Christians in Italy, Asia Minor, Gaul, and North Africa. In Athens, the city's third and final apologist, Athenagoras, produced his *Legatio Pro Christianis*. Athenagoras later wrote a treatise concerning the resurrection of the dead. This will be discussed below in relation to its Alexandrian, not Athenian, provenance.

This chapter will begin with an introduction to Athenagoras and his two works, noting especially the different locations of Athenagoras' two writings—the *Legatio* in Athens and *De Resurrectione* in Alexandria—in order to argue that Athenagoras eventually left Athens and played a role in the Christian School in Alexandria. After this, an overview of Athenagoras' cultural moment will be provided, including the impacts of Marcus Aurelius' attention on

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[1] James H. Oliver, "Roman Emperors and Athens," *Historia* 30, no. 4 (1981): 419–20.
[2] *Greek Constitutions of Early Roman Emperors from Inscriptions and Papyri* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1989), 292, no. 134.
[3] Paul Graindor, "Antonin le Pieux et Athènes," *Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 6 (1927): 754.
[4] Bowie, "Teachers and Students," 243.

Athens, the destabilising effects of the Antonine Plague and the Costoboc invasion of Attica, and cultural conversation among the educated elite regarding Hellenism and Barbarism (and Athens' role in that narrative). Athenagoras' *Legatio* will then be discussed, with a particular eye to his description of the Christians. This discussion will note how his apology can be read in light of this cultural milieu and will discuss his use of Hebrew and Christian scripture.[5]

6.2 Athenagoras and His Works

6.2.1 Athenagoras

Athenagoras is described in the title of his *Legatio* as an "Athenian Philosopher and Christian" (Ἀθηναγρόρου Ἀθηναίου Φιλοσόφου Χριστιανοῦ). While this title is the only evidence of Athenagoras' authorship of the *Legatio* within the manuscript itself,[6] two further references confirm the attribution. Firstly, a reference to Athenagoras is found in Methodius of Olympus' (died c.311) work *De Resurrectione* (37.1–2), in which the author identifies the source of a quote from *Legatio* 24 with, "As was also said by Athenagoras" (καθάπερ ἐλέχθη καὶ Ἀθηναγόρᾳ).[7] Secondly, Philip of Side, writing in the fifth century, makes the following statement:

> Athenagoras was the first head of the school at Alexandria; flourishing in the times of Hadrian and Antoninus, to whom he also addressed his *Legatio* for the Christians; a man who embraced Christianity while wearing the garb of a philosopher, and presiding over the academic school. He, before Celsus, was bent on writing against the Christians; and studying the divine scriptures in order to carry on the contest with the greater accuracy, was thus himself caught by the Holy

[5] That is, what would later be included in the New Testament canon.
[6] The earliest extant manuscript is Parisinus Graecus 451, copied by the scribe Baanes in 914CE under the supervision of the Archbishop Arethas.
[7] Portions of Methodius are recorded by Epiphanius (*Haer*. 64.29.1) and Photius (*Bibl.* 234). Full translation from the Paleoslavonic (the only full text) and Greek (fragments) into German is found in the critical edition of Bonwetsch: G. Nathanael Bonwetsch, *Methodius von Olympus* (Leipzig: A. Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung nachf. (Georg Böhme), 1891). Cf. Miroslaw Mejzner, "The Anthropological Foundations of the Concept of Resurrection According to Methodius of Olympus," in *Studia Patristica, Vol. LXV* (Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 185, n.1.

> Spirit, so that, like the great Paul, from a persecutor he became a teacher of the faith which he persecuted. Philip says that Clement, the writer of the *Stromata*, was his pupil, and Pantaenus the pupil of Clement, Pantaenus too was an Athenian, and was a Pythagorean in his philosophy.[8]

This comment appears to confirm Athenagoras' writing of the *Legatio*. Philip's Greek reads, "οἷς καὶ τὸν ὑπὲρ Χριστιανῶν πρεσβευτικὸν προσεφώνησεν," which bears a strong resemblance to the title given on the manuscript of the *Legatio*, "Πρεσβεία περὶ Χριστιανῶν."

The further biographical comments in Philip's record are of varying value. The question of the Athenagoras' residence in Alexandria will be discussed below. The claim that he was a philosopher in the Academic school before his conversion to Christianity would seem to match the eclectic Middle Platonism which characterises his philosophical argumentation in the *Legatio*.[9] Regardless of the specifics of Athenagoras' philosophical training, it is noteworthy that he is characterised as such since this was also the case with Aristides, as seen in the previous chapter.

6.2.2 His Works

Two texts have traditionally been attributed to Athenagoras: the *Legatio pro Christianis* and *De Resurrectione*. All surviving manuscripts of these texts can be traced to one source manuscript, Parisinus 451, which is a collection of early "apologetic" texts. Parisinus 451 was copied by the scribe Baanes under the supervision of Arethas, the Archbishop of Caesarea in around 914CE.[10]

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[8] This translation is taken from L.W. Barnard, *Athenagoras: A Study in Second Century Christian Apologetic* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1972), 13–14.

[9] See more below in 6.2.2.2 and 6.4.1.2. David Rankin, *Athenagoras: Philosopher and Theologian* (London: Routledge, 2016), 7–9; Malherbe, "Structure of Athenagoras, *Supplicatio Pro Christianis*," in *Light from the Gentiles: Hellenistic Philosophy and Early Christianity. Collected Essays, 1959–2012 by Abraham J. Malherbe, Volume 2.*, ed. Carl R. Holladay, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 807–827.

[10] Uta Heil, "Athenagoras," *Brill's New Pauly Supplements I - Volume 2: Dictionary of Greek and Latin Authors and Texts*, English edition by Tine Jerke and Volker Dallman (2009). Consulted online on 01 September 2020 <http://dx.doi.org.simsrad.net.ocs.mq.edu.au/10.1163/2214-8647_bnps2_COM_0038>

Athenagoras addressed his *Legatio* to the emperors Marcus Aurelius and Commodus in 176CE. The broadest possible date range is from 175CE, when Marcus Aurelius took the title "Sarmaticus", to 178CE when the description "profound peace" which Athenagoras uses to describe the empire would have been incongruous with the outbreak of the Germanic war in 178. The choice between 176 and 177 depends on: a) whether Athenagoras actually presented his *Legatio* in the presence of the emperors during their visit to the city in the Autumn of 176; and b) whether Athenagoras would have addressed Commodus as αὐτοκράτωρ before he was granted imperium on 27 November 176. It is probably more likely that Athenagoras wrote the *Legatio* intending to present it before the emperors in September 176.[11]

In the proemium, Athenagoras claims that Christians were not able to enjoy the freedoms that all other residents of the empire enjoyed, regardless of religious or urban affiliation, but rather were being persecuted unjustly on the basis of their name alone (*Leg* 1–2). Appealing to the emperors' "gentle and mild natures, [and] peacableness and humanity (φιλάνθρωπον) toward all," he calls on the emperors to "bring to an end by law the abuse we suffer" (*Leg.* 1.2; 2.1). His argument is structured as three responses to three accusations against the Christians: atheism, Thyestean banquets (cannibalism), and Oedipean unions (incest) (*Leg*. 3). The most important of these three, considering how much space he devotes to each accusation, is the charge of atheism. Tim Whitmarsh has argued that the charge of atheism was a fabrication of the Christians themselves, used in texts such as the *Legatio* to the end that the apologist would refute the charge and turn the accusation against the accusers.[12] This rhetorical ploy of rebuttal and return accusation is certainly put to use in these writings, but Whitmarsh's argument about the fabrication of the accusation is not convincing. For instance, Aelius Aristides dismissed the Christians as impious because "they do not believe in the higher powers" (*Or.* 3.671).

6.2.2.1 Authorship of the Legatio and De Resurrectione

The question whether Athenagoras of Athens authored two works, the *Legatio* and *De Resurrectione*, or only the first of those, is of interest because understanding the authorship

[11] Barnes, "Embassy," 111–114; Birley, *Marcus*, 194; Barnard, *Athenagoras*, 19.
[12] Tim Whitmarsh, "'Away with the Atheists!' Christianity and Militant Atheism in the Early Empire," in *Christianity in the Second Century: Themes and Developments*, ed. James Carleton Paget and Judith Lieu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 281–93.

and provenance of these texts helps to develop a picture of the Athenian church in the late 170s CE. I will argue that that *De Resurrectione*, while Athenagorean, is not Athenian.

Athenagoras' *Legatio* is universally accepted as being penned by the apologist. The authenticity of his treatise *De Resurrectione* had traditionally been argued on the basis of the statement in *Legatio* 37.1, "Let our teaching concerning the resurrection be set aside for the present" (Ἀλλ᾽ ἀνακείσθω μὲν ὁ περὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως λόγος); the shared quotations of 1 Corinthians 15:32 in *Leg*. 12.3 and *De Res.* 19.3, and *Iliad* 16.672 in *Leg.* 12.3 and *De Res.* 16.5; and the similarity of style and vocabulary between the two texts.[13] The claim to authenticity has come under increased scrutiny since the 1950s, when Paul Keseling deemed *De Resurrectione* not to be the work of Athenagoras because of its lack of attestation elsewhere and because he deemed it "not unsuspicious for internal reasons."[14] He did not offer further elaboration on the suspicious internal problems, but in a 1954 article, "Athenagoras or Pseudo-Athenagoras," Robert M. Grant sought to do this very thing.[15]

Grant enumerates a few arguments for claiming the non-Athenagorean authorship of the treatise, before making his primary assertion that *De Resurrectione* was written to counter certain teachings of Origen regarding the resurrection. Problems he identifies include the fact that the assertion of authorship comes in the form of addenda from the hand of one of the two men involved in the production of the manuscript (Par. Gr.451), and not from the text's archetype itself;[16] the difference in understanding of the nature of the resurrection between the two texts;[17] the many terms that are unique to each text (despite the many commonalities in terminology); and the non-importance of the shared quotes of 1 Corinthians and *Iliad*.[18] His assertion that *De Resurrectione* was written to counter Origen's teaching on the resurrection appeals to the treatise's refutations of arguments that may be identified as Origenian, such as

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[13] This list is provided, and problematised, by Bernard Pouderon. Bernard Pouderon, "L'authenticité du traité sur la résurrection attribué à l'apologiste Athénagore," *Vigiliae Christianae* 40 (1986): 227.

[14] "Aus inneren Gründen nicht unverdächtig." Paul Keseling, "Athenagoras," in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum, Band I: A Und O - Bauen: Sachwörterbuch zur Auseinandersetzung des Christentums mit der Antiken Welt*, ed. Theodore Klauser (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1950), 881.

[15] Robert M. Grant, "Athenagoras or Pseudo-Athenagoras," *Harvard Theological Review* 47, no. 2 (1954): 121–29.

[16] "Athenagoras or Pseudo-Athenagoras," 121–22.

[17] "Athenagoras or Pseudo-Athenagoras," 122–23.

[18] "Athenagoras or Pseudo-Athenagoras," 123.

the "chain consumption" argument (*De Res.* 4–9) and Origen's statement that the physical resurrection is an "unworthy idea" (cf. *De Res*. 10).[19]

Grant's arguments have been dismissed summarily by Malherbe,[20] and received longer refutations from Pouderon and Barnard to the same end.[21] Pouderon and Barnard both baulk at the lack of Origen's name anywhere in the treatise, and the lack of robust biblical argumentation against someone with such a reputation as a biblical scholar as Origen held.[22] They also identify numerous points of similarity between the vocabulary, demonstrative method, references of sources, and doctrinal concepts found in the *Legatio* and *De Resurrectione*,[23] suggesting their authorship by the same individual; and similarities between *De Resurrectione* and the philosophical, scientific and theological debates of the late second century.[24] While these arguments do not signal the "end of the quarrel", as Pouderon optimistically claims,[25] they do demonstrate that Grant's arguments were not conclusive, as he later acknowledged.[26]

Further challenges to Athenagorean authorship have come from Nicole Zeegers-Vander Vorst and Nikolai Kiel.[27] While they identify some legitimate difficulties with the argument for authenticity, their arguments for inauthenticity tend to give too little credence to the differences between the two texts in terms of purpose and audience.[28]

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[19] "Athenagoras or Pseudo-Athenagoras," 123–27.
[20] "The reasons advanced for this doubt are not convincing." Malherbe, "Structure," 811.
[21] Pouderon, "L'authenticité," 228–29; Barnard, *Athenagoras*, 28–30.
[22] Pouderon, "L'authenticité," 229; Barnard, *Athenagoras*, 30.
[23] Pouderon, "L'authenticité." 232–241.
[24] Pouderon argues that *De Resurrectione* is a response to Valentinian conceptions of the resurrection: *D'Athènes à Alexandrie: Études sur Athénagore et les origines de la philosophie chrétienne*, Bibliotheque Copte De Nag Hammadi (Louvain: Editions Peeters, 1997), 145–95. Barnard finds parallels with Galen *Nat. Fac.* 1.10, 3.13; Albinus *Epitome* 23.3; and Lucian. Barnard, *Athenagoras*, 30–31.
[25] The subtitle on p.232 reads, "Pour mettre fin à la querelle: étude comparative des deux ouvrages."
[26] "My arguments that it was not Athenagoras are not fully conclusive, as several scholars have insisted." Grant, *Greek Apologists*, 109.
[27] Nicole Zeegers-Vander Vorst, "La paternité Athénagorienne du *De Resurrectione*," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 87, no. 2 (1992): 333–74; Nikolai Kiel, *Ps-Athenagoras De Resurrectione: Datierung und Kontextualisierung der dem Apologeten Athenagoras Zugeschreibenen Auferstehungsschrift*, Vigiliae Christianae Supplements (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 11–60.
[28] Cf. David Rankin's critique of Pouderon and Zeegers-Vander Vorst, in which he acknowledges the legitimacy of Zeegers-Vander Vorst's concern, but ultimately rests on

After summarising the history of research, Kiel attacks the question of authorship from three angles: the manuscript tradition; divergences in content between the *Legatio* and *De Resurrectione*; and differences in style. The noteworthy aspect of the evidence from the manuscript tradition is found in the scholia of Parisinus Graec. 451. The same hand that added the inscription "τοῦ αὐτοῦ" to the title of *De Resurrectione* to identify Athenagoras as the author, describes the author of *De Resurrectione* as ὁ θαυμάσιος οὐτοσὶ καὶ θεῖος ἀνήρ in the scholion to *De Res.* 1.1, and calls Athenagoras ὁ θεῖος Ἀθηναγόρας in the scholion to Eus. *Praep*. 1.3.[29] The repeated reference to Athenagoras as "θεῖος", and the addition of the prescript and subscript that assert Athenagorean authorship, show that the authorship was not in question for Arethas.[30] Whether this is based on the tradition Arethas received, his own reading of *Legatio* 37, or his insight as a Platonic scholar is impossible to determine.[31] As Rankin has observed, even if we cannot know why Arethas attributed the authorship to Athenagoras, the fact that he did so "must count for something."[32]

A further consideration that arises from the manuscript tradition is how the difference in text quality should be interpreted. Grant argues that the differences in textual tradition should lead us to conclude that the two writings circulated separately until the tenth century, and that "either Baanes, or more probably Arethas, was the first to propose Athenagoras as the author of the treatise."[33] On the other hand, Kiel cites Pouderon's suggestion that the different textual traditions may indicate that the two texts were not often published together but were rather usually combined with other works in (separate) thematic collections.[34] Kiel rightly observes that the textual tradition cannot decisively answer the question of

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being "undecided" about the authorship of *De Resurrectione* and thus operates on a *status quo* acceptance of the traditional attribution. Rankin, *Athenagoras*, 17–23 (esp. 19–21).

[29] Folios 348 and 188 of Parisinus Gr. 451; Kiel, *Ps-Athenagoras*, 26–29; Adolf Harnack, *Die Überlieferung der griechischen Apologeten des zweiten Jahrhunderts in der alten Kirche und im Mittelalter* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1991 (1882)), 33, 177.

[30] "Insgesamt gesehen scheinen die Beobachtungen zu den Scholien zu bestätigen, dass die Verfasserangabe von De Resurrectione für Arethas nicht zur Debatte stand, sondern vielmehr von ihm der Tradition entsprechend übernommen wurde." Kiel, *Ps-Athenagoras*, 26.

[31] Kiel considers the first two: *Ps-Athenagoras*, 25–26.; Barnard proposes the third: Barnard, *Athenagoras*, 28.

[32] Rankin, *Athenagoras*, 18.

[33] Grant, "Athenagoras or Pseudo-Athenagoras," 122.

[34] Kiel, *Ps-Athenagoras*, 29.

authorship.[35] The separate tradition may, however, problematise another argument for inauthenticity which notes that Methodius of Olympus quotes Athenagoras' *Legatio* in his own work on the resurrection (*Leg*. 24.2–3 in *De Res*. I.37.1–2), but fails to mention Athenagoras' *De Resurrectione*.[36] If these texts had significantly different histories and circulations, it may be possible that Methodius simply had access to one and not the other.

Kiel's analysis of the differences in content between the two works, which he assesses on the basis of five shared topics that he argues should evidence some similarities, raises pertinent questions but ultimately either expects too much similarity between two works, despite their significantly different audiences and purposes, or does not allow for the possibility of further development in Athenagoras' thought. For example, Kiel, citing *Legatio* 36.2 and *De Res.* 14.6, argues that there is a clear difference between the two texts regarding the "courtroom argument" in relation to the resurrection. He says of *Leg*. 36.2, "The resurrection of the body is mentioned here above all for the purpose of the judgment,"[37] and, "the otherworldly κρίσις still provides the main reason for the resurrection."[38] In *De Res.* 14.1–6, on the other hand, the author says that in arguing the case for the resurrection, the two most important arguments are based on the creator's intention in creating men (*De Res.* 14.4; *De Res.* 12–13), and the nature of created men (*De Res.* 14.4; *De Res.* 15–17). The "third argument", which consists of "a consideration of the reward or punishment owing each man in accordance with just judgement and the end that befits human life" (*De Res.* 14.5), should not be used on its own to justify the resurrection, but should only be used as a lesser support of the two "primary" arguments. The author even acknowledges "the many" who solely rely on this third argument, "thinking that the resurrection must take place because of the judgement," and describes this thinking as "a falsehood" (ψεῦδος) because there will be innocents who will be raised but not judged, thus proving that the resurrection cannot only be for the purpose of judgement (*De Res*. 14.6). Kiel then places the *Legatio* alongside other apologists who argue

[35] *Ps-Athenagoras*, 29. Cf. L.W. Barnard, "Athenagoras: De Resurrectione. The Background and Theology of a Second Century Treatise on the Resurrection," *Studia Theologica* 30, no. 1 (1976): 38.
[36] Athenagoras, *Legatio and De Resurrectione*, xxv; Rankin, *Athenagoras*, 18. The version of Methodius' *De Res.* that was consulted here was from the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* series: Methodius, "From the Discourse on the Resurrection," in *Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6.*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Cox (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 364–77.
[37] "Von der Auferstehung des Leibes ist hier vor allem zum Zwecke des Gerichts die Rede." Kiel, *Ps-Athenagoras*, 47.
[38] *Ps-Athenagoras*, 48.

for the resurrection based on the need for judgement afterwards (citing Justin, *1 Apol*. 52.3; Tatian, *Oratio* 6.1; Theophilus, *Ad Aut.* 1.14.4–6; Tertullian, *Apol*. 48.12 and *De Res.* 14.8).[39]

Kiel is correct in identifying a difference in the two treatments of the courtroom argument, but the main weakness in his argument is that in the *Legatio* 36.1–2, Athenagoras is not arguing a case for the resurrection. The emphasis of his point is that the Christians do not practice cannibalism because they believe they will face a judgement, and the resurrection has an instrumental role in this judgement. He is not arguing a case for the resurrection, as the author of *De Resurrectione* clearly is, but rather is arguing a case for the Christians' moral lifestyle. While you cannot argue for shared authorship of these two texts based on the use of this courtroom argument, you also cannot use the differences between the two as proof of separate authorship, as Kiel tries to do.[40]

The discussion around the Athenagorean authorship of *De Resurrectione* is problematised by the distinctly different purpose and tone of the two texts. While the *Legatio* has an apologetic purpose, and is addressed to the emperors in order to elicit a response to the plight of the Christians (*Leg.* 2.1–6), *De Resurrectione* is a philosophical/theological treatise which has a mixed audience in mind (those who "disbelieve or dispute" the doctrine, and those who are "well disposed to the truth"; 1.3). It is difficult to draw meaningful comparisons between the discussion of the resurrection in the *Legatio*—where it is a small part of a larger argument directed towards a hostile audience—and the fully developed treatment found in *De Resurrectione*. Furthermore, it is clear that *De Resurrectione* is not the fulfilment of Athenagoras' statement in *Legatio* 37.1, "Let our teaching concerning the resurrection be set aside for the present." If Athenagoras had been interested in writing a fuller treatment of the resurrection *for the emperors* (which his vague statement in 37.1 is *not* a promise to do), *De Resurrectione* is not that treatise. However, it is plausible that Athenagoras was interested in the arguments around the resurrection, and *De Resurrectione* is a philosophical treatise, or perhaps speech, which he did produce later but in a different context.

In his recent monograph on Athenagoras, David Rankin surveyed the arguments of Bernard Pouderon and Nicole Zeegers-Vander Vorst regarding the Athenagorean authorship of the *Legatio* and *De Resurrectione*. Kiel's monograph had not been published when Rankin wrote

[39] *Ps-Athenagoras*, 48.
[40] *Ps-Athenagoras*, 50.

his own, which is why I have discussed Kiel in more detail above. Rankin's conclusion was that neither argument ultimately wins the day; he is not convinced by either Pouderon or Zeegers-Vander Vorst. As a result, he accepts the traditional attribution of Athenagoras' authorship of *De Resurrectione*, but with some reservation, and rests most of the weight of his discussion of Athenagoras on the *Legatio* rather than *De Resurrectione*. I agree with Rankin that the arguments for or against Athenagoran authorship of the treatise cannot be supported to a sufficient degree for either side to be proven conclusively, and am willing to accept the traditional attribution of the treatise to Athenagoras. There is, however, a further element to *De Resurrectione* which is pertinent to the consideration of Christianity in Athens, which will be discussed below.

6.2.2.2 De Resurrectione in Alexandria?

In the varying arguments regarding the authorship of *De Resurrectione*, a repeated theme is that the treatise, much more so than the *Legatio*, exhibits a connection with Alexandria. R.M. Grant makes the connection in an almost throw-away comment toward the end of his article. He notes, "When he says that the commandments of the decalogue 'cannot without absurdity be spoken to or understood of souls' (*De Res*. 23.4), it is obvious he is writing against some Alexandrian theologian, since Clement of Alexandria so understood them."[41]

L.W. Barnard is favourable towards placing Athenagoras in Alexandria as per Philip of Side's record. He argues this on three counts. Firstly, he considers the mention of camels in *De Resurrectione* 12.2 to suggest that Athenagoras was in Alexandria at the time of writing this treatise because "the camel was unknown in Greece and Asia Minor but in Egypt it was used in the postal service and would have been a familiar sight."[42] Secondly, he notes that "the Alexandrian writer Boethus, according to Photius, dedicated his treatise '*Difficult Expressions in Plato*' to a certain Athenagoras. It seems possible that this is our apologist as elsewhere in his work Photius mentions Athenagoras the apologist unmistakeably and without giving him

[41] Grant, "Athenagoras or Pseudo-Athenagoras," 127.
[42] Barnard, *Athenagoras*, 15. He notes later (p.30) that *De Resurrectione*'s form as a public lecture, and its address to sceptics and doubters, suggest "the hand of one accustomed to give lectures in rhetoric and would certainly fit the connexion with the Alexandrian catechetical school."

a qualifying title."[43] Finally, he suggests that another minor indicator may be Athenagoras' use of the "Philonic terms ἔνθεον πνεῦμα and ἔκστασις λογισμοῦ" in *Legatio* 9.2.[44]

David T. Runia also identifies the use of "*verba Philonica*" in Athenagoras' writings, but he is rightly sceptical of Barnard's final argument, saying, "The argument's method is sound, but the parallels, though not without interest, are of insufficient precision and weight to sustain it."[45] Although Athenagoras' use of ἔνθεον πνεῦμα is close to Philo's (*De Decal.* 35.175), with both talking about God's use of a person to give his prophetic message, his use of ἔκστασις λογισμοῦ differs. Where Philo uses the phrase to describe the madness that overcomes some people when they drink too much strong drink (*De Vit Cont.* 5.40), Athenagoras uses it to describe the way that the prophets were moved by the Spirit "in the ecstasy of their thoughts". In the context of arguing for the trustworthiness of the prophetic message, it does not seem likely that Athenagoras was deliberately, or "directly,"[46] borrowing Philo's terminology. As well as this, the same terminology is found in Plutarch (*Sol*. 8.1) and Josephus (*Ant*. 17.247), so it cannot be guaranteed that Philo is Athenagoras' source for this phrase.

Despite his disagreement with Barnard on the possible use of Philonic terminology in the *Legatio*, Runia argued that some *verba Philonica* could be found in *De Resurrectione*. In particular, he identifies Athenagoras' use of the word ἀγαλματοφορεῖν (*De Res.* 12.6), which is only otherwise found in Philo and in later Patristic writers, but not the pagan literature before Athenagoras' time.[47] He also notes the use of συνδιαιωνίζειν in *De Res.* 12.6, 15.8 and 25.4, another word which is found in Philo (but not contemporary pagan sources) and later patristic writing.[48] Runia emphasises Philo's location in Alexandria, and that the next known source for each term (if one does not yet count Athenagoras) is an Alexandrian patristic writer—Origen and Athanasius respectively.[49]

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[43] *Athenagoras*, 16.
[44] *Athenagoras*, 16.
[45] David T. Runia, "Verba Philonica, Ἀγαλματοφορεῖν, and the Authenticity of the *De Resurrectione* Attribute to Athenagoras," *Vigiliae Christianae* 46 (1992): 324.
[46] Cf. Barnard's comment that the "*direct* use of Philo by early Christian writers seems to have been confined to those associated with Alexandria." Barnard, *Athenagoras*, 17.
[47] Sixteen times in Philo compared to ten times (total) in Athenagoras, Origen, Eusebius, John Chrysostom, Nilus and Leontius. Runia, "Verba Philonica," 317, 19–20.
[48] "Verba Philonica," 324.
[49] "Verba Philonica," 319, 24.

This Alexandrian influence in *De Resurrectione* is interpreted in varying ways, often in accordance with the amount of recognition a scholar is willing to give to Philip of Side's record of Athenagoras. Runia rejects Philip's record, favouring the traditional location of Athenagoras in Athens, and thus argues that the apologist could not have written *De Resurrectione* and that it must have been written at a later time:

> Since there is no evidence of any connection with Alexandrian theology in Athenagoras' *Legatio*, and any connections of the Apologist with the city are entirely speculative, the probability is, in our view, in favour of the second horn of the dilemma, namely that the *De resurrectione* is not his and not to be dated to the second century, but rather to a later period, when the tradition of Alexandrian theology, decisively influenced by the reception of the Philonic corpus, spread out from Alexandria to a wider audience in the early Christian world.[50]

As outlined above, Barnard is favourable towards the Alexandrian connection mentioned in Philip of Side's record. While he does not directly comment on the location of the *Legatio*, he suggests that Athenagoras may have been motivated to write the *Legatio* on the basis of Marcus Aurelius' "magnanimity and moderation" and "philosophic bearing" when in Alexandria shortly after the city had aligned with Cassius, the Governor of Syria, in his rebellion against the emperor.[51] Regarding *De Resurrectione*, he asserts that "the work, *in its present form*, was intended as a public lecture," which "would certainly fit the connexion with the Alexandrian catechetical school."[52] It can be seen here that Barnard, who holds to the shared authorship of both texts, identifies the Alexandrian connection more clearly with *De Resurrectione* than with the *Legatio*.

Rankin, who gives "virtually no credibility at all to Philip's testimony,"[53] firmly states that "it is time … to take more seriously the description 'the Athenian' and the suggestion of Athenagoras' probable engagement with the Athenian Middle Platonist scholarship of his era."[54] It is interesting to note that Rankin differentiates between the *Legatio* and *De Resurrectione*, arguing that it is "difficult to explain" how the writer of the *Legatio* could be

[50] "Verba Philonica," 324.
[51] Barnard, *Athenagoras*, 24.
[52] *Athenagoras*, 30.
[53] Rankin, *Athenagoras*, 6.
[54] *Athenagoras*, 9.

Alexandrian but exhibit no knowledge of Philo's works,[55] but willing to concede a potential visit to Alexandria by Athenagoras on the basis of the *verba Philonica* that were identified by Runia in *De Resurrectione*.[56]

Bernard Pouderon is convinced by both Barnard's and Runia's arguments regarding Philonic language in the *Legatio* and *De Resurrectione*, and cites Runia's article as the factor that led him to fully accept Philip of Side's statement that Athenagoras was the first head of the catechetical school at Alexandria.[57] Pouderon had already argued vigorously for the Athenagorean authorship of both texts, and thus the Philonic language in the texts pushed him to accept an Alexandrian location for the apologist. He also argues that *De Resurrectione* could have been prepared in response to Valentinian teaching on the resurrection in such texts as *The Treatise on the Resurrection*, *The Gospel of Truth*, and *The Gospel of Philip*.[58] He concludes that Athenagoras originated in Athens, was involved in a "Christian school" there, but relocated to Alexandria for unknown reasons which may have included "the increase of persecutions … which Alexandria, city of religious syncretism, was able to escape for a time; the necessity of channeling … Egyptian theological speculation … [and] fighting the gnostic influence; and finally, the intellectual decline of Athens, whose influence diminished in favour of its Egyptian rival."[59]

Pouderon also argues that the *Legatio* should be connected to Alexandria, noting that "The *Supplicatio* expresses a particular interest in Egyptian religion, its gods and its places of worship" (La *Supplique* manifeste un intérêt particulier pour la religion égyptienne, ses dieux et ses lieux de culte; p.372), no doubt in reference to Athenagoras' disparaging comments about Egyptian religious practices in *Leg.* 14.2 and his comments on the Greeks inheriting the names of their gods from the Egyptians in *Leg.* 28. These references, however, do not necessarily support an Alexandrian location for the *Legatio*. Athenagoras' knowledge of Egyptian practices in chapter 14 could be gained anywhere in the Mediterranean world, even

[55] *Athenagoras*, 9.
[56] *Athenagoras*, 10.
[57] Pouderon, *D'Athènes à Alexandrie*, 372.
[58] *D'Athènes à Alexandrie*, 145–95.
[59] " La recrudescence des persécutions… et auxquelles Alexandrie, ville de syncrétisme religieux, a pu échapper un temps ; la nécessité de canaliser… la spéculation théologique égyptienne… de lutter contre l'influence de la gnose ; enfin, le déclin intellectuel d'Athènes, dont le rayonnement diminuait alors au profit de sa rivale égyptienne." *D'Athènes à Alexandrie*, 375.

by the presence of Egyptian cults in Athens itself,[60] and his argumentation in chapter 28 is heavily dependent on the writings of Herodotus. The relationship between Egyptian and Greek religion, as to who could claim to be the source of wisdom, was a live debate in the period of the Second Sophistic, with the Herodotean narrative being challenged by those who would want to champion Greek claims, such as Plutarch (*De Defec. Orac*. 410B–411E) and Philostratus (*Vit. Ap.* 6.11). Daniel Richter argues that Plutarch and Philostratus portray Greek sages as "exporting" Greek wisdom to places such as Egypt and India, in contrast to Herodotus' narrative of Greeks inheriting wisdom from Egypt, in order to demonstrate the essential Greekness at the centre of the Roman *oikoumene*.[61] Athenagoras, on the other hand, can use Herodotus' narrative to undermine Greek religion in order to present the superiority of Christianity.

Other suggestions about the provenance of the *Legatio* have included suggestions of Corinth and Asia Minor. Louis Ruprecht Jr. has suggested that Athenagoras was located in Corinth, based on the apologist's discussion, in *Legatio* 17, of local Corinthian art which is not referred to elsewhere (not even in Pausanias with whom Athenagoras shared many details in his treatment of art history).[62] R.A. Knox, followed by W.H.C. Frend, has used similar reasoning to locate Athenagoras in Asia Minor, noting that "he tells us about alleged heathen miracles at Parion, on the Hellespont, and about a certain Nerullinus, elsewhere unheard of, who had erected an oracular statue at Troas."[63] Since these "elsewhere unattested local references" that Ruprecht and Knox identify lead to differing conclusions regarding location, it is better to understand them as indicating either that Athenagoras was well travelled (at least in Greece and Asia Minor) with a keen interest in art and sculpture and its lore, or that these stories were more widely known in Athenagoras' day than we can ascertain through the literature still extant today.

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[60] Regarding Egyptian cults in Athens, the cults of Isis and Serapis both had a presence in Athens: Paus. *Descr. Gr.* 1.18.4; Ronda R. Simms, "Isis in Classical Athens," *The Classical Journal* 84, no. 3 (1989): 216; Susan Walker, "A Sanctuary of Isis on the South Slope of the Athenian Acropolis," *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 74 (1979): 244.
[61] Daniel S. Richter, *Cosmopolis: Imagining Community in Late Classical Athens and the Early Roman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 192–206.
[62] Louis A. Ruprecht Jr., "Athenagoras the Christian, Pausanias the Travel Guide, and a Mysterious Corinthian Girl," *Harvard Theological Review* 85, no. 1 (1992): 35–49.
[63] R.A. Knox, *Enthusiasm. A Chapter in the History of Religion: With Special Reference to the XVII and XVIII Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), 42. Cf. W.H.C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church* (Cambridge: James Clark & Co., 1965), 285–86.

The Alexandrian elements with *De Resurrectione*, then, have been interpreted as evidence of the inauthenticity of the attribution of Athenagorean authorship, evidence of Athenagoras having briefly sojourned in Alexandria, and (alongside purported Alexandrian influences in the *Legatio*) evidence that the two texts both had an Alexandrian provenance. The majority of the scholars surveyed above recognised that the connection to Alexandria is much clearer in *De Resurrectione*, whereas any connection between the *Legatio* and the city is significantly more questionable. The question remains as to whether there is anything within the *Legatio* that clearly indicates a connection to Athens.

Athenian elements in the Legatio

Athenagoras' *Legatio* has traditionally been understood as emanating from Athens because of the identification of Athenagoras as an "Athenian Philosopher and Christian" (Ἀθηναγόρου Ἀθηναίου φιλοσόφου χριστιανοῦ). Three lines of evidence support this understanding. Firstly, Athenagoras engages with discussions on the nature of God which were current within the Athenian Middle Platonist movement in the period. Secondly, localised persecution in Athens as evidenced by Dionysius' letter to the Athenians (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 4.23.3) provides a realistic context in which Athenagoras could have written the plea. And thirdly, Athenagoras' different perspective on the slaves' testimonies evidences either a different local experience of persecution in Athens, as opposed to Rome and Gaul (Justin, *2 Apol*. 12.4; Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.14), or a rhetorical strategy which was reminiscent of the use of βάσανος (the torture of slaves to gain a trustworthy testimony) in Athenian legal procedures, or perhaps both.

Middle Platonists

Another aspect of the *Legatio* that suggests an Athenian provenance is Athenagoras' engagement with questions about the nature of God that were current among Athenian Middle Platonists throughout this period. Philip of Side, in the note quoted above, claimed that Athenagoras, prior to his conversion to Christianity, presided over the Academy, and alluded to his being an Athenian by noting that Pantaenus "too was an Athenian". While it is unlikely that there was a formal Platonic school in Athens between Sulla's attack on Athens in 86BCE, before which the head of the Academy had fled to Rome, and Marcus Aurelius' establishment of the four endowed chairs of philosophy in 176CE, there were a number of Platonic teachers that had smaller, more informal "schools" that they operated out of their

own houses.[64] While Philip's claim that Athenagoras presided over the Academy is thus unlikely, as is his assertion that the apologist was the first head of the catechetical school in Alexandria, it is believable that he did have some training under a Platonic teacher. Malherbe has demonstrated that Athenagoras used a similar structure of argument to that found in the Middle Platonist Alcinous' summary of Plato's teaching.[65]

David Rankin has argued more specifically that the apologist seems to be writing in an Athenian Middle Platonist milieu because the discussion about the nature of God engages that found in the philosophy of such Athens-connected individuals as "Plutarch, Nicostratus, Calvenus Taurus, Atticus, Harpocration and Severus."[66] While Plutarch and Atticus "identify the supreme divine entity with the Creator-Father entity of the *Timaeus*," Harpocration "distinguishes the two."[67] Athenagoras uses Plato's statement, which he understands as unifying the two, to support his own arguments for the oneness of God: "So then, Plato says, 'It is a hard task to find the Maker and Father of this universe, and having found him it is impossible to declare him to all.' Here he understands the uncreated and eternal God to be one" (*Leg*. 6.2).

Rankin also observes that Plutarch, Atticus and Nicomachus "distinguish the God-Father-Creator from the Logos … So rather than seeing the Logos as merely an attribute or aspect of…God, they propose the logos as an entity distinct from, though subordinate to him."[68] Athenagoras argues a trinitarianism along these lines, saying that "the Son of God is the *Logos* of the Father in Ideal Form and Energizing Power; for in his likeness and through him all things came into existence, which presupposes that the Father and Son are one … Who then would not be amazed if he heard of men called atheists who bring forward God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit and who proclaim both their power in the unity and their diversity in rank?" (*Leg*. 10.2, 5).

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[64] John M. Dillon, "The Academy in the Middle Platonic Period," *Dionysius* 3 (1979): 63–77.
[65] Malherbe, "Structure of Athenagoras," 807–27.
[66] Rankin, *Athenagoras*, 7.
[67] *Athenagoras*, 7.
[68] *Athenagoras*, 8. Rankin acknowledges (p.8, n.22) that it could be argued that Philo was a potential source for Athenagoras on this point, though he notes that "much divides Athenagoras and Philo," and is willing to concede that Athenagoras may "have spent some time in Alexandria."

Finally, Rankin says that locating Athenagoras within this context makes sense of his comment in *Legatio* 7.2. The apologist notes that the "poets and philosophers have gone at this and other matters by guesswork … That is why they all came up with different doctrines concerning God, matter, the forms, and the world." The four areas of interest "are the very issues at the heart of Middle Platonist discourse in the first and second centuries of the Common Era."[69]

There is a further link with Athens in this section of the *Legatio*, in that Athenagoras echoes Paul's speech on the Areopagus in his description of the poets and philosophers' efforts. He states that each of them was "moved by his own soul through some affinity with the breath (πνοῆς) of God to seek (ζητῆσαι), if possible, to find (εὑρεῖν) and understand (νοῆσαι) the truth" (7.2). In Acts 17:25–27, Paul says that God gave humans "life and breath (πνοὴν) and everything" and had determined the periods and boundaries of the nations, "so that they would search (ζητεῖν) for God and perhaps grope for him and find (εὕροιεν) him." Athenagoras' use of this passage of Acts does not necessarily indicate that he himself is in Athens, but he may have found Paul's comments, made in Athens, on the seemingly hopeful but ultimately futile efforts of the nations to seek God, to be apt language to apply to his own Athenian interlocutors.

Localised Persecution

Grant and Pouderon both make passing references to Dionysius of Corinth's letter to the Athenians (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 4.23.2–3). Grant, placing Dionysius a few years before Athenagoras, does not mention the theme of persecution that arises in the letter but rather notes its reference to Dionysius the Areopagite.[70] The question of dating will be discussed below, and will show that Dionysius likely wrote after Athenagoras. Pouderon refers to the letter in conjunction with *Hist. eccl.* 4.26.10 and 6.1, which record persecutions in Athens under Antoninus Pius and in Alexandria under Severus.[71] The significance of the letter is that it describes intense persecution in Athens, thus offering a local context in which to place Athenagoras' *Legatio*, rather than viewing it as a general apologetic work.

[69] *Athenagoras*, 9.
[70] Grant, *Greek Apologists*, 106.
[71] Pouderon, *D'Athènes à Alexandrie*, 375, n.65.

Eusebius describes Dionysius' letter as a "call to faith and to life according to the gospel" (*Hist. eccl.* 4.23.2), in which the bishop rebukes the Athenians as "all but apostates from the truth" (ἂν μικροῦ δεῖν ἀποστάντας τοῦ λόγου) because they "despised" (ὀλιγωρήσαντας) the truth as a result of severe persecution, including the martyrdom of their bishop, Publius. Part of the occasion of Dionysius' writing is the recent appointment of a new bishop, Quadratus, whom Dionysius commends for gathering the church (διὰ τῆς αὐτοῦ σπουδῆς ἐπισυναχθέντων, *Hist. eccl.* 4.23.3) which had been scattered. Dionysius is known to have been active from the late 160s through to the mid-170s, because he wrote to the Bishop Soter of Rome whose ministry is known to belong to that time, but since the next known bishop of Corinth is Bacchylus (who was in the role in the tenth year of Commodus, c.188/89), it can be cautiously accepted that Dionysius was bishop into the 180s.[72]

The ways that Athenagoras describes the persecution of the Christians portrays a similar experience to that alluded to in Dionysius' letter, though it seems likely that the bishop's letter reflects a slightly later and more intense period of persecution. Athenagoras describes the Christians as being "driven to and fro and persecuted" (ἐλαύνεσθαι καὶ φέρεσθαι καὶ διώκεσθαι, *Leg.* 1.3), which may reflect the segmenting of the Christian community under persecution, mirroring the "gathering" that happens under Quadratus, or simply the experience of being harried and pressured in a way they could not control.

He also notes that the persecution affects the Christians' "goods" (χρήματα), "civic standing" (ἐπιτιμίαν), and also, when their property is gone, it affects their "bodies and souls" (τὰ σώματα καὶ τὰς ψυχάς, *Leg.* 1.4). This reference to "bodies and souls" refers to the entirety of the human self, since Athenagoras talks about the body and soul both facing God's judgement (*Leg.* 36), and thus he may here be referring to the deaths of Christians. The apologist elsewhere appeals for the emperors to bring "an end to our slaughter at the hands of lying informers" (ὅπως παυσώμεθά ποτε ὑπὸ τῶν συκοφαντῶν σφαττόμενοι, *Leg.* 1.3), and mentions the Christians' confidence in the face of this threat, saying, "We do not think that we shall suffer so great an evil here below, even if they rob us of our lives (κἂν τῆς ψυχῆς ἡμᾶς

[72] Cavan Concannon, *Assembling Early Christianity: Trade, Networks, and the Letters of Dionysios of Corinth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 3–4; Karl Leo Noethlichs, "Korinth - Ein "Aussenposten Roms"? Zur kirchengeschichtlichen Bedeutung des Bischofs Dionysius von Korinth," in *Hairesis: Festschrift für Karl Hoheisel zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Manfred Hutter, Wassilio Klein, and Ulrich Vollmer, Jahrbuch Für Antike Und Christentum. Ergänzungsband 34 (Münster: Aschendorff, 2002), 234.

ἀφαιρῶνταί τινες), that it may be compared to what we shall gain beyond from the great Judge in return for a way of life that is gentle, affectionate, and kind" (*Leg.* 12.1). Later, he notes regarding the persecutions that "evil has habitually opposed virtue" (*Leg*. 31.1), and likens the Christians' experiences to those of Pythagoras (who was "burned to death"), Heraclitus and Democritus (who were "driven out"), and Socrates (who was condemned to death) (*Leg*. 31.2). However, he then gives a softer picture of the persecution, saying, "But just as they were no worse in the scale of virtue because of the opinion of the crowd, neither does the *indiscriminate slander of a few cast any shadow upon the uprightness of our life*" (*Leg.* 31.2). Athenagoras expects the deaths of Christians to be a consequence of these persecutions, and may allude to this having already happened, but he does not emphasise this in his descriptions of the Christians' plight. He does not, like Justin Martyr and the letter from the Gallic Christians (*2 Apol.* 2; Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.37–40; 47–56), identify specific instances of executions of believers.

If Athenagoras' comment on "bodies and souls" does refer to the death of some Christians, his statement seems to stand in contrast to Jesus' warning in Matt. 10:28, "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, fear him who can destroy both body and soul in hell." The apologist's understanding of the future resurrection and judgement are in accord with the second half of Jesus' warning, but where Jesus argues that opponents cannot affect the soul, Athenagoras says that they can. The apologist's argument in *Legatio* 27, regarding the influence of demons on "weak and docile" souls, may be instructive here:

> First, that the movements of the soul not directed by reason but by fantasy in the realm of conjectures derive various images, now one, now another, from matter or simply mould them independently and give birth to them. A soul experiences this especially when it attaches itself to the spirit of matter and blends with it, when it does not look up to heavenly things and their Maker but down to earthly things, or, in general terms, when it becomes mere blood and flesh and is no longer pure spirit … When the soul is weak and docile, ignorant and unacquainted with sound teaching, unable to contemplate the truth, unable to understand who the Father and Maker of all things is—when such a soul has impressed upon it false opinions concerning itself, the demons associated with matter, because they are greedy for the savour of fat and the blood of the sacrifices … flood them with illusory images (*Leg.* 27.1–2).

The soul, when it has stopped focusing on its Maker, is susceptible to demonic influences that inspire idol worship. If Athenagoras had this aspect of the soul's activity in mind when thinking of the effect of persecution on the soul, it may be that he is alluding to Christians having turned from the faith back to Graeco-Roman worship practices in order to avoid further persecution. Such a scenario would align with Dionysius' reading of the Athenian Christians as having "despised" the "life according to the gospel" (*Hist. eccl.* 4.23.2), which Dionysius notes was particularly evident "since the martyrdom of Publius."

The above comparison between the *Legatio* and Dionysius' letter to the Athenians, showing similar concerns about persecution, death and faithlessness, illustrates that Athenagoras may not have been writing only a general plea on behalf of Christians but a plea instigated by the persecution of the Athenian Christians.

In his note on Dionysius' letter, noted above, Pouderon draws the inference that the "Christian school in Athens", primarily identified with Athenagoras, may have relocated to Alexandria during the 170s at least in part because of the persecution in Athens and relative peace enjoyed (until the Severan period) in Alexandria.[73] He suggests that Athenagoras moved to Alexandria, where he then penned the *Legatio*. This relocation, related to the experience of persecution, is especially plausible when considered alongside the clear Alexandrian elements of Athenagoras' *De Resurrectione*.

I would disagree with Pouderon, however, regarding the provenance of the *Legatio*. Based on the arguments above, such as the lack of convincing Alexandrian elements in the *Legatio* and the rhetoric that fits the Athenian context, it seems more likely that Athenagoras wrote the plea from Athens before then fleeing to Alexandria. This is even more the case if we are to understand that Athenagoras was genuinely appealing to the authorities, whether the emperors themselves or local Athenian authorities, for intervention in the Christians' plight. That Athenagoras does not make any reference to the death of such a key figure in the church as the bishop Publius, mentioned by Dionysius, may suggest that Athenagoras wrote before

[73] Pouderon, *D'Athènes à Alexandrie*, 375, n.65.

that point in the persecution.[74] This cannot be pushed too far, however, since he does not mention any specific people in the Athenian church.

Arguments about slaves

It was suggested above that Athenagoras' *Legatio* was written in response to localised persecution in Athens as much as it may reflect broader persecution in the same period. Athenagoras explains that his *Legatio* responds to the accusations of atheism, Thyestean feasts and Oedipean unions which had been levelled against the Christians (*Leg*. 3.1). The latter two accusations had also been cast against the Christians in Vienne and Lyons in Gaul around the same time (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.14). A similar phrase is also found in Tertullian, *Ad Nationes* 1.7.27, and it is possible, in light of his comment that the Christians shared food "of an ordinary, harmless kind" (*Letters* 10.96.7), that Pliny the Younger knew of similar accusations against the Christians in Bithynia at the beginning of the second century.

Grant and Marcovich both assert that there is no evidence that Athenagoras had any knowledge about the Gallic martyrs, even though they refer to the same accusations of Thyestean banquets and Oedipean unions, because he makes different claims regarding the testimonies of the slaves in Christian households.[75] The Christians of Vienne and Gaul state that some slaves accused their Christian masters: "There were also arrested certain heathen slaves of our members, since the governor had publicly commanded that we should all be prosecuted, and these by the snare of Satan, fearing the tortures [βασάνους] which they saw the saints suffering, when the soldiers urged them, falsely accused us of Thyestean feasts and Oedipodean intercourse" (*Hist. eccl.* 5.1.14).[76] Athenagoras, on the other hand, claims, "We have slaves, some many, some few, and it is impossible to escape their observation. Yet not

[74] Pouderon uses this line of reasoning to argue that the *Legatio* is slightly earlier than the events in Gaul: "Un détail cependant permettrait de situer la *Supplique* un peu avant les événements de Gaule : Athénagore, dans son ouvrage, ne fait allusion à aucun événement précis, ne dénonce l'attitude d'aucun magistrat, ne célèbre aucun martyr." *Athénagore d'Athènes: Philosophe chrétien* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1989), 57.
[75] Marcovich, *Legatio*, 2; Grant, "Five Apologists," 9.
[76] Συνελαμβάνοντο δὲ καὶ ἐθνικοί τινες οἰκέται τῶν ἡμετέρων, ἐπεὶ δημοσίᾳ ἐκέλευσεν ὁ ἡγεμὼν ἀναζητεῖσθαι πάντας ἡμᾶς· οἳ καὶ κατ᾽ ἐνέδραν τοῦ σατανᾶ, φοβηθέντες τὰς βασάνους ἃς τοὺς ἁγίους ἔβλεπον πάσχοντας, τῶν στρατιωτῶν ἐπὶ τοῦτο παρορμώντων αὐτούς, κατεφεύσαντο ἡμῶν Θυέστεια δεῖπνα καὶ Οἰδιποδείους μίξεις.

one of them has ever told such monstrous lies about us" (*Leg*. 35.3).[77] While Grant argues that the *Legatio* must be earlier than the letter of the Gallic Martyrs, because Athenagoras contradicted their comments about the slaves,[78] Pouderon states more simply that Athenagoras was not acquainted with the letter.[79]

The argument that Athenagoras' statement about the slaves is explained by his lack of knowledge about the Gallic martyrs is problematised by Justin Martyr's statements that are very similar to those of the Gallic martyrs. He writes, "For having put some to death on account of the accusations falsely brought against us, they also dragged to the torture [βασάνους] our domestics, either children or weak women, and by dreadful torments forced them to admit those fabulous actions which they themselves openly perpetrate" (2 *Apol* 12.4).[80] Athenagoras' "exploitation" of Justin's apologies has been demonstrated by Pouderon.[81] The question arises as to whether the time that elapsed between Justin and Athenagoras' writing was sufficient for the latter to get away with making a conflicting claim about slave testimonies, or whether the Athenian apologist's report reflects his local (Athenian) experience or is dependent on some other local factor.

It is interesting to note that the way that Athenagoras uses the "slave argument" is different to Justin and the Gallic Christians. The statements by Justin and the Gallic Christians are almost identical in content and perspective. The slaves may have made these confessions, but they are untrustworthy because they 1) spoke out of fear, or experience, of torture (JM: εἰς βασάνους εἵλκυσαν and αἰκισμῶν φοβερῶν; GM: φοβηθέντες τὰς βασάνους); 2) were forced or urged by the accusers (JM: ἐξαναγκάζουσι; GM: τῶν στρατιωτῶν ἐπὶ τοῦτο παρορμώντων αὐτούς); and 3) brought false accusations (JM: συκοφαντίᾳ; GM: κατεφεύσαντο). While the

[77] Καίτοι καὶ δοῦλοί εἰσιν ἡμῖν, τοῖς μὲν καί πλείους τοῖς δὲ ἐλάττους, οὓς οὐκ ἔστι λαθεῖν· ἀλλὰ καὶ τούτων οὐδεὶς καθ᾽ ἡμῶν τὰ τηλικαῦτα οὐδὲ κατεψεύσατο.
[78] Grant, "Chronology," 29; "Five Apologists," 9.
[79] He argues for the priority of the *Legatio* based on the fact that Athenagoras does not mention any specific events or martyrdoms. Pouderon, *Athénagore D'athènes*, 55, 57.
[80] Φονεύσαντες γὰρ αὐτοί τινας ἐπὶ συκοφαντίᾳ τῇ εἰς ἡμᾶς, συνέλαβον καὶ εἰς βασάνους εἵλκυσαν οἰκέτας τῶν ἡμετέρων ἢ παῖδας ἢ γύναια, καὶ δι᾽ αἰκισμῶν φοβερῶν ἐξαναγκάζουσι κατειπεῖν ἡμῶν ταῦτα τὰ μυθολογούμενα ἃ αὐτοὶ φανερῶς πράττουσιν. Marcovich, *Apologiae*.
[81] Pouderon, *Athénagore d'Athènes*, 347–50. The primary parallels are between *Legatio* 1–4 and *1 Apology* 2–4, but Pouderon lists numerous parallels, shared quotes, and lines of argument between the two.

torture of slaves to procure their testimony was an accepted practice,[82] one official being described as "prudent" by Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus for his use of it,[83] a common criticism was that the results could be unreliable because the slave could say anything to stop the torture.[84] Justin and the Gallic Christians adopted this approach to try to discredit both the judicial processes under which they had suffered and the slaves' testimonies against the Christians.

Athenagoras, on the other hand, does not mention torture or fear, but simply reports that their slaves had not made any accusations against the Christians. By noting that "it is impossible to escape their observation", he affirms that slaves do have access to information and contexts that could produce condemnatory evidence (if it existed), but he echoes the claim of Justin and the Gallic Christians that the accusations being brought against the Christians are false. It is not clear in the *Legatio*, however, whether the Christians' slaves had actually been tortured for evidence or if he is presenting their lack of accusation as a rhetorical strategy.

The practice of βάσανος had a place in Classical Athenian law, and is attested in a number of Athenian legal texts.[85] In these cases, the two parties would agree to the terms by which the slave of one party could be tortured in order to answer specific questions pertaining to the case. There is some disagreement among scholars, however, as to just how it worked in practice and whether it was ever really practised.[86] Michael Gagarin has argued that βάσανος

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[82] "Furthermore, a slave could not enjoy the trust that was automatically owed to a free person, and coercion was therefore required to ensure that a slave's testimony could be believed." Kathleen M. Coleman, "The Fragility of Evidence: Torture in Ancient Rome," in *Confronting Torture: Essays on the Ethics, Legality, History, and Psychology of Torture Today*, ed. Scott A. Anderson and Martha C. Nussbaum (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 105.

[83] Ulpian *Dig*. 48.18.1.27, in Alan Watson, *Roman Slave Law* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 86–89.

[84] Ulpian *Dig.* 48.18.1.23: "It is stated in constitutions that reliance should not always be placed on torture—but not never, either; for it is a chancy and risky business and one which may be deceptive. For there is a number of people who, by their endurance or their toughness under torture, are so contemptuous of it that the truth can in no way be squeezed out of them. Others have so little endurance that they should rather tell any kind of lie than suffer torture; so it happens that they confess in various ways, incriminating not only themselves but others also."

[85] Cf. Isaeus 8.9–11; Antiphon *Pros. Step.* 5–8; Isocrates 17.15–17; Demosthenes 30.37.

[86] "Gagarin sees evidentiary torture as a 'legal fiction', the challenge to which was used by a litigant to lend credibility to his report of what a slave might have said. Thür sees the

was a "legal fiction", in that the slaves were "only rarely, if ever," actually tortured.[87] Rather, a party would set their terms for the process in such a way that their opposition would refuse. The legal orator would then be able to use the refusal of the other party to offer, or accept, the evidence of the slave's testimony as a rhetorical strategy to characterise the other party as untrustworthy.[88] An example of this can be seen in Antiphon's *Prosecution of the Stepmother for Poisoning*, in which a murdered man's son accuses his step-mother of murdering his father. The son says regarding his half-brother:

> It is not for my brother to say that he is quite sure his mother did not murder our father; for when he had the chance of making sure, by torture, he refused it; he showed readiness only for those modes of inquiry which could yield no certainty. Yet he ought to have been ready to do what I in fact challenged him to do, so that an honest investigation of the facts might have been possible; because then, if the slaves had admitted nothing, he would have confronted me with a vigorous defence based on certainty, and his mother would have been cleared of the present charge. But after refusing to inquire into the facts, how can he possibly be certain of what he refused to find out? ... What reply does he mean to make to me? He was fully aware that once the slaves were examined under torture his mother was doomed; and he thought that her life depended upon the avoiding of such an examination, as he and his companions imagined that the truth would in that event be lost to sight. (Ant. *Pros. Step.* 5–8)

In this case, the son is able to use his half-brother's refusal to his own advantage. The refusal to allow the βάσανος is portrayed as being as incriminating as any evidence that may have resulted from the process if it had taken place.

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discussions of torture as a judicial relic used to embarrass the opponent. I have simply concluded that evidentiary torture did sometimes take place and that it was decisive." David C. Mirhady, "The Athenian Rationale for Torture," in *Law and Social Status in Classical Athens*, ed. Virginia Hunter and Jonathan Edmondson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 53–54.

[87] Michael Gagarin, "The Torture of Slaves in Athenian Law," *Classical Philology* 91, no. 1 (1996): 17.

[88] "Torture," 16.

It is safest to conclude, with David Mirhady, that "evidentiary torture did sometimes take place,"[89] but it can also be accepted that Gagarin's observations are correct. Sometimes, Classical Athenian legal orators would use the "incomplete" βάσανος for its rhetorical effect. It is possible that Athenagoras, in mustering the non-accusation of the Christians' slaves, was entering in the same rhetorical territory as the "legal fiction" of βάσανος. While the apologist was not involved in a formal legal case and thus was not making any formal βάσανος challenge, he was rhetorically offering the Christians' slaves to their opponents for examination. The Christians were not hiding or refusing evidence, but rather would open themselves up for examination, even through the process of βάσανος. This rhetorical posture aligns with another point in the *Legatio*, where Athenagoras declares that if they are found to be guilty of some crime, "we do not ask to be let off. On the contrary we consider it right that our punishment be severe and merciless" (*Leg.* 2.1). If this understanding of Athenagoras' rhetorical strategy in relation to the slaves' testimony is to be accepted, it is a further piece of evidence for the Athenian provenance of the *Legatio*.

6.2.2.3 Conclusion

It has been argued above that the authorship debate regarding Athenagoras' *Legatio* and *De Resurrectione* has raised important questions particularly about the dating and provenance of *De Resurrectione*, but ultimately the traditional attribution should be allowed to stand. The shared authorship of the two texts attributed to Athenagoras, the localised persecution, and the different provenances of the two texts are helpful in developing a picture of the Athenian church in the late 170s CE. Athenagoras wrote his *Legatio* from Athens in the middle of an increasingly intense period of persecution, trying to gain some reprieve for the Christians. When no reprieve was forthcoming he fled the city to Alexandria, where he was able to join the Christian community and become involved in theological and philosophical conversations and education such as opposing Valentinian conceptions of the resurrection. In Athens, however, the church suffered under the persecution and the martyrdom of their bishop, Publius, requiring the appointment of a new bishop, Quadratus, along with the exhortation from Dionysius of Corinth.

This reconstruction of Athenagoras' relocation from Athens to Alexandria, and the provenance of his literary outputs, leads to two further corollaries. Firstly, *De Resurrectione*,

[89] Mirhady, "Athenian Rationale," 54.

while Athenagorean should not be considered an Athenian text but rather an Alexandrian one. For the purpose of this thesis, then, the role that *De Resurrectione* has played in this present discussion is essentially the only attention that the text will receive in this examination of Christianity *in Athens*.

Secondly, the series of events outlined in the previous paragraph illustrates the different experiences of persecution that Christians of differing socio-economic statuses could have. It seems that Athenagoras had the means and connections to make flight to Alexandria possible, while others of the Athenian church could not escape the persecution so successfully.

6.3 Athenagoras' Cultural Milieu

6.3.1 Marcus Aurelius and Athens

Marcus Aurelius demonstrated a keen interest in Athens through engaging in the city's socio-political affairs, funding chairs of rhetoric and philosophy, and being initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries. He did not undertake much in the way of a building program, except for the works at Eleusis that will be discussed below. This is probably due to a combination of the financial restrictions caused by the plague and the Marcomannic Wars, and that Hadrian's extensive building works had rendered further development unnecessary.[90] Marcus and Commodus, who had been made Caesar in 166CE and would receive the titles Imperator and Augustus on 27 November 176,[91] visited Athens in September 176. This came at the end of a lengthy eastern tour upon which the two rulers had embarked after the revolt led by Avidius Cassius, who had been "recognised as emperor in most of the eastern provinces, including Egypt."[92]

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[90] Christer Bruun discusses this in relation to imperial building projects in Italy. Christer Bruun, "The Antonine Plague and the 'Third-Century Crisis'," in *Crises and the Roman Empire: Proceedings of the Seventh Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire, Nijmegen, June 20–24, 2006*, ed. Olivier Hekster, Gerda de Kleijn, and Daniëlle Slootjes (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 209–14.

[91] Commodus: Hist. Aug. *Marc.* 16.1; *Comm.* 1.10; 11.13–14; 12.5. Olivier Hekster, *Commodus: An Emperor at the Crossroads* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 2002), 30–39.

[92] Anthony R. Birley, *Marcus Aurelius: A Biography* (London: Routledge, 2000), 183.

6.3.1.1 Endowments for Education and Philosophy

Dio Cassius records, "When Marcus had come to Athens and had been initiated into the Mysteries … he established teachers at Athens in every branch of knowledge, granting these teachers an annual salary."[93] He endowed four chairs in philosophy (one for each of the Stoic, Epicurean, Academic and Peripatetic schools).[94] He also endowed an imperial chair of rhetoric, which stood in addition to the chair of rhetoric established by Hadrian, valued at 10000 drachmas per year.[95] While a move from the Athenian to the Roman chair of rhetoric—"the high chair" (Phil. *Vit. Soph.* 2.10.589)—would have been considered a promotion, the Athenian chair was still "a symbolic recognition of distinction in declamation and teaching"; it and its counterparts in the philosophical schools would certainly have been desirable posts.[96] These endowed chairs further supported Athens' position as a leading city for education which had been recovered under Hadrian.[97]

6.3.1.2 Concerns for Religion

As well as supporting the culture of learning in Athens, Marcus showed a concern for religious matters in the city as well. This is evident in two ways. Firstly, it is likely that Marcus funded rebuilding and expansion works in the sanctuary at Eleusis (around 176CE) after the Costoboc attack of 170CE. The inclusion of a late first-century inscribed base in the foundations of one of the building's interior supports suggests that the structure was subject to some rebuilding in the the second century CE. Camp suggests that this rebuilding probably happened under Marcus Aurelius and was necessitated by the Costoboc attack.[98] Scholia from Aelius Aristides'

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[93] Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, LXXI.31.3.

[94] Christopher Gill, "The School in the Roman Period," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 35.

[95] Phil, *Lives* 2.11.591; 2.10.588; 2.23.593; 2.30.622. Ewen Bowie, "Teachers and Students in Roman Athens," in *Fame and Infamy: Essays on Characterization in Greek and Roman Biography and Historiography*, ed. Rhiannon Ash, Judith Mossman, and Frances B. Titchener (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 243.

[96] Lucian satirises the competition amongst philosophers aiming to gain the Peripatetic chair in *The Eunuch*. "Teachers and Students," 244–45.

[97] Leofranc Holford-Strevens, "Cultural and Intellectual Background and Development," in *A Companion to Marcus Aurelius*, ed. Marcel Van Ackeren (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 133–34.

[98] Schol. ad Panath. 183.2–3 (Dindorf III, 308–309). Camp, *Archaeology of Athens*, 213; Juan Manuel Cortés Copete, "Marco Aurelio, Benefactor De Eleusis," *Gerión* 16 (1998): 257; Francesco Camia, "Cultic and Social Dynamics in the Eleusinian Sanctuary under the Empire,"

Panathenaica notes Aurelius' rebuilding of the temple at Eleusis after he had "philosophised as a teacher" (φιλοσοφήσας ἐν διδασκάλου) in Athens.[99] This means that the rebuilding would have taken place during, or after, Marcus' visit in 176CE, leaving the sanctuary damaged for the five years between the attack and the imperial visit.[100]

Juan Manuel Cortés Copete has noted that the delay between the damage of Eleusis and its refurbishment can be partly explained by a lack of local funding.[101] The funding required for the types of work undertaken by Marcus could only have been matched on a local level by Herodes Atticus, the extremely wealthy Sophist and politician from Marathon. At the time, however, Herodes had been accused of tyranny, and his chief opponents held important positions in relation to Eleusis. He would not have been a likely source for funds at this time.[102] Cortés Copete's argument could be further supported by Marcus' letter to the Athenians. In the letter he urges them to receive "my and their own Herodes" back so that Herodes can reside among the Athenians "with joy in the religious and other events at Athens," and for the Athenians to renew their "mutual friendship" with Herodes, mindful of his "well-known beneficence."[103] The tying together of Herodes' beneficence and his concern for religious events suggests that a more positive relationship with him would have been beneficial in regards to the Eleusis sanctuary; but instead Marcus enacted his own euergetism towards the cult, probably at the time of his own initiation.

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in *Empire and Religion: Religious Change in Greek Cities*, ed. Elena Muñiz Grijalvo, Juan Manuel Cortés Copete, and Fernando Lozano Gómez (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 49.

[99] Schol. ad Panath. 183.3: Ἀντωνῖνος ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐφ᾽ ᾧ Ἀριστείδης ἦν, πλεῖστα Ἀθήνεσιν ἀνεγνωκὼς καὶ φιλοσοφήσας ἐν διδασκάλου μοίρᾳ τὴν πόλιν ἐτίμα, καὶ πολλὰς μὲν καὶ ἄλλας εὐεργεσίας αὐτῇ παρέσχε καὶ τὸν ἐν Ἐλευσῖνι νεὼν πολυτελῶς ἐπεσκεύασεν.

[100] Cortés Copete, "Marco Aurelio," 258.

[101] "Marco Aurelio," 259–60.

[102] "Pero su disputa con el grupo de oligarcas atenienses que se le oponían pudo actuar como freno a la posible acción del millonario." "Marco Aurelio," 259.

[103] Oliver, *Greek Constitutions*, 378–79, no. 184, l.87–94. Herodes Atticus' earlier acts of beneficence to Athens included the construction of an Odeion and the Panathenaic Stadium, both extraordinarily expensive projects. Others included "the stadium at Delphi, a nymphaion at Olympia, and, probably, a refurbishment of the Peirene fountain at Corinth." Paus. VII.20.6; Phil. *VS* 2.551; Camp, *Archaeology*, 213; Jennifer Tobin, *Herodes Attikos and the City of Athens: Patronage and Conflict under the Antonines* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1997), 185–94.

The second aspect of Marcus' promotion of the religious life of Athens was his establishment of the "Sacred Gerusia".[104] This body seems to have had responsibility for religious concerns in the city, especially in terms of religious festivals—particularly the Panathenaia—but also with an interest in the imperial cult.[105] The Gerusia had a number of members who were Eumolpidae, and thus were closely connected with Eleusis, but the evidence does not suggest that Eleusis was the sole focus of the group. After comparative consideration of the Gerusiae of Athens and Ephesus, Oliver draws the following conclusion:

> The keen interest which the imperial government displayed in Sacred Gerusiae … is part of a general attempt to revitalize the spiritual values of the old Greek and Roman world. New strength and new life were to be infused into the ceremonies of the old gods, the ceremonies were not to lose their splendor and their powers of attraction for the urban population. Spiritual forces of a new and perhaps subversive character were gathering strength in the Roman Empire, and against them the enlightened government of Hadrian and the Antonines pursued a policy more subtle than that of open intolerance.[106]

Oliver's oblique statement to "new and subversive" spiritual forces no doubt includes the growth of the Christian faith around the empire. It is noteworthy for this thesis' focus on Athens that part of Marcus' actions in support of traditional religious practice concerned two of the most important religious institutions of the city: the Panathenaia and the Eleusinian Mysteries. Moreover, persecution against the Christians at the same time as an increased imperial interest in Athenian religious matters reflects the events of the earlier persecution during Hadrian's reign.

6.3.1.3 Marcus and the Christians

If Oliver's statement that Marcus Aurelius did not pursue a policy of open intolerance is correct, that did not mean that Christians enjoyed a period of peace throughout his reign.

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[104] The following summarises the findings of James H. Oliver, *The Sacred Gerusia*, Hesperia Supplements, Volume 6 (Baltimore: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1941), esp. 1–9.
[105] *The Sacred Gerusia*, 5.
[106] *The Sacred Gerusia*, 49.

Christians were facing strong opposition and persecution at popular and official levels in Athens, as well as Gaul, Asia Minor, and Africa. The most well known of the persecutions was that of the Christians in Lyons (Lugdunum) and Vienne (Eus. *HE* 5.1), usually dated to the late 170s CE.[107] The letter from the Gallic Christians says that both "the governor and the people showed the like unrighteous hatred against us" (5.1.58). The crucial issue in the trials of the Christians was simply whether they confessed to be Christians or not. This reflects the consistent position of the second-century imperial edicts regarding the Christians, first clearly outlined in the correspondence between Trajan and Pliny: confessors were to be executed (citizens by beheading, non-citizens by any means); those who recanted would be released.[108] The intensity of the persecution in Gaul can be seen in the governor's choice to go beyond the imperial directives: Attalus, a Roman citizen, was "sent to the beasts"—rather than beheaded—"to please the mob" (5.1.44, 50); and some of those who recanted were condemned as criminals anyway (5.1.33).

In 180CE, a group of twelve believers from Scilli in North Africa were condemned to death by the provincial governor Saturninus.[109] The trial followed the same pattern as that of the Christians in Gaul, though the record is less hagiographical in flavour than the Gallic letter. The Scillitan martyrs were offered the opportunity to turn from the Christian faith and return "to the Roman way of life" (ad Romanorum morem redeundi; *Scill. Mar.* 14), but on their refusal to recant they were beheaded (17). The predominant confession of the accused was simply, "I am a Christian" (Christiana/Christianus sum; 9, 10, 13). It is noteworthy that even when the Christians tried to explain their good works (2) or their willingness to honour Caesar as Caesar (but not as a god; 9), the governor's only concern was whether or not they claimed to be Christians. As Athenagoras complains in *Legatio* 1.3, it was the name "Christian", not the Christians' actions or morality, that was of legal interest. Again this fits the approach outlined in Trajan and Pliny's correspondence.

A point of contrast between the Gallic and Scillitan martyrs is that where the governor in Gaul went beyond the restrictions of the imperial directives in order to please the crowd, the North African proconsul "spares the martyrs all humiliating tortures, and has them executed by

[107] Though note the discussion in T.D. Barnes, "Pre-Decian "Acta Martyrum"," *JTS* 19, no. 2 (1968): 517–19.
[108] Barnes, "Legislation," 40, 48.
[109] Translation referred to here is from Herbert Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 86–89.

beheading as though they were Roman citizens."[110] It is possible that all twelve victims in Carthage were Roman citizens, but the text does not make this explicit. Considering his repeated offer of time to consider their confession (*Scill. Mar.* 11, 13), it is more likely that the proconsul did not hold the same animosity toward these Christians as had developed in Gaul and thus handed down the more merciful sentence. At the very least, this contrast demonstrates that second-century persecutions were not uniform in intensity, and thus local governors "enjoyed a wide discretion" to enact the imperial rescripts in the ways they saw fit.[111]

Around the same time that Athenagoras wrote his *Legatio*, Melito of Sardis also addressed an apology to the emperor (Eus. *HE* 4.26).[112] In it he referred to the Christians being driven about by "new decrees" (καινοῖς δόγμασιν, 4.26.5), and questions whether these decrees could have come from Marcus. He cited Hadrian's rescript to Fundanus, and notes that Antoninus Pius had written edicts to the cities "that no new measures should be taken concerning [the Christians]" (Eus. *HE* 4.26.10). These edicts had been sent when Marcus and Antoninus were ruling together (καὶ σοῦ τὰ σύμπαντα διοικοῦντος αὐτῷ, *Hist. eccl*. IV.26.10) and thus could be dated anywhere between 140 and 161CE. They were addressed to the Larisians, the Thessalonians, the Athenians, and all the Greeks. Melito expressed a confidence that since Marcus held "the same opinion [as Hadrian and Antoninus] about them and, indeed, one which is far kinder and more philosophic" (4.26.10–11), he would act in the Christians' favour.

While Melito expresses his expectation that the decrees did not come from the emperor, he does leave such a possibility open, saying, "If this is done as your command, let it be assumed that it is done well, for no righteous king would ever have an unrighteous policy" (4.26.6). If these decrees in Asia did have an imperial provenance, it is possible that persecution in Athens could have been influenced by them.

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[110] Musurillo, *Christian Martyrs*, xxiii.
[111] P.A. Brunt, "Marcus Aurelius and the Christians," in *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History*, ed. Carl Deroux, Collection Latomus 164 (Bruxelles: Latomus, 1979), 500.
[112] Robert M. Grant, "The Chronology of the Greek Apologists," *Vigiliae Christianae* 9, no. 1 (1955): 27.

There is no surviving evidence of how Marcus responded to Athenagoras' *Legatio*, if he even saw it or any of the other apologies addressed to him during this period.[113] The lack of a rescript responding positively to the appeals suggests that the emperor was not moved by their argumentation.

6.3.2 Destabilisation in the Late Second Century

It is commonly recognised that crises such as plagues, natural disasters, or war, were often precursors to persecution against the early Christians.[114] This was especially so since these crises would lead many, often with the encouragement of the emperor, to seek the gods' help in overcoming the crisis. The Christians could not involve themselves in such a religious turn. Tertullian wryly noted that those who hated the Christians used "as a pretext to defend their hatred the absurdity that they take the Christians to be the cause of every disaster to the State, of every misfortune of the people. If the Tiber reaches the walls, if the Nile does not rise to the fields, if the sky doesn't move or the earth does, if there is famine, if there is plague, the cry is at once: 'The Christians to the lion!'" (*Apol*. XL.1–2).[115]

6.3.2.1 The Antonine Plague

The Antonine Plague was reputedly introduced to the Roman Empire when Lucius Verus' army returned from the Parthian War in 165CE, and continued to impact various regions until possibly 182CE.[116] It was particularly virulent, with drastic impacts in regard to population and

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[113] Other apologies were written by Apollinaris of Hierapolis, Melito of Sardis, Tatian, and Miltiades. Robert M. Grant, "Five Apologists and Marcus Aurelius," *Vigiliae Christianae* 42 (1988): 1.

[114] Brian J. Arnold, *Justification in the Second Century* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 91; Birley, *Marcus Aurelius*, 152; Paul Keresztes, *Imperial Rome and the Christians: From Herod the Great to About 200 A.D* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1989), 133; Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians in the Mediterranean World from the Second Century AD to the Conversion of Constantine* (London: Penguin, 1986), 426.

[115] Cf. E.R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety: Some Aspects of Religious Experience from Marcus Aurelius to Constantine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 111–16.

[116] Cf. Duncan-Jones' discussion of the timeline of the plague: Richard P. Duncan-Jones, "The Impact of the Antonine Plague," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 9 (1996): 116–17.

the economy,[117] though it is difficult to gain an exact picture of its effect. The *Historia Augusta* records:

> It was [Lucius Verus'] fate to seem to bring a pestilence with him to whatever provinces he traversed on his return [from Parthia], and finally even to Rome. It is believed that this pestilence originated in Babylonia, where a pestilential vapour arose in a temple of Apollo from a golden casket which a soldier had accidentally cut open, and that it spread thence over Parthia and the whole world (*Lucius Verus* VIII.1–3).

And:

> There was such a pestilence, besides, that the dead were removed in carts and wagons. About this time, also, the two emperors ratified certain very stringent laws on burial and tombs, in which they even forbade any one to build a tomb at his country-place, a law still in force. Thousands were carried off by the pestilence, including many nobles, for the most prominent of whom Antoninus erected statues. Such, too, was his kindliness of heart that he had funeral ceremonies performed for the lower classes even at the public expense (*Marcus Aurelius* XIII.3-6).

In response to the plague, Marcus "zealously revived the worship of the gods" (*Marc. Aur.* XXI.6). Evidence also remains of inscribed stones and amulets bearing oracles regarding the plague.[118] In his scathing critique of Alexander of Abonuteichos, Lucian reports an oracle that Alexander "despatched to all the nations during the pestilence", which read: "Phoebus, the god unshorn, keepeth off plague's nebulous onset" (*Alexander* 36). He notes that "this verse was to be seen everywhere written over doorways as a charm against the plague; but in most cases it had the contrary result." A very similar reference to Phoebus, found on an amulet in London, is testimony to the wide spread of both the disease and the attempts via cultic means

[117] *Historia Augusta: Marcus Aurelius* XVII.3.
[118] Christopher P. Jones, "An Amulet from London and Events Surrounding the Antonine Plague," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 29 (2016): 469–72; "Ten Dedications "to the Gods and Goddesses" and the Antonine Plague," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 18 (2005): 293–301.

to avoid its contraction.[119] Anthony Birley observes, "[The Christians'] failure to honour and propitiate the gods, particularly at a time when special religious rites were being carried out, would make them more than usually conspicuous."[120] He notes Justin Martyr's opponent Crescens' accusations that the Christians were "atheists and impious" (ἀθέων καὶ ἀσεβῶν, Eus. *Hist. eccl.* IV.16.3; Jus. *2 Apol*. 3.2), and the report that he "counselled others to despise death" (Eus. *HE* IV.16.9; Tat. *Ad Graec*. 19.2),[121] as evidence that Crescens made the accusations of impiety at the time of the plague.[122]

Even though the Antonine Plague impacted many regions of the empire, it is important to consider here since there is evidence that Athens itself was affected. Philostratus records that when Marcus Aurelius was adjudicating the legal contest between the Athenians and Herodes Atticus, the Athenians asserted that Atticus had corrupted the magistrates with "the honeyed strains of his eloquence," and they cried out "Oh what bitter honey" (ὦ πικροῦ μέλιτος) and "Happy are they who perished in the plague" (μακάριοι οἱ ἐν τῷ λοιμῷ ἀποθνήσκοντες).[123]

A letter from Marcus Aurelius to the Athenians, written in 174/75CE, suggests that the plague had so affected the population, particularly among the upper class, that Marcus agreed to relax the eligibility requirements for appointment to the Areopagus. The relevant section of the letter reads:

> How much concern I have for the glory of Athens, that she continue to preserve her ancient dignity, had, I think, been sufficiently shown, especially when I tried to lead their select synhedrion back to the ancient custom whereby they received into the Areopagus only those who had passed the test of three generations. And would there were an abundance of the notable families, so that it might be possible for me even [now] to stand by

[119] "An Amulet from London," 469–70.
[120] Birley, *Marcus Aurelius*, 152.
[121] Eusebius possibly misquotes Tatian. Eusebius records: θανάτου δὲ ὁ καταφρονεῖν συμβουλεύων (The one counselling [others] to despise death; *HE* IV.16.9). The text of Tatian is corrupt at this point and could be as Eusebius records, or could be: θανάτου δὲ ὁ καταφρονῶν (The one despising death). Marcovich includes the longer reading, though acknowledging the difficulty: θανάτου δὲ ὁ καταφρον[εῖν συμβουλεύ]ων. Miroslav Marcovich, ed. *Tatiani: Oratio ad Graecos*, PTS 43 (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1995), 39.
[122] Birley, *Marcus Aurelius*, 152–53.
[123] Phil. *Vit. Soph.* 561.

> our decision. But since, counting the disasters which have befallen them through the intervention of chance, because of which many other cities have, I know, made special claims for relief … I compromise and grant to the Athenians, that … they consider only this, whether a man has a father of good birth, and if anyone appears to have been expelled from the Areopagus on account of the rule concerning three generations, he shall recover his rank; after this it will suffice for both parents of a man to have been born free.[124]

Marcus had reinstated an "ancient custom" that in order to be eligible for entry to the Areopagus, a man had to be able to demonstrate that his family had been citizens for three generations. A problem arose when there was not an "abundance of notable families" because, as in other cities, "disasters … have befallen them through the intervention of chance." Marcus, therefore, eased the restrictions, allowing that only one generation above the applicant needed to have been born free. The timing of this allowance, the reference to a population depletion that was not evident when Marcus first reinstated the ancient restrictions, and the references to disasters experienced both in Athens and other cities, all indicate a connection with the Antonine Plague.[125]

In his *Legatio*, Athenagoras responds to the accusation of atheism, demonstrating at length how the Christians were not atheists. Even though he does not mention the plague and its impact on Athens, it is possible that the crisis faced by the Athenians was a contributing factor to the persecution then placed on the Christians.[126]

6.3.2.2 The Costoboc Invasion of Greece

Another event that would have led to an increased sense of instability in Athens and Attica was an invasion in 170CE of Macedonia and Greece by the Costobocs, a barbarian tribe from an area north or north east of Dacia.[127] Aelius Aristides probably referred to this attack in his *Eleusinian Oration*, which suggests that the invaders reached as far as Eleusis where they wreaked some sort of havoc. Aristides does not offer a great deal of detail, but describes the

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[124] Oliver, *Greek Constitutions*, no. 184, l.57–69; p.366–88.
[125] Duncan-Jones, "Antonine Plague," 134.
[126] Cavan Concannon, "Ethnicity, Economics, and Diplomacy in Dionysios of Corinth," *HTR* 106, no. 2 (2013): 160–61.
[127] Birley, *Marcus Aurelius*, 165.

event as "so great a matter" (τοσοῦτον πρᾶγμα), "the common calamity" (τὸ κοινὸν πτῶμα), and "the merciless day" (ἡ σχετλία ἡμέρα), and notes a fire as a consequence of the attack.[128] Pausanias (*Descr. Gr.* 10.34.5) mentions the Costobocs—whom he describes as "bandits" (τῶν λῃστικῶν) and "barbarians" (τῶν βαρβάρων)—noting that they "overran Greece" (τὴν Ἑλλάδα ἐπιδραμὸν), visiting Elateia[129] among other cities. Here they were opposed by a local militia led by an Olympic champion named Mnesibulus. Mnesibulus himself died in the fighting.

The invasion was significant enough for Roman military intervention. An inscription notes that L. Iulius Vehilius Gratus Iulianus was sent with a task force (*vexillatio*) against the Costobocs in Achaia and Macedonia.[130] Amelia Brown summarises the impact of the raid(s):

> No serious damage was caused, at least at Eleusis and Elateia, but people were killed, and some part of the sanctuary at Eleusis did burn. It attracted the attention of the Roman authorities enough to merit the sending of a *vexillatio*, and news reached Aristides in Smyrna across the Aegean. Thus, the military and psychological effects probably were more extreme than actual damage to property, and given the range of existing sources, there probably was only a single raiding party of Costobocs coming south for plunder and returning in defeat in 170.[131]

Evidence of the both the "psychological" effects of the attack and the damage inflicted upon the sanctuary of Eleusis can be seen in the dedications honouring a certain hierophant of Eleusis. The hierophant saved the sacred objects related to the Eleusinian Mysteries by taking them to Athens during the attack, which is referred to in the inscription as "the hateful war" (πολέμωι στυγερῶι, I. Eleus. 494; cf. 515; 516). A herm was set up in Eleusis in his honour shortly after, and the inscription notes that the Athenians honoured him with a crown (c.171–

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[128] Aristides uses the term πυρκαϊά, which refers to a funeral pyre. Amelia Robertson Brown, "Banditry or Catastrophe?: History, Archaeology, and Barbarian Raids on Roman Greece," in *Romans, Barbarians, and the Transformation of the Roman World: Cultural Interaction and the Creation of Identity in Late Antiquity*, ed. Ralph W. Mathisen and Danuta R. Shanzer (Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), 80.

[129] Elatεia is between 110 and 130 kilometres from Eleusis according to modern road and walking routes.

[130] "Pra[ep(osito)] vexillationis per Achaiam et Macedoniam et in Hispanias, adversus Castabocas et Mauros rebelles." CIL 6.31856. Brown, "Banditry or Catastrophe?," 81, n.13.

[131] "Banditry or Catastrophe?," 82.

176CE; I. Eleus. 494). It seems that some might have considered his flight to Athens an act of cowardice, because the hierophant's funerary monument (c.191/2CE) notes that "he did not flee from the onslaught of the hostile, but saved the undefiled secret objects for the children of Kekrops" (δυσμενέων μόθον οὐ τρέσεν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐσάωσεν ἄχραντα ἀρρήτων θέσμια Κεκροπίδαις, I Eleus. 515).[132] A commemorative statue, set up around the same time as the funerary monument, records that he both evaded the "unlawful work of the Sarmatians" (Σαυροματῶν ἀλεείνων ἔργον ἄθεσμον)[133] and "initiated the son of Ausonia, the very glorious Antoninus" (Αὐσονίδην τε ἐμύησεν ἀγακλυτὸν Ἀντωνῖνον, I. Eleus. 516).[134] The honours recorded by these inscriptions indicate how significant it was to the Athenians that the objects of the sacred rites were protected during this attack.

6.3.3 Concerns of Ethnicity

It is significant that the two major crises to impact Athens in the 170s related to the "barbarians". The plague entered the empire via the army returning from Parthia and the Costoboc invasion was a barbarian invasion. One of the central themes within the cultural movement of the "Second Sophistic"—the cultural milieu which dominated the educated classes from roughly 50 to 250CE, with an emphasis on Greek *paideia*, reclaiming classical Hellenic culture and particularly the Attic Greek dialect—was the definition of the boundaries between Hellenic culture and barbarianism; that is, who could claim to be Greek?[135] The debate centred on whether Greek ethnic origin (*eugeneia*) or Greek culture (*euglottia*, including language and education) was of primary importance. Two different approaches to the Greek/Barbarian theme can be found in the works of Aelius Aristides and Lucian of Samosata.

6.3.3.1 Aelius Aristides' Panathenaic Oration

Aelius Aristides wrote his *Panathenaic Oration* between 165 and 167 CE, for delivery at the Panathenaic Games of 167CE.[136] Oliver notes that the *Oration* was composed in a "period of

[132] The "children of Kekrops" were the Athenians. Kekrops was a mythical king of Athens.
[133] The Costobocs were considered to be a Sarmatian tribe. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 6.7.
[134] i.e. Marcus Aurelius.
[135] Romeo, "The Panhellenion," 31.
[136] James H. Oliver, *The Civilizing Power: Study of the Panathenaic Discourse of Aelius Aristides against the Background of Literature and Cultural Conflict, with Text, Translation,*

a strong challenge to Hellenism and the period of a strong Hellenic reaction … The Panathenaic Discourse … was a serious work in support of Hellenic ideals and traditional values."[137] In it, he draws a stark opposition between the Athenians and the barbarians, highlighting the Athenians' role as the antithesis to, and defense from, Barbarism. The city is "removed from the barbarians in the customs of its men" to the extent that "it is separated by the nature of its geography" (14). This separation was exaggerated by Athens' colonies acting as a bulwark, removing the city even further from barbarian land (15). Later, Aristides speaks about the battle of Marathon. While the Athenians organised themselves for war, they resembled "a city organizing a religious procession … calling upon [the gods'] aid and placing herself in their trust" (84). The Persians, though referred to here only as "Barbarians", were "strange and hostile"; they had wealth, mass, and material preparation, but these were to be pitted againt Hellenic excellence and mind (86–87). Aristides here pits Athenian piety and wisdom against barbarian strangeness and monstrosity.

It is likely, as Oliver says, that Aristides "probably regarded Christianity as one more manifestation of Barbarism rather than as a degenerate form of Hellenism."[138] In his direct reference to the Christians, he highlights their origins in Palestine and compares them with the most detested of philosophical schools, the Cynics: "They [the Cynics] are involved in the two most extreme and opposite evils, baseness and willfulness, behaving like those impious men of Palestine. For the proof of the impiety of those people is that they do not believe in the higher powers. And these men in a certain fashion have defected from the Greek race."[139] The Cynics, in behaving like the Christians, have essentially left their Hellenism behind, defecting to barbarism.

Another example of a promotion of traditional Hellenic, and specifically Athenian, culture in Athens can be found in a particular series of coinage in the city at this time. Kroll notes that this coinage is noteworthy because "in the entire repertory of over 70 different Athenian imperial reverse types, they alone celebrate heroes of recorded Athenian history."[140] Coin

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and Commentary, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society: Vol 58, Pt 1 (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1968), 34.

[137] *Civilizing Power*, 35. Amongst those challenges, Oliver emphasises the rising influence of Christians among the educated elite.

[138] *Civilizing Power*, 37.

[139] Aelius Aristides, *Or.* 3.671.

[140] John H. Kroll, "The Athenian Imperials: Results of Recent Study," in *Internationales Kolloquium zur kaiserzeitlichen Münzprägung Kleinasiens: 27–30 April 1994 in Der*

types include the contest of Athena and Poseidon; Themistocles on a ship; the general Miltiades marching a Persian captive; and the dual between Theseus and the Minotaur. Kroll argues that the Athena-Poseidon and Themistocles coins were financed by the Claudii of Melite, possibly the priest of Poseidon-Erechtheus Tib. Cl. Demostratus, because of the family's long-held control of the priesthood of Poseidon-Erechtheus and lineage traced from Themistocles. The Miltiades and Theseus types were likely financed by Herodes Atticus, who belonged to the Claudii of Marathon and traced his lineage to Miltiades.

The Claudii of Melite were staunch opponents of Herodes Atticus. Kroll argues that this type of coinage was primarily intended to "magnify the moneyers' families."[141] In light of the ongoing conflict between the families, it is likely that the coinages played a part in the ongoing inter-familial conflict, with both parties financing coinage to demonstrate their benefaction towards the city and their connection to its history and mythology. Just as Aelius Aristides appealed to Athens' historical victories over the Persian barbarians, so Herodes and the Claudii of Melite appealed to their connections to the same wars in order to promote themselves in the city.

6.3.3.2 Owning the "Barbarian Label: Lucian of Samosata, Hadrianus of Tyre, Favorinus of Arles

In contrast to those who emphasised a stark division between Greek and Barbarian, others problematised such a division by arguing for a Hellenism based on education and language. Sometimes, they critiqued the elitist claims of the Hellenists altogether. Lucian of Samosata often included this theme in his work. As a Syrian, Lucian was a "barbarian", he also had attained a prominent place among the leading writers and rhetoricians of his day.

In *The Scythian*, Lucian tells the story—set in the sixth century BCE—of a quintessential barbarian, Anacharsis, who visited Athens from Scythia:

> A stranger and a foreigner (ξένος καὶ βάρβαρος) he experienced considerable confusion of mind, for everything was strange and there were

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Staatlichen Münzsammlung, München, ed. Johannes Nollé, Bernhard Overbeck, and Peter Weiss, Nomismata (Milano: Ennerre, 1997), 64–66.

[141] "Athenian Imperials," 65.

> the many sounds which frightened him; he did not know what to do with himself; he saw that people who saw him laughed at his dress; he met no one who spoke his language, and altogether he was already sorry he had made the trip. (*Scyth.* 3)

Fortunately, Anacharsis is met by a fellow Scythian, named Toxaris, who had fully adopted Athenian dress and speech. Toxaris introduces Anacharsis to Solon, a man who can make him "a true citizen of Greece" (πολίτην γνήσιον ἀποφανεῖς τῆς Ἑλλάδος, *Scyth.* 7). So Lucian highlights the disjuncture between Greek and barbarian culture, but demonstrates through both main characters that it is possible for a barbarian to become Greek. He reveals at the end of the work that "My own situation is like that of Anacharsis … for he too was a barbarian" (*Scyth*. 9). Lucian felt the alienation described about Anacharsis, but was able to find a way into the culture via a local benefactor (*Scyth.* 10–11). Elsewhere, however, Lucian is harsh in his criticism, and favours barbarian culture over the arrogance of Helleno-centric Greek culture.[142]

Similarly, around 176CE Hadrianus of Tyre held the imperial chair of rhetoric at Athens.[143] Philostratus records that in his proemium, Hadrianus did not praise the city's wisdom but rather his own, saying, "Once again letters have come from Phoenicia" (πάλιν ἐκ Φοινικῆς γράμματα, *Lives* 2.10.587). Through this statement, referencing the claim that the alphabet had been introduced to the Greeks by the Phoenicians (cf. Herodotus 5:58–61), Hadrianus emphasised a Phoenician (barbarian) superiority, or priority, over the Greek in regards to education.[144]

6.3.3.3 Melito, Tatian, and Christian "Barbarism"

Some of the Christian apologists also claimed the "barbarian" heritage of the Christian faith. Melito characterised the Christians as "the race of the religious" (τὸ τῶν θεοσεβῶν γένος),

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[142] Stamenka E. Antonova, *Barbarian or Greek? The Charge of Barbarism and Early Christian Apologetics* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 123–25.
[143] Bowie, "Teachers and Students," 244.
[144] Roger D. Woodard, *Greek Writing from Knossos to Homer: A Linguistic Interpretation of the Greek Alphabet and the Continuity of Ancient Greek Literacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 133–35; Stephen Colvin, *A Brief History of Ancient Greek* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), 68–74.

and stated that "our philosophy first grew up among the barbarians, but its full flower came among your nation in the great reign of your ancestor Augustus, and became an omen of good to your empire, for from that time the power of the Romans became great and splendid" (Eus. *HE* 4.26.5–7). In this, he acknowledged the historical "barbarian" roots of the religious movement; and also used ethnic language, describing Christians as a "race" (γένος). However, by tying the rise of Christianity to the rise of the Roman Empire, he attempted to validate it as a valuable aspect of the fabric of the empire.

Tatian, on the other hand, took a more aggressive approach against the Greeks. He argued in the opening chapter of *Address to the Greeks* that the Greeks ought not to be poorly disposed towards the barbarians because all the "institutions" that define Hellenism were received from barbarian sources (*Ad. Graec*. 1). He rejected Hellenism in favour of the "barbarian philosophy" that was Christianity (42), after finding the former wanting on numerous counts.[145]

6.3.3.4 Athenagoras

Some scholars have argued that Athenagoras utilises the concept of ethnicity in his presentation of the Christians.[146] Regarding the apologists in general, and Athenagoras in particular, Young asserts, "To legitimize their position, Christians claimed to be a people or a race, alongside others to whom rights were given."[147] She, as well as Denise Buell and Stamenkova Antonova, note Athenagoras' opening comments, wherein he says that the emperors allow the inhabitants of their empire to "follow many different customs (ἔθεσι) and laws (νόμοις)" because they believe that it would be "impious and irreligious" (ἀσεβὲς καὶ ἀνόσιον) to have no beliefs, and that the fear of the divine restrains people from evil (*Leg.* 1.1–2). Athenagoras goes on to argue that those "who are called Christians" (οἱ λεγόμενοι Χριστιανοί, 1.3) are not given the same consideration and are allowed to be persecuted, even

[145] Laura Salah Nasrallah, "Mapping the World: Justin, Tatian, Lucian, and the Second Sophistic," *HTR* 98, no. 3 (2005): 299–306; John Eugene Fojtik, "Tatian the Barbarian: Language, Education and Identity in the *Oratio Ad Graecos*," in *Continuity and Discontinuity in Early Christian Apologetics*, ed. Jörg Ulrich, Anders-Christian Jacobsen, and Maijastina Kahlos (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2009), 23–34.
[146] Antonova, *Barbarian or Greek?*, 3–4; Denise Kimber Buell, *Why This New Race: Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 50–51; Young, "Greek Apologists," 103.
[147] "Greek Apologists," 103.

though they are the most upstanding in religion and citizenship (εὐσεβέστατα διακειμένους καὶ δικαιότατα πρός τε τὸ θεῖον καὶ τὴν ὑμετέραν βασιλείαν, 1.3).[148] They also note the apologist's later response to the accusation that the Christians are at fault for not "recognizing the same gods as the cities." Athenagoras argues that even the cities disagree with each other regarding the gods. Thus, if the Christians are to be considered "irreligious," then "all cities and all peoples are irreligious" (ἂν τοίνυν ἡμεῖς … ἀσεβῶμεν, πᾶσαι μὲν πόλεις, πάντα δὲ ἔθνη ἀσεβοῦσιν, *Leg.* 14.1–2).

Oskar Skarsaune, on the other hand, disagrees that Athenagoras sought to use "ethnoracial discourse."[149] Noting that "not once does Athenagoras call Christians a *genos*, an *ethnos*, or a *dēmos*," he rejects Buell's reading of the apologist as an "invalid inference." Instead, he suggests that "different types of religious customs were observed by different peoples and cities, but comparing Christian customs with these in no way implied that the Christians were an *ethnos* or a city. Athenagoras himself points to poets and philosophers as the group most similar to the Christians (*Leg.* 5–7), and one would hardly call philosophers a nation."[150]

Skarsaune is correct that Athenagoras does not explicitly use ethnic language to refer to the Christians, and is not especially trying to establish the Christians as a recognisable ethnic group. It is likely that in light of the various crises that rendered "barbarianism" as even more problematic in Athens, Athenagoras avoided ethnic categories as much as possible. Yes, the Christians are recognisable by their beliefs, practices, and ethics, but this is as one group among a great diversity in the empire. A key element of what the apologist wants to convey is that the Christians are good *citizens*, and it is their Christian faith that produces their good citizenship (*Leg.* 1.3). Contrary to the arguments of Antonova and Buell, Athenagoras is not trying to emphasise ethnic discourse, but rather downplay it. The Christians are not a new and foreign race, they are a stable and valuable group that already participates positively in the life of the empire and thus deserves the freedoms enjoyed by other similar groups.

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[148] Buell notes, accurately, that Athenagoras' argument "obscures how Christians, as inhabitants of these cities and among these *ethnē*, live in disjunction with the local customs," and notes that the Roman concern was not so much about which gods were worshipped, but how they were worshipped. Buell, *Why This New Race?*, 50–51.
[149] Oskar Skarsaune, "Ethnic Discourse in Early Christianity," in *Christianity in the Second Century: Themes and Developments*, ed. James Carleton Paget and Judith Lieu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 260.
[150] "Ethnic Discourse," 260, n.44.

6.4 Athenagoras' *Legatio*

This section will discuss the insights in the Athenian church that Athenagoras' *Legatio* offers. First, the description of the Christians will be analysed, including the socio-economic profile, the portrayal of Christianity in relation to philosophy, and the portrayal of Christians as "philanthropic". Following this, Athenagoras' deployment of scripture will be considered, especially in relation to discussions of God and right worship, citizenship, eschatology, sexual ethics, and teaching programs.

6.4.1 Descriptions of the Christians

Athenagoras does not give any indication of ecclesiastical structure in Athens. The letter from Dionysius of Corinth to the Athenians, discussed in the next chapter, indicates that there was a bishop in Athens around the same time as Athenagoras, named Publius. Publius died in the persecution and was later replaced by Quadratus, whose ministry Dionysius commends. This is the extent of the data regarding church structures.

6.4.1.1 Socio-Economic Status of Christians

Athenagoras himself seems to have been a well-traveled individual. He speaks intelligently about artwork and statuary from Corinth and Asia Minor, and in this regard is perhaps a little more cosmopolitan in taste than his forebear, the Apostle Paul (cf. Acts 17:16). Even though he critiques the roles of statuary in religion and superstition, he positively acknowledges their aesthetic value: "Almost all of the statues of Neryllinus serve simply as public monuments, since that is how a city is beautified" (*Leg.* 26.3). He also discusses themes that suggest he had knowledge of Egypt, and he may well have visited there. It will be argued below (§7.4) that Athenagoras later relocated from Athens to Alexandria, which may suggest that he was wealthier than those who were left in the city during, and after, the persecution.

Athenagoras' description of the Christians presents a community with a diverse socio-economic makeup. Those with higher social status can be identified by the complaint that the persecution affected their goods and civic standing (χρήματα … ἐπιτιμίαν, *Leg.* 1.4), and the claim that "we have slaves, some many, some few" (δοῦλοι εἰσιν ἡμῖν, τοῖς μὲν καὶ πλείους

τοῖς δὲ ἐλάττους, 35.3).[151] As is implied in Athenagoras' description of the persecution, wealth and status would not necessarily protect these Christians from persecution. The letter of the Gallic martyrs mentions Vettius Epagathus, who "asked to be heard himself in defence of the brethren to the effect that there was nothing atheistic or impious among us." Vettius "was howled down by those around the judgement-seat, for he was a man of position, and the governor would not tolerate the just requests which he had put forward but merely asked if he were a Christian himself" (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.9–10). Here Vettius is an established Christian, who was also a wealthy individual. Rather than offer him any protection, his position seems to be what inspires an especially vocal response from the crowds.

Beyond the above, the apologist notes that there are men and women of all ages (*Leg.* 32.5), and that "in our ranks … you could find common men, artisans, and old women" (11.4). Athenagoras evidently did not think that he belonged to that common class.[152] However, even though these common folk may not have mastered philosophical argumentation, they demonstrated a moral excellence that Athenagoras argues has not been attained by those who have mastered the rigours of philosophy (11.3). That Christianity holds its own as a philosophy is an important theme for Athenagoras, and is worth some further discussion.

6.4.1.2 Christianity in response to philosophy

Even though the title of the *Legatio* identifies Athenagoras as an "Athenian Christian Philosopher," the apologist does not explicitly claim the title of "philosopher" for himself, nor does he explicitly state that he wants the Christian faith to be understood as a philosophy. However, Athenagoras addresses the emperors as philosophers and his argumentation reveals an engagement with the philosophical questions, and the related critiques of Christianity, that were current in his day. As Malherbe says, "It is against the background in which Christians were regarded as irresponsible, antisocial Cynics, as naive people who held an irrational faith, who led unexamined lives, and who rejected scientific knowledge, that Athenagoras wrote his Apology."[153]

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[151] Barnard, *Athenagoras*, 149.
[152] William R. Schoedel, "Christian 'Atheism' and the Peace of the Roman Empire," *Church History* 42, no. 3 (1973): 309.
[153] Abraham J. Malherbe, "Apologetic and Philosophy in the Second Century," in *Light from the Gentiles: Hellenistic Philosophy and Early Christianity. Collected Essays, 1959–2012 by Abraham J. Malherbe, Volume 2.*, ed. Carl R. Holladay, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 792.

In a context where Lucian and others could dismiss the Christians as entirely too credulous (Luc. *Per.* 11–13; Celsus in Origen *Contra Cels.* 1.9; Galen),[154] and where "faith" was too closely aligned with irrational belief, Athenagoras encouraged his audience to consider the "reasoning of our faith" (τὸν λογισμὸν ἡμῶν τῆς πίστεως, *Leg.* 8.1).[155] Later, he reminds his audience that "we are servants of reason and not its masters" (35.6). Furthermore, the apologist reiterated that the God he proclaimed could be "apprehended by mind and reason alone" (νῷ μόνῳ καὶ λόγῳ καταλαμβανόμενον, *Leg.* 10.1). Not only is reason the means by which one could apprehend God, it is central to the very nature of who God is: "the Son of God is the mind and reason of the Father" (10.2); and "God, who is eternal mind, had in himself his Word or Reason from the beginning" (10.3). This emphasis on reason also ties in with Athenagoras' positive presentation of the Christians in regards to citizenship (1.3). Stoic philosophy had "emphasized the compatibility of philosophy with civic life," and Marcus Aurelius notes in his *Meditations* that "the rational is at once the political" (ἔστι δὲ τὸ λογικὸν εὐθὺς καὶ πολιτικόν, *Med.* X.2).[156]

In regards to Lucian's critiques of the two frauds—Alexander of Abonuteichus and Peregrinus (or Proteus; *Leg.* 26.3. cf. Lucian *Alexander*; *The Death of Peregrinus*)—Athenagoras cites the two men in the section where he discusses the demonic activity behind the oracles and miracles derived from statues (*Leg.* 26–27). He places these two men, and the statues set up in their honour, firmly in the context of superstition about statues and idols, without any acknowledgement of Peregrinus' period of popularity among the Christians.[157]

The right approach to death

[154] The relevant Arabic fragment of Galen is quoted in R. Walzer, *Galen on the Jews and Christians* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), 48–49: "If I had in mind people who taught their pupils in the same way as the followers of Moses and Christ teach theirs—for they order them to accept everything on faith—I should not have given you a definition."
[155] "Apologetic and Philosophy," 788–89.
[156] C. Kavin Rowe, *One True Life: The Stoics and Early Christians as Rival Traditions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 80.
[157] "Historisch zutreffend wird die Gefängnishaft des Peregrinus sein, die er seines christlichen Bekenntnisses wegen zu erleiden hatte." Hans Dieter Betz, "Lukian von Samosata und das Christentum," *Novum Testamentum* 3, no. 3 (1959): 230.

In a statement referring to the Christians, Marcus Aurelius criticises a willingness for death that is based on "obstinacy" (κατὰ ψιλὴν παράταξιν), as is the case with the Christians (ὡς οἱ Χριστιανοί), and "stage heroics" (ἀτραγῴδως, *Med.* XI.3).[158] Instead, readiness for death must "be associated with deliberation and dignity" ([κατὰ] λελογισμένως καὶ σεμνῶς). A similar distate for Christian willingness for martyrdom is expressed by Arrius Antoninus in Tertullian's *To Scapula* 5. Tertullian reports: "When Arrius Antoninus was driving things hard in Asia, all the Christians of the province, in one united band, presented themselves before his judgement seat; on which, ordering a few to be led forth to execution, he said to the rest, 'O miserable men, if you wish to die, you have cliffs or ropes'."[159]

Athenagoras expresses a confidence but not a foolhardiness towards the mortal dangers faced by the Christians. In his introductory statements, the apologist notes that the penalty the Christians suffer does not only affect their goods and civic standing—things that the Christians are not excessively concerned with—but, more seriously, affects their "bodies and souls" (*Leg.* 1.4). Here Athenagoras is not expressing a foolhardy boast about the post-mortem rewards the Christians will enjoy, but raising their loss of life as a serious injustice for which he was seeking imperial intervention. As Geffcken notes, if their opponents accused them of longing for death, the apologists' response was "We like to live!"[160]

The Athenian apologist's approach could be contrasted with Justin's more aggressive treatment of this issue. The earlier apologist declared that the emperor "has the power to kill, but not to harm" (*1 Apol.* 2.4), and loosely cited Jesus' warning, "Fear not them that kill you, and after that can do no more; but fear Him who after death is able to cast both soul and body into hell" (*1 Apol.* 19.7; cf. Matt. 10.28). Nystrom notes that Justin's boldness in this regard undercuts his argument: "Why ask for fair treatment in one instance and claim that it does not matter how Christians are treated in another?"[161] Athenagoras, on the other hand, used

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[158] Some take the phrase ὡς οἱ Χριστιανοί to be a gloss, while others are comfortable to read it as genuine. Gloss: Brunt, "Marcus Aurelius and the Christians," 498; Haines, *Marcus Aurelius*, LCL 58, p.294, n.1. Genuine: Malherbe, "Apologetic and Philosophy," 786, n.39.

[159] Trans.: Ralph Martin Novak, *Christianity and the Roman Empire: Background Texts* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press, 2001), 97.

[160] "Die Christen wollten ebenso gut leben wie die Heiden, und wenn diese ihnen Todessehnsucht vorwerfen konnten, so war di Antwort der apologetischen Literatur: wir leben gern!" J. Geffcken, *Zwei griechische Apologeten* (Leipzig/Berlin: B.G. Teubner, 1907), 162–63.

[161] David E. Nystrom, *The Apology of Justin Martyr*, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 46.

the Christian expectation of future reward or punishment to highlight their ethical living *now* (*Leg.* 12.3–4; 35.15–16; 36.6).[162]

Demons and psychology

Athenagoras' argumentation around the effects of demons in relation to idol worship, as Dragoș-Andrei Giulea has shown, demonstrates a reception of Jewish theological concepts through the framework of Stoic philosophical and psychological terms.[163] Giulea notes that Athenagoras was likely the first to make these connections, though they would be worked out more fully by Evagrius: "Athenagoras descended into the domain of human psychology and investigated the way the fallen angels and their offspring act within the human soul. He was probably the first to undertake this kind of investigation, before Clement, Origen, and Evagrius, all of whom most likely followed, mediated or not, the Athenagorian project."[164]

On the basis of the discussion above, it can be seen that Athenagoras was not only conversant with classical philosophical and literary works, he also engaged with the works of his contemporaries, such as Aristides, Lucian, and Marcus Aurelius. Not only that, Athenagoras argumentation reveals his ability to do unique philosophical work that brought Jewish traditions into conversation Stoic concepts.

6.4.1.3 Christians as "Philanthropic" Citizens

Athenagoras begins the *Legatio* with an appeal to the emperors' philanthropic natures (1.2). Later, he notes that their ancestors, likely referring to Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, showed "humane affection" (φιλανθρωπίᾳ, 30.2) towards their subjects, and were rewarded with praise because of it.[165] In this context of the benevolence which the emperors bestowed upon their subjects, and the general peace and freedom it gave most people (1.1–2), the Christians were not beneficiaries (1.3). Athenagoras, however, in seeking to refute the accusations that

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[162] This will be discussed further below in §7.3.2.3.
[163] Dragoș-Andrei Giulea, "The Watchers' Whispers: Athenagoras' *Legatio* 25,1–3 and the *Book of the Watchers*," *Vigiliae Christianae* 61, no. 3 (2007), 258–281.
[164] Giulea, "Watchers' Whispers," 262.
[165] Melito had described Marcus Aurelius' stance towards the Christians as "πολύ γε φιλανθρωποτέραν καὶ φιλοσοφωτέραν" (Eus. *HE* 4.26.11)

portrayed them as impious and undesirable, positions the Christians with the emperors and describes their life as "philanthropic".

In *Leg.* 12.1, the apologist notes that the Christians' understanding of God's future judgement of the human race leads them to adopt a life that is "moderate, philanthropic, and humble" (τὸν μέτριον καὶ φιλάνθρωπον καὶ εὐκαταφρόνητον βίον),[166] and "gentle, philanthropic, and kind" (τοῦ πράου καὶ φιλανθρώπου καὶ ἐπιεικοῦς βίου). If anyone was to suggest that the Christians would only be philanthropic towards their own fellow-believers, Athenagoras denies that accusation. Paraphrasing Luke 6:32–34, he says that they show "such affection for men that we love not only our friends, 'for', it says, 'if you love them who love you and lend to them who lend to you, what reward will you have?'" (12.3).[167] He references Jesus' teaching elsewhere, quoting the commands to love your enemies and bless them who curse you.[168] The Christians' loving action towards their fellow man, just like the emperors', reaches beyond their own community.

This argument certainly responds to broader critiques against Christianity, but it would also have had relevance in the Athenian context. A decade earlier, Aelius Aristides had praised the Athenians for their philanthropy.[169] Examples of the Athenians' *philanthropia* included: their courteous association with others (7); just trials (44); the reception of any and all people and the inclusion of them in civic life (60); and refuge for those in need (68). Oliver observes, "If Aristides chose to return again and again to this by no means new theme, he probably did so because the old theme had achieved a new interest, which some may find in the rising *odium humani generis,*" that is, the rising influence of the Christians.[170] Athenagoras' effort at highlighting the Christians as "philanthropic" places them within this ethical framework. The Christian community in Athens reflects its urban context, seeking to love their neighbour in various ways.

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[166] Schoedel: "moderate, that shows affection for men, and that is thoughtlessly despised"; Geffcken, *Apologeten*, 184: "einfachen, selbstlosen und bescheidenen"; Pouderon: "une vie de modération, de charité et d'humilité". Marcovich: τὸν μέτριον καὶ φιλάνθρωπον καὶ <οὐκ> εὐκαταφρόνητον βίον.
[167] See comparison in Appendix 2, §1.1. Justin likewise claimed that the Christians cultivated philanthropy which they had received from God (*Dial.* 110.3; *1 Apol.* 10.1).
[168] *Leg.* 1.4; 11.2, 4. Cf. Matt. 5:39–45.
[169] *Panath. Or.* 7, 8, 9, 44, 45, 54, 60, 62, 63, 66, 68, 69, 74, 122, 133 [Oliver, *Civilizing Power*].
[170] Oliver, *Civilizing Power*, 36–37.

6.4.2 Athenagoras' use of Scripture in his description of the Christians[171]

Compared to other Christian writers from the second century, Athenagoras is very sparing in his quotation of Christian Scripture.[172] He only directly quotes a handful of Old Testament texts, and fewer again from the Gospels.[173] The apologetic nature of the text is at least partly responsible for the lack of direct quotation of Christian writings.[174] Athenagoras is much more willing to directly quote from the Hebrew Scriptures, which is probably due to Judaism's status as a *religio licita*. It is noteworthy, though, that Athenagoras uses Pauline language and concepts much more clearly than any earlier apologists.[175] Though he may not quote them directly, nor signpost his references to them, he certainly alludes to Pauline texts.

In light of Andrew Gregory and Christopher Tuckett's warnings regarding the clarity of terms used in any analysis of reception history, it is important at the outset to outline the usage of the terms "reference", "quotation", "allusion", and "echo".[176] Following Gregory and Tuckett, I will use "reference" "as an umbrella term to refer to any apparent use of one text in another."[177] Gregory and Tuckett "suggest that 'quotation' be used to refer to instances in one text showing a significant degree of verbal identity with the source cited," and that "allusion" should "be used to refer to instances containing less verbal identity."[178] In this investigation, key markers of a quotation will be: 1) textual indicators that the author is using

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[171] I use the term "Scripture" to refer to the Hebrew Scriptures, including the deuterocanonical texts where relevant, and the early Christian writings that would later be included in the New Testament canon.
[172] Rankin, *Athenagoras,* 155. Compare, for example, with Justin's *Apologies*: Marcovich identifies 72 OT references, 75 Gospels references, and 23 references from the rest of the NT in Justin; 25 OT referencs, 45 Gospels references, and 32 references from the rest of the NT in Athenagoras. More significant than the count of references is that Justin quotes texts more than Athenagoras, who has more allusions than quotes. Miroslav Marcovich, ed. *Iustini Martyris: Apologiae Pro Christianis*, PTS 38 (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1994), 171–73; *Athenagoras: Legatio Pro Christianis*, PTS 31 (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1990), 117–18.
[173] See Appendix 1: References to Scripture in Athenagoras' *Legatio*.
[174] Rensberger, "As the Apostle Teaches," 335–36; Barnard, *Athenagoras*, 69, 72.
[175] Rensberger, "As the Apostle Teaches," 280–81.
[176] Andrew F. Gregory and Christopher M. Tuckett, "Reflections on Method: What Constitutes the Use of the Writings That Later Formed the New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers?," in *The Reception of the New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Andrew F. Gregory and Christopher M. Tuckett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 64.
[177] "Method," 64.
[178] "Method," 64.

a source; and 2) close verbal matches to the proposed source text. The reference to Proverbs 8:22 in *Legatio* 10.4 is a clear example of a quotation. The verb φησίν ("it says") indicates that Athenagoras is using another source, and the verbal match with Proverbs is almost exact.

Proverbs 8:22	*Legatio* 10.4
[22]κύριος ἔκτισέν με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἔργα αὐτοῦ	«κύριος γάρ», φησίν, «ἔκτισέν με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἔργα αὐτοῦ.»

An example of an allusion can be found in his use of Rom. 12:4 at *Leg.* 13.4:

Rom. 12:4	*Leg.* 13.4
[1]Παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, διὰ τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν τοῦ θεοῦ παραστῆσαι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν **θυσίαν** ζῶσαν ἁγίαν εὐάρεστον τῷ θεῷ, **τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν** ὑμῶν.	καὶ προσφέρειν, δέον ἀναίμακτον **θυσίαν τὴν λογικὴν** προσάγειν **λατρείαν**;

6.4.2.1. Who is God, and how should he be worshipped?

The primary argument in Athenagoras' refutation of the accusation of atheism (*Leg.* 4–30) is that the Christians worship one God, who is of a completely different nature to his creation, and who is not worshipped through physical sacrifices. In this wide ranging argument, which makes up the majority of the *Legatio*, Athenagoras first draws on Greek poets and philosophers in an attempt to demonstrate the resonance between Christian monotheism and Hellenistic philosophy (*Leg*. 5–7).[179]

While Athenagoras is happy to use these poets and philosophers to support his case, he is not uncritical in doing so.[180] Echoing the language of Paul in Acts 17:27,[181] the apologist argues

[179] Abraham Malherbe, "Athenagoras on the Poets and Philosophers," in *Light from the Gentiles: Hellenistic Philosophy and Early Christianity. Collected Essays, 1959–2012 by Abraham J. Malherbe, Volume 2.*, ed. Carl R. Holladay, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 850–51.
[180] Stuart E. Parsons, "Very Early Trinitarian Expressions," *Tyndale Bulletin* 65, no. 1 (2014): 146.
[181] See Appendix 2, §1.1. Marcovich, Pouderon and Schoedel do not identify this reference. Athenagoras also alludes to Acts 17:24 in *Leg.* 16.3: "The world (ὁ κόσμος) did not come into

that these poets and philosophers had "gone at this and other matters by guesswork … moved … through some affinity with the breath of God to seek (ζητῆσαι), if possible, to find (εὑρεῖν) and understand (νοῆσαι) the truth. There are severals parallels between the two passages: the seeking and finding; the doubt surrounding the possibility of finding (and the implication that they experienced only limited success); the affinity (or descendence from) God; the role of the poets in this search.

Athenagoras may have had Celsus in mind, who argued for the philosophers' monopoly on the true knowledge of God. He said, "To find the Maker and Father of this universe is difficult … the way of truth is sought (ζητεῖται) by seers and philosophers … it is impossible for all men to travel it" (Orig. *Contra Celsum* 7.42). For him, this "search" (ζήτησις) was a "*terminus technicus* for philosophy."[182] Athenagoras, on the other hand, argues that the crucial need to attain the knowledge of God is to "learn about God from God" (*Leg.* 7.2), something the poets and philosophers would not do.

Athenagoras' use of Acts 17:27 to refute the efforts of the philosophers is perhaps not surprising; after all, it is thematically relevant. It is, however, probably significant that he uses it as an Athenian in Athens. It will be discussed in the next chapter that Dionysius of Corinth cites Acts 17 to the Athenians in order to encourage them in the faith (*Hist. eccl*. 4.23). It seems that Acts 17 had some traction in the Athenian Christian community as history regarding the church's foundation in the city. Athenagoras is showing another example of this use of the text. Throughout the second century, Athens had again become a hub of sophistic endeavour. The Christian community had received criticism as irrational and depraved. In the Acts 17 narrative they were able to find the justification of their position: The poets and philosophers could not achieve what they claimed, it was only in the Christian message that one could truly find the "Maker and Father of this universe".

In Support of Monotheism

being because God needed (δεομένου) it." Acts 17:24: "The God who made the world (τὸν κόσμον) and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth… nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed (προσδεόμενός) anything."

[182] Malherbe, "Poets and Philosophers," 856.

After critiquing the poets and philosophers, Athenagoras outlines a logical argument for monotheism (8), but acknowledges that this logical argument could be dismissed as "man-made" (ἀνθρωπικὸν, *Leg.* 9.1; cf. 7.3; 11.4),[183] and thus proceeds to demonstrate monotheistic theology from the prophets. These, whom he describes as being moved by the divine Spirit (κινήσαντος αὐτοὺς τοῦ θείου πνεύματος, 9.1), include Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, though in his discussion he references Isaiah, Baruch, Proverbs, and Genesis.[184] His later arguments on Christian worship (13; 16) draw primarily from Pauline literature.

Four quotations are found clustered together in the context of discussing the belief that there is only one God (*Leg.* 9.1–2). Athenagoras uses them to demonstrate that the Christians do not believe a man-made doctrine, but rather one that was affirmed by the voices of the prophets (αἱ φωναὶ τῶν προφητῶν πιστοῦσιν ἡμῶν τοὺς λογισμούς, he notes Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah and the rest of the prophets). These prophetic voices were not merely espousing more ancient man-made doctrine because "in the ecstasy of their thoughts, as the divine Spirit moved them, [they] uttered what they had been inspired to say" (*Leg.* 9.1). The four quotations come from Baruch 3:36 and Isaiah 44:6, 43:10–11 and 66:1.[185] They emphasise that God is incomparable, no other gods are before him, and he stands apart from creation (earth is his footstool). God's ontological otherness is illustrated with "potter and clay" imagery, which highlights the difference between God as creator and his creation (*Leg.* 15.2). Athenagoras may be drawing on Paul's comments at Rom. 9:21, or possibly Jeremiah 18, but it could be that he has simply drawn the metaphor from the commonplace reality of pottery in the ancient world.

In his discussion of the cluster of prophetic quotations, Bernard Pouderon observes that the same passages (including the quotes from Proverbs discussed below) appear in other apologetic texts, most notably Irenaeus' *Against Heresies*, Cyprian's *Testimonies*, and Lactantius' *Divine Institutes*. However, since the others do not cluster them as Athenagoras does, and since his forms of the quotes do not follow those found in possible source

[183] In *Legatio* 24.6, Athenagoras contrasts "worldly wisdom" from "prophetic wisdom," noting that the former is "heavenly" (ἐπουρανίου) and the latter is "earthly and in harmony with the prince of matter" (ἐπιγείου καὶ κατὰ τὸν ἄρχοντα τῆς ὕλης). This statement could be influenced by 1 Cor. 2:6–7, which contrasts "God's wisdom" with the wisdom of "the rulers of this age (τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου). Cf.
[184] Rankin, *Athenagoras*, 156–57.
[185] See table 2.1 in Appendix 2.

testimonia, Pouderon concludes that it cannot be argued that Athenagoras was necessarily using an anthology of Bible passages to form his argument. It is just as possible that Athenagoras chose these passages from his own reading of scripture.[186]

The "Prophetic Spirit" in Proverbs

To further support his argument that Christians are not atheists, Athenagoras continues on to describe how the Christians are not only monotheists, they are also trinitarian (though he does not use that term). Christians believe there is a "Son of God" who "is the Word of the Father in Ideal Form and Energising Power; for in his likeness and through him all things came into existence, which presupposes that the Father and the Son are one" (*Leg.* 10.2). This is supported by a quote of what the "Prophetic Spirit" says in Proverbs 8:22: "'For the Lord,' it says, 'made me the beginning of his ways for his works'" (10.4).[187] This verse is also used by Justin (*Dial.* 61.3–5) and Cyprian (*Test*. II.1) to establish the divinity of Christ. Irenaeus, on the other hand, equates "Wisdom" in Proverbs to the Holy Spirit (*Haer.* IV.20.3).

The second quote, from Proverbs 21:1, is found in *Legatio* 18.2. Athenagoras draws a surprising comparison between the two emperors (Marcus Aurelius the father, and Commodus the son) and God the Father and his Son: "As all things have been subjected to you, a father and a son, who have received your kingdom from above ('for the king's life is in God's hand', as the prophetic spirit says), so all things are subordinated to the one God and the Word that issues from him whom we consider his inseparable Son." While Athenagoras uses his formula that identifies this as a quote (φησὶ), he does not quote the text exactly. Where the LXX says "καρδία βασιλέως", the apologist replaces that with "βασιλέως…ψυχὴ."

The Son, then, is distinct from but not inseparable (ἀμέριστῳ, 18.2) from the Father, but "proceeding" (προελθών, 10.2) from him. Athenagoras also notes that the "Prophetic Spirit" that has spoken through Proverbs is "an effluence of God which flows forth from him and returns like a ray of the sun" (10.4).[188]

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[186] Bernard Pouderon, "Les citations scripturaires dans l'oeuvre d'Athénagore. Leurs sources et leur statut," *Vetera Christianorum* 31 (1994): 120–23.
[187] See Appendix 2, §1.2
[188] Parsons, "Trinitarian Expressions," 146.

In and of itself, Athenagoras' claim that God is one but has multiple inseparable persons is not entirely foreign to Greek religious thought. Athenagoras himself is able to draw on Greek philosophical arguments for the unity of God, while also acknowledging the pluriform nature of Greek religion. A key argument to which Athenagoras devotes a significant segment of his treatise, however, draws a distinction between the Greek conceptions of the gods—which he describes as "created" (γενητήν) and "perishable" (φθαρτήν) like matter—and the true (Christian) conception of the divine as "uncreated" and "eternal".[189] The non-Christian populace falls into error because they are unable to discern what is god and what is matter (*Leg.* 15.1), but Athenagoras stops short of accusing them of wilfully turning away from God into error.[190]

Being immaterial, God is in need of nothing (*Leg.* 16.3; cf. Acts 17:24), and that is why Christian worship takes on a different format to that of the non-Christians. While they "measure piety in terms of sacrifices" (*Leg.* 13.1), the Christians "raise up holy hands" (13.3) and "offer up our rational worship as an unbloody sacrifice" (13.4). Both of these statements about worship seem to be derived from Pauline literature.[191]

Firstly, the reference to lifting holy hands in prayer likely comes from 1 Tim. 2:8, and is a phrase from Paul's instructions regarding the "ethical conditions of prayer"[192] used by Athenagoras as an allusion to worship. The grammatical change from the present active participle ἐπαίροντας to the present subjunctive ἐπαίρωμεν fits the change in context and does not drastically change the meaning of the quote.

The posture of raised hands in prayer is present in both Old and New Testaments (Ps 133:3; 140:2; Lk. 24:50), the early church (1 Clem. 29.1), and in Greek and Roman contexts (Pliny *Ep.*

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[189] *Leg.* 4.1; 5.2–3; 19.1; 21.5. Cf. Rom. 1:19–20, 23.
[190] D. Jeffrey Bingham, "Athenagoras on the Divine Nature: The Father, the Son, and the Rational," *Perichoresis* 17, no. 1 (2019), 57–59; Kathy L. Gaca, "Paul's Uncommon Declaration in Romans 1:18–32 and Its Problematic Legacy for Pagan and Christian Relations," in *Early Patristic Readings of Romans*, ed. Kathy L. Gaca and L.L. Welborn (New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 11.
[191] See Appendix 2, §1.4.
[192] Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 445.

6.20.15; Demosth. *Or.* 21.52).[193] An example from the Roman context is the Mourning Women of Canosa. These terracotta statues of mourning women, standing with hands raised in prayer, were placed in tombs to act as ongoing attendants for the deceased.[194]

Other early Christians also reference the practice. Tertullian, in an apologetic context, mentions having "hands outspread" (manibus expansis; *Apol.* 30.4) in prayer. The idea of needing pure hands (as indicative of spiritual purity)[195] is present in 1 Clement 29.1, and also appears in a Greek cultic context in Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* 469 (πρῶτον μὲν ἱερὰς ἐξ ἀειρύτου χοὰς κρήνης ἐνεγκοῦ, δἰ ὁσίων χειρῶν θιγών, "First bring sacred libations from an ever-flowing stream, touching them with hands that are pure!"). It is interesting that Athenagoras equates "raising holy hands" with sacrifice, rather than prayer, but it seems likely that he is thinking of worship more generally. In the lead up to this quotation, the apologist has pointed out that, in their complete ignorance of God, those who accuse the Christians "measure piety in terms of sacrifices" (*Leg.* 13.1). In contrast, the Christians forego physical sacrifices in favour of the simple and pure worship represented by raising holy hands (in prayer).

Secondly, *Legatio* 13.4 contains a recognisable phrase—θυσίαν τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν—slightly modified. Where Paul has "*living* sacrifice" (θυσίαν ζῶσαν), Athenagoras speaks of "*unbloody* sacrifice" (ἀναίμακτον θυσίαν).[196] The connection between "unbloody" and "living" is logical. The living sacrifice has not had its blood spilt. The implication is that this sacrifice is not the cultic sacrifice of Greek (or Jewish) religion, since God has no interest in that type of sacrifice. Rather, it is the whole giving of oneself—or, corporately, the community of the church—to God in sacrificial service. Barnard suggests that Athenagoras has the

[193] Raising hands in prayer was "the prayer gesture par excellence" ("der Gebetsgestus par excellence"; Jakov and Voutiras), and "for the Romans is the most common prayer gesture" ("Daher ist das Erheben der Hände für die Römer der häufigste Gebetsgestus"; Fyntikoglou and Voutiras). Daniel Jakov and Emmanuel Voutiras, "Das Gebet Bei Den Griechen," *ThesCRA* III (2005): 120–21; Vassilis Fyntikoglou and Emmanuel Voutiras, "Das Römische Gebet," *ThesCRA* III (2005): 163; Hendrik S. Versnel, "Prayer and Curse," in *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Greek Religion*, ed. Esther Eidinow and Julia Kindt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 450.

[194] Ruth Allen, "Science Reveals New Clues About Mysterious Ancient Greek Sculptures of Mourning Women," The Getty Museum, https://blogs.getty.edu/iris/science-reveals-new-clues-about-mysterious-ancient-greek-sculptures-of-mourning-women/.

[195] Towner, *Timothy and Titus*, 202; Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 445.

[196] See Appendix 2, §1.4. "ἀναίμακτον θυσίαν" becomes very common among later patristic writers.

eucharist in view here, but that is certainly not explicit.[197] The need to defend against "Thyestean banquets" would preclude any obvious references to the eucharist.

As far as other possible sources for the change in adjective, the *Testament of Levi* describes angelic worship as "a reasonable and bloodless offering" (λογικὴν καὶ ἀναίμακτον θυσίαν, 3.6).[198] Plutarch records that Numa, following a Pythagorean influence in cultic practice, urged the Romans not to "revere an image of God", and ensured that most of their sacrifices "involved no bloodshed" (ἀναίμακτοι, *Numa* 8.8). The Pythagorean connection is interesting in this context. Plutarch notes that the philosopher said that "the first principle of being … was invisible (ἀόρατον) and uncreated (ἄκτιστον), and discernible only by the mind (νοητὸν ὑπελάμβανεν)" (*Numa* 8.7). Athenagoras uses similar language in *Legatio* 4.1: "the divine is uncreated (ἀγένητον) and eternal (ἀίδιον) and can be contemplated (θεωρούμενον) only by thought (νῳ) and reason (λόγῳ)."

There is possibly a more deliberate element in this choice of language, however. In the surrounding context, Athenagoras notes that God "does not need" whole burnt offerings (ὁλοκαυτώσεων, ὧν μὴ δεῖται ὁ θεός, *Leg.* 13.4), but rather it is necessary (δέον) to bring (προσφέρειν) an unbloody sacrifice. In doing so, he aligns the character of God with the nature of the required worship. Later, in chapter 27, at the end of an extended discussion of the demonic influence behind idol worship, the apologist notes that demons incite the irrational human mind towards idol worship "because they are greedy for the savour of the fat and the blood of the sacrifices, and because their business is to delude men" (27.2). So the choice of "unbloody" in chapter 13 may be more understandable in the light of the demonic thirst for bloody sacrifice in chapter 27.

In *Legatio* 16, Athenagoras again uses a cluster of Pauline allusions in his rebuttal of Greek conceptions of god, and the Christian response of proper worship.[199] The allusions to Rom. 1:25 and 1 Tim. 2:8 are straightforward. The quote of Gal. 4:9 is of interest. While Paul's emphasis in regards to "weak and beggarly elements" (ἀσθενῆ καὶ πτωχὰ στοιχεῖα) lies on the means of justification—whether that be through observing the Jewish law, or the Galatians' former pagan practices. Athenagoras uses the same phrase with the emphasis on the

[197] Barnard, *Athenagoras*,
[198] Jewett, *Romans*, 730.
[199] See Appendix 2, §1.4

ontological difference—God is uncreated, eternal, etc, whereas the other 'gods' consist of passible matter (παθητὴν ὕλην).[200]

6.4.2.2 Citizenship

As noted earlier, Athenagoras presents the Christians as philanthropic, and as "the most pious and righteous of all men in matters that concern both the divine and your kingdom" (*Leg*. 1.3).[201] His statement that the emperors have "received [their] kingdom from above," in which he likens the father and son rulers to the Father God and Son (18.2),[202] reveals an extremely positive opinion of the rulers, though it does also clearly state their subordination under God.[203] Athenagoras also offers an affirmation of Roman law, stating, "If a man can convict us of any evil … we do not ask to be let off … we consider it right that our punishment be severe and merciless" (*Leg.* 2.1). He supports this picture of good citizenship further with an allusion to 1 Tim. 2:1–2.

Prayer for the Emperors

In his final appeal to the emperors, Athenagoras urges that his requests be granted since the Christians ("men like ourselves") pray that the emperors' reign will "grow and increase" and that "the succession to the kingdom may proceed from father to son" (*Leg*. 37.2). He notes that this prayer has a benefit for the Christians, in an allusion to 1 Tim. 2:1–2, saying "we may lead a quiet and peacable life" (*Leg.* 37.3).[204] The quote is almost exact except for the change from the subjunctive "διάγωμεν" in 1 Tim. 2 to the optative "διάγοιμεν" in *Leg.* 37. The same quote also appears in Theophilus of Antioch's *Ad Autolycum* 3.14, but it is unlikely that Athenagoras borrowed the reference from him. While Theophilus may have been active from around 169CE (Eus. *HE* 4.20.1; 4.24.1–3), the third book of his *Ad Autolycum* includes a reference to Marcus Aurelius' death which occurred after Athenagoras wrote his *Legatio*.[205] If

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[200] The reversal of πτωχὰ καὶ ἀσθενῆ also appears in Origen (*Hom. Jer.* 12.13.1). Origen, *Homélies sur Jérémie*, vol. 2 volumes, SC (Paris: Cerf, 1976–77).
[201] Athenagoras' acquiescent tone can be contrasted with Tatian's much more aggressive rejection of Hellenism. Grant, "Five Apologists," 8, 11.
[202] See comparison of *Leg.* 18.2 and Rom. 13:1–2 in Appendix 2, §2.1
[203] Grant, "Five Apologists," 8.
[204] See Appendix 2, §2.2.
[205] Grant, *Greek Apologists*, 143; Rick Rogers, "Theophilus of Antioch," in *Early Christian Thinkers: The Lives and Legacies of Twelve Key Figures*, ed. Paul Foster (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2010), 54.

there is any dependence between the two second-century references, Theophilus would be dependent upon Athenagoras.[206]

Some observations can be made here. Firstly, the context in which Athenagoras uses this quote mirrors the context in 1 Timothy, though his apologetic aims account for the different aspects of the text in the *Legatio*. In his letter, Paul was urging Timothy and his church to a variety of prayer (δεήσεις, προσευχάς, ἐντεύξεις, εὐχαριστίας, 1 Tim. 2:1) for all people, including (or perhaps particularly) for kings and all those in high positions, so that they could have this peaceful life. Athenagoras, on the other hand, has an apologetic aim. Rather than urging a range of types of prayer, the apologist tailors his argument to his imperial audience. Prayer for "kings and people in high positions" becomes a specific prayer for the increase of the emperors' reign and the safe transition of rule from father to son.

The relevance of the quoted phrase—ἥρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον διάγωμεν—for Athenagoras' apologetic aim is of interest. In 1 Tim. 2:2, Paul uses a single ἵνα clause ("so that we may live…)[207] to indicate the primary purpose of his instructions regarding prayer. Athenagoras, on the other hand, uses a ἵνα/ὅπως construction, in which "ἵνα-clause gives the content, [and] the ὅπως-clause [gives] the purpose of the prayer."[208] This construction allows the apologist to demonstrate the mutual benefit of their prayer: the ἵνα clause emphasising that his prayer is for the benefit of the rulers; and the ὅπως showing that the Christians will continue this prayer because of the resultant benefit to them of a peaceful life.

In 1 Tim. 2:2, the "quiet and peacable life" the Christians were to pray for had a particular character: "in all piety and dignity" (ἐν πάσῃ εὐσεβείᾳ καὶ σεμνότητι). This "piety" may reflect Hellenic ideas regarding good citizenship,[209] but it is more likely that it points to "the genuine

[206] Cf. Pouderon's note: "Citation de Paul, *I Tim. 2,2,* reprise par Théophile, *Ad Aut.* III, 14." Athénagore, *Supplique et sur la Résurrection*, 209, n.4.
[207] For ἵνα primarily indicating purpose here, see Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 38; Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 116.
[208] BDAG, "ὅπως", 718.
[209] Luke Timothy Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 194; Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 39. Dibelius and Conzelmann highlight the high occurrence of "εὐσέβεια" in inscriptions.

life of faith and the manner… in which the Christian is to pursue life."[210] Athenagoras, on the other hand, emphasises the Christians' good citizenship and loyalty. The specific purpose of the prayer, discussed previously, is evidence of this. Also, the claim that the Christians will "willingly do all that is commanded" (αὐτοὶ δὲ πάντα τὰ κεκελευσμένα προθύμως ὑπηρετοῖμεν) emphasises the point. This offer of service to imperial rulers, in relation to prayer for them, also appears in Justin Martyr *1 Apol*. 17.3.[211]

It has already been noted that Athenagoras simplifies the terminology for prayer compared to Paul's list. What is noteworthy, however, is that he uses a term, εὔχομαι, that does not appear in 1 Tim 2. According to the *TLG* this particular word for prayer is common among Hellenic and Jewish-Hellenistic literature, including Philo, Josephus, Plutarch, and Lucian, as well as early Christian writers such as the Clements of Rome and Alexandria. The sections in Theophilus' *Ad Autolycum* 3.14 and Justin Martyr's *1 Apology* 17.3 that make the same arguments regarding prayer for the emperors use the same term for prayer as Athenagoras. It seems that in choosing a single term for prayer, Athenagoras opted for the more common term which had wide usage across Christian and Hellenic literature.

So in this instance, Athenagoras seems to have this passage from Paul in mind, though we cannot be certain what form he may have known it in.[212] He has reworked it for his apologetic purpose, as opposed to Paul's didactic purposes, and selected more common contemporary terminology for prayer. One final observation is that where Justin used Jesus' teaching on paying taxes to Caesar (Matt. 22:20–21; Luke 20:24) in his argument to demonstrate the Christians' good citizenship, Athenagoras only resorted to the passage in 1 Timothy.

6.4.2.3 Eschatological expectations leading to upright lives

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[210] It is worth noting the explicitly Christocentric nature of εὐσέβεια in the Pastorals: 1 Tim. 3:16; 6:3. I. Howard Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), 423. Cf. Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 117.

[211] Justin Martyr: ὑμῖν δὲ πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα χαίροντες ὑπηρετοῦμεν; Athenagoras: αὐτοὶ δὲ πάντα τὰ κεκελευσμένα προθύμως ὑπηρετοῖμεν. "It was emphasized by the early apologists that the church's prayers for the state were a sign of their loyalty": Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 81.

[212] It "may well reflect awareness of the Pauline dictum or even possibly of this passage." Johnson, *1&2 Timothy*, 189.

A significant element of Athenagoras' portrayal of the Christians as good citizens is his argument that the doctrine of future judgement ensures their good and godly behaviour in this life.

Giving an account

In *Legatio* 12.3–4,[213] 35.15–16, and 36.6, Athenagoras ties his argument to the Christian teaching that people will have to give an account (ὑφέξειν…λόγον in 12.3–4; λόγον ὑφέξειν in 35.15, 36.6) to God. In each of these cases, the rendering of the account is related to ethical living in this lifetime. The argument in 12.3–4 and 35.15 is that this account giving pushes the Christians to choose "the way of life that is moderate, that shows affection for men, and that is thoughtlessly despised" (τὸν μέτριον καὶ φιλάνθρωπον καὶ εὐκαταφρόνητον βίον αἱρούμεθα, 12:3–4),[214] and to urge their women not to abort their children (35.15). The same type of argument is used negatively in 36.6. Athenagoras states that "those who would not shrink from any outrage are men who think that they will not render an account of their present life," by which he is referring to non-Christians. Since they do not expect to give an account to God, they feel free to act in any way they choose, whereas the Christians choose a morally superior lifestyle.

In his index of biblical references in the *Legatio*, Marcovich lists Matt. 12:36 and Rom. 14:12 alongside the sections of the *Legatio* discussed above.[215] Based on the thematic links Marcovich identified, Heb. 4:13, 13:17, and 1 Pet. 4:5 could also have been included. These passages use the same term for "account" (λόγον) as the *Legatio*, but different verbs, using the future indicative forms of ἀποδίδωμι (Matt. 12:36; 1 Pet. 4:5) and δίδωμι (Rom. 14:12),

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[213] In this passage, Athenagoras includes one of his rare direct quotes of Scripture, from Isa. 22:13/1 Cor. 15:32, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." He argues that those who have no sense of a future judgement are more likely to live a hedonistic or morally lax life than those, such as the Christians, who expect a future judgement or reward based on their actions in this life.

[214] In the positive sense, Athenagoras alludes to Rom. 8:18 in noting that the future reward is so valuable that suffering now can be endured. The text here follows Schoedel. Marcovich inserts "οὐκ" between καὶ and εὐκαταφρόνητον, suggesting that the life they choose is *not* despised. His insertion goes against Parisinus Gr.451. Schoedel's text follows the manuscript. Athenagoras' argument is that the life the Christians choose is moderate (i.e. not disruptive) and philanthropic, and the mistreatment they receive is "thoughtless" in light of the good qualities of their lifestyle. Athenagoras, *Legatio and De Resurrectione*, 24–25.

[215] Marcovich, *Legatio*, 117–18.

and the future participle of ἀποδίδωμι (Heb. 13:17).[216] John Nolland and Robert Jewett, in their respective commentaries, both note that this terminology is borrowed from the world of accounting, and refers to the accountability of a subordinate to the business owner and their responsibility to submit their accounts to be audited.[217] The same idea appears in Jesus' parables of the Dishonest Manager (Luke 16:1–13); the Ten Minas (Luke 19:11–27); and the Talents (Matt. 25:14–30).[218]

Eschatological hope

The expectation of rendering an account views the future judgement in negative terms, but Athenagoras also argues for a positive approach to future rewards. He notes that it is the "hope of eternal life" that enables the Christians to abstain from "the things in this life, even the pleasures of the soul" (in this case avoiding unrestrained sexual expression; *Leg*. 33.1). His phrase "hope of eternal life" may be an allusion to Titus 1:2 and 3:7,[219] but he does not use the phrase in quite the same way as the apostle.

In Titus, the "hope of eternal life" is the "certain expectation, based on what God has done in the past, of eternal life, to which [Paul] looks forward and to which his message invites his hearers"[220]—it is the hope that Paul preaches as he preaches the gospel of Christ. Titus 3:7 makes this clear, where mercy, regeneration and renewal come through Christ, with the effect that the believer is justified by grace and becomes an heir "according to the hope of eternal life", i.e. "eternal life is undoubtedly assumed to be an important part of the content of the inheritance."[221] For Paul, this hope relates to the "faith of the elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness" (Tit. 1.1).

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[216] BDAG lists these occurrences of ἀποδίδωμι as examples of meeting "a contractual or other obligation," namely, "fulfilling various responsibilities." Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, eds., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2000), 109–10.
[217] John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 507; Robert Jewett, *Romans* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 852.
[218] Note "ἀπόδος τὸν λόγον" in Luke 16:2 and "λόγον" in Matt. 25:19.
[219] See Appendix 2, §3.1.
[220] *Pastoral Epistles*, 124.
[221] *Pastoral Epistles*, 325.

In keeping with his apologetic purpose, Athenagoras highlights this aspect of the way that the "hope of eternal life" impacts godly living in this life. The Christians, he argues, do not pursue lives of libertinism or hedonism, because they hope for eternal life. He does not, however, emphasise the assurance of hope in the same way that Paul does. In *Leg.* 32.5, just before this passage being discussed, he says, "Again our teaching has it … 'So then one must be scrupulous about the kiss, or more precisely, the reverential greeting', since it places us outside eternal life if our thoughts are the least bit stirred by it." So whereas Paul's hope operates from status to action, "since we have a sure hope, we live godly lives," Athenagoras' works in the other direction, "We live godly lives in the hope that we will enjoy eternal life."

6.4.2.4 Sexual Ethics

Athenagoras' comments about the "kiss", noted above, reveal a heightened level of concern regarding matters of sexual propriety. This "reverential greeting" (*Leg.* 32.5)—encouraged by Paul (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26) and Peter (1 Pet. 5:14), and noted by Justin as a common practice (*1 Apol.* 65.2)[222]—was evidently practised in the Athenian church. Kisses could be interpreted as erotic actions,[223] and Athenagoras cites an "otherwise unattested logion" which warns against kissing twice because of the pleasure it could bring.[224] The apologist raises this practice, and its possible temptations, in order to demonstrate the Christians' exercise of self control in this area.[225] This is one element of his defence against the accusation of "incestuous unions"; more will be discussed below.

In his defence against the accusation of "incestuous unions" (*Leg.* 32–34), Athenagoras draws on a constellation of references from the Gospels and Pauline literature. He lauds the sexual purity of the Christians while accusing the Christians' opponents and the Greek gods of being guilty of sexual immorality. This line of argumentation, noting human imitation of divine immorality, also appeared in Aristides' *Apology*.[226]

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[222] Justin *1 Apol.* 65.2: Ἀλλήλους δὲ φιλήματι ἀσπαζόμεθα παυσάμενοι τῶν εὐχῶν.
[223] Lawrence Edward Phillips, "The Ritual Kiss in Early Christian Worship," PhD Diss., (University of Notre Dame, 1992), 36–37.
[224] Clement of Alexandria treats the kiss with a similar level of caution (*Paed.* 3.11.81–82). Michael Philip Penn, *Kissing Christians: Ritual and Community in the Late Antique Church* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 107.
[225] Penn, *Kissing Christians*, 107–108.
[226] See §6.2.2.1.

Against Adultery: Matt. 5:28; 19:19

To illustrate the Christians' sexual purity, in rebuttal of the accusation of incestuous relationships, Athenagoras twice quotes from Jesus' teaching regarding adultery and once alludes to Paul's teaching. In these, the apologist takes a strict line regarding what is permissible. The first quote, including the formulaic "φησί", from Matt. 5:28, follows the text very closely:[227] "But we are so far from promiscuity that it is not even permissible for us to look with lust: for 'he who looks at a woman to lust after her', it says, 'has already committed adultery in his heart'" (*Leg.* 32.2).[228]

The second quote is found in 33.5: "For 'whoever divorces his wife', it says, 'and marries another, commits adultery.'" This takes the shared core of Matt. 19:9 and Mark 10:11 but does not include the condition from Matthew in which divorce is allowed in the case of unchastity (also in Matt. 5:32).[229] Instead, it follows the unqualified condemnation of divorce given in Mark 10:11, Luke 16:18, and 1 Cor. 7:10–11.[230] Another interesting factor is that in both quotations regarding adultery, Athenagoras drops "ἐπ᾽ αὐτήν" ("against her"; cf. Matt. 5:28; Mark 10:11). It may be that Athenagoras has some developed reason for the removal of this prepositional phrase, but perhaps it is most simply explained by him aiming to keep the portrayal of marital faithfulness as uncomplicated as possible.

The same may be said for his removal of the Matthean condition, but his further development of his anti-adultery stance suggests that he more deliberately takes the stricter line. While Paul states, in 1 Cor. 7:39–40, that after her husband dies a woman is free to marry any man she chooses (only in the Lord), Athenagoras does not consider death to break the bond of marriage.[231] Following his reference to Matt. 19:9 above, he says, "Neither does it allow a man to divorce a woman … nor does it allow him to marry again. For he who detaches himself from

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[227] A further possible allusion to Matthew 6:22–23 may be found in *Leg.* 32.3. Where Jesus asserted that "the eye is the lamp of the body" (Ὁ λύχνος τοῦ σώματός ἐστιν ὁ ὀφθαλμός), Athenagoras notes that Christians are only allowed to look at certain things so that their eyes "may be a light to us" (ἡμῖν φῶς αὐτούς εἶναι).

[228] Matt. 5:28: "But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart." See Appendix 2, §4.1.

[229] Pouderon notes: "Massaux … qui attribue le fragment à Marc; en fait, l'emprunt à Matthieu est tout aussi vraisemblable." "Les citations," 116.

[230] R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 208.

[231] Geffcken, *Apologeten*, 233.

his previous wife, even if she has died, is a covert adulterer" (*Leg.* 33.5–6).[232] So here Athenagoras' portrayal of Christian sexual purity goes beyond the New Testament passages that he relies upon.

The immorality of the Greek gods

Athenagoras alludes to Rom. 1:27 in his attack against the practice of sexual immorality amongst those who accuse the Christians. He notes their "business of harlotry" (ἀγορὰν … πορνείας) and "male prostitution" (μηδὲ τῶν ἀρσένων φειδόμενοι),[233] and closely following Paul's statement, says "Men work their terrible deeds with men" (ἄρσενες ἐν ἄρσεσι τὰ δεινὰ κατεργαζόμενοι, *Leg*. 34.2).[234] Paul had noted that God gave them up (παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεός) to their lusts because they had "worshipped the creature rather than the Creator" (Rom. 1:24–26). One of Athenagoras' key arguments regarding God was that it was crucial to worship the Creator, not created matter (*Leg.* 15), and the question of how sexual immorality relates to Athenagoras' opponents' worship arises here. Athenagoras points out that his opponents "attribute [these behaviours] to their own gods, boasting of them as noble deeds and worthy of the gods" (*Leg.* 34.2).

It seems that Athenagoras emphasises the link between the immorality of the gods and the Christians' opponents by a change that he makes to Paul's language in Rom. 1:27. Other apologists condemn these sexual practices, but none of them refers to this verse.[235] Of the patristic writers who quote the verse, none of them exchanges τὴν ἀσχημοσύνην (shameless deeds; Rom. 1:27) for τὰ δεινά (terrible deeds; *Leg.* 34.2) as Athenagoras does.[236]

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[232] Tertullian, both before and after his adoption of Montanism, expresses a similar position on remarriage: *Ad. uxor.* 6–7; *De exhort. cast*. 8, 13; *De monog*. 17. Cf. Christine Trevett, *Montanism: Gender, Authority and the New Prophecy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 112.

[233] Pouderon: "qui ne rejettent même pas la prostitution mâle."

[234] See Appendix 2, §4.2. Schoedel: "Frightful deeds"; Pouderon : "des actes infâmes".

[235] Justin *1 Apol.* 27.1–3; Tatian *Ad Graec*. 28; and Aristides *Apol*. 13; 15.

[236] This statement is based on a TLG proximity search for the three terms ἄρσενες, ἄρσεσι, and κατεργαζόμενοι. The only texts in which these terms appear in close proximity are Christian texts related to Rom. 1:27: e.g. Clem. *Paed.* 2.10.86; Origen *Cont. Cels.* 7.49; Eus. *Prep. Ev.* 6.6.37. Of the thirty results of the search, only Athenagoras had τὰ δεινά in the place of τὴν ἀσχημοσύνην

The primary translation given by *LSJ* is "fearful, terrible," and the lexicon notes that this meaning is predominant in Homer. Secondarily, the sense of "force or power … for good or ill" (*LSJ*, 329) was also used in reference to the gods in Homer.[237] Athenagoras uses δεινός in three other locations, all related to the Greek gods: 1) a quote from Orpheus, "Phanes brought forth yet another fearful (δεινήν) child" (*Leg.* 20.3); 2) a sarcastic comment about Ares as "the one mighty in war" (ὁ δεινὸς ἐν πολέμοις, *Leg.* 21.3) whose "fair flesh [Diomedes] tore asunder" (*Leg.* 21.3; Hom. *Il.* 5.858); 3) a comment on morality and the gods, "if they are about to condemn promiscuous and licentious unions, then they ought to hate Zeus [on account of his incestuous relations with Hera and Core] … or Orpheus, the creator of these stories" (εἰ δεινὸν τὸ ἐπ᾽ ἀδείας καὶ ἀδιαφόρως μίγνυσθαι κρίνειν ἔμελλον, ἢ τὸν Δία μεμισηκέναι … ἢ τὸν τούτων ποιητὴν Ὀρφέα, *Leg.* 32.1).

The third example given above appears at the beginning of Athenagoras' refutation of the accusation of incestuous unions (*Leg.* 32.1). Athenagoras clearly wants to turn that accusation back against the Greek gods. At the end of this refutation (*Leg*. 34.3–4), the apologist modifies the Pauline reference to include τὰ δεινά to describe the immoral behaviour of the Christians' opponents, before linking the opponents' behaviour with that of the gods. Athenagoras' argument suggests that he is using τὰ δεινά in its stronger negative sense. The "frightfulness" of these deeds is emphasised further in the next section, in which "adulterers and pederasts" are likened to fish that "swallow up whoever comes their way, the stronger driving out the weaker" (*Leg.* 34.3). Athenagoras argues that their behaviour is like cannibalism: "This is what it really means to feed on human flesh" (*Leg.* 34.3). He inserts the Homeric terminology into the Pauline reference so that he can highlight the connection between Greek immorality and Greek religion.

Familial Attitudes – 1 Timothy 5.1–2

In a final biblical reference in relation to Christian sexual purity, Athenagoras utilises the familial imagery in 1 Tim. 5:1–2 to demonstrate the attitudes members of the Christian community have towards one another.[238] Paul urged Timothy to treat the people under his

[237] *BrillGE* has "dreadful, terrible … τὸ δεινόν: dreadful act" (460). There is a wider range of meaning, with less of a sense of "terror": e.g. δεινὰ ποιεῖν, "make complaints" (Id 3.14; 5.41).
[238] See Appendix 2, §4.3. Marcovich, Schoedel and Pouderon all failed to identify this reference.

care appropriately—"in all purity" (ἐν πάσῃ ἁγνείᾳ)—according to their age and gender, as "father", "mother", "brother", or "sister". Athenagoras, likewise, notes that the Christians "regard some, depending on their age, as our sons and daughters, others we consider our brothers and sisters, and to those advanced in years we give the honour due to fathers and mothers" (*Leg.* 32.5). This treatment has a particular eye to purity: "We are profoundly concerned that the bodies of those whom we consider brothers and sisters … remain inviolate and unsullied."

Dibelius and Conzelmann note that instructions like the one found in 1 Tim. 5 were reasonably common in the Roman world, but the examples they give all regard male relations—so honouring as fathers, brothers, sons.[239] The noteworthy feature in Timothy is the phrase ἐν πάσῃ ἁγνείᾳ, which highlights the need for sexual purity especially with the pastor's relationship with women.[240] This same emphasis is seen in Athenagoras.

6.4.2.5 Evidence of a teaching "program"?

In the *Acts of Justin and Companions*, Justin's interrogator Rusticus asks him where he and his disciples meet (*Acta Iust*. 3.3).[241] The apologist describes the small school that he operated in Rome. He notes that he did not engage too much with the wider Roman church, but he would accept any students who would come and learn from him. Athenagoras does not claim such an arrangement in Athens, but in *Legatio* 11.2, he makes a comment that indicates formative didactic practices within the church community. In the context of explaining Christian doctrines, he asks, "What then are the teachings on which we are brought up?" (τίνες οὖν ἡμῶν οἱ λόγοι, οἷς ἐντρεφόμεθα;).

The present middle/passive verb "brought up" (ἐντρεφόμεθα) can refer to nourishment, such as from food, but it was also used metaphorically to refer to formation in a system of thought or culture.[242] Jacob Engberg has suggested that Athenagoras' statement may indicate that he

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[239] Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 72.
[240] Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 214–15.
[241] Translation from Herbert Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 42–61.
[242] BrillGE, 706. Cf. 1 Tim. 4:6. Commentators are divided on whether Paul is referring to the nourishing effect of the Word, or on its training of Timothy in good service. Nourishment: Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 304; George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC

was raised in a Christian family.[243] This suggestion is unlikely. Athenagoras is speaking for Christians as a community, and does not at any other point use personal testimony like Aristides did in his *Apology* (16.4–6). It would not make sense for him to make a statement from his own childhood experience here.

The term was commonly used in the context of education to refer to the formational effect of a certain teaching. Plato refers to laws under which "men have been reared up" (οἷς γὰρ ἂν ἐντραφῶσι νόμοις, *Laws* 798A) and which shape a way of life which is hard to break away from. Plutarch makes numerous references to the "rearing" which is particularly geared towards the shaping of character (*Aem. Paul.* 21.2; *Pelop.* 19.1; *Pyrrhus* 26.10; *Alex.* 47.3; cf. Clem. *Strom.* 1.1.4; 1.1.8), though these references do include the comment that this training often starts in one's youth. Clement of Alexandria also uses this terminology, without any reference to age, to describe those who have been "rightly reared in the words of truth" (οἱ δὲ ἐντραφέντες γνησίως τοῖς τῆς ἀληθείας λόγοις, *Strom.* 1.1.4) and those who have been "reared in the arts of all kinds of words" (τοῖς ἐντεθραμμένοις λόγων παντοδαπῶν τέχναις, *Strom.* 1.1.8).

It is likely that the Christians in Athens had mechanisms of teaching and discipleship. Since the intended audience of the *Legatio* included both pagan outsiders and Christian insiders, Athenagoras' encouragement for his readers to "to apply yourselves to these very books [of the prophets]" (*Leg.* 9.3) probably had a primary purpose—that the emperors stop the persecution of the Christians (9.3)—but also a secondary didactic purpose urging Christians to be formed in the Scriptures. Given the prevalence of philosophical schools in the city, and the presence of philosophically trained men within the Christian community, it is likely that Christian education took on a formal shape. Athenagoras' statement here is suggestive of such a situation, but it is impossible from this statement to say any more than this about church educational structures.

(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 194. Training: William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 248.

[243] Jakob Engberg, "'From among You Are We. Made, Not Born Are Christians': Apologists' Accounts of Conversion before 310 AD," in *Continuity and Discontinuity in Early Christian Apologetics*, ed. Jörg Ulrich, Anders-Christian Jacobsen, and Maijastina Kahlos (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2009), 52.

It is significant, however, to pay attention to the portion of Jesus' teaching that Athenagoras chooses to highlight as particularly formative for the Christians. It is clear from the discussion above that the apologist believed the Christians to be formed by Scripture much more broadly, and shows a particular interest in Pauline literature; but in this instance he highlights Jesus' teaching from Matt. 5:44–45 (with an insertion from Luke 6:28): "What then are the teachings … 'I say to you, love your enemies, bless them who curse you, pray for them who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven who makes his sun rise upon the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust'" (*Leg.* 11.2).[244] Ulrich Luz notes that Jesus' teaching in this passage, and the two commandments of loving God and loving neighbour, were expressed in Hellenistic Judaism with the pairing of εὐσέβεια and φιλανθρωπία as the chief virtues.[245] Athenagoras' choice of this teaching, then, ties in to his portrayal of the Christians as philanthropic.

6.4.2.6 Conclusion

The analysis of Athenagoras' use of Scripture, above, has provided clear evidence of Athenagoras' knowledge of Genesis, prophetic literature, and some deutero-canonical works; his use of Jesus' teaching, especially from the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5–7); his use of Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, 1 Timothy, and Titus; and his reliance upon Acts 17 as a model of engagement with Greek philosophy and religion. It is likely that his greater willingness to quote explicitly from the Hebrew Scriptures is due to the antiquity of the texts, their canonical status, and his apologetic purposes. However, his argumentation is strongly interwoven with references to Jesus' teaching and the apostolic writings.

This thesis has taken the view that apologetic literature likely had two audiences in view: the educated pagan world, and the Christian community. For the outsiders who may have had greater or lesser awareness of the Christian sacred texts, much of Athenagoras' use of Scripture is likely to have gone unnoticed. His argument regarding Christian piety, citizenship, doctrine, and forms of worship would have been clear enough without an understanding of the biblical allusions. For the Christian audience, however, Athenagoras' utilisation of these biblical references would have taken on a didactic edge. The engagement with the Graeco-

[244] See Appendix 2, §5.1
[245] Ulrich Luz, *Matthew*, trans. James E. Crouch, 3 vols. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001–2007), 1:288; 3:83–84.

Roman world that he reveals in the *Legatio*, including both critique (Acts 17) and participation (citizenship, Rom. 13:1–2), is shown to be *biblical* and thus is the kind of approach the Christians should adopt.

Athenagoras clearly hoped that it would be possible for the Christians to dwell peacefully in the context of the Roman Empire. He aimed to convince his pagan readers that the Christians posed no threat to societal stability, and to convince his Christian readers to adopt a posture of faithful Christian citizenship. Unfortunately, the situation in Athens deteriorated after the writing of the *Legatio*, as will be discussed below.

7. DIONYSIUS OF CORINTH AND THE CHURCH IN ATHENS AFTER 180CE

7.1 Introduction

The persecution of the Athenian Christians had been severe enough for Athenagoras to relocate to Alexandria. Three literary sources provide some insight into the nature of the Athenian church after Athenagoras' departure: Dionysius of Corinth's *Letter to the Athenians* (Eus. *Hist. eccl*. 4.23.2–3); Origen's comments regarding the city in *Contra Celsum* 3:30; and Gregory of Nazianzus' comments in his funerary oration for Basil of Caesarea. The latter two of these fall outside of the target timeframe of this thesis but the brief snapshots that they give make for a helpful postscript on the Athenian church's first two centuries.

7.2 Dionysius of Corinth and Bishop Quadratus

Eusebius records that Bishop Dionysius of Corinth (c.165–180)[1] rendered himself "most useful to all in the general epistles which he drew up for the churches" (*Hist. eccl.* 4.23), including a letter addressed to the Athenian church. Eusebius describes this letter as "a call to faith and to life according to the gospel" (or "*politeia* according to the gospel"; ἡ…διεγερτικὴ πίστεως καὶ τῆς κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον πολιτείας). Eusebius does not clearly signal any direct quotes from the letter itself, but seems to summarise its main argument and some content. Cavan Concannon has recently outlined the caution that must be taken with Eusebius' reports, particularly regarding whether he has faithfully recorded the text or whether he has allowed his own editorial interests to shape his report.[2] In the case of Dionysius' letter to the Athenians, the mention of Dionysius the Areopagite fits Eusebius' interest in establishing a succession of orthodox, apostolic bishops,[3] but it probably served a range of rhetorical functions for Dionysius and the Athenians. These will be discussed below.

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[1] Eusebius says Dionysius, along with some others, "flourished" (Ἤκμαζον; *Hist. eccl.* 4.21) in the reign of Marcus Aurelius.

[2] Cavan Concannon, *Assembling Early Christianity: Trade, Networks, and the Letters of Dionysios of Corinth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 9–19.

[3] *Assembling Early Christianity*, 14–15.

The issue that precipitated the sending of the letter was that the Athenian Christians had, in Dionysius' view, despised their "gospel *politeia*" and become "all but apostates from the truth" (μικροῦ δεῖν ἀποστάντας τοῦ λόγου) after the martyrdom of their leader Publius during a time of persecution.[4] Dionysius continues on to mention Quadratus, saying that he was appointed bishop after Publius, and that "through his zeal [the Athenians] had been brought together and received a revival of their faith" (*Hist. eccl.* 4.23).

That Dionysius rebukes the near-apostasy of the Athenians, but also speaks of the revival of their faith, suggests that he wrote soon after Quadratus was appointed. His mention of the revival of their faith may identify the "firstfruits" of Quadratus' ministry even though faithlessness and near-apostasy still remained in the Christian community. It is also likely, though, that Dionysius wrote his letter in the hope that by lending his authority to Quadratus' appointment he would help bring about the positive outcomes which his letter claimed were already a reality.[5]

7.2.1 What did it mean to be "all but apostate"?

The claim that the Athenians were "all but apostate" from the truth raises the question of what that near-apostasy looked like. One unlikely possibility to mention is the difference between Athenagoras and Dionysius in regards to Christian sexual ethics. Athenagoras, as discussed earlier, held chastity or very limited marital sex to be the ideal for Christians. Dionysius, on the other hand, wrote a letter to Pinytus, bishop of Knossus on Crete, urging him to "not lay upon the brothers a heavy burden by requiring chastity, but that he have regard for the weakness of the many" (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 4.23.7). It is probably unlikely that this issue would be construed as "near apostasy", though it is interesting that Dionysius likely encouraged the Athenians in a more moderate direction.

[4] Most likely during the reign of Marcus Aurelius.

[5] Concannon, *Assembling Early Christianity*, 92; Wilhelm Kühnert, "Dionysius von Korinth: Eine Bischofsgestalt des zweiten Jarhunderts," in *Theologia Scientia Eminens Practica: Fritz Zerbst zum 70 Geburtstag*, ed. Fritz Herbst and Hans-Christoph Schmidt-Lauber (Wien: Herder, 1979), 281–82.

Eusebius references others who had apostatised from the church. He notes Cerdo, a proto-Marcionite,[6] who occasionally confessed the true faith, but at other times was "convicted by his evil teaching and separated from the assembly of the brethren" (ποτὲ δὲ ἐλεγχόμενος ἐφ᾽ οἷς ἐδίδασκεν κακῶς, καὶ ἀφιστάμενος τῆς τῶν ἀδελφῶν συνοδίας, *Hist. eccl.* 4.11.1). Tatian, who had been a disciple of Justin, developed false teaching which reflected Valentinian and Marcionite teaching, specifically "telling stories of invisible Aeons … and rejecting marriage as corruption and fornication," and thus "left the church (ἀποστὰς τῆς ἐκκλησίας, 4.29.3). Furthermore, a Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria noted that "our blessed pope Heraclas" would not admit returnees "from the heresies" into the church until they told him everything the false teachers had taught them. This Alexandrian Dionysius says these restored persons "had departed from the Church (or rather, had not even done that, but, while still reputed members of the congregation, were charged with frequenting some false teacher)" (καίτοι τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἀποστάντας, 7.7.4), which suggests that "apostasy" may not necessarily mean a total break from the "orthodox" Christian community.

The above examples from Eusebius all point towards apostasy as a result of giving or following false teaching. It was possible for the entire church in a city to become committed to one of these groups. Epiphanius records that in the case of Thyatira in Asia Minor, the "Phrygians [i.e. Montanists] … converted the whole town to their sect" (*Pan.* 51.33.3). According to Epiphanius' dating, the church there was "buried in the Phrygian sect" (51.33.5) from 172 to 263 CE.[7] In the case of Athens, Tertullian possibly alludes to a Valentinian presence when he draws a comparison between the sect and the Eleusinian Mysteries. He says:

> These individuals care about nothing more than to conceal what they teach … In just the same way concerning the Eleusinian Mysteries, itself a heresy of Athenian paganism; the fact that they keep silent about these mysteries make them an object of shame … In just this manner the heretics against whom we are now opening fire fashion useless and disgraceful tales out of

[6] "He taught that the God preached by the Law and the Prophets was not the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the one was known, the other unknown, the one was righteous and the other good. Marcion of Pontus succeeded him and increased the school, blaspheming unblushingly." Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 4.11.2.

[7] Paul McKechnie, *Christianizing Asia Minor: Conversion, Communities, and Social Change in the Pre-Constantinian Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 116. Translation of Epiphanius: Frank Williams, ed. *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis Books II and III. De Fide* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

> the sacred names, titles, and contents of the true faith. They can do this because of the openhanded charity of the divine scriptures; from such a large work, many interpretations can be drawn. These people make the Eleusinian rites into Valentinian lures, sacred only because of their great silence, heavenly only because of their concealment (*Contra Val.* 1.1).

Tertullian's comparison in the first two sentences of this paragraph read as a simple analogy: the Valentinians are to Christianity what the Eleusinian Mysteries are to Greek Religion. The last sentence, however, suggests some closer link between the Valentinians and Eleusis. It is certainly possible that Valentinian teaching had reached Athens. The strong links between Rome and Athens throughout the second century would have made this likely. However, Tertullian's reference to Eleusis need not necessarily locate Valentinians in Athens. The Eleusinian Mysteries were possibly the most well-known mystery cult, and had enjoyed the prestige of numerous emperors becoming initiates. Tertullian's readers were sure to understand the reference.

One challenge to this possibility is that none of the Athenian apologists address the presence of divergent Christian groups in the city; the church is always presented as a unified whole. Admittedly, this is probably evidence of the rhetorical needs of the outward-facing nature of the apologetic texts. Athenagoras later engages Valentinian thought in his *De Resurrectione*, written in Alexandria after his Athenian period.[8] This could suggest either that interaction with Valentinians in Athens prepared him to engage formally with them in Alexandria, or that he did not mention them in his *Legatio* because they were not a noteworthy presence in Athens. On balance, Tertullian's analogy linking Eleusis and Valentinianism does not demonstrate a Valentinian presence in Athens; rather, it was probably a rhetorical ploy at locating the sect firmly outside of the "Christian" camp, into the "pagan" one.

An understanding of Athenian "near apostasy" cannot be gleaned from a consideration of heretical Christian movements. A helpful comparison is found, however, in John Barclay's article "Who was considered an apostate in the Jewish Diaspora." In it, he considers accusations of "apostasy" in Jewish texts from the first centuries BCE and CE. He cautiously,

[8] Bernard Pouderon, *D'Athénes à Alexandrie: Études sur Athénagore et les origines de la philosophie chrétienne*, Bibliotheque Copte de Nag Hammadi (Louvain: Editions Peeters, 1997), 145–95.

to avoid unjustified generalisation, concludes "that 'apostates' were those who were considered to have abandoned their commitment to the Jewish community and its way of life through an assimilation most frequently marked by laxity on Jewish food laws and involvement in non-Jewish religion."[9] One specific example that he deals with is of interest here. He notes that Josephus, in a paraphrase of 1 Maccabees, describes a group of Jerusalem Hellenisers:

> [T]hese Jews 'abandoned the ancestral laws and the constitution established by them' (τοὺς πατρίους νόμους καταλιπόντες καὶ τὴν κατ᾽ αὐτοὺς πολιτείαν) and wished, in following Antiochus' laws, to adopt a Greek constitution (τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν πολιτείαν ἔχειν, *Ant.* 12.240). This double aspect (abandoning Jewish ways and adopting those of the Greeks) is present in almost all the cases of 'apostasy' featured by Josephus.[10]

Most pertinent here is the use of πολιτεία—"constitution", as Barclay translates it, or "citizenship"—in the context of apostasy. These Jews were turning from the Jewish way of life, built off the ancestral law, and turning to a Greek way of life. In like manner, Dionysius views the Athenians as despising their "gospel *politeia*". If they were turning away from a gospel *politeia*, to what exactly were they turning? As noted above, it is not likely that Dionysius had a particular "heresy"—such the Marcionite heresy, Montanism, or Valentinianism—in view. Rather, as will be elaborated below, his reference to Dionysius the Areopagite suggests that the Christian community was drawn to assimilate with the Hellenic society around it. It is to Eusebius' mention of Dionsyius that we now must turn.

7.2.2 Summoning Dionysius

As noted above, Eusebius briefly mentions Dionysius the Areopagite in his summary of the letter. It is clear that Eusebius' interest is particularly focused on the Areopagite as an early bishop with apostolic connections. Eusebius says, "Moreover, he mentions that Dionysius the Areopagite was converted by the Apostle Paul to the faith, according to the narrative in the Acts, and was the first to be appointed to the bishopric of the diocese of Athens" (*Hist. eccl.*

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[9] John M.G. Barclay, "Who Was Considered an Apostate in the Jewish Diaspora?," in *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Graham N. Stanton and Guy G. Stroumsa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 92.
[10] "Apostate," 86.

4.23). The historian does not explain how Dionysius of Corinth used this information in the rhetoric of his letter.

Concannon proposes two ways that Dionysius may have utilised his earlier namesake. Firstly, he says that "[T]he invocation of a now legendary founding figure might have been deployed to strengthen the new bishop as the heir to a clear apostolic succession…The new bishop Quadratos is thus lifted up as part of the same clear line of succession that connected Paul to the Areopagite to the martyred bishop Publius and now to Quadratos."[11] Secondly, he proposes that "the invocation of the Areopagite may have been a kind of kinship diplomacy that linked Athens and Corinth as dual Pauline foundations … as a way of showing solidarity with a collective that had seen its bishop martyred."[12]

A possible further support to the idea that Dionysius was using the Areopagite to bolster Quadratus' position is found in the description of the effects of the new bishop's ministry: "Through his zeal they had been brought together (ἐπισυναχθέντων) and received a revival of their faith" (*Hist. eccl.* 4.23). The language of "being brought together" illustrates the impact that the persecution and "near apostasy" of the church had, fragmenting the Christian community. It also echoes the first foundation of the Athenian church in Acts 17. There, the first believers, among whom Dionysius is named, "joined" (κολληθέντες, 17:34) Paul. Though the verbs are different, the image of forming (and re-forming) the community are similar. Where the Apostle Paul was the first person around which the Athenian church was formed, and seemingly tradition developed about Dionysius' appointment as "bishop", Quadratus is presented as that new person around whom community formation has been realised.

It may be relevant to consider here Dionysius' "order" to the churches in Amastris and Pontus "to receive those who are converted from backsliding, whether of conduct or of heretical error" (*Hist. eccl.* 4.23.6). Apparently, the churches had not been willing to welcome these repentant (former) backsliders and Dionysius had weighed into the situation, authoritatively "ordering" (προστάττει) the churches in the matter.[13] In his letter to the Athenians, Dionysius certainly envisions the "all-but-apostate" Christians returning to the fold. His use of the

[11] Concannon, *Assembling Early Christianity*, 93.
[12] *Assembling Early Christianity*, 93. Concannon (p.94) goes further, saying that Dionysius may in fact have viewed himself as something of a higher authority over the church in Athens because he was the bishop of the provincial capital.
[13] *Assembling Early Christianity*, 112–19.

“gathering” imagery, reminiscent of the first forming of the church under Paul, may have been an attempt to frame a potentially contentious issue—the welcome of apostate Christians back into the church—in the most positive terms.

It is also possible that Dionysius was drawing a comparison between the Areopagite and the Athenian Christians themselves. The repetition of “faith” throughout Eusebius’ report suggests this: 1) the letter is a “call to faith” (διεγερτικὴ πίστεως, 4.23.2); 2) the Athenians receive a “revival of their faith” (τῆς πίστεως ἀναζωπύρησιν εἰληχότων, 4.23.3); and 3) Dionysius the Areopagite was “converted by the Apostle Paul to the faith” (ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀποστόλου Παύλου προτραπεὶς ἐπὶ τὴν πίστιν, 4.23.3). Since the first two instances of “faith” relate to the Athenian Christians, it seems that Dionysius’ “faith” is meant to be an example to them. Perhaps Dionysius was appealed to not only as one link in an apostolic succession of bishops, but as an example *par excellence* of Athenian faith. The Athenian Christians had been scattered through persecution and near apostasy, and presumably tried to reintegrate into other socio-religious communities in the city. Dionysius the Areopagite, on the other hand, is portrayed in Acts as a member of the highest body in the Athenian social strata, but who “crossed the floor” and joined Paul and the fledgling church in Athens. It is likely that, for someone of Dionysius’ social status, a move like that would have come at some social cost. The Corinthian Dionysius may have capitalised on the Areopagite’s example to call the Athenian Christians back to the apostolic faith of the “first bishop”, emphasising the value of “gospel *politeia*” over Athenian *politeia*.

This emphasis on “gospel *politeia*” over civic *politeia* does not necessarily mean that Christians were precluded from citizenship in their city or Rome, or that they renounced any citizenships they held. Rather, the emphasis here is that their own primary self-identity should be found in “gospel *politeia*”. Perhaps Dionysius has in mind something similar to the description of believers found in *Epistle to Diognetus* 5.5: “They live in their respective countries, but only as resident aliens; they participate in all things as citizens, and they endure all things as foreigners. Every foreign territory is a homeland for them, every homeland foreign territory” (πατρίδας οἰκοῦσιν ἰδίας, ἀλλ᾽ ὡς πάροικοι· μετέχουσι πάντων ὡς πολῖται, καὶ πανθ᾽ ὑπομένουσιν ὡς ξένοι· πᾶσα ξένη πατρίς ἐστιν αὐτῶν, καὶ πᾶσα πατρὶς ξένη).[14]

[14] Trans.: Ehrman, LCL 25 (2003).

Caution is also due here because "*politeia* according to the gospel" (τῆς κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον πολιτείας, 4.23.2) may well be a Eusebian, not Dionysian, turn of phrase. Eusebius uses the exact phrase in 2.17.15, and similar phrases in the preface of Book 2 (κατὰ Χριστιανοὺς εὐαγγελικῆς πολιτείας) and 7.32.30 (πολιτείας εὐαγγελικῆς). As noted above, however, Josephus' treatment of Jewish apostasy highlighted concerns about "citizenship" and the Jewish (or Greek) way of life. Even if the phraseology is Eusebian, the conceptual framework predates the Corinthian Dionysius and thus probably would have been at his disposal.

7.2.3 Appealing to Early Accounts

The letter of Dionysius of Corinth to the Athenian church reveals a somewhat different picture of the church than the one presented by the apologists. In the apologetic treatises, the church was suffering persecution but persevering nobly in light of the future hope of judgement and reward. Dionysius' letter, however, gives a picture of a church in disarray. There is clearly enough of a remaining Christian community because he must have addressed the letter to someone and he can refer to the new bishop, Quadratus. However, in light of the persecution that resulted in the death of Publius, the Athenians seem to have increasingly adopted a way of life that would not so obviously identify their Christian faith.

Dionysius of Corinth appeals to the narrative of Dionysius the Areopagite, in part to help establish Quadratus in his new role as bishop and to appeal to a kinship link between the Athenian and Corinthian churches, but also to present the Areopagite as an example of Athenian faith that the "all-but-apostate" Athenians should emulate. Just as Dionysius was willing to risk the loss of his privileged place in Athenian society for the sake of joining Paul in the Christian faith, so should the Athenians not return to the Greek way of life as a means of escaping the persecution they had faced.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Dionysius' use of Dionysius the Areopagite is that he uses the Acts narrative *and* the local tradition about the Areopagite's appointment as the first bishop of the Athenian church, taking advantage of the rhetorical force of both the text's authority and the tradition's local significance.

Just as Athenagoras had not demonstrated much concern about the relationship between the Christians and Judaism, Dionysius' concerns suggest that the Athenians were being drawn

towards a Greek, rather than Jewish, way of life. Considering the issues tackled in the writings of the three apologists and Dionysius, there seems to have been a shift of ethnic affiliations throughout the century. Quadratus the Apologist appealed to and claimed knowledge of Christians from the time of Jesus' Judean ministry, and was working to clarify the difference between the Jewish and Christian communities. Despite the Acts 17 narrative minimising any sense of a Jewish contingent in the fledgling Athenian church, Quadratus' *Apology* suggests the Athenian church had an identifiable Jewish element. Aristides could easily demonstrate why polytheists has missed the mark, but was careful and not entirely critical of the Jews, probably because of the closer relationship between the Jewish and Christian communities at the time. Athenagoras found the Greek philosophical milieu to be fertile ground for Christian proclamation, and deliberately downplayed the eastern origins of the faith. By the late second century, Dionysius was appealing to the Athenian city councillor, Dionysius the Areopagite. The Athenian church now needed to be warned to remain distinct from the Greek society around it. It could be suggested that the Christians had to distance themselves from the Jews early in the second century, found a new opportunity in the resurgence of the philosophical schools in Athens under Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius, and by the late second century had to be cautioned about how closely to identify in that direction.

7.3 Later Developments

Dionysius' letter leaves the question of the survival of the Athenian church hanging unanswered. There are no further Christian texts written to or by Christians in Athens in the second century to help clarify the picture. There are two brief mentions by Origen (250CE) and Gregory of Nazianzus (350CE), however, that can offer a possible insight into the survival of the church throughout the third and fourth centuries. While these fall outside of the time period that this thesis is focusing on, they are worth a brief discussion to complete the study.

7.3.1 Origen

In *Contra Celsum* 3.30, written sometime between 246 and 249 CE,[15] Origen describes the Athenian church as "meek and quiet" (πραεῖά τις καὶ εὐσταθής).[16] Origen had spent a

[15] Henry Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), xiv–xv.
[16] Greek text from Marcel Borret, *Origène: Contra Celse. Tome II.* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1968).

"prolonged sojourn" in Athens during his Caesarean years—sometime between 233CE,[17] when he relocated from Alexandria to Caesarea, and 246CE, the terminus post quem for the writing of *Contra Celsum*—during which he completed his commentary on Ezekiel and began one on Song of Songs (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* VI.32.1–2).[18] It seems that the Christian community in Athens at this time was enjoying a time of relative peace.[19]

It is tempting, based on my earlier argument about Athenagoras' relocation (and thus the relocation of the Athenian Christian "School"), to understand Origen's description as suggesting that the Athenian Christians had been cowed by the surrounding culture and continued as a fairly secluded minority group. The immediate context, however, and the use of these adjectives elsewhere, suggest that this is not the image that Origen was trying to convey.

The statement in 3.30 is part of a broader argument regarding the appropriateness of considering Jesus to be the Son of God, rebutting Celsus' point that it is self-evident that human beings are not gods, as demonstrated by the Metapontines' refusal of Apollo's desire that they consider Aristeas as a god (*Contra Cels.* 3.29). Origen argues that God "made the gospel of Jesus to be successful, and caused churches to exist in opposition to the assemblies of superstitious, licentious, and unrighteous men" (3.29). Even the worst of the Christians were better than the pagan assemblies. In this context, he notes that "the Church of God, say, at Athens is meek and quiet, since it desires to please God. But the assembly of the Athenians is riotous (στασιώδης) and in no way comparable to the Church of God there" (3.30). He notes that the situation is the same in Corinth and Alexandria.[20] Of the "rulers" of the churches in each city, even the bad ones, Origen notes that "there is superior progress towards the virtues surpassing the character of those who are councillors and rulers in the cities. Thus, Origen

[17] The scholarship is divided on when exactly Origen relocated: Daniélou, 230CE; Crouzel, 233CE; Trigg, 234CE. Jean Daniélou, *Origen*, trans. Walter Mitchell (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2016 (1955)), 22–23; Joseph W. Trigg, *Origen* (London: Routledge, 1998), 234; Henri Crouzel, *Origen: The Life and Thought of the First Great Theologian*, trans. A.S. Worrall (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), 2–3.
[18] The description "prolonged sojourn" comes from Trigg, *Origen*, 45.
[19] Origen notes in *Contra Celsum* 3.15 that the church had enjoyed a long period of peace, but his comments suggest that tensions were rising again and the Christians were expecting persecutions to begin again. Cf. Chadwick, *Contra Celsum*, xiv–xv.
[20] Presumably Origen visited Corinth at the same time that he visited Athens.

continues, "is it not reasonable to think that in Jesus, who was able to accomplish such great results, the divine element was exceptional, and that there was none whatever in Aristeas?"

Origen elsewhere in *Contra Celsum* highlights the εὐσταθές life as resulting from the transformative work of God through Christian doctrine. In 1.26, he notes that receiving the word (παρειλήφασι τὸν λόγον) transforms those who are in the depths of licentiousness, injustice, and covetousness (ἀκολασίαις … ἀδικίαις … πλεονεξίαις) into people who have become "more reasonable and reverent and stable" (γεγόνασιν ἐπιεικέστεροι καὶ σεμνότεροι καὶ εὐσταθέστεροι). Again, in 3.68, he argues that Christian doctrine has caused multitudes to turn from being licentious (ἀκολάστων) to living "the most tranquil life" (τὸν εὐσταθέστατον βίον).[21]

In his commentary on John's Gospel, Origen uses the same adjectives—πρᾷον μὲν καὶ εὐσταθὲς—to describe those "who are herded by Christ … because they are gentle and tame, even if irrational," in contrast to those "who are reigned over by him because they have dedicated themselves more rationally to piety."[22] If this type of imagery was applied to the description of the Athenians, it would have the sense that though the Athenian Christians are simple folk they still have excelled in virtue. This argument was found in Athenagoras' *Legatio* 11.4: "In our ranks, however, you could find common men, artisans, and old women who, if they cannot establish by reasoned discourse the usefulness of their teaching, show by deed the usefulness of the exercise of their will."

However, Josephus uses the two adjectives when describing some Jews who were offended by the desecrating actions of a "Caesarean mischief maker" sacrificing birds near a synagogue entrance: "The steady-going and peaceable (εὐσταθὲς καὶ πρᾷον) members of the congregation were in favour of immediate recourse to the authorities; but the factious folk (τὸ στασιῶδες) and the passionate youth (ἐν νεότητι φλεγμαῖνον) were burning for a fight" (*Jewish War* 2.290). Here we find the same contrast as that made between the Athenian Christian and pagan *ekklēsiai.* The εὐσταθὲς individual is moderate and steady, seeking a peaceful (even civically minded) solution, whereas the στασιῶδες person looks for a fight.

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[21] Trans.: Chadwick, *Contra Celsum*, 173. See also Basil of Caesarea, *Ep.* 2 (p.23 in the Loeb edition): "One should not exhibit frantic gluttony in eating, but on all occasions should preserve composure (εὐσταθὲς), gentleness (πρᾶον), and restraint (ἐγκρατές)."

[22] *Commentarii in evangelium Joannis* 1.28.198. Greek text: E. Preuschen, *Origenes Werke, vol. 4* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1903), 483–574. English trans.: Trigg, *Origen*, 135.

It is clear that Origen is highlighting the superiority of the Christians over their pagan neighbours in regard to their attainment of virtue. This superior virtue was attained through the working of God through the Gospel of Jesus or, in other words, by receiving the Word. It may be that Origen is tipping his hat to the members of the Athenian church with more basic education, as did Athenagoras, but this is not the main thrust of his statement. Rather, he is emphasising their peaceableness and stability, even civility, on account of their faith. It seems that the Athenian church did return to the faith after the persecution of the late second century, perhaps in response to the encouragement of Dionysius of Corinth and the oversight of Bishop Quadratus. However, in light of the looming threat of persecution, noted by Origen in *Contra Celsum* 3.15 and experienced in reality in the Decian persecution,[23] the Athenian Christians would soon need to emulate Josephus' "steady-going and peaceable" Jews in the refreshed opposition against them.

7.3.2 Gregory of Nazianzus

The most developed references to Athens by a Patristic writer are found in Gregory of Nazianzus' fourth-century funerary oration for Basil of Caesarea.[24] He records their relationship which developed while pursuing learning in the schools of the city (*Or.* 43.14–24).[25] Gregory's primary aim in Athens was philosophy (φιλοσοφία) and learning (τῶν λογῶν, 43.19, 20), and he considered the city to be "the home of eloquence … truly golden, patroness of all that is excellent" (τὸ τῶν λόγων ἔδαφος … τὰς χρυσᾶς ὄντως … καὶ τῶν καλῶν προξένους εἴπερ τινί, 43.14). However, it was not without its dangers. He notes that "Athens is harmful, in general, to the things of the soul … It abounds in the evil riches of idols beyond the rest of

[23] Greek Orthodox tradition records seven named individuals executed in Athens during the Decian persecution. Paul and Andrew, Mesopotamian soldiers brought to Athens by their Governor, were converted by their Christian captives Dionysius and Christina. All four were executed. Heraclius, Paulinus and Benedimus, "were Athenians, and preachers of the Gospel who turned many of the heathen from their error to the light of Christ." On the order of the Governor, they were either burnt to death in an oven or beheaded. Leonidas, Bishop of Athens, is believed to have been executed in Corinth but his remains interred in Athens. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, "Holy Martyrs Peter, Dionysius, Andrew, Paul, Christina, Heracles, Paulinus and Benedimus—Martyr Euphrasia of Nicea—Martyr Julian." 2014. http://archmichael.org.au/event/3322/; cf. Janin, col. 17

[24] Grégoire de Nazianze, *Discours 42–43*, SC 384 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1992); Martin R.P. McGuire, ed. *Funeral Orations by Saint Gregory Nazianzen and Saint Ambrose*, The Fathers of the Church Vol 22 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1953).

[25] Frantz, *Late Antiquity*, 37.

Greece, and it is difficult not to be led astray by their admirers and advocates" (43.21). In the case of Gregory and Basil, however, they did not fall victim of this danger, and rather were strengthened in their faith through their studies as they avoided Athenian idolatry (43.21).[26]

The only hint that Gregory gives of the Christian community in Athens is in *Or.* 43.21, where he notes, "Two ways were familiar to us: the first and more precious leading us to our sacred buildings and the teachers there (τοὺς ἱεροὺς ἡμῶν οἴκους καὶ τοὺς ἐκεῖσε διδασκάλους); the second and the one of less account, to our secular teachers (τοὺς ἔξωθεν παιδευτάς)." Who exactly these "sacred teachers" were and how formal the learning community was is not clear. Rubenson comments that the impression is that neither Gregory nor Basil "regarded Athens as important for their Christian formation, or the Church of Athens as the focus of their stay there."[27] This is probably an overstatement. Gregory had commented on the positive outcome of resisting the dangers of Athens, and in the the context of discussing his different teachers, commented, "Nothing, indeed, has any value, in my opinion, apart from what leads to virtue (ἀρετή) and what makes those who apply themselves better. Each group has a name taken from its origins or its establishment, practices or actions which are specific to it: for us, the great business and the supreme title consisted in being Christians and in bearing the name." Gregory and Basil's main intentions in going to Athens may have been training in philosophy, and thus the church may have been of secondary interest, but it can be seen that "sacred teachers" were as important as those teachers "external" to the church in training that resulted in virtue.

7.4 Conclusion

Where Athenagoras' *Legatio* testified to the intense persecution that the Athenian Christians experienced under Marcus Aurelius, Dionysius of Corinth's *Letter to the Athenians* reveals the aftermath. The Christians had been scattered, and their bishop put to death. While there is a hint of hope in the appointment of Bishop Quadratus, the brief notes from Origen and Gregory of Nazianzus show that the Christian community lived on. Even if the Christian "school" of

[26] Aaron Wenzel, "Libanius, Gregory of Nazianzus, and the Ideal of Athens in Late Antiquity," *Journal of Late Antiquity* 3, no. 2 (2010): 272–275.
[27] Samuel Rubenson, "The Cappadocians on the Areopagus," in *Gregory of Nazianzus: Images and Reflections*, ed. Jostein Børtnes and Tomas Hägg (Copenhagen: Museum of Tusculanum Press, 2006), 114.

Athens represented by Athenagoras, and earlier by Aristides, had moved to Alexandria, the Athenian church continued on. The church may not have been the primary drawcard for visiting Christian intellectuals such as Origen and Gregory. However, it was an example of virtue for Origen, and by Gregory's day had sacred buildings and teachers who were important contributors to the pursuit of philosophy and virtue.

8. CONCLUSION

Conclusions have been offered throughout this thesis that have drawn out some of the pertinent inferences from the findings of each chapter. This final chapter will draw together some of the threads that have run through the whole thesis, in order to make some overarching observations regarding the early Athenian Christians and to identify some connections with the scholarship on early urban Christianity more broadly.

8.1 Pauline Influence

After arguing that the Athenian church was established during Paul's mission recorded in Acts 17, it was noted that one topic of consideration would be whether, or how, the Pauline influence lived on in the Athenian church. Except for Quadratus' *Apology*, each of the second century texts referenced Paul's writings or Acts 17. Both Aristides and Athenagoras draw on Rom. 1 and Acts 17 in their descriptions of the nature of God, and Athenagoras echoes Paul's opinion on the futility of philosophical efforts to understand God.

It was argued in chapter four that Paul's Areopagus speech was not only a philosophical oration, but rather he was presenting Christianity in such a way that would satisfy their requirements for the introduction of a new religion. This is helpful for thinking about the purposes of the second century apologists. Their works are not simply efforts at presenting a more intellectually rigorous form of Christianity. Rather, they engaged the broader public with the intent that the Christians may be allowed to have a presence in the city without fear of harassment.

Paul's letters were also appealed to as a guide for Christian living. Athenagoras describes much of the ethical and civic behaviours of the Christian in language taken from Paul. Dionysius also appealed to the Acts 17 narrative to exhort the Athenians back to faith. This connection to Paul was less evident in Aristides. It seems that by the end of the second century, there was a strong tradition in the Athenian church that claimed Paul as the founding apostle, and looked to Dionysius the Areopagite as a model of faith. The call to return to faith was a call to their Pauline roots.

8.2 Participation in Christian (and Pagan) Networks

At each point in the history of the Athenian church, the Christian community has in some way been located within a network that stretched beyond the city itself. The Acts 17 narrative locates the foundation of the Athenian church in Paul's evangelistic ministry in the city, focusing particularly on his speech to the Areopagus. The apostle's arrival in the city was part of his "second missionary journey", and thus the church in Athens was networked with the other nascent Christian churches in other cities because they shared a founder.

The early apologists were participants in networks on numerous levels. Quadratus appealed to the eyewitness testimonies of Jewish Christians that had been healed by Jesus, and he defended the Christians against persecution that arose because of Jewish revolts in North Africa. Aristides also needed to explain the Christians' relationship to the Jews, probably because of influxes of Jews into Asia Minor and Greece after the Bar Kochba rebellion. He probably also shared some connection with Hyginus in Rome. Even more foundationally for Aristides, the foundation of the Panhellenion meant that Athens was increasingly connected with cities throughout Greece, Asia Minor, and beyond. Annual festivals brought an influx of people to Athens each year. The Christians in Athens were presented with an opportunity for wide-ranging Christian influence; this is probably reflected in the evangelistic emphasis in Aristides' *Apology*.

Athenagoras himself was a well-travelled individual, with knowledge of Corinth, Asia Minor, and Alexandria; his move to Alexandria contributed to the development of the Christian school in that city, a school which would go on to be significantly more influential than the Athenian church. More noticeable in the later period was Dionysius of Corinth's efforts to restore the Athenian church after its decimation in the persecution. The Corinthian bishop, who actively tried to influence numerous churches around the empire, approached the Athenians in terms of fictive kinship, encouraging them to accept Quadratus as their bishop.

The earliest Athenian Christians may not have been one of the larger centres of Paul's mission, such as Corinth or Ephesus, but the church played an active role in the second century.

8.3 Fractionation and "Sects"?

In their studies on the early Christians in Rome and Ephesus, Lampe and Trebilco both identified a certain level of "fractionation", to use Lampe's terminology, amongst the Christian communities in the city. For Lampe, this meant that the whole Christian community of the city met in smaller groups in house churches and the like, and did not uniformly hold what would come to be recognised as "orthodox" views. Groups such as the Valentinians were tolerated for a significant amount of time before a monepiscopal structure developed later in the second century; even Marcion, who was regularly in conflict with the Roman church, left on his own volition. Trebilco argued that in Ephesus there were numerous Christian groups, some more orthodox than others, and thus it was not simply one homogenous community.

The church in Athens did not offer sufficient material to make any strong claims in this regard. However, there are some features worthy of discussion. Firstly, while later tradition names a variety of "bishops" of Athens throughout the period under examination, it is only with the mention of Bishop Publius by Dionysius of Corinth that we have the mention of an Athenian bishop by one of his contemporaries. Before this point, there is very little evidence about the structures of the church in the city. The apologists are, perhaps unsurprisingly, not a lot of help in this regard since giving instructions regarding leadership structures was not relevant to their purposes. At most, Aristides' comments about "judges" gives a picture of some people—the description does not clarify whether these judges hold their position as a group or one individual at a time—executing a role of leadership and oversight in the community.

The apologists themselves, however, seem to have operated in a liminal context, somewhere at the fringe of church and society. They portray themselves as philosophers, and engage in the current philosophical and literary conversations. Aristides distances himself from the Christians, referring to them with the third-person plural, "they", though he does confess his own faith. Athenagoras felt free enough to leave Athens and relocate to Alexandria during the persecution, which is perhaps some indication of a sense of disconnection from the local church, even if he refers to the Christians with the first-person plural, "we".

It can reasonably be concluded that the Athenian context contributed to the development of such a dynamic. Like any city, Athens was home to a wide range of people, living and working at all levels of society. The Christian community reflected this diversity. The city, however,

especially in the second century, had once more become a centre of political importance and educational opportunities. As such, the Christian community contained members who were highly educated and able to represent the Christian faith into such a context. They seemed to operate as a type of public Christian intellectual without, as far as can be seen, ecclesial responsibility as a bishop or elder.

Secondly, throughout the two centuries the Athenian church wrestled with their relationship to their close cultural neighbours. The Athens narrative in Acts 17 suggests that the first Christian community in the city was multiethnic and stratified to some degree in regards to socio-economic status, and they formed a faith community around Paul and his preaching. The apologists in the early second century express a heightened concern about the relationship between Judaism and Christianity. This was no doubt related to the Jewish revolts in the first decades of the second century. While both Quadratus and Aristides clearly acknowledge the relationship between the Jews and Christians, they distance themselves from the other ethno-religious group. Aristides uses the structures of the Graeco-Roman world, in his philosophical explanation of God and his portrayal of the Christians as similar to an association, to present the Christians as beneficial to the world.

Athenagoras takes this even further, in that his writing contains almost nothing that suggests any relationship to Judaism. Even his references to the Hebrew Scriptures downplay this fact. Instead, he draws parallels with Greek philosophers and the Christians' philanthropy, which is only otherwise applied to the emperors themselves. In the end, surveying the aftermath of the persecution, Dionysius urges the Athenians to return to the faith of their founding "bishop", Dionysius the Areopagite. These wrestles were certainly driven by changing cultural and political situations to which the apologists were responding. As such, they do not reveal "fractionation" in the Athenian church. Rather, they show a church (or select representatives of it) trying, not always successfully, to engage in the society around them.

APPENDIX 1: BIBLICAL REFERENCES IN ATHENAGORAS' *LEGATIO*[1]

Marcovich	**Schoedel**	**Pouderon**
Old Testament		
Genesis	Genesis	Genesis
1:3–27 – 13.10–14	Gen 1 – 13.2	1:3–27 – 14.2; 33.6
		1:27 – 33.6
6:1–4 – 24.35–39	6:1–5 – 24.5	6:1–4 – 24.2–6
Exodus	Exodus	Exodus
–	–	20:12 – 32.5
Leviticus	Leviticus	Leviticus
19:18 – 11.29	–	–
Psalms	Psalms	Psalms
103 (104):2 – 13.10	–	103 (104):2,5 – 14.2
Proverbs	Proverbs	Proverbs
8:22 – 10.20–21	8:22 – 10.4	8:22 – 10.4
21:1 – 18.12	21:1 – 18.2	21:1 – 18.2
24:12 – 31.23–24		
Wisdom	Wisdom	Wisdom
7:25 – 10.22–23; 24.9–10	7:25 – 10.4	7:25 – 10.4; 24.2
13:1–2 – 15.17–19; 16.16–17 22.55–57	13:1 – 16.3	–
Isaiah	Isaiah	Isaiah
22:13 – 12.12–13	22:13 – 12.3	22:13 – 12.3
43:10–11 – 9.11–12	43:10–11 – 9.2	43:10–11 – 9.2
44:6 – 9.10	44:6 – 9.2	44:6 – 9.2
66:1 – 9.12–14	66:1 – 9.2	66:1 – 9.2
Jeremiah		
18:6 – 15.11–12	–	–
Baruch	Baruch	Baruch
3:36 – 9.9	3:36 – 9.2	3:36 – 9.2
1 Enoch	1 Enoch	1 Enoch
6:2 – 24.35–36	6:2 – 24.5	6:2 – 24.2–6

[1] According to Miroslav Marcovich, William Schoedel, and Bernard Pouderon. Miroslav Marcovich, ed. *Athenagoras: Legatio Pro Christianis*, vol. 31, Patristische Texte Und Studien (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1990); Athenagoras, *Legatio and De Resurrectione*, trans. William R. Schoedel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972); Bernard Pouderon, "Les Citations Scripturaires Dans L'oeuvre D'athénagore. Leurs Sources Et Leur Statut," *Vetera Christianorum* 31 (1994); *Athénagore D'athènes: Philosophe Chrétien* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1989).

New Testament – Gospels

Matt	Matt	Matt
5:28 – 32.10–11	5:28 – 32.2	5:28 – 32.2
5:32 – 33.13–14	–	–
5:39–40 – 1.32–36; 11.27–28; 34.17–18	5:39–40 – 1.4; 11.4	5:39–40 – 1.4; 11.4
5:40, 46 – 12.22–24	5:46 – 12.3	5:46 – 12.3
5:42 – 11.28	–	5:42–43 – 11.4
5:44–45 – 11.6–9; 34.18	5:44–45 – 11.2	5:44–45 – 11.2
6:22 – 32.12	–	–
–	7:12 – 32.4	–
12:36 – 12.3–4; 35:15–16; 36.6	–	–
–	–	19:4–6 – 33.6
19:19 – 11.29; 33:13–14	19:9 – 33.5	19:19 – 32.5; 33.5
22:36, 40 – 32.17–18	–	–
22:39 – 11.29; 32.18	22:39 – 11.4; 32.4	22:39 – 11.4

Mark	Mark	Mark
10.11 – 33.13–14	10:11 – 33.5	10:11 – 33.5

Luke	Luke	Luke
6:27–28 – 11.6–9; 34.18	6:27–28 – 11.2	6:27–28 – 11.2–4
6:29 – 1.32–36; 11.27–28; 34.17–18	6:29–30 – 1.4; 11.4	6:29–30 – 1.4; 11.4
6:30 – 11.28	–	–
6:32, 34 – 12.22–24	6:32, 34 – 12.3	6:32, 34 – 12.3
10:18 – 25.1	–	10:18 – 24.2–6
11:34 – 32.13	–	–
–	–	16:18 – 16:18

John	John	John
1:3 – 10.10	1:3 – 10.2	1:3 – 4.2; 10.2
1:5 – 10.3; 16.10; 31.25	–	
1:13 – 27.6; 31.20–21	–	
3:6 – 31.27	–	
10.30 – 10.10–11	–	10:30 – 10.2
10:38 – 10.11–12	10:38 – 10.2	10:38 – 10.2
12:31 – 24.33; 24.42; 25.5; 25.38	–	–

New Testament – Acts and Paul

Romans	Romans	Romans
1:19–20 – 5.14–15	1:19–20 – L5.3	–
1:25 – †16.16–17; ^22.55–57	1:25 – 16.3	–
1:27 – 34.4–5	1:27 – L34.2	1:27 – L34.2
8:18 – 12.5–8	–	–
9:21 – 15.11–12	–	–
12:1 – 13.22	12:1 – L13.4	12:1 – L13.4
13:1–2 – L18.1–14	–	–
14:8 – 31.18	–	–
14:12 – 12.3–4; 35.15–16; 36.6	–	–

1 Cor	1 Cor	1 Cor
2:6–7 – 24.40	–	–
2:13 – 9.1–2; 7.20; 11.4 –	–	
–	6:7 – L1.4	–
15:32 – 12.12–13(Is.22:13)	15:32 – L12.3	15:32 – L12.3
–	–	15:50 – L27.1
Gal	Gal	Gal
4:9 – 16.19	4:9 – L16.3	4:9 – L16.3
Col	Col	Col
1:15 – 10.15	–	1:15 – L10.3
1 Tim.	1 Tim.	1 Tim.
2:2a – 37.6	2:2 – L37.2–3	2:2 – L37.3
2:2b – 37.9–10	–	–
2:8 – 13.16–17	2.8 – L13.3	2:8 – L13.3
6:11 – 31.18	–	–
6:16 – 16.10	6:16 – L16.3	6:16 – L16.3
2 Tim.	2 Tim.	2 Tim.
3:17 – 31.18	–	–
4:8 – 31.12–13	–	–
Titus	Titus	Titus
1:2; 3:7 – 33.1	–	–
3:3 – 21.43 (Marc.) -	–	–
–	–	1:12 – L30.3

Two references Marcovich, Schoedel and Pouderon missed

Acts
17:27–28

1 Tim
5:1–2

New Testament – Catholic Epistles and Revelation

1 Pet	1 Pet	1 Pet
4:15–16 – 2.12	–	–
Jude	Jude	Jude
6 – 24.33	–	–
Rev	Rev	Rev
20:13 – 36.4	–	–

APPENDIX 2: SCRIPTURE QUOTATIONS, ALLUSIONS AND ECHOES IN ATHENAGORAS' *LEGATIO*

1.1 – On the Search for God

Acts 17:27	***Leg.* 7.2**
[27]that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, [28]… as even some of your own poets have said, "For we are indeed his offspring."	For poets and philosophers have gone at this and other matters by guesswork, each of them moved by his own soul through some affinity with the breath of God to seek, if possible, to find and understand the truth. But they were able to gain no more than a peripheral understanding; they could not find Being since they would not stoop to learn about God from God, but each relied upon himself.
[27]ζητεῖν τὸν θεόν, εἰ ἄρα γε ψηλαφήσειαν αὐτὸν καὶ εὕροιεν, καί γε οὐ μακρὰν ἀπὸ ἑνὸς ἑκάστου ἡμῶν ὑπάρχοντα. [28]… ὡς καί τινες τῶν καθ' ὑμᾶς ποιητῶν εἰρήκασιν· τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν.	Ποιηταὶ μὲν γὰρ καὶ φιλόσοφοι, ὡς καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις, <καὶ τούτοις> ἐπέβαλον στοχαστικῶς, κινηθέντες μὲν κατὰ συμπάθειαν τῆς παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ πνοῆς ὑπὸ τῆς αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ ψυχῆς ἕκαστος ζητῆσαι <καί>, εἰ δυνατόν, εὑρεῖν καὶ νοῆσαι τὴν ἀλήθειαν, τοσοῦτον δὲ δυνηθέντες, ὅσον περινοῆσαι, οὐχ εὑρεῖν τὸ ὄν, οὐ παρὰ θεοῦ περὶ θεοῦ ἀξιώσαντες μαθεῖν, ἀλλὰ παρ' αὐτοῦ ἕκαστος·

1.2 – In Support of Monotheism

LXX	***Legatio* 9:1–2**
Baruch 3:36	

<table>
<tr><td>οὕτος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν οὐ λογισθήσεται ἕτερος πρὸς αὐτόν.</td><td rowspan="4">… τί οὖν οὗτοι; «Κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν· οὐ λογισθήσεται ἕτερος πρὸς αὐτον·» καὶ πάλιν· «ἐγὼ θεὸς πρῶτος καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα, καὶ πλὴν ἐμοῦ οὐκ ἔστι θεός.» Ὁμοίως· «ἔμπροσθεν ἐμοῦ οὐκ ἐγένετο ἄλλος θεὸς καὶ μετ᾽ ἐμὲ οὐκ ἔσται· ἐγὼ ὁ θεὸς καὶ οὐκ ἔστι παρὲξ ἐμοῦ.» Καὶ περὶ τοῦ <τούτου> μεγέθους· «ὁ οὐρανός μοι θρονός, ἡ δὲ γῆ ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν μου. ποῖον οἶκον οἰκοδομήσετέ μοι, ἢ τίς τόπος τῆς καταπαύσεώς μου;»</td></tr>
<tr><td>Isa 44:6
οὕτως λέγει ὁ θεὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ισραηλ ὁ ῥυσάμενος αὐτὸν θεὸς σαβαωθ ἐγὼ πρῶτος καὶ ἐγὼ μετὰ ταῦτα πλὴν ἐμοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν θεός</td></tr>
<tr><td>Isa. 43:10–11
[10]γένεσθέ μοι μάρτυρες κἀγὼ μάρτυς λέγει κύριος ὁ θεός καὶ ὁ παῖς ὃν ἐξελεξάμην ἵνα γνῶτε καὶ πιστεύσητε καὶ συνῆτε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι ἔμπροσθέν μου οὐκ ἐγένετο ἄλλος θεὸς καὶ μετ᾽ ἐμὲ οὐκ ἔσται. [11]ἐγὼ ὁ θεός καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν πάρεξ ἐμοῦ σῴζων</td></tr>
<tr><td>Isa. 66:1
[1]οὕτως λέγει κύριος ὁ οὐρανός μοι θρόνος ἡ δὲ γῆ ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν μου ποῖον οἶκον οἰκοδομήσετέ μοι ἢ ποῖος τόπος τῆς καταπαύσεώς μου</td></tr>
</table>

1.3 – Proverbs and the Trinity

Proverbs 8:22	***Leg.* 10.2**
The Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of long ago.	The prophetic Spirit also agrees with this account. “For the Lord”, it says, “made me the beginning of his ways for his works.”
κύριος ἔκτισέν με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἔργα αὐτοῦ	“κύριος γάρ,” φησίν, “ἔκτισέν με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἔργα αὐτοῦ.”

Proverbs 21:1	***Leg.* 18.2**

The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will.	For as all things have been subjected to you, a father and a son, who have received your kingdom from above ("for the king's life is in God's hand", as the prophetic spirit says), so all things are subordinated to the one God and the Word that issues from him whom we consider his inseparable Son.
ὥσπερ ὁρμὴ ὕδατος οὕτως καρδία βασιλέως ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ οὗ ἐὰν θέλων νεύσῃ ἐκεῖ ἔκλινεν αὐτήν	"βασιλέως γὰρ ψυχὴ ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ," φησὶ τὸ προφητικὸν πνεῦμα

1.4 – Proper Worship of God

1 Tim. 2:8	***Leg.* 13.3**
I desire, then, that in every place the men should pray, **lifting up holy hands** without anger or argument.	So then, we regard the Artificer as a God who conserves and governs all things with the knowledge and skill by which he guides them and we **raise up holy hands** to him, what further need does he have of any hecatomb?
Βούλομαι οὖν προσεύχεσθαι τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐν παντὶ τοπῳ, **ἐπαίροντας ὁσίους χεῖρας** χωρὶς ὀργῆς καὶ διαλογισμοῦ.	ὅταν οὖν ἔχοντες τὸν δημιουργὸν θεὸν συνέχοντα καὶ ἐποπτεύοντα ἐπιστήμῃ καὶ τέχνῃ κατ᾽ ἣν ἄγει τὰ πάντα, **ἐπαίρωμεν ὁσίους χεῖρας** αὐτῷ, ποίας ἔτι χρείαν ἑκατόμβης ἔχει;

Rom. 12:1	***Leg.* 13.4**
I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to <u>present</u> your bodies as a <u>living</u> **sacrifice**, holy and	And what have I to do with sacrificing, since what is required is to <u>offer up</u> our **rational worship** as an <u>unbloody</u> **sacrifice**?

acceptable to God, which is your **spiritual worship**.	
[1]Παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, διὰ τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν τοῦ θεοῦ παραστῆσαι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν **θυσίαν** ζῶσαν ἁγίαν εὐάρεστον τῷ θεῷ, **τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν** ὑμῶν.	καὶ προσφέρειν, δέον ἀναίμακτον **θυσίαν τὴν λογικὴν** προσάγειν **λατρείαν**;

Rom. 1:25	***Leg*. 16.3**
[25] because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.	For God is himself all things to himself: inaccessible light, a complete world, spirit, power, reason. Thus if the world is a harmonious instrument rhythmically moved, I worship not the instrument but the one who tuned and strikes the strings and sings to its accompaniment … If, as Plato says, the world is God's craftsmanship, though I admire its beauty, I reverently draw near to the craftsman. If it is substance and body as the Peripatetics say, we do not neglect worshipping God, the cause of bodily motion, and fall back upon the **beggarly and weak elements**, worshipping passible matter because of the air which they regard as impassible. If a man regards the parts of the world as powers of God, we will not draw near and serve these powers, but their Maker and Ruler.
1 Tim. 2:8	
[16] It is he alone who has immortality and *dwells in* unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.	
Gal. 4:9	
[9] Now, however, that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the **weak and beggarly elemental spirits**? How can you want to be enslaved to them again?	

2.1 – Submission to Authorities

Rom. 13:1–2	***Leg.* 18.2**
[1]Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. [2]Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.	for as all things have been subjected to you, a father and a son, who have received your kingdom from above ("for the king's life is in God's hand", as the prophetic spirit says), so all things are subordinated to the one God and the Word that issues from him whom we consider his inseparable Son.
Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἐξουσίαις ὑπερεχούσαις ὑποτασσέσθω. Οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἐξουσία εἰμὴ ὑπὸ θεοῦ, αἱ δὲ οὖσαι ὑπὸ θεοῦ τεταγμέναι εἰσίν. ὥστε ὁ ἀντιτασσόμενος τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ διαταγῇ ἀνθέστηκεν· οἱ δὲ ἀνθεστηκότες ἑαυτοῖς κρίμα λήμψονται.	ὡς γὰρ ὑμῖν πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ πάντα κεχείρωται ἄνωθεν τὴν βασιλείαν εἰληφόσιν (βασιλέως γὰρ ψυχὴ ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ, φησὶ τὸ προφητικὸν πνεῦμα), οὕτως ἑνὶ τῷ θεῷ καὶ τῷ παρ᾽ αὐτοῦ λόγῳ υἱῷ νοουμένῳ ἀμερίστῳ πάντα ὑποτέτακται.

2.2 – Prayer for the Emperors

1 Tim 2:1–2	**L37.2–3**	**Theophilus, *Ad Autolycum* 3.14**
First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, [2] for kings and all who are in high positions, so that **we may lead a quiet and peaceable life** in all godliness and dignity.	Who ought more justly to receive what they request than men like ourselves, who **pray** for your reign that the succession to the kingdom may proceed from father to son, as is most just, and that your reign may grow and increase as all men become subject to you? 3. This is also to our advantage that **we may lead a quiet and peacable life** and at the	Yet, concerning subjection to rulers and authorities, and **prayer** concerning them, the divine word commands us, so that **we may lead a quiet and peacable life.**

	same time may willingly do all that is commanded.	
[1]Παρακαλῶ οὖν πρῶτον πάντων ποιεῖσθαι δεήσεις, προσευχάς, ἐντεύξεις, εὐχαριστίας, ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀνθρώπων, [2]ὑπὲρ βασιλέων καὶ πάντων τῶν ἐν ὑπεροχῇ ὄντων, ἵνα **ἥρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον διάγωμεν** ἐν πάσῃ εὐσεβείᾳ καὶ σεμνότητι.	[37.2] τίνες γὰρ καὶ δικαιότεροι ὧν δέονται τυχεῖν ἢ οἵτινες περὶ μὲν τῆς ἀρχῆς τῆς ὑμετέρας **εὐχόμεθα**, ἵνα παῖς μὲν παρὰ πατρὸς κατὰ τὸ δικαιότατον διαδέχησθε τὴν βασιλείαν, αὔξην δὲ καὶ ἐπίδοσιν καὶ ἡ ἀρχὴ ὑμῶν, πάντων ὑποχειρίων γιγνομένων, λαμβάνῃ; [3]τοῦτο δ᾽ ἐστὶ καὶ πρὸς ἡμῶν, ὅπως **ἥρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον διάγοιμεν**, αὐτοὶ δὲ πάντα τὰ κεκελευσμένα προθύμως ὑπηρετοῖμεν.	[3.14] Ἔτι μὴν καὶ περὶ τοῦ ὑποτάσσεσθαι ἀρχαῖς καὶ ἐξουσίαις καὶ **εὔχεσθαι** ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν κελεύει ἡμᾶς ὁ θεῖος λόγος, ὅπως **ἥρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον διάγωμεν**.

3.1 – Eschatological hope

Titus 1:2; 3:7	**L33.1**
Titus 1:2 **in hope of eternal life**, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began Titus 3:7 so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the **hope of eternal life.**	Therefore, having **hope of eternal life**, we despise the things of this life, including even the pleasures of the soul.

Titus 1:2 ἐπ᾽ **ἐλπίδι ζωῆς αἰωνίου**, ἥν ἐπαγγείλατο ὁ ἀψευδὴς θεὸς πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων. Titus 3:7 ἵνα δικαιωθέντες τῇ ἐκείνου χάριτι κληρονόμοι γενηθῶμεν κατ᾽ **ἐλπίδα ζωῆς αἰωνίου**.	**Ἐλπίδα οὖν ζωῆς αἰωνίου** ἔχοντες, τῶν ἐν τούτῳ τῷ βίῳ καταφρονοῦμεν μέχρι καὶ τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς ἡδέων

4.1 – Adultery verses in *Legatio* 32—33

Matt. 5:28	***Leg.* 32.2**
But I say to you that **everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery** with her **in his heart**.	But we are so far from promiscuity that it is not even permissible for us to look with lust: for '**he who looks at a woman to lust after** her', it says, '**has already committed adultery in his heart.**'
[28]ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι πᾶς **ὁ βλέπων γυναῖκα πρὸς τὸ ἐπιθυμῆσαι αὐτὴν ἤδη** ἐμοίχευσεν αὐτὴν **ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ.**	[32.2] "ἡμεῖς δὲ τοσοῦτον τοῦ ἀδιάφοροι εἶναι ἀπέχομεν, ὡς μηδὲ ἰδεῖν ἡμῖν πρὸς ἐπιθυμίαν ἐξεῖναι. **"ὁ"** γὰρ **"βλέπων"**, φησί, "**γυναῖκα πρὸς τὸ ἐπιθυμῆσαι αὐτῆς ἤδη** μεμοίχευκεν **ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ**".

Matt. 19:9; Mark 10:11	***Leg.* 33.5**
Matt. 19:9 And I say to you, **whoever divorces his wife**, except for unchastity, **and marries another commits adultery**. Mark 10:11 He said to them, "**Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery** against her.	For '**whoever divorces his wife**', it says, '**and marries another, commits adultery**.'
Matt 19:9 λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι **ὃς ἂν ἀπολύσῃ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ** μὴ ἐπὶ πορνείᾳ **καὶ γαμήσῃ ἄλλην μοιχᾶται** καὶ ὁ ἀπολελυμένην γαμήσας μοιχᾶται. Mark 10:11	"**ὃς**" γὰρ "**ἂν ἀπολύσῃ**", φησί , "**τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ καὶ γαμήσῃ ἄλλην, μοιχᾶται**."

καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, **Ὃς ἂν ἀπολύσῃ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ καὶ γαμήσῃ ἄλλην μοιχᾶται** ἐπ᾽ αὐτήν.	

4.2 – Romans 1:27

Rom. 1:27	***Leg.* 34.2**
and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. **Men committed** shameless acts **with men** and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error.	For it is they who have made a business of harlotry and have established immoral houses of every base pleasure for the young. Nor have they neglected male prostitution. **Men work their** terrible deeds **with men**…
ὁμοίως τε καὶ οἱ ἄρσενες ἀφέντες τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν τῆς θηλείας ἐξεκαύθησαν ἐν τῇ ὀρέξει αὐτῶν εἰς ἀλλήλους, **ἄρσενες ἐν ἄρσεσιν** τὴν ἀσχημοσύνην **κατεργαζόμενοι** καὶ τὴν ἀντιμισθίαν ἣν ἔδει τῆς πλάνης αὐτῶν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἀπολαμβάνοντες.	οἱ γὰρ ἀγορὰν στήσαντες πορνείας καὶ καταγωγὰς ἀθέσμους πεποιημένοι τοῖς νέοις πάσης αἰσχρᾶς ἡδονῆς καὶ μηδὲ τῶν ἀρσένων φειδόμενοι, **ἄρσενες ἐν ἄρσεσι** τὰ δεινὰ **κατεργαζόμενοι**.

4.3 – Sexual Ethics – 1 Timothy 5:1–2 and *Leg.* 32.5

1 Tim. 5:1–2	***Leg.* 32.5**
[1]Do not speak harshly to an older man, but speak to him as to a father, to younger men as brothers, [2] to older women as mothers, to younger women as sisters—with absolute purity.	For this reason we regard some, depending on their age, as our sons and daughters, others we consider our brothers and sisters, and to those advanced in years we give the honour due to fathers and mothers. But we are profoundly concerned that the bodies of those whom we consider brothers and sisters and who are now by all the other

	terms applied to kin remain inviolate and unsullied.
[1]Πρεσβυτέρῳ μὴ ἐπιπλήξῃς, ἀλλὰ παρακάλει ὡς πατέρα, νεωτέρους ὡς ἀδελφούς, [2]πρεσβυτέρας ὡς μητέρας, νεωτέρας ὡς ἀδελφὰς ἐν πάσῃ ἁγνείᾳ.	διὰ τοῦτο καὶ καθ᾽ ἡλικίαν τοὺς μὲν υἱοὺς καὶ θυγατέρας νοοῦμεν, τοῖς δὲ ἀδελφοὺς ἔχομεν καὶ ἀδελφὰς καὶ τοῖς προβεβηκόσι τὴν τῶν πατέρων καὶ μητέρων τιμὴν ἀπονέμομεν. οὓς οὖν ἀδελφοὺς καὶ ἀδελφὰς καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τοῦ γένους νοοῦμεν ὀνόματα, περὶ πολλοῦ ἡμῖν ἀνύβριστα καὶ ἀδιάφθορα αὐτῶν τὰ σώματα μένειν.

5.1 – Matthew 5:44–45 and Luke 6:28

Matt 5:44–45; Luke 6:28	***Leg.* 11.2**
Matt 5:44–45 **44** But I say to you, **Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.** Luke 6:27–28 **27** "But I say to you that listen, **Love your enemies**, do good to those who hate you, **28** *bless those who curse you*, pray for those who abuse you.	What then are the teachings on which we are brought up? '**I say to you, love your enemies**, bless them who curse you, **pray for them who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven who makes his sun rise upon the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust.'**
Matt 5:44–45 44ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν, **ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν** καὶ **προσεύχεσθε ὑπὲρ τῶν διωκόντων ὑμᾶς. 45ὅπως γένησθε υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς, ὅτι τὸν**	τίνες οὖν ἡμῶν οἱ λόγοι, οἷς ἐντρεφόμεθα; "λέγω ὑμῖν· **ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν**, εὐλογεῖτε τοὺς καταρωμένους, **προσεύχεσθε ὑπὲρ τῶν διωκόντων ὑμᾶς,**

ἥλιον αὐτοῦ ἀνατέλλει ἐπὶ πονηροὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς καὶ βρέχει ἐπὶ δικαίους καὶ ἀδίκους. Luke 6:27–28 [27]Ἀλλὰ ὑμῖν λέγω τοῖς ἀκούουσιν, **ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν**, καλῶς ποιεῖτε τοῖς μισοῦσιν ὑμᾶς, [28]εὐλογεῖτε τοὺς καταρωμένους ὑμᾶς, προσεύχεσθε περὶ τῶν ἐπηρεαζόντων ὑμᾶς.	**ὅπως γένησθε υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, ὃς τὸν ἥλιον αὐτοῦ ἀνατέλλει ἐπὶ πονηροὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς καὶ βρέχει ἐπὶ δικαίους καὶ ἀδίκους.”**

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