

Allen Brent

The Imperial Cult
& the Development
of Church Order

*Concepts &
Images of Authority
in Paganism &
Early Christianity
before the Age
of Cyprian*

BRILL

**THE IMPERIAL CULT AND THE DEVELOPMENT
OF CHURCH ORDER**

SUPPLEMENTS TO
VIGILIAE CHRISTIANAE

Formerly Philosophia Patrum

TEXTS AND STUDIES OF EARLY CHRISTIAN LIFE
AND LANGUAGE

EDITORS

J. DEN BOEFT — R. VAN DEN BROEK — W.L. PETERSEN
D.T. RUNIA — J.C.M. VAN WINDEN

VOLUME XLV



THE IMPERIAL CULT AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHURCH ORDER

*Concepts and Images of Authority in Paganism and Early
Christianity before the Age of Cyprian*

BY

ALLEN BRENT



BRILL
LEIDEN · BOSTON · KÖLN
1999

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Brent, Allen.

The imperial cult and the development of church order : concepts and images of authority in paganism and early Christianity before the Age of Cyprian / by Allen Brent.

p. cm. — (Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae*, ISSN 0920-623X ; v. 45)

Includes bibliographical references (p.) and indexes.

ISBN 9004114203

1. Church polity—History—Early church, ca. 30-600. 2. Emperor worship—Rome. 3. Christianity and other religions—Roman.

I. Title. II. Series.

BV648.B73 1999

261.2'207'09015—dc21

99-36631

CIP

Die Deutsche Bibliothek – CIP-Einheitsaufnahme

[*Vigiliae Christianae* / Supplements]

Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae* : formerly *Philosophia Patrum* ; texts and studies of early Christian life and language. – Leiden ; Boston ; Köln : Brill.

Früher Schriftenreihe

ISSN 0920-623X

Vol. 45. Brent, Allen: The imperial cult and the development of church order. – 1999

Brent, Allen:

The imperial cult and the development of church order : concepts and images of authority in Paganism and Early Christianity before the Age of Cyprian / by Allen Brent. – Leiden ; Boston ; Köln : Brill, 1999

(Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae* ; Vol. 45)

ISBN 90-04-11420-3

ISSN 0920-623X

ISBN 90 04 11420 3

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Caroline Penrose Bammel, F.B.A.
(1940–1995)
In piam memoriam

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AAWG</i>	Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen
<i>ABAW</i>	Abhandlungen der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften
<i>ABenRev</i>	American Benedictine Review
<i>AHAW</i>	Abhandlungen der heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften
<i>AGJU</i>	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums (Leiden: Brill)
<i>AKWG</i>	Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen
<i>ArLiW</i>	Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft
<i>AmJArch</i>	American Journal of Archaeology
<i>AmJPhil</i>	American Journal of Philology
<i>AnBoll</i>	Analecta Bollandiana
<i>AnLov</i>	Analecta Lovaniensia Biblica et Orientalia
<i>ANRW</i>	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung, Ed. H. Temporini and W. Haase (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter)
<i>Antiqu.</i>	Antiquitas: Beiträge zur Historia-Augusta Forschung, Ed. J. Straub und A. Alföldi (Bonn: R. Habelt Verlag 1963—)
<i>ArcCl</i>	Archeologia classica
<i>ArFil</i>	Archivio di filosofia
<i>Athen.</i>	Athenaeum
<i>Ath. Mitt.</i>	Mitteilungen des kaiserlich deutschen archäologischen Instituts: athenische Abteilung
<i>AThR</i>	Anglican Theological Review
<i>ATNT</i>	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des alten und neuen Testaments
<i>Aug</i>	Augustinianum
<i>BArC</i>	Bulletino di archeologia cristiana
<i>BE</i>	Bulletin épigraphique
<i>BEHE.R</i>	Bibliothèque de l'école des hautes études, Sciences religieuses

<i>BeitrHistTh</i>	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
<i>BICS</i>	Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies
<i>BiLit</i>	Bibel und Liturgie
<i>Bjb</i>	Bonner Jahrbücher des rheinischen Landesmuseums in Bonn und des Vereins von Altertumsfreunden im Rheinlande
<i>BLitE</i>	Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique
<i>BR</i>	Biblical Research
<i>BRév</i>	Biblical Review
<i>BSGT</i>	Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana
<i>BThAM</i>	Bulletin de théologie ancienne et médiévale
<i>Byz</i>	Byzantion: Revue internationale des études byzan- tines
<i>ByzZ</i>	Byzantinische Zeitschrift
<i>BZNW</i>	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wis- senschaft
<i>BZHT</i>	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
<i>BCCa</i>	Civiltà cattolica
<i>ChH</i>	Church History
<i>CTh</i>	Cahiers théologiques (Neuchâtel: Éditions Delachaux et Niestlé 1949—)
<i>CIG</i>	Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum
<i>CIL</i>	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
<i>ClAnt</i>	Classical Antiquity
<i>ClassRev</i>	Classical Review
<i>ClassStud</i>	Classical Studies. Department of Classics of the Uni- versity of Kyoto
<i>ClPl</i>	Classical Philology
<i>CSCO</i>	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
<i>CSLE</i>	Corpus Scriptorum Latinorum Ecclesiasticorum
<i>DACL</i>	<i>Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie</i> , (Ed.) F. Cabrol and H. Leclercq (Paris: Libraire Letouzey et Ané 1924)
<i>DAIRM</i>	Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts: römische Abteilung
<i>DomSt</i>	Dominican Studies
<i>DR</i>	Downside Review
<i>EglTheo</i>	Église et théologie
<i>EpAnat</i>	Epigraphica anatolica

<i>EphL</i>	Ephemerides liturgicae
<i>EPRO</i>	Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain, Maarten J. Vermaseren (Leiden: Brill)
<i>EThL</i>	Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses
<i>Entretiens</i>	Fondation Hardt Pour l'Étude de l'Antiquité Classique (Vandoeuvres-Genève: Olivier Reverdin)
<i>FRLANT</i>	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des alten und neuen Testaments
<i>FZPhTh</i>	Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie
<i>GCS</i>	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten beiden Jahrhunderte
<i>GGR</i> ³	Geschichte der griechischen Religion, in <i>Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft</i>
<i>Greg</i>	Gregorianum
<i>GRBS</i>	Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies
<i>Gym</i>	Gymnasium
<i>HA</i>	Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft
<i>Herm</i>	Hermes
<i>Hermath</i>	Hermathena
<i>Hesp</i>	Hesperia
<i>HeyJn</i>	Heythrop Journal
<i>Hochl.</i>	Hochland. Zeitschrift für alle Gebiete des Wissens und der schönen Künste
Horsley, <i>New Docs</i>	G. Horsley, <i>New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity</i> , (Macquarie: Ancient History Documentation Research Centre 1983—)
<i>HThR</i>	Harvard Theological Review
<i>Hypomn.</i>	Hypomnemata: Untersuchungen zur Antike und zu ihrem Nachleben, A. Dihle, H. Erbse, C. Habicht, G. Patzig, B. Snell (Editors), (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht 1962—)
<i>ILCV</i>	Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres, Ed. E. Diehl, Vols. 1–3
<i>ICUR</i>	Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae Septimo Saeculo Antiquiores, Ed. De Rossi G.B. and Silvagni A., Nova series (Rome 1921—)
<i>IG</i>	Inscriptiones Graecae, Ed. Kirschner J. (Berlin: Rheimarum 1913—; De Gruyter 1924—)
<i>JbAC</i>	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum

<i>JBL</i>	Journal of Biblical Literature
<i>JEGArch</i>	Journal of Egyptian Archeology
<i>JEH</i>	Journal of Ecclesiastical History
<i>JES</i>	Journal of Ecumenical Studies
<i>JHS</i>	Journal of Hellenic Studies
<i>JLiW</i>	Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft
<i>JRA</i>	Journal of Roman Archeology
<i>JRH</i>	Journal of Religious History
<i>JRomS</i>	Journal of Roman Studies
<i>JSTNT</i>	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
<i>JSTNT.S</i>	Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplementary Series
<i>JThS</i>	Journal of Theological Studies
<i>LeDiv</i>	Lectio divina
<i>MAAR</i>	Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome
<i>MD</i>	La Maison-Dieu
<i>MEFRA</i>	Mélanges de l'école française de Rome: Antiquité
<i>MemAmAc</i>	Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome
<i>MGH</i>	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
<i>MSR</i>	Mélanges de science religieuse
<i>MuThZ</i>	Münchener theologische Zeitschrift
<i>NA</i>	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
<i>NScavAnt</i>	Notizie degli scavi di antichità, in <i>Atti della r. accademia dei Lincei</i>
<i>NT</i>	Novum Testamentum
<i>NTS</i>	New Testament Studies
<i>OECT</i>	Oxford Early Christian Texts, H. Chadwick (Ed.), (Oxford: Clarendon Press)
<i>Opera Min Sel.</i>	L. Robert, <i>Opera Minora Selecta</i> , Épigraphie et Antiquités Grecques, Vols. 1-7 (Amsterdam: Hakkert 1969-1990)
<i>OrChr</i>	Oriens Christianus
<i>OrChrA</i>	Orientalia Christiana analecta
<i>OrSyr</i>	Orient syrien
<i>OstkiSt</i>	Ostkirchliche Studien
<i>PL</i>	J.P. Migne, <i>Patrologia Latina</i>
<i>Phil</i>	Philologus, <i>Zeitschrift für klassisches Altertum</i>
<i>PO</i>	<i>Patrologia orientalis</i>
<i>PG</i>	J.P. Migne, <i>Patrologia Graeca-Latina</i>
<i>PTS</i>	<i>Patristische Texte und Studien</i> (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter 1964—)

<i>PWK</i>	A. Pauly-Wissowa, <i>Real-encyclopädia der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (Metzler: Stuttgart 1899)
<i>QLP</i>	Questions liturgiques et paroissiales
<i>RAC</i>	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum
<i>RAr</i>	Revue archéologique
<i>RBen</i>	Revue benedictine
<i>Rbib</i>	Revue biblique
<i>RDroitCan</i>	Revue de droit canonique
<i>RH</i>	Revue historique
<i>REA</i>	Revue des études anciennes
<i>REG</i>	Revue des études grecques
<i>RevHisRel</i>	Revue de l'histoire des religions
<i>RecSciRel</i>	Recherches de science religieuse
<i>RelStudRev</i>	Religious Studies Review
<i>RBelgPhH</i>	Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire
<i>RevEtByz</i>	Revue des études byzantines
<i>RevHE</i>	Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique
<i>RevHPhR</i>	Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuse
<i>RevScPhTh</i>	Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques
<i>RevSR</i>	Revue des sciences religieuses
<i>RGG</i>	Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart
<i>RivAC</i>	Rivista di archeologia cristiana
<i>RPARA</i>	Rendiconti della pontificia accademia romana di archeologia
<i>RPhil</i>	Revue de philologie, de littérature et d'histoire anciennes
<i>RSLR</i>	Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa
<i>RThAM</i>	Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale
<i>SBAW</i>	Sitzungsberichte der bayrischen Akademie der Wissenschaften
<i>SC</i>	Sources chrétiennes (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf 1944—)
<i>SciEspirit</i>	Science et esprit
<i>ScuCat</i>	La scuola cattolica
<i>SecCent</i>	The Second Century
<i>Set</i>	Studi e testi
<i>SGK</i>	Schriften der königsberger Gelehrten Gesellschaft
<i>SHAW</i>	Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften
<i>SJLA</i>	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity, Ed. J. Neusner (Leiden: Brill)

<i>SPAW</i>	Sitzungsberichte der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften: Philosophisch-historische Klasse
<i>StAns</i>	Studia anselmiana
<i>StEphAug.</i>	Studia Ephemeridis "Augustinianum" (Institutum Patristicum "Augustinianum": Rome)
<i>StPB</i>	Studia Post-Biblica
<i>StTh</i>	Studia Theologica
<i>StudClas</i>	Studii clasice. Bucuresti, Soc. de Studii Clasice din RSR
<i>StudPatr</i>	Studia Patristica
<i>StuPat</i>	Studia Patavina
<i>SupplVCh</i>	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae (Leiden: Brill 1987—)
<i>TheolStKrit</i>	Theologische Studien und Kritiken
<i>Theoph</i>	Theophania: Beiträge zur Religions- und Kirchengeschichte des Altertums
<i>TheoRev</i>	Theologische revue
<i>ThG</i>	Theologie und Glaube
<i>ThQ</i>	Theologische Quartalschrift
<i>ThR</i>	Theologische Rundschau
<i>ThS</i>	Theological Studies
<i>ThZ</i>	Theologische Zeitschrift
<i>TU</i>	Texte und Untersuchungen der altchristlichen Literatur
<i>TWNT</i>	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum neuen Testament
<i>TBA</i>	Tübinger Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft
<i>VC</i>	Verbum Caro: Revue theologique et oecuménique (Neuchâtel 1947)
<i>VCh</i>	Vigiliae Christianae
<i>WMANT</i>	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum alten und neuen Testament
<i>WUNT</i>	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum neuen Testament (Mohr: Tübingen)
<i>ZKG</i>	Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte
<i>ZKTh</i>	Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie
<i>ZNW</i>	Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und Kunde der älteren Kirche
<i>ZRGG</i>	Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte
<i>ZThK</i>	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche
<i>ZWTh</i>	Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie

PLATES*

1. Ara Pacis Augusti
DAI Neg. 53.307.
Courtesy of Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rom.
2. Ara Pacis:
Tellus: celebration of *Pax* in nature and society.
DAI Neg. 86.1448.
Courtesy of Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rom.
3. Ara Pacis:
Tellus and her children in a fruitful earth.
DAI Neg. 32.1744.
Courtesy of Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rom.
4. Ara Pacis:
Nymph (*Hora*) of sea-realm seated on a tamed dragon.
DAI Neg. 32.1746.
Courtesy of Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rom.
5. Ara Pacis:
Close-up of Tellus' child in Nature's superabundance.
DAI Neg. 86.1458.
Courtesy of Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rom.
6. Ara Pacis:
Sacrificial Scene (*Suoventaurilia*)
DAI Neg. 66.107.
Courtesy of Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rom.
7. Altar of Lares:
Augustus as *augur* with *lituus*.
DAI Neg. 75.293.
Courtesy of Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rom.
8. Altar of the Lares:
Vicomagistri at joint sacrifice.
DAI Neg. 60.1472.
Courtesy of Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rom.
9. Altar of Lares:
Augustus hands statuettes to *ministri* of a *compitum*.
Mus. Vatic. Arch. Fotog. Neg. N. A.16.6.
Courtesy of Monumenti musei e gallerie pontificie.
10. *Ministri* with statuettes of *Lares* and *Genius Augusti*.
Mus. Vatic. Arch. Fotog. Neg. N. XXXV.5.9.
Courtesy of Monumenti musei e gallerie pontificie.

* The Plates Section can be found at the end of this book.

11. Altar dedicated to the *Lares* of Augustus.
Roma, Musei Capitolini, Arch. Fotog. Inv. 855/S.
12. Augustus presents statue of Minerva to *magistri* of woodworkers.
Roma, Musei Capitolini, Arch. Fotog. Inv. 1909/S.
13. Gemma Augustea.
Courtesy of Kunsthistorisches Museum, Wien Inv. IX.A.79.
14. Pompei: Priestess with *stola* and *patera*.
Naples, Mus. Naz. Inv. 6041.
15. Priest with incense box.
Lyon, Mus. Gallo-Rom. (Photo: Ch. Thioc).
16. Head of Augustus with thunderbolt and star.
BMC (Tiberius) 151.c.216.20 (Pl. 26.3). (Obv.)
© The British Museum
17. Livia as priestess holding *patera* and sceptre.
BMC (Tiberius) 151.c.216.20 (Pl. 26.3). (Rev.)
© The British Museum
18. Head of Augustus with star.
BMC (Titus) 271.c.219.86 (Pl. 54,3). (Obv.)
© The British Museum
19. Altar to *Providentia*.
BMC (Titus) 271.c.219.86 (Pl. 54,3). (Rev.)
© The British Museum
20. Domitia Augusta.
BMC (Domitian) 65.c.194.56 (Pl. 61,9). (Obv.)
© The British Museum
21. Domitia (Pietas) with sceptre, left, extending right hand
towards her child.
BMC (Domitian) 65.c.194.56 (Pl. 61,9). (Rev.)
© The British Museum
22. Domitia Augusta.
BMC (Domitian) 62 (Pl. 61,6). (Obv.)
© The British Museum
23. Divus Caesar (Domitian's son) as baby Jupiter seated on
a globe circled by seven stars.
BMC (Domitian) 62 (Pl. 61,6). (Rev.)
© The British Museum
24. Victory (Domitian) draped and holding a shield.
BMC (Domitian) 504.c.220.3. (Rev.)
© The British Museum
25. *Aeternitas* holding the sun and moon.
BMC (Domitian) 346.c.219.94 (Pl. 73,4)
© The British Museum
26. Sabina Augusta
BMC (Hadrian) 1095.c.391.8 (Pl. 75,7). (Obv.)
© The British Museum
27. Cybele, towered, draped and seated.
BMC (Hadrian) 1095.c.391.8 (Pl. 75,7). (Rev.)
© The British Museum

28. Faustina (I) Augusta.
BMC (Antoninus Pius) 1436.c.223.190 (Pl. 34,4). (Obv.)
© The British Museum
29. Cybele towered and enthroned with two lions.
BMC (Antoninus Pius) 1436.c.223.190 (Pl. 34,4). (Rev.)
© The British Museum
30. Faustina (II) Augusta.
BMC (Marcus Aurelius) 934.c.225.1 (Pl. 73,11). (Obv.)
© The British Museum
31. Cybele (Mater Magna) towered.
BMC (Marcus Aurelius) 934.c.225.1 (Pl. 73,11). (Rev.)
© The British Museum
32. Matri Deum Salutari:
Cybele towered and on a lion's back.
BMC (Commodus) 680 (Pl. 109,15). (Rev.)
33. Julia (Domna) Augusta.
BMC (Septimius Severus) 77.c.198.154 B (a)
(Pl. 28,18) (Obv.)
© The British Museum
34. Isis with Horus in both arms.
BMC (Septimius Severus) 77.c.198.154 B (a)
(Pl. 28,18) (Rev.)
© The British Museum

INTRODUCTION

The received opinion on the Imperial Cult of perhaps a majority of Roman historians was well summed up in the work of Kurt Latte, who claimed that the importance of this Cult had been greatly overestimated. Emperor Worship played a minor role, on his view, and was not really a religious phenomenon at all. “Der Kaiserkult blieb . . . die Anerkennung des römischen Weltreichs, in seiner gegenwärtigen Form, eine konventionelle Geiste.”¹ The Imperial Cult, as Étienne quoted Latte as saying, was “une invention des pères de l’Église.”²

Certainly this view has also predominated in many discussions of why the Early Church suffered persecution. Sherwin-White agreed with De Ste Croix in this respect at least, when he claimed that “emperor worship is a factor of no independent importance in the persecution of Christians.” It was refusal to worship the gods in general that was the prime reason for persecution.³ If Latte’s view were correct, the study of the Imperial Cult in relation to the development of Early Church Order would be the study of social reality as the early Christians had constructed it. But that construction of social reality would have been disowned by the pagans themselves.

But Latte’s summary defence of the early consensus of Roman historians has recently sustained a highly significant challenge. Writers such as Fears,⁴ Fishwick,⁵ and Price⁶ have emphasised the increasing centrality of the Imperial Cult to Roman religion, particularly

¹ K. Latte, *Römische Religionsgeschichte*, in *HA* 5,4 (1967) and (1976), p. 326. The most recent example is found in B.W. Jones, *The Emperor Domitian*, (London: Routledge 1992).

² Quoted in G. Alföldy, *Subject and Ruler, Subjects and Methods: an Attempt at a Conclusion*, in A. Small (Ed.), *Subject and Ruler: The Cult of the Ruling Power in Classical Antiquity*, in *JRA: Suppl. Series*, 17 (1996), p. 254.

³ A.N. Sherwin-White, *The early persecutions and Roman Law again*, in *JThS* 3,2 (1952), p. 210 cf. G.E.M. De Ste. Croix, *Why were the early Christians persecuted?* in *Past and Present*, 26 (1963), p. 10.

⁴ J.R., Fears, *The Cult of Virtues and Roman Imperial Ideology*, in *ANRW* 2,17,2 (1981), pp. 827–948. J.R. Fears, *The Theology of Victory at Rome*, in *ANRW* 2,17,2 (1981), pp. 736–826.

⁵ D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West: Studies in the Ruler Cult of the Western Province of the Roman Empire*, I,1–2, II,1–2, in *EPRO* 108 (1987).

⁶ S.R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: U.P. 1984).

through its ability to synthesise itself with traditional pagan cults in various subtle ways. Indeed, Géza Alföldy well summarised the significance of Fishwick's work, reinforced by the papers of the Alberta Symposium celebrating the latter's sixty-fifth birthday, and edited by Alastair Small, as having this broader and synthesising significance as the means of celebrating imperial unity in a way that was religious and even sacramental.⁷

I believe, therefore, that, in the light of the reassessment of the Imperial Cult as a religious phenomenon, it is possible to reassess also its influence on the development of ministerial Order in the Early Church. My argument (Chapter 2), influenced to some extent by the work of Liebeschuetz,⁸ is that the Imperial Cult as founded under Augustus was basically a reorganisation of the Republican Cult whose elected magistrates, through the college of augurs, had the constitutional as well as religious responsibility of obtaining the *pax deorum*. The chaos of the late Republic, as evidenced by Livy, Lucan, Suetonius, and Dio had a metaphysical as well as a humanly political basis. Furthermore their historiography represented a generally received opinion.

The Republican Cult, in failing to achieve the *pax deorum*, represented a cultic failure that was the perceived religious counterpart of the political failure of the Republican Constitution. Thus Augustus executed a religious reformation in which his Imperial Cult could be understood as producing an extraordinary *pax deorum* of millennial proportions and endurance.⁹ I document in Chapter 1 how this pagan and imperial construction of social reality was reinforced. Certain features of the early martyrologies establish that the real reason for the persecutions was a cultic reason. Christianity was a *superstitio* threatening the *pax deorum* obtained through the Imperial Cult.

In Chapters 3–6 I examine the writings of *Luke-Acts*, Clement of Rome, the *Apocalypse*, and Ignatius of Antioch. In each case I argue

⁷ Alföldy (1996), pp. 255–256.

⁸ J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon 1979).

⁹ I rely here on the insightful general treatment by e.g., P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. A. Shapiro (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 1990), or studies of the *Ara Pacis* such as that of R. Bertolotti de Angelis, *Materiale dell'Ara Pacis* presso il Museo Nazionale Romano, *DAIRM* 90 (1985), pp. 221–234, or E. Bianchi, *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Rome: Fratelli Palombi 1994), pp. 13–16.

that we have a nascent Church Order, developing *pari passu* with that of the Imperial Cult, in which the converted heirs of the Augustan religious reformation show that their Christian Cult, with its officers and rites, are able to achieve the true *pax dei*. In consequence, Christian social constructions of reality are fashioned in interaction with their pagan and imperial counterparts. In Chapters 7–8 we trace the emergence of Pagan Monotheism and Christian Monarchianism as they emerge in the second century, and are reflected in Imperial and Church Order under the Severans and Elagabalus on the one hand, and Callistus on the other.

My discussion is informed throughout by a sociological model in which the interaction between these two developing social phenomena, the Pagan and the Christian Cultus, can be fruitfully studied and explained. The development of Early Christian Church Order is understood as the development of a contra-culture (Chapter 1). A group, deprived of status and significance by the wider culture, sets up its own contra-culture that mirrors and reverses the values of the former, granting the status and significance to its members that the former has denied them.¹⁰

My thesis is intended to show finally how the Church of Cyprian faced the Empire of Decius Trajan and Valerian as two rival cultic organisations which had behind both of them two centuries of interactive development.

I wish to acknowledge financial support both from the British Academy for the completion of chapters 1–6, and from the Leverhulme Trust for chapters 7–8. The generous assistance of both bodies have enabled me to continue my research in early Christian history with the resources of the Libraries of Cambridge University and of Rome.

My most grateful thanks must go to Professore Manlio Simonetti, of La Sapienza and of the Lateran University. At the British School in Rome I have enjoyed friendship and discussion with numerous scholars, in particular with the Director, Professor Andrew Wallace-Hadrill. I have greatly benefited from the much valued support of the Augustinianum in Rome, in particular that of their Vice Praeses, Dr Robert Dodaro, and from the kindness and hospitality of Dr George Lawless and many others there.

¹⁰ S. Leventman (Ed.), *Counterculture and Social Transformation: Essays on Negativistic Themes in Sociological Theory* (Illinois: Thomas 1982).

In Cambridge I must mention Professor William Horbury, F.B.A., and Dr James Carleton Paget for their encouragement of my work, and also the Patristics Seminar under the leadership of Dr Lionel Wickham. Whether in Rome or in Cambridge my thanks is also due to Dr Christopher Kelly, for his valued insights and suggestions.

I also acknowledge with thanks provision of photographs as well as permission to reproduce them from:

- (i) Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rom (Plates 1–8).
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- (v) Museo Nazionale, Napoli (Plate 14).
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- (vii) The British Museum, London (Plates 16–34).

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5TH MARCH 1999

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CHAPTER ONE

CHRISTIAN AND PAGAN CULTUS BY THE THIRD CENTURY

Contra-cultural theory and Cyprianic Order

The victory of early Christianity and its success in annihilating its pagan rival both as a political and intellectual force is the victory of a state within a state, an *imperium in imperio*, which both challenged the State itself, and sought finally and unsuccessfully to replace it totally. The ambiguous success of the later Church in seeking the latter objective needs in any case careful qualification. In later times neither Gregory VII nor Innocent III were to succeed finally in either disengaging the Church from lay control, or in subjecting lay political authority entirely to ecclesiastical authority.

The essential features of later Catholic Church Order emerged, in a clear and unambiguous form, in the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch, the scholarly consensus for whose dates I accept as the first decade of the second century.¹ Here a single bishop, together with a circle of presbyters and a number of deacons, emerged as the liturgical and organisational mark of the true Church. Those essential features, with certain modifications and additions that did not affect their fundamental form, were to find expression in the theology of Catholic Order of Irenaeus, Pseudo-Hippolytus, and finally Cyprian. Irenaeus might add that the bishop in liturgical act and in governing the community has to show his place in an unbroken succession (*διαδοχή*) of teachers extending back to the apostles.² Pseudo-Hippolytus might add that the succession of teachers also “shares in the high priesthood (*μετέχοντες ἀρχιερατείας*).”³ Finally Cyprian was to add a catholic to an apostolic criterion of validity: other bishops had to give

¹ For a discussion of this question and relevant bibliography, see A. Brent, *The Relations between Ignatius of Antioch and the Didascalia Apostolorum*, in *SecCent* 8,3 (1991), pp. 129–156.

² Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, III, 3,3 cf. E. Molland, *Irenaeus of Lugdunum and the Apostolic Tradition*, in *JEH* 1,1 (1950), pp. 12–28; *Idem*. *Le développement de l'idée de succession apostolique*, in *RevHPhR* 34 (1954), pp. 1–29.

³ Pseudo-Hippolytus, *El.* I proem. 6 cf. *Ap. Trad.* 3.

an almost universal acknowledgment to a given episcopal succession. But the normative structure of liturgy and Order of a given Christian community was to remain essentially as Ignatius of Antioch had described it.

Cyprian's final qualification of the edifice constructed by Ignatius and embellished by Irenaeus was that for a bishop to be valid he must not simply be both in the place of God the Father and in the apostolic succession but in communion with all other father-bishops. In order to be in communion with the Catholic Church one has to be in communion with a bishop who is in communion with other bishops. The final link as it were in the interlocking bonds of mutual recognition and communion between the bishops is the See of Rome that thus provides a focus of unity. The Catholic Church thus became an alternative *imperium*, presided over by bishops in communion with each other, which now stands in stark contrast to pagan Imperial Order. Church Order is a kind of reversed mirror image of Imperial Order.

PART A. CYPRIANIC HIERARCHY AND DECIUS TRAJAN

In Cyprian's edifice we have the clearest example of Church Order arraigned against Imperial Order. Both the institution of the emperor as *Pontifex Maximus* of his own cult, and that of the bishop as the *sacerdos* and ruler of the Christian cult, had undergone, in the first two centuries, extensive development. But now the finally developed edifice of Church Order was to confront an Imperial Order that had itself undergone extensive development. Since Caracalla's citizenship law of A.D. 212, the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, the Severan policy of integrating the diverse cultures into a single whole had found its theological representation in the iconography of the Imperial Cult. Caracalla appears on coins as the Lord of the world and as the reflection of the divine light of the sun, permeating all things and creating universal order. The emperor and his consort were to possess the religious function of effecting sacramentally the unity of the empire of which the citizenship law was the hope.⁴

Over against and reflecting a reverse image of Imperial Order

⁴ Abd el Mohsen el Khachab, ὁ Καρακάλλος κοσμοκράτωρ, in *JEGArch* 47 (1961), pp. 119–133. For further discussion and bibliography, see A. Brent, Hippolytus and the Roman Church in the Third Century: Communities in Tension before the Emergence of a Monarch-Bishop, in *Suppl. VCh* 31 (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1995), pp. 83–84.

stood the now developed, Cyprianic hierarchy. The bishop as high priest now expressed in his intercommunion with other bishops the unity of the Church just as the cult of Decius Trajan, formed in the Severan ideology of the previous generation, expressed sacramentally the unity of the Empire. To be in communion with Christ you have to be in communion with a bishop who presides over a geographical territory called a diocese. In order to be in communion with other Christians outside your diocese, your bishop has to be in communion with their bishop and so on. But the way in which Cyprian expresses himself is significant:

Thus the church of the Lord (*sic et ecclesia domini*) directs its rays of light spread through the whole world (*luce perfusa per orbem totum radios suos porrigit*). However the light is one (*unum tamen lumen est*) which is shed everywhere (*quod ubique diffunditur*), nor is the unity of its physical form divided from it (*nec unitas corporis separatur*) . . .

De Catholicae Ecclesiae Unitate 5

Cyprian's justification of *ecclesia una est* is that each bishop in the apostolic succession will mutually recognise the faith and life of the other. But behind the plurality is the one and indivisible unity which each expresses. That unity is described almost in Plotinian terms, as in *Enneads* VI, 9,9, of the archetypal light (*unum tamen lumen est*) that characterises the indivisible and therefore ultimate One. It was "eternal (ἀίδια)". For Plotinus the ἀρχή of all things, "of life (ζωῆς) . . . mind (νοῦ) and being (ὄντος) . . . remains as such (ἠσαύτως μένει), not being divided into them (οὐ μεμερισμένη εἰς αὐτά), but remaining whole (ἀλλ' ὅλη μένουσα)."

Moreover, the imagery and underlying Neo-Platonic philosophy of these sentiments bear striking resemblance to the iconography of the Imperial Cult. Pagan thinkers at this time were also looking for a universal religion based upon the cult of *Sol Invictus*, the Unconquered Sun, of which all other deities would be but aspects and reflections. Associated with the Imperial Cult, the cult of *Sol Invictus* would imply a theology of imperial unity. That theology was sustained by Neo-Platonism, as represented by Plotinus. His archetypal light giving unity and therefore reality to lesser existence without thereby being diminished was symptomatic of a social construction of reality in which an imperial autocrat and his predecessors and successors gave unity to a diverse empire at the centre of which they stood. Through the Imperial Cult worship was sought of past emperors as a visible expression of imperial authority.

The act of offering incense at the altars of the Imperial Cult as a sacrament of imperial unity would mirror Cyprian's theology of the unity of the Church. Participation in the Imperial Cult, superintended by the Emperor as *Pontifex Maximus*, would lead to incorporation into the body of the Empire through the unifying light of ὁ Κακάκαλλος κοσμοκράτωρ. Participation in the Christian Cult, superintended by bishops in an intercommunion focused on the bishop of Rome, would lead to incorporation into the Church as the Body of Christ.⁵ Both represented alternative social constructions of reality in which inclusion in the one necessarily lead to exclusion from the other, with corresponding strategies of legitimation nihilating rival claims.

But the parallelism between the Imperial Cult and the Christian Cult had existed in embryo before the developments of Cyprian's time, as some early martyrologies make plain.

PART B. CHRISTIAN AND IMPERIAL CULT: PARALLELS BEFORE CYPRIAN

The parallelism between participation in the Christian Cult and the Imperial Cult, and the mutual exclusivity of each, though thrown into stark relief by Cyprian, had already been previously clearly drawn in the *Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs* (A.D. 180). Speratus begins by denying wrongdoing and accepting persecution "because we honour our emperor (*propter quod imperatorem nostrum observamus*)."⁶ But he continues in more specific terms when he asserts: "I do not recognise the empire of this age (*Ego imperium huius seculi non cognosco*) . . . I recognise my master, the king of kings and emperor of all nations (*cognosco dominum meum, regem regum et imperatorem omnium gentium*)."⁷ Furthermore, the *Acts* make it quite clear that it was as much for the religious participation in Christian rites as for the bare belief in

⁵ Cyprian *Ep.* 59,14, speaking against Felicissimus and the lax party, says of them that: ". . . audent et ad Petri cathedram adque ad ecclesiam principalem unde unitas sacerdotalis exorta est a schismaticis et profanis litteras ferre . . ." See also *De Unit.* 4; *Ep.* 43,5; 55,8; 59,7; 73,7; 75,16.

⁶ J. Armitage Robinson (Ed.), *Passio Scilitanorum*, in *The Passion of Perpetua*, in *Texts and Studies: Contributions to Biblical and Patristic Literature*, No. 2 (Cambridge: U.P. 1891), pp. 112, 8. The Greek version reads, pp. 113, 10: τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν καὶ βασιλεῖ δουλεύομεν.

⁷ Armitage Robinson (1891), p. 112, 18-22.

a different emperor that the Christians were on trial. The decree which Saturnus the proconsul recites condemning Speratus and his group is that “they confessed that they had lived according to the Christian rite (*ritu Christiano se vivere confessos*).”

Furthermore, the *ritus Christianus* is juxtaposed with “the opportunity offered (*oblata sibi facultate*) of returning to the custom of the Romans (*ad Romanorum morem redeundi*).”⁸ As Saturninus had previously asserted: “We are religious (*Et nos religiosi sumus*), and our religion is simple (*et simplex est religio nostra*), and we swear by the genius of our Lord Emperor (*et iuramus per genium domini nostri imperatoris*) . . .”⁹ *Religio* in Latin of course has a far greater cultic sense than its English equivalent which can mean adherence to a bare set of beliefs. Furthermore Saturninus promise: *indulgentia domini nostri imperatoris*, if he and his group will take the oath, has a cultic resonance in the corresponding Greek version of the *Acts*. In the case of the latter, *potestis indulgentiam domini nostri imperatoris promereri* (“you can merit the pardon of our Lord Emperor”) is rendered in the Greek version: ἐδύνασθε παρὰ τοῦ ἡμῶν αὐτοκράτορος συγχωρήσεως ἀξιωθῆναι.

Συγχωρεῖν is used in the sense of “pardon” specifically in the context of the remission of sins as a necessary requirement of being “in communion” in the record of strife between the community of the author of *El. IX*, 7,1–3 and that of Zephyrinus and Callistus at Rome in A.D. 215.¹⁰ In Cyprian’s writings *indulgentia* is associated with *paenitentia* and thus the means of obtaining absolution and restored communion. He claims that a heretic cannot have the power to baptise since he cannot have the *indulgentia divina*. Furthermore *indulgentia* or pardon is the result that follows the penitence of the lapsed and thus marks their restoration to communion.¹¹ Its sense therefore approaches that of συγχωρήσις used in the sense of forgiveness particularly through absolution that takes place through baptism.¹²

We see therefore, from the *Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs*, that in the late second century, well before the development of Cyprianic ideology, not only was there a parallelism between the kingdom of Christ and Caesar, but a parallelism between the participation in

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 116, 2–3.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 112, 9–11.

¹⁰ For a discussion of this passage, see Brent (1995), pp. 424–425.

¹¹ Cyprian, *Sent. Episc.* 19; *Ep.* 30, 6.

¹² Chrysostom, *Hom. in Iohan.* 27,1: διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος ὁλόκληρον τῶν ἀμαρτημάτων τὴν συγχωρήσιν ἐδωρήσατο. Cf. Eriphanius, *Haer.*, 68,2.

the cult of Christ and in that of Caesar. Both have their *indulgentia/συγχώρησις* by which members who have cut themselves off can be ritually restored, whether by swearing by Caesar's *genius* in the case of the one, or, in the case of the other, by confession and repentance that re-establishes the grace of baptism and therefore union in the Body of Christ.

Furthermore, the specific charge of participation in a cultic rite (*ritus Christianus*), as the antithesis to the imperial, rather than allegiance to a bare belief, is also witnessed by other martyrologies. It is true that we find in the an emphasis on swearing to the *genius* of Caesar (*Passio Polycarpii*, 8, 2; 9, 2; 10, 1) in recantation of a belief. The crowds cry "Away with the atheists. Search for Polycarp," a charge which the confessor turns back on the crowd themselves (9, 2-3). A similar emphasis can be observed in the *Acta S. Justini*, where non-participation in the Imperial Cult is a question of preferred doctrines. But in the account of the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne (A.D. 177), preserved in Eusebius (*H.E.* V, 1,3-63), the emphasis is cultic with no opportunity offered to swear by the *genius* of Caesar to someone who had already confessed rather than denied all association with the Christian cult.

In this case too, some of those who denied that they were Christians were not released but also suffered, not on the charge of Christianity in itself, but "as murderers (ὡς ἀνδροφόνου) and polluted persons (καὶ μισροί)," (*H.E.* V, 1,33) quite contrary to procedures apparently established in the correspondence between Trajan and Pliny. Clearly here it was a question of the proconsul being concerned with "crimes associated with the name (*flagitia cohaerentia nomini*)," and not the "name" itself,¹³ and with a population out of control who were rioting about such alleged Christian crimes.

Now it is expressly recorded that charges were made of "Thyestian feasts and Oedipodean intercourse," which further inflamed the mob (*H.E.* V, 1,14). What inflamed the mob on this occasion at least was therefore the belief that here was a cult that was a *superstitio* and not a proper religion. As Frend has pointed out, charges of cannibalism, murder, and incest were not isolated slurs but related to images of *prava religio* whose exemplar is to be found in Livy's account of the Bacchanalian riot of 186 B.C. and in which such excesses were

¹³ Pliny *Ep.* X, 96,2.

recorded as having occurred.¹⁴ The revulsion of the mob was a reaction to Christianity viewed as an *exitiabilis superstitio*, as Tacitus (*Ann.* XV, 44,4) was to view it, and therefore to Christianity as a cultic practice.

It is therefore to be emphasised that one strand in the parallelism between Church and Empire was a cultic strand. It was not simply that Christians claimed an allegiance to another but spiritual kingdom, and that the Empire misconstrued this as disloyalty. Rather they also participated in a cult that was, like the Bacchanalian cult described by Spurius Postumius Albinus, the consul of 189 B.C., violating the divine law. Such violations upset the *pax deorum* and were marked by prodigies requiring acts of augury in order to set right a natural order upset by the practices of a *prava religio*. We shall argue that part of the parallelism between Imperial and Christian Cults was the issue of the *pax deorum*. Augustus as augur had extraordinarily succeeded in securing this ritual and metaphysical *pax* in the wake of the failure Republican magistrates. The superior Christian *pax dei* was secured by Christ and perpetrated through the cultic acts of the Christian community and its ministers according the *Luke-Acts* (Chapter 3), Clement *Corinthians* (Chapter 4), and Ignatius of Antioch (Chapter 6). The Christian cult was thus the rival means for obtaining the cultic objectives of the Imperial Cult, and represented a denial of the claims of the latter to have achieved such objectives (Chapter 2).

Cyprian's ideological response to Decius' universal decree did not create the cultic parallelism but rather was the outcome of a long line of development. My thesis will seek to examine the by Cyprian's time longstanding parallel relations between the Early Church and the Imperial Cult, which *prima facie* had quite different objectives, and which historically appeared about the same time and in conflict with one another. There are two possibilities regarding the form that such a relation could have taken, namely reaction or interaction. Let me begin by giving my grounds for rejecting a purely reactive thesis.

¹⁴ Livy 39, 8–19 cf. W.C.H. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church*, (Oxford: Blackwell 1965), pp. 109–112. The point was made originally by R.M. Grant, Pliny and the Christians, in *HThR* 41 (1948), p. 273 cf. S. Benko, Pagan Criticisms of Christianity, *ANRW* (1980) II, 23,2, pp. 1066–1072 and R.L. Wilken, *The Christians as the Roman saw them*, (New Haven and London: Yale U.P. 1984), pp. 25–30.

PART C. CHURCH ORDER AS *APOLOGIA*: THE REACTIVE THESIS

It is possible to present an account of the development of Church Order as a reactive apologetic to external mis-representation about the true character of the Christian cult. Thus *Luke-Acts*, Clement, Justin, Tatian, Athenagoras, and Tertullian defended Christianity from the moral charges brought against it. These writers, so it is argued, sought to establish the foundations for a legal argument for the recognition of the Christian cultus as a so called *religio licita*, though the validity of the concept in Roman Law has been questioned. Surely, therefore, an apologetic aim has influenced the development of Church Order? If the characteristic of a *religio illicita* is that it is no true *religio* but a degenerate *superstitio* and, on the example of the Bacchanalian riot, a threat to public order, morality, and the civil peace, then any charismatic appearances must be played down or superseded by an ordered ministry.

Thus in the community exhibited by the *Didache* the ministry of wandering apostles must be discounted, and prophets replaced by duly elected ἐπίσκοποι and διάκονοι. At Corinth when Clement writes in A.D. 95 any sign of disorder must be reduced, any outbreak of frenzied disputes about Order and succession must be put down. Clement exhorts the Corinthian community to exhibit publically an authority structure consisting of an ordered διαδοχή of πρεσβύτεροι-ἐπίσκοποι. Clearly one of his purposes was to suggest obliquely how his Christian community might find an acceptance within the authority structure of the Roman empire. The priest of Dionysus had done as much far more directly when he presented to the Alexandrine magistrate the certificate stating who were his immediate two predecessors in administering the Dionysiac cult.¹⁵ Within such a perspective, the relationship between Christian and pagan cult is clearly interactive, however reluctant the group in question may have been to admit such influence expressly. (Chapter 3.)

The Church reacts to pagan society by simply rebutting its accusations of cannibalism, incest, and charismania. That it reacts also to the pagan cultus is considered purely co-incidental, as if the relationship between that cultus and Roman society was purely contin-

¹⁵ E. Bammel, Sukzessionsprinzip im Urchristentum, in *StEphAug* 31 (1990), pp. 63-72.

gent. You could be a moral citizen, and therefore a good and loyal member of the society of the Roman Empire and not participate in that cultus. The evolution of Church Order was therefore equally reactive—an attempt to set all things in order so as to be recognised as one of the religious options in a multicultural empire. As such the Church simply wished to leave the pagan cultus alone whilst no-doubt converting its wayward members to the true faith. It certainly could not interact with it so as to incorporate any of its concerns into its own structure.

There are a however number of problems with such a perspective stated in these terms:

1. It fails to account for the phenomenon of stages in the development of Church Order reflected in the development of the Imperial Cult and *vice versa*. This was clearly the case with Christian, Cyprianic Order in comparison with Decian Imperial Order, and it is clearly relevant to ask how true it was also for stages in development before Cyprian.

2. It assumes that the responses of those who write the justification for Church Order—and thus in conceptualisation and reconceptualisation actually shape it—are in fact similar responses as those of the apologists who are ostensibly claiming legal recognition from the Roman state.

3. It undervalues the way in which the Apologists themselves, whilst appearing as suppliants for legal recognition, actually attack in their works the values of Roman society and the pagan cultus itself that underpins those values. The apologists are not simply reacting to Roman society but criticising and indeed undermining it, whilst being prepared to use pagan religious concepts radically reorientated for their own Christian ends.

4. It fails to grasp how integral was that expression of Roman religion which was the Imperial Cult to the Roman conception of society. The cultus itself under the Severans and finally under Decius became the sacrament that constituted that society, and which forged so many disparate cultures into one social whole. Such a development reflected the unity and purpose first of a Stoic and then later of a Neo-Platonic universe. We shall trace the embryonically sacramental character from the inception of that cult with Augustus, and emphasise how important his *ius augurium* as *Pontifex Maximus* was to a society influenced by the widespread belief that its existing cultus

had failed in *augurium* and *haruspicium* to secure the *pax deorum* in the events of the civil war (Chapter 2). We shall observe the fully fledged development of what was initially embryonic with Augustus into the kind of pagan monotheism that paralleled Christian Monarchianism in the course of the second century (Chapter 7), and which were reflected both in Imperial and in Church Order under Elagabalus and Callistus (Chapter 8). Imperial religious functions were not therefore simply an accidental appendage that could have been different and left unaltered a Roman society that could simply tolerate Christianity if presented with a successful *apologia*.

At all events, the charge of *superstitio* rather than *religio* did not survive the age of Septimius Severus. The charge of incest and cannibalism and threats to social or cosmic order were almost unheard in the persecutions of Decius Trajan, Valerian, and Diocletian. Yet the Church was persecuted despite two developments that perhaps ought to have led to a reorientation of church-state relations. Firstly, the apologists rebutted the grosser slurs on the Christian name, and, secondly, the success of a hierarchically governed, Church marginalized the Montanists whose charismatic excesses could have otherwise suggested a Bacchanalian threat to public order.

We shall therefore argue that the relations between Church and State were interactive rather than reactive, and necessarily involved interaction with the religious and cultic face of a single politico-religious unity. In that interaction, neither party simply reacted to the other. Each tried to take over and refashion the conditions and their justification of each other's social and political existence.

My quest is therefore for a sociological model in contra-cultural theory that will enable discrete relations to be teased out and examined. The study of both institutions has been bedevilled by the assumption by historians until fairly recently, encouraged by Eusebius, that the form into which both institutions developed finally around 251, under Cyprian of Carthage on the one hand, and Decius Trajan on the other, had been what they were from the very first. There was no development of either institution therefore to examine, and so no possibility of their development interacting with one another. But given that both institutions developed to some extent *pari passu* from the age of and Tiberius onwards, let us examine a sociological model that will enable the interaction between both to be studied as they developed alongside each other.

PART D. IMPERIAL AND CHRISTIAN ORDER:
CONTRA-CULTURAL RELATIONS

During the 1950s Cohen and his associates outlined a theory of how, within the context of a wider culture, a subculture is formed from its interaction with the wider culture. We shall argue that such an interaction is reflected in the relations between Church and State in the early centuries. When the Church became an *imperium in imperio*, it had formed a counter-culture that had absorbed elements from its host culture. A subculture, in terms of what Durkheim described as a post-industrial society functioning on the principle of organic solidarity, could live at peace with wider society. It could exist, like the division of labour, as part of a multiculturalism in which society hangs together by its very diversity contributing to the unity of the whole.¹⁶ But sometimes the sub-culture becomes a contra-culture, and at this point Cohen and his associates were to go beyond Durkheim's original simplicity.¹⁷

Delinquency, for example, was not simply regarded as the reaction of the individual to a wider society that rejected that individual, deprived him of rights, and created in him a feeling of alienation or *anomie*. Rather delinquency was a positive solution in which delinquents created a contra-culture in terms of which they could achieve the status and power that wider society had denied them. The contra-culture accordingly changed the scale of values of the culture with which it interacted, reformulating and reconstructing its authority relations and the rationale for the status awarded to authority figures. Thus a contra-culture was not produced by a reaction to the general culture that simply accepted the definitions of that culture regarding its status and role. More positively the contra-culture was produced by an interaction that redefined the demands of the host culture, accepting some of them and reformulating others.

Thus, in the case of teenage gangs, status was awarded to those

¹⁶ For a discussion of Durkheimian sociology and its implications for secular and religious multiculturalism, see A. Brent, Cultural Episcopacy and Ecumenism, Representative Ministry in Church History from the Age of Ignatius of Antioch to the Reformation, with special reference to contemporary ecumenism, in *Studies in Christian Mission* 6, (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1992), chapters 1-2 and 6.

¹⁷ A.K. Cohen, *Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1955) and Sociological Research in Delinquent Subcultures, in *American Journal of Orthopsychology*, 27,4 (1957), pp. 781-788.

who had "heart", who would risk their lives in acts considered by wider society as foolhardy. To be cynically unfaithful in human relationships etc. reversed accepted norms of the value of trust. Such a phenomenon was described as *inverse polarity*. Criminal activity did not conform to the utilitarian values of wider society, since there was little material advantage in "borrowing" cars for "laughs," and this marks the *non-utilitarian* characteristic of a contra-culture. *Malice*, in the case of delinquents manifested in gratuitous violence, was in evidence against non-group members. A *short run hedonism* characterised behaviour in which unplanned anti-social acts spontaneously took place. Furthermore, the group was characterised by a *group autonomy* that resisted any constraint except that which arises informally from group members. Yet, in Cohen's words, "it is not the individual delinquent but the gang that is autonomous."¹⁸

Hargreaves applied the same kind of sociological analysis to a secondary school organised in terms of streams rather than sets. He detected in the four streams of a secondary modern school four distinct subcultures that went from the "A" stream where group norms and values were those of the official society, whereas streams "B", "C", and "D" showed variations on the theme of contra-cultures inverting those norms and values, and exhibiting versions of *non-utilitarianism*, *inverse polarity*, *malice*, *hedonism*, and *group autonomy*. Malice is shown in the deep hostility between A and D stream boys, and in the stereotypes thus created. Inverse polarity is manifested in the way in which esteemed members of a C or D stream are those who do not perform academically, do not undertake voluntary tasks for teachers, etc. "Messing" is done by cultural isolates in the A stream, whose members frown on it as purposeless destructiveness. Yet those who do not join in such activities in the C and D streams are the cultural isolates who do not admire the aimlessness and uselessness of such behaviour (non utilitarian). Group punishments such as detentions reinforce group autonomy. There is a deferral of gratification in A stream boys as opposed to the hedonism of "having fun" of streams C and D.¹⁹

¹⁸ A.K. Cohen and J.F. Short, Research in Delinquent Subcultures, in *Journal of Social Issues*, 14,3 (1958), pp. 20-37, discussed by D.M. Downes, *The Delinquent Solution*, (London: Routledge 1966), pp. 22-30, 202-208.

¹⁹ D.H. Hargreaves, *Social Relations in a Secondary School*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1967), pp. 164-176 ff.

Whether in Cohen's teenage gangs, or in the C and D streams of Hargreaves secondary school, it is to be emphasised, as we have said, that the phenomena are not to be regarded as individual reactions of alienation to a wider culture that places them low in its hierarchy and their personal values low in its own scale. Rather the formation of a contra-culture is a positive interaction that creates a positive solution to the problem of social alienation. A society within a society, framing alternative values, and an alternative status system, is created in which the individual can gain the status and significance that wider society denies him.

In 1982 an attempt was made to apply contra cultural theory to theories regarding the sociological significance of poverty and wealth.²⁰ Part of that attempt led Walter to attempt an analysis of the medieval Church's attitude to poverty in the context of such a theory.²¹ We may follow Walter's suggestive remarks and use the analytic concepts that we have distilled from contra-cultural theory generally to express the development of monastic movements, led by Cluny in the 9th century.

The mendicant Dominicans made poverty and dependency on others the positive mark of status and so exhibited inverse polarity. The development of rules of life for the community as a whole, and their removal from episcopal control with direct access to the Papal court, marked the creation of group autonomy. There was no individual freedom as such, since either the formal or informal norms of the groups would produce conformity, or indeed the individual could be charged by external ecclesiastical authority. But the group as a whole had achieved an inviolate status.

The Franciscans in addition to the inverse polarity that made poverty rather than wealth the mark of status and divine approval also engaged devotionally in a kind of spiritual hedonism of immediate gratification. To be lost in the love of God exhibited by a natural universe filled with benignly human attributes was considered preferable to the life of career advancement by rational and calculated plan. Thus the contra cultural value of non-utilitarianism against the utilitarianism of wider society is seen in evidence. In the developments

²⁰ S. Leventman (Ed.), *Counterculture and Social Transformation: Essays on Negativistic Themes in Sociological Theory*, (Illinois: Thomas 1982).

²¹ E. Victor Walter, *From Counterculture to Subculture: an Episode in the History of Poverty*, in Leventman (1982), pp. 75-86.

marked by the radical or Spiritual Franciscans, suppressed by John XXII in the fourteenth century, non-utilitarianism is manifested in the claim that the renunciation of any property is necessary to salvation. Here a contra-culture is seen reinforcing its inversion of the values of wider society.

Certainly Cyprian's Church exercised group autonomy in rejecting the constraints to worship the Emperor. Furthermore, the discipline that one did not sacrifice incense under sanction of excommunication arose informally from group members. It was that informality that produced the variety of approaches to non-conformity that was the cause of Cyprian's dilemma. The *libellatici* clearly had one view of readmission to communion, those who sought *libelli pacis* from the confessors another, and the Novatians yet a third.²² Cyprian clearly had to make formal constraints that had arisen informally, in the manner of contra-cultural groups.

Indeed other regular features of a contra-culture can be seen in the martyrological texts themselves, to which I have already made reference. Inverse polarity is seen in that what the host culture regards as executed criminals are described, in the case of the Scillitan Martyrs, by the contra-culture as "crowned (*coronati*) and "reigning (*regnant*)" as a consequence of their martyrdom.²³ The day of their ignominious death is, for Perpetua and her companions, the day of their victory (*dies victoriae*).²⁴

Non-utilitarianism is clearly seen in the questions of magistrates as to the use or point of not swearing or sacrificing to the Emperor's *genius*, as when Perpetua's father appeals to her to avoid the family's social disgrace, and to care for the needs of her baby son.²⁵ The Eirenarch Herod, and Nicetes his father, ask Polycarp: "What harm is there in saying 'Caesar is Lord,' and sacrificing, and the rest of it, and so saving yourself?"²⁶ Malice is shown, in references in *Acta Justini* 1, to "the wretched defenders of idolatry and their impious decrees." We find a short-term hedonism in Blandina's affirmation that brings her "refreshment (*ἀνάληψις*) and rest (*ἀνάπαυσις*)." (*H.E.* V, 1,19)

²² Cyprian, *De Laps.* 28; *Ep.* 30, 3; 65, 13 and 17.

²³ *Passio Scillitanorum* 18,1 (Armitage Robinson (1891), pp. 86,16).

²⁴ *Passio S. Perpetuae* 13-14 (Armitage Robinson (1891), p. 116).

²⁵ *Ibid.* 3,1 (Armitage Robinson (1891), pp. 62/63, 2-64/65).

²⁶ Pionius, *Passio Polycarpi*, 8,2 (J.B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, London: MacMillan 1891).

Thus we find contra-cultural features in early Christian descriptions of the clash between the Christian community as a cultic community, and the Roman Empire seeking sacramental unity through its own cultic act of sacrificing incense to the genius of Caesar. But what of ministerial, sacerdotal Order itself in both Imperial and Christian Cult?

I propose in the following chapters to now apply contra cultural analysis systematically to the phenomenon of the interaction between Church and State during the first two centuries specifically in terms of the offices of those who superintended their two parallel cults. My thesis will be that the development of Church Order can be understood as the creation of a contra-culture in which the values of the dominant culture are reversed, and members of that contra-culture achieve a status denied to them by wider society. It is in response to the demands of such a process that the suppression of the charismatic takes place, and a stable and organised society is created in Clement *Corinthians* and the *Didache* (Chapter 4). Ignatius as the martyr bishop and his procession from Antioch in Syria to Rome can be understood as marking the interface between the Pagan and the Christian Cult. His office and sacrifice can be seen to be the creation of a reversal of images derived from the Imperial Cult (Chapter 5).

Features of Cohen's definition of a contra-culture will moreover be seen also in *Luke-Acts*, Ignatius and the *Apocalypse*. We find an inverse polarity in the *Apocalypse* where by means of a reversal of values the apparatus and liturgy of the Imperial Cult is applied to the heavenly worship of the true God. Then there will be the example of Ignatius the bishop who both leads the Christian cultic procession to Rome and then becomes a sacrifice on the altar of the Imperial Cult which seems almost thereby appropriated and Christianised. Here we shall see an inversion of cultic elements and a burning (hedonistic?) desire for martyrdom the glory of which well-meaning Roman Christians may try to deprive him who do not grasp the full significance of the inverse polarity valued by their contra-culture (*Rom.* 1-2). We shall furthermore argue that the sacerdotal imagery of the Imperial Cult is influencing iconography of ecclesial Order both in Ignatius and in the *Apocalypse*, with the former producing inverse polar images of the latter. *Luke-Acts* too (Chapter 3) will be shown to mirror Augustan history, with the *pax Christi* produced by the Christian, apostolic cult as the contra-cultural parallel

to the *pax deorum* produced by Augustus' augural act and witnessed on his monument, the *Ara Pacis* (Chapter 2).

But a contra-culture needs the model of the wider society with which it is interacting in order to determine what values need to be reconstructed, what system of privilege and honour needs to be reversed. Here we shall find Domitian and the further development of the Imperial Cult providing the historical matrix that determines the character of what develops in Church Order at this particular period. We have argued here a similar relationship for the age of Cyprian with contemporary developments in the Imperial Cult. Such a process we shall argue to be in evidence not only in Clement of Rome, but in his near contemporaries in *Luke-Acts*, the *Apocalypse*, and the Ignatian Letters (Chapters 3, 5 and 6). We shall finally discuss how a Monarchian theology of the Trinity mirrors the Monarchian philosophical basis for the Imperial Cult under the Severans, and is reflected in developments both in Imperial and Church Order under Elagabalus and Callistus (Chapters 7–8).

From our analysis of the ideology of the communities presupposed by these developments, we shall derive a framework for understanding the subsequent Cyprianic developments with their own reflections of imperial Order and Imperial Cult.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE IMPERIAL CULT

The religious character of the Augustan Revolution

The Augustan revolution was as much religious as it was political. Divination and the rites of the *augur* were constitutional as well as religious necessities in a society in which both religion and politics were intertwined. The Imperial Cult represents therefore both a constitutional revolution and a religious reformation. The cult carried associations with the legendary kings of Rome that left its mark on the Republican constitution. The transformation of Republic to Principate required therefore a transformation of the cult in which the final exercise of the *ius augurium* was in the hands of the henceforth imperial and hereditary *Pontifex Maximus*. The history of the civil wars, beginning with Marius and Sulla, and ending with Actium had moreover impressed on Roman minds the need to achieve through the cultus the *pax deorum*.

In the next three chapters we shall examine first and early second century works, namely *Luke-Acts*, Clement, *Corinthians*, the *Apocalypse*, and the epistles of Ignatius of Antioch. We shall argue that these writers express varieties of Christian, contra-cultural constructions mirroring the Roman Empire with its central cultic expression in the Imperial Cult which was, with its new association with *Fortuna Redux*, to make wider eschatological claims. Preliminary to our discussion in these future chapters we shall examine here, in section A, the growth of the concept of the Imperial Cult from its republican roots to its unique association with Augustus. In section B we shall examine the inception of that cult at the *ludi saeculares* of 13 B.C., and the beginnings of its wider reception, particularly in Asia Minor but also in the Latin West.

Within the literature of the first century B.C., Cicero's *De Natura Deorum* bears witness to a Stoic justification for the practices of both *augur* and *haruspex*. In early and mid first century A.D. we shall find, particularly in the case of Lucan, but with reference to Livy too, a historiography that reads the event of the lost and restored order of

nature and society in terms of a Stoic, hyloholistic theology of *fortuna*, *fatum* and *λόγος*. We shall show how the Augustan constitutional and cultic developments reflected such Stoic assumptions. Augustus' control of the Imperial Cult, secured through his office of *Pontifex Maximus*, had as its objective the obtaining of the *pax deorum*. The explanation and justification of such an objective was a philosophical theology informed by Stoicism.

We shall follow the development of the Stoic theology underpinning Augustus' specific cultic claim to control the *ius augurium*, alongside other features of the Augustan ideology. In particular, we shall examine how the concepts of *pax*, *fortuna*, and *salus* were linked with expectations of a returning golden age. The further synthesis also took place when the birth of both Julius Caesar and that of Octavian/Augustus as his heir was also linked with *fortuna redux*. Both as a result came to be personally and individually described in what in the Judaeo-Christian tradition would be "Messianic" terms. In making such a claim I acknowledge the influence of the distinguished art historian John Elsner, who has recently approached the study of the *Ara Pacis* emphasised an alternative model of art to naturalism that takes account of the nature and importance of viewing in the understanding of images.¹

In the cross current of multicultural concepts in the early Roman Empire, such an artefact needs to be interpreted in the light of a reconstruction of the probable dialogue between the viewer and art object in which the understanding of the object is "permanently incomplete and yet always temporarily fulfilled by the viewer's own participation in the sacrificial rite." As Elsner claims: "viewers creatively constructed numerous meanings which might deconstruct, undermine, or conflict with one another. A Jewish view, for instance, or a Pythagorean one might have been very different from that of

¹ J. Elsner, *Cult and Sculpture: Sacrifice in the Ara Pacis Augustae*, in *JRomS* 81 (1991), pp. 50–61. Strong support has been given to the pursuit of such an art-historical methodology by one distinguished Roman historian, Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, in his review article (*Rome's Cultural Revolution*, in *JRomS* 79 (1989), pp. 157–164) of P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. A. Shapiro, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 1990). As Wallace-Hadrill claims: "... it is necessary for anyone who wished to discuss Augustus to take the art-historical material seriously. This makes it the more lamentable that the study of Roman art history has so tenuous a hold in British universities" (p. 164). See also K. Galinsky, *Venus, Polysemy, and the Ara Pacis Augustae*, in *AmJArch* 96,3 (1992), pp. 457–475.

a Roman priest."² What I will be seeking in the following discussion is an exploration of some intersections of such various and multi-cultural dialogues with the iconography of the Imperial Cult as exemplified also in firstly Pagan and then early Christian documents. Such intersections will be sufficiently large in number, I believe, to constitute a claim for some degree of normativeness of the picture that I will develop.

PART A. REPUBLICAN ANTECEDENTS OF THE IMPERIAL CULT

The practice of worshipping deified emperors, whether alive or dead, was not part of Republican religious or political practice before Augustus. But even in Republican times the principle was acknowledged that it was the responsibility of public officials to seek the will of the gods in divination. To make this possible, political figures were elected to the office of *pontifex*, and their college was headed by a *Pontifex Maximus*. It is clear from Cicero's treatise the *De Natura Deorum* that taking the *auspicia* was a political as well as a religious requirement. In this treatise, we have a dialogue between Gaius Velleius and Quintus Lucius Balbus, who represent respectively the Epicureans and the Stoics, but who are otherwise unknown except for their names,³ and Gaius Cotta, the Academician in whose house the dialogue is set (1,6). Cotta indeed should have found the discussion particularly relevant, since, as Balbus is quick to point out, he has been elected *pontifex*, and has a solemn religious duty to the state cult. The Middle Academy claimed that at most probability, but never certainty was possible about the phenomenal world. In opposition to such a view, Balbus proposes by means of Stoicism to justify philosophically the religious rites and practices in which the wavering Cotta has to participate, although the latter has some doubts about their final validity.⁴

² Elsner (1991), p. 52.

³ In Cicero, *De Orat.* 3,78 Velleius is mentioned as a friend of L. Licinius Crassus, and also the two Balbi.

⁴ *De Nat. Deor.* 2,2: "Est enim et philosophi et pontificis et Cottae de dis immortalibus habere non errantem et vagam ut Academici sed ut nostri stabilem certamque sententiam."

2A 1. *The political and constitutional significance of divination*

As Balbus is quick to point out, Cotta's participation in divination and augury were not a matter of private conscience separate from his civic duty as a magistrate. In his second consulate Tiberius Gracchus proceeded with the election of his successors even though the original returning officer had dropped dead. He had to admit on reflection that he had proceeded irregularly because the tent in which he had conducted the augury which validated his course of action was in Scipio's park outside the city boundary. He had attended a meeting of the Senate from this tent and had forgotten to take the *auspicia* on his return. In consequence, as a result of a formal reference by the college of Augurs, the Senate caused the resignation of the elected consuls Figulus and Scipio.⁵

One observes here that divination was more than a kind of superstition to be practiced before major battles or a kind of prayer for success in a critical situation. Rather it was an integral aspect of the ordinary, constitutional process. In this respect one supposes that the rules of propriety in respect of divination at key moments in the political process were not formally unlike the rules of propriety in consulting modern opinion pollsters.

A Prime Minister, having consulted the polls, and having found that they predicted an election victory, might still lose. But he would stand a far better chance of remaining leader of his party and, if the party was a major one in the new parliament, Leader of the Opposition, because he had done so. A Prime Minister, who called a General Election with every computation of current of electoral opinion against him and lost, would undoubtedly experience astonished disbelief at his sheer recklessness and lack of judgment.

But neither the former Prime Minister nor his critics would necessarily understand the theories of mathematical probability, the techniques of sampling and the underlying theory of sociological classification and stratification which justified the use of such polls. Different experts are indeed at variance about the precise justification of such second order theories. But despite such lack of consensus on an overall theory, and indeed independently of it, there arises a general normative expectation that such advice shall be taken in such a form.

⁵ *Ibid.* 2,4, see also Cicero, *De Divinat.*, 2,74.

Such was clearly the case with the institution of the college of pontiffs and augurs. They were regarded as having a regulatory role upon the political institutions of Rome.⁶ It was not simply a question of the *divinatio augurum*, of their powers of foretelling the future, but of the *disciplina*, or discipline that they exercised over magistrates. This *disciplina* was supported by a *ius augurum*, a political prerogative exercised by the augurs as of right. Cicero is therefore able to conclude of this *ius* that: “even though it was originally constituted as a result of the good reputation that divination had (*etsi divinationis opinione principio constitutum sit*), however afterwards it has been preserved and retained by reason of the public benefit (*tamen postea rei publicae causa conservatum ac retentum*).” (*De Divinatione* 2,75.)

Furthermore Cicero was to express the view in his dialogue *De Legibus* through the character of Marcus that the *ius augurum* was of the highest political significance and linked with *auctoritas*:

The greatest and most significant right in the state (*maximum autem et praestantissimum in re publica*) is the right of augurs (*ius est augurum*) which is linked to political authority (*cum auctoritate coniunctum*) . . . For what right is greater (*quid enim maius est*) if we examine legal right (*si de iure quaerimus*), than to be able to adjourn (*dimittere*) committees and councils (*comitiatus et concilia*) based on the highest constitutional or personal power (*a summis imperiis et summis potestatibus*), or their decisions (*instituta*), or to rescind them if they have already been made (*vel habita rescindere*).

Cicero, *De Legibus*, 2,31

This, as we shall see, was a constitutional point not lost upon Augustus (*Res Gestae* c. 7) in assuming the *ius augurum* (2A 4.1.5). However we should beware of thinking that it was merely a useful political device not treated seriously by himself or his educated contemporaries. When Atticus suggests that the *auspicia* might have been invented to be of merely political use, Marcus replies:

I think that the art of divination which the Greeks call μαντική really exists (*divinationem, quam Graeci μαντικήν appellant, esse sentio*) and part of this which concerns birds and other signs (*et huius hanc ipsam partem, quae est in avibus ceterisque signis*), is part of our discipline (*quod disciplinae nostrae*). For if we concede that the gods exist, and the universe is ruled

⁶ W. Warde Fowler, *The Religious Experience of the Roman People from the Earliest Times to the Age of Augustus*, (London: MacMillan 1911), pp. 270–313; J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion*, (Oxford: Clarendon 1979), pp. 7–29; J. Linderski, The Augural Law, in *ANRW* (1986) II,16,3, pp. 2147–2312.

by their will, that they are mindful of the human race, and that they have power to give indications of the future, then I do not see any reason for denying divination.

De Legibus 2,32

We shall now see, in the context of the later republic, how such a metaphysical position was given philosophical justification.

2A 2. *Stoic justifications for the validity of cultic acts*

In *De Natura Deorum* Cicero was to go on to represent Balbus as arguing a Stoic justification of why divination worked, and of why it possessed the political function that it did. The universe was pervaded and all things held together by a fiery breath that was reason (λόγος) and God. “The world for that reason was God and every power of the world was contained within the divine nature.”⁷ The divinity of the world must be assigned also to the stars that exhibit a like rational order.⁸ Thus in the words of Cleanthes, in such a material monism without the dualism of matter and Spirit: “All are but part of one stupendous whole, whose Nature body is and God the soul.”⁹

Because, therefore, the ultimate constituent of matter was refined fire, both spiritual and rational, therefore the movement of the world was by providence (πρόνοια). But *pronoia* was not to be personified as a particular deity and thus ridiculed by the Epicurean Velleius as “an old hag of a fortune teller.”¹⁰ It is rather a function of the ἡγεμονικόν or ruling principle which any non-homogeneous entity, that is to say an entity made of parts, must possess in order to be held together. In animals or in plants it is the source of motions of the appetites, located in the roots, in human beings it is intelligence,

⁷ *De Nat. Deor.* 2,30: “Quodcirca sapientem esse mundum necesse est, naturamque eam quae res omnes complexa teneat perfectione rationis excellere, eoque deum esse mundum omnemque vim mundi natura divina contineri.”

⁸ *Ibid.* 2,39: “Atque hac mundi divinitate perspecta tribuenda est sideribus eadem divinitas, quae ex mobilissima purissimaque aetheris parte gignuntur neque ulla praeterea sunt admixta natura totaque sunt calida atque perlucida, ut ea quoque rectissime et animantia esse et sentire atque intellegere dicantur.”

⁹ A. Pope, *Essay on Man*, I p. 267 quoted in F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, Vol. 1: Greece and Rome, in *Bellarmino Series IX* (London: Burns Oates 1961), p. 388.

¹⁰ *De Nat. Deor.* 2,73: “Velut a te ipso hesterno die dictum est anum fatidicam πρόνοιαν a Stoicis induci, id est providentiam; quod eo errore dixisti quia existimas ab iis providentiam fingi quasi quandam deam singularem quae mundum omnem gubernet et regat.”

but in the universe as a whole it must be reason (*ratio* = λόγος) which rules the whole.¹¹ From such a position it is but a short remove to argue that since the order of nature can be read by the discerning eye in the stars, so can the future be read by those who understand that rational order and who can therefore rationally submit to the decree of fate found mapped out there. If fate can be read via such rational order or λόγος in the stars, then it can also be discerned in the entrails of sheep when rightly cut up and observed.¹² Thus Cicero was to remark that the Stoic doctrine of determinism or fate, because it was based upon the endowment of nature with mind, was consistent with “oracles and everything else which is connected with divination.”¹³

Thus the role played by augury and divination in the Roman constitutional scheme was legitimated in terms of a Stoic cosmology. Physics was studied in Graeco-Roman philosophical schools in order to achieve neither a disinterested understanding of nature nor a technology with which to control it. Rather physics, like metaphysics, was used to service theories of ethics. There was a need to know the nature of the universe in order to discover how ethically the behaviour of human beings could fit within it. The Epicurean discovered that death, in the light of an atomic theory of the universe, was dissolution and that there was no fear of eternal punishment, and this as such was the purely ethical value of Greek atomism. Lucretius notoriously, at the end of his great work, produced several quite conflicting explanations of the behaviour of a certain spring without coming to any conclusion about which of them was the

¹¹ *Ibid.* 2,29: “Natura est igitur quae contineat mundum omnem eumque tueatur, et ea quidem non sine sensu atque ratione; omnem enim naturam necesse est quae non solitaria sit neque simplex sed cum alio iuncta atque conexas habere aliquem in se principatum, ut in homine mentem, in belua quiddam simile mentis unde oriuntur adpetitus . . . Principatum autem id dico quod Graeci ἡγεμονικόν vocant, quo nihil in quoque genere nec potest nec debet esse praestantius . . .”

¹² *De Divinat.* 1,11: “duo sunt enim divinandi genera, quorum alterum artis est, alterum naturae. Quae est autem gens aut quae civitas, quae non aut extispicum aut monstra aut fulgora interpretantium aut augurum aut astrologorum aut sortium (ea enim fere artis sunt) aut somniorum aut vaticinationum (haec enim duo naturalia putantur) praedictione moveatur? quarum quidem rerum eventa magis arbitrator quam causas quaeri oportere. est enim vis et natura quaedam, quae tum observatis longo tempore significationibus, tum aliquo instinctu inflatuque divino futura praenuntiat.”

¹³ *De Fato* 15,33: “Quodcirca si Stoicis qui omnia fato fieri dicunt consentaneum est huiusmodi oracula ceteraque quae ad divinationem pertinent comprobare . . .”

“true” explanation.¹⁴ So long as any explanation in terms of the atomic theory fitted, then the universe was made safe for Epicurean ethics. Likewise the Stoic cosmology justified Stoic ethics. To live according to nature was to live according to the rational will of the world-soul, and to submit to the decree of that rational will was to act rationally and therefore freely.

But we have seen that there could be a political and even constitutional dimension to Stoic ethics in this respect. Divination became the way of reading the will of the world soul, whether in the stars or on the lining of a sheep’s stomach, and how the future according to what was read there would be determined by the operation of right reason. Indeed political philosophy, in any age, as the ethical justification of forms of human government, has not unfairly been regarded as a branch of ethics. In modern times the fact-value distinction in ethics has led to the distinction between political science as the clinical study of the machinery of government, and political philosophy as the justification of the form of government by which human beings “ought to be governed,” given any number of radically different, possible governmental machines.

Thus with Stoicism as a justification of divination as a feature of a political constitution we find cosmology employed as a means of explaining how people ought to live, not simply as individuals but as a society. Roman magistrates needed the resources of divination in order to perceive the divine, rational order of the world and to deduce the future from its present rational operations (*pronoia*). They need this, not simply so that they as individuals can “live according to nature,” but so that they can align society with nature’s inexorably rational will, and so that society can freely and rationally accept what is its destiny to be and to achieve.

2A 3. *Augury and divination: Imperial Cult as sacrament*

In this respect Stoicism offered a kind of sacramental theology when applied to divination. Berger and Luckmann pointed to the way in which religion orders social reality. Experts arise in the construction of universes of social reality, whose social function is to harmonise myths and produce a picture of the natural and supernatural world into which human social relations, including political arrangements,

¹⁴ *De Rer. Nat.* 6, 848-905.

can be anchored. Thus the social order is both harmonised and stabilised, and immunised against chaotic change and disorder. Human societies thus appear to become as unchangeable and given as the natural or supernatural order in a process that is obviously an illusion.¹⁵ We can see the social function of colleges of augurs in such a light.¹⁶

But such universes of discourse, produced by such experts, do not come into existence suddenly and perfectly, but have their own history of development. According to a Stoic universe of discourse, divination sought to incarnate the supernatural order into present political plans and proposals in order to give them value and enable them to reflect the divine purpose (*pronoia*). The augurs, who read the future and the divine will in such events as the flight of birds and the course of thunderstorms, were a distinct college in Cicero's time. The *haruspices*, who consulted the entrails of victims, only became a college in the time of Claudius and contributed further to such a project licensed by Stoicism.¹⁷ At the close of the dialogue, in the course of the first century before Christ, Cicero conceded grudgingly his belief that Balbus' Stoicism "seemed to be more approximated to the appearance of the truth."¹⁸ There were clearly as yet still powerful Epicurean and Academic alternatives that would deny legitimation to such politico-cultic acts as divination, and so deprive the order of Roman society of such a comprehensive and totalising legitimation.

Nor indeed was yet the worship of the Emperor part of the sacramental bond which reinforced and renewed right reason (*ὀρθὸς λόγος*) and law (*νόμος*), and made the citizen subject to the necessity of the rational *pronoia* of Fate. We shall observe a tendency, begun by Augustus, to connect the sacramental political acts of divination with the Emperor through reorganisation of the college of augurs and

¹⁵ P. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, (London: Penguin 1967), pp. 130–133 ff., and P. Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion*, (London: Penguin 1973), pp. 30–35 ff.

¹⁶ J. Bayet, *Histoire politique et psychologique de la religion romaine*, (Paris: Payot 1957), pp. 58–59: "Les haruspices interprétaient d'après l'état du flux sanguin, la couleur, la conformation de telle ou telle partie du foie (*pars familiaris*, 'de chez nous'; *pars hostilis*, 'du dehors'; ou neutre). Les *exta* pouvaient ainsi donner des indications sur l'ordre, le désordre, le chaos de l'univers. Mais ils pouvaient, pour l'immédiat, conseiller ou déconseiller une action."

¹⁷ Liebeschuetz (1979), p. 22.

¹⁸ *De Nat. Deor.* 3,95: "... mihi Balbi ad veritatis similitudinem videretur esse propensior."

pontiffs over which he was to preside as *Pontifex Maximus*. But it was to take three and four centuries until Decius Trajan, and finally Julian, for the cult to be focused on a single sacerdotal act in which all citizens must legally participate. It was only then that finally and unambiguously this central act of worship both symbolised imperial unity and effected what it symbolised throughout the world which Rome ruled.

But initially most of the ingredients that were to develop into the later, fully-fledged cultus were there. We can see reflections of the sacramentality of the acts of him who exercised the *ius augurium*, and what was believed to be at stake in those acts, reflected in the historiography of two writers who described historical events in the Republic and late Republic at the time of the transition to the Principate or shortly afterwards.

2A 4. *Livy and Lucan: Augury as political sacrament*

Titus Livius (59 B.C.–17 A.D.), born in the year of Julius Caesar's first consulship, commenced writing his history in 27 B.C., five years after Octavian's victory at Actium (31 B.C.). In *Ab Urbe Condita* 4,20,7 he records a conversation with Augustus in which the latter had recalled an inscription on a linen breastplate that he had read in the temple of Jupiter Feretrius. Here "Augustus Caesar" is described as "the founder or restorer of all the temples (*templorum omnium conditorem aut restitutorem*)."¹⁹

Livy, like Lucan, appears to have had republican sympathies that were shown in the way in which he describes almost lovingly the old republican constitutional forms. No doubt he believed in Augustus' interpretation of his acts, not as revolutionary, but as *res publicae restitutae*. Thus Livy was never party to any political movement to restore those forms. It may be that he was satisfied by the way in which Augustus notoriously cloaked his military autocracy by using such republican titles as *princeps* (*senatus*), or his prerogatives in terms of the republican *imperium proconsulare*, or *tribunicia potestas*. But one wonders whether a man of his intelligence could ever have been persuaded by the kind of political strategist who assures us that he has abolished neither the office of Monarch, Prime Minister, nor Leader of the Opposition, since he carries all three offices in his one person.

¹⁹ Livy 4, 20,7.

There must, one feels, have been something more, which convinced him that the past age, by some fateful necessity, had gone forever. That conviction I am going to suggest was a religious conviction about the need for the *pax deorum* in a society which had lost it. The emperor Augustus, as *Pontifex Maximus*, controlling the *ius augurium*, alone could restore that peace and stability. It was indeed a fateful necessity that Livy, though not Lucan, might have considered to have existed not in reality but only in the minds of the superstitious masses. But it was a social reality that Livy found irresistible and unable to be countered.

A similar theme we shall trace also in the case of Marcus Annaeus Lucanus (39–65 A.D.), who was involved in failed conspiracy to take Nero's life,²⁰ in consequence of which he committed suicide along with his co-conspirators, his uncles Seneca and Gallio. We shall see in his case particular Stoic doctrines underpinning his belief in the need for a cult of augury to secure the *pax deorum* which was also linked with a single *dominus*. Lucan himself had been appointed both *quaestor* and *augur*. Since Lucan conspired to replace Nero with another *princeps*, his aim was not to restore the republic. In his case too, therefore, we witness the phenomenon of someone hostile to an emperor, and indeed hostile to the memory of Julius Caesar, nevertheless accepting the end of republican government as such. Here too we shall argue that the Imperial Cult, as the means of achieving the *pax deorum*, was critical in Lucan's historiography, and was seen as a reality reflected in the natural order of things and not simply as a purely social product.

We shall see however that both works are problematic in view of the fact that we cannot be sure how they ended. The tenth book of Lucan's *Pharsalia* was left unfinished, and the closing books (46–142) of Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita* have also been lost, though we do have fragments that survive. Book 45 ends abruptly in 167 B.C. The remaining lost books, used by Dio Cassius as his principle source, continued until the Principate of Augustus and the death of Drusus in 9 B.C. We will need therefore to try to reconstruct how Livy would have completed his basic themes from the way in which he began them.

We shall begin with two passages which exemplify from the earlier

²⁰ Martial, *Epigr.* 7, 21 and 23; Statius *Silvae* VII, 31–32.

books of Livy how in fact he would have regarded Augustus in the later books had they survived. We shall then examine the specific relationship between augury and the *pax deorum* and the perceived popular weight that this had in the late Republic, as exemplified in Livy, supported as we shall see by Suetonius and Cassius Dio.

2A 4.1. *Livy, augury and the pax deorum*

On several occasions Livy makes it clear that a magistrate is responsible through the cultus for obtaining the *pax deorum*. The *pax* required might be upon man-made disasters such as war or civil war, but it might also be upon the destructive chaos of nature itself. In 464–463 B.C. Livy recorded the ravages of disease in Rome that followed defeat in battle at the hands of the Aequi and other losses (3,7,6). The disease also was a case of divine displeasure, of the *deum ira*.²¹ The Senate orders individual prayers (3,7,7). The way in which the disease passes is described as follows:

... little by little, either because the peace of the gods had been obtained by request (*pace deum impetrata*) or because the more difficult time of year had passed, bodies deadened by diseases began to recover their health.²²

It is at first sight curious that Livy is sceptical about the obtaining the *pax deum impetrata* by individual private prayer, in place of the *deum ira* marked by the plague. Livy introduces here a small note of scepticism since he admits a purely natural alternative. But Livy's personal scepticism on this and other occasions should not blind us to the fact that he describes the significance for the general population of what he personally finds superstitious.²³

Generally, however, the *pax deorum* is obtained through the specific instrument of official cult by means of a *pontifex* exercising the *ius*

²¹ 3,6,5: "... urbem Romam subita deum ira morbo populari."

²² 3,8,1: "inde paulatim seu pace deum impetrata seu graviore tempore anni iam circumactio defuncta morbis corpora salubriora esse incipere."

²³ 1,31, 6–8: Tullus "who previously had thought it less for kings to devote their minds to sacred rites (*sacris dedere animum*), suddenly became subject to all kinds of great and depraved superstitions (*magnis parvisque superstitionibus*), and filled the populace with religious scruples (*religionibus*)." At the end of the Punic War, in 204 B.C. we read, 29,14,2: "the situation had filled minds with superstitious fears (*superstitionum*), and they were inclined to believe portents (*ad credenda prodigia*)." Cf. also I pr. 7. For a discussion of Livy's approach to religion and for bibliography, see P.G. Walsh, *Livy: His Historical Aims and Methods*, 2nd Ed. (Bristol: Classical Press 1989), chapt. 3.

augurium. The *pax deorum* is normally associated with official augury and not private prayer.²⁴ In 208 B.C., in the course of the eleventh year of the First Punic War, the consuls were preoccupied with “a number of reported portents (*prodigiis aliquot nuntiatis*)” for which “they did not succeed in any straightforward expiation (*non facile litabant*).” (27,23,1)

The Temples of Fortuna and Mars at Capua had, along with many tombs, been struck by lightning, and mice had gnawed the gold in Jupiter’s temple at Cumae. A swarm of bees had settled at Casinum’s forum, at Caere a vulture had flown into the temple of Jupiter, and Volsinii’s lake was stained with blood (27,23,2–4). Each of such omens were characteristic of the natural signs in terms of which augurs read the future. Yet it was clearly the duty of the consuls to obtain in the face of these omens the *pax deorum* marked by their reversal:

On account of these prodigies (*horum prodigiorum causa*) for one whole day (*diem unum*) supplication was made (*supplicatio fuit*). For several days (*per dies aliquot*) full-grown victims were slaughtered but without successful expiation (*hostiae maiores sine litatione caesae*), with the invited peace of the gods asked for so long but not secured (*dique non impetrata pax deum*). On the heads of the consuls (*in capita consulum*) terrible consequences revolved even though the republic itself was unharmed (*re publica incolumi exitiabilis prodigiorum eventus vertit*).

27,23,4

It was thus of political as well as of cultic importance that the visible *pax deorum* was secured in response to what augury had first established. The consuls were clearly as responsible in 208 B.C. for obtaining the *pax deorum* as Sulpicius Severus, the military tribune had been in 389 B.C. when the Fabii were massacred at Cremara and the rout at Alia occurred. Rome was destroyed because “on the day after the Ides of July (*postridie Idus Quintiles*) he had not made an acceptable sacrifice (*non litasset*)” and two days later had exposed the army to the enemy “without securing the peace of the gods (*neque inventa pace deum*).” (6,1,12)

It is important, in view of the later significance of augury for the Imperial Cult, to point out that augury *per se* was not accepted but only that which conformed to Roman tradition. In 430 B.C., in

²⁴ Warde Fowler (1911), pp. 300–301 ff.; Bayet (1957), pp. 59–60; Liebeschuetz (1979), pp. 56–65.

response to a plague that had broken out in succession to a drought, strange sacrificial rites were introduced into homes in order to secure the *pax deorum*. There was seen “in every street and shrine (*in omnibus vicis sacellisque*) foreign and uncustomary rites of propitiation (*peregrina atque insolita piacula*) for seeking the peace of the gods (*pacis deum exposcendae*.” (4,30,10) Accordingly the *aediles* were to see “that none but Roman gods (*non nisi Romani di*) should be worshipped, nor in any other way than the ancestral (*neu quo alio more quam patrio colerentur*.” (4,30,11)

We find furthermore this principle again emphasised in the course of the war against Hannibal (213 B.C.). Here it was not simply a case of sacrifices *more patrio per se* but indeed a case of prophecy and ritual such as might be associated with augury. There was a “crowd of women who were failing to follow the customs of the fathers in their sacrifices (*nec sacrificantum . . . deos patrio more*.” (25,1,7) It was prophets (*vates*) as well as petty priests (*sacrificuli*) who were involved (25,1,8), so that the *augur's* art was clearly in view. The religious movement was put down violently by the praetor Marcus Aemilius (25,1,11). His edict stated:

. . . whoever has prophetic books or prayers (*quicumque libros vaticinos precationesve*) or a written ritual for sacrifice (*aut artem sacrificandi conscriptam haberet*), he should bring all those books and letters to him (*eos libros omnis litterasque ad se*) before 1st April (*ante kal. Apriles deferret*), in order that no one in a public or sacred place (*neu quis in publico sacrove loco*) should sacrifice by means of a new or foreign rite (*novo aut externo ritu sacrificaret*).

25,1,12

Clearly therefore the divination of the future (*vates*), and the ritual intended to secure the *pax deorum* against prophecies of their *ira*, were both under the political control of the magistrates, who also were to maintain strictly their traditional Roman character.

Thus Livy describes, albeit with sceptical references to the grounds for believing the *superstitio*, the relationship between the cult aimed at averting the *ira* and producing the *pax deorum impetrata*, and the political responsibility of magistrates.²⁵ This responsibility is more-

²⁵ Admittedly he reserves Tacitus' description of early Christianity as *prava religio* for the Bacchalian cult that produced the riot (29,16,6) from which the state religion had delivered the masses (29,16,7). But in 1,31,8 the tradition (*tradunt*) is recorded that the “sacrifice was begun and conducted improperly (*non rite initum aut*

over specifically pontifical in that it extends to the minutiae of sacrifices that must be performed *more patrio*. As the example of Aemilius shows, such sacrificial practices implied the knowledge and even control of the future. It extends moreover from the political to the natural order in that the popular mind associated natural disasters with political events, despite Livy's personal scepticism. Thus far we can learn from the full portion of Livy's work that survives down to 167 B.C. where it breaks off.

But can we glean any further information relevant for our inquiry from the fragments of the remainder of his work that has not survived?

Lucan, as we shall shortly see, despite Livy's personal scepticism, agrees with him that prodigies and other signs of the *ira deorum* increased dramatically during the course of the civil war from the death of Caesar onwards. For Lucan the existing cult was generally regarded as being unable, without reformation, to achieve the *pax deorum*. Did Livy's original text therefore contain evidence that Augustus, as *Pontifex Maximus* and superintendent of the cult of augury, was popularly seen to bring the solution to the specifically religious problem of achieving the *pax deorum*, in a society otherwise unstable and in a state of inevitable collapse? The Augustan propaganda machine developed and fostered that popular feeling in order to provide political legitimation for the Principate.

Of the existing surviving narrative of Livy, books 11–20 are also lost, as well as the ending from 167 B.C. onwards, from books 46–142. We possess various Oxyrhynchus fragments alone with summaries from other sources of Books 37–142. These therefore overlap what survives (37–45) and what is lost (46–142), and which end in 9 B.C. We also have the work known under the name of *Julius Obsequens*, which is a book of prodigies at Rome that begins 190 B.C. and ends in 11 B.C.

We will therefore ask the speculative question as to how in general terms Livy would have ended his history in 11 B.C. and with what cultic concomitants he would have described the peace of Augustus from Actium in 31 B.C. onwards. We can look firstly at how Augustus is described in the few references in Books 1 and 4,

curatum id sacrificium) with the result that, because of his "faulty conduct of the rite" (*prava religione*), Jupiter struck him with a thunderbolt. Here quite clearly *prava religio* refers to improper as opposed to quite proper ceremonial activity and not to bare religious belief.

and how on the basis of this Livy could have described him in his final Book 142. We can try to gauge the cultic concomitants to Octavian's victory from those accompanying other victories and defeats throughout Livy's history. *Julius Obsequens* will help us here, since one of his sources was Livy's later books that have not survived. We are able from this work to view the kinds of prodigies recorded from 167 B.C. onwards, in comparison with what preceded.

We shall first see how Livy prefigures Augustus mysteriously in his early chapters, and how he associates his figure with the *augur's* office.

2A 4.2. *Augustus' Early prefiguration: 8,6,9 and 5,23,4-11*

In 340 B.C. Torquatus the consul persuaded the senate to war with the Latins after the death of Annius who had spurned Roman Jupiter. In the field of battle:

There in the stillness of the night both consuls are said to have been visited by the same apparition (*visa species*) of a man of greater than human stature (*virī maioris quam pro humano habitu*) and more august (*augustiorisque*) who declared that the commander of one side and the army of the other must be offered to the *Manes* and Mother Earth (*Deis Manibus Matrique Terrae deberi*).

8,6,9-10

The advice given by this *vir augustior* was clearly cultic and augural. They responded with the decision that "victims must be slain to avert the wrath of heaven (*averruncandae deum irae victimas caedi*)." The "entrails corresponded to what had been seen in the dream (*extis eadem quae in somnio visa fuerant portenderentur*)." (8,6,11) The prevision of Augustus associates him therefore with the cult of augury.

We may note several other such passages that prefigure Augustus in the early chapters of Livy. Hercules is described as *formamque viri aliquantum ampliore[m] augustiore[m]que humana[m]*. To the god that bears this human form is made the promise that he should have the *aram maximam* dedicated by the "greatest nation on earth." (1,7,9)²⁶ Livy would

²⁶ See also Livy *praef.* 7; 5,41,8; 8,9,10. The reference to Augustus is denied both in these passages and those cited in my text by Walsh (1989), pp. 15-16 supporting H. Erkell, *Augustus, Felicitas Fortuna*, (Göteborg 1952), p. 19, but see L. Ross Taylor, The Divinity of the Roman Emperor, in *American Philological Association, Philological Monographs*, 1 (Connecticut 1931), pp. 164-165 who points out that in Livy 1,7 Hercules and Romulus in attaining Divinity are prototypes of Augustus

have seen the fulfilment of this prefigurement in the dedication of the *Ara Pacis* to Augustus (*Augustae*) on his return from Spain and Gaul in 9 B.C., which was the very date on which Augustus conducted his own *lustrum* of the city. Thus we can see the dialogue between Livy and the *Ara* conceptually integrated with his perceptions and idealizations of Augustus and his divine purpose. It should be further pointed out that Livy is quite fond of discrete allusions to Augustus' later cult. For example, he cites the case of the irreverence of Marcus Furius Camillus, who subdued the Veii in 396 B.C., and describes him as *maximus imperator omnium*. At his *adventus* the crowds thronged in unusual numbers, though not quite with the *cuncta ex Italia ad comitia mea confluyente multitudine* that met to elect Augustus as *Pontifex Maximus* in *Res Gestae* c. 10.

Furthermore Furius rode into the city on a chariot drawn by white horses in impersonation of Jupiter and the Sun God (Apollo; 5,23,4–11). The latter, as we shall later see, was the dress of Octavian when he commemorated Actium in 28 B.C. Thus this was the form of dress that a Marcus Furius Camillus could only have worn with irreverence, but which the Augustus of superhuman proportions (*visa species viri maioris quam pro humano habitu augustiorisque*) could now wear as befitting his status nearing divinity (8,6,12).²⁷

2A 4.2.1. *Augustus: 1,19,1–3, 28,2,2 and the lost ending*

We can see moreover a clear parallel between the legendary role of Numa and the historical role of Augustus, in relation to augury and the *pax deorum*.

Numa is proposed as king (716 B.C.). He insists that the gods be consulted as follows:

Being summoned, he commanded that just as Romulus had obeyed the augural omens in founding his city (*augurato urbe condenda*) and assuming regal power (*regnum adeptus est*), so too in his own case the gods should be consulted. Accordingly an *augur*, who thereafter, as a mark

just as in Horace *Odes* III,14,1; IV,5,35; *Ep.* II,1,5. Both are called *augustus*, and "in several passages in the early books Livy uses the word *augustus* in contrast to *humanus* in what would seem to be a conscious effort to call to mind the emperor's position." See also L. Ross Taylor, *Livy and the Name Augustus*, in *ClassRev* 32 (1918), pp. 158–161.

²⁷ B.O. Foster in the Loeb edition remarks that he was probably mistaken about popular resentment since the suggestion of Jupiter in dress and chariot was customary. But this misses the point that Livy is making regarding Augustus and his successors by pretending that Furius' behaviour was so unusual.

of honour, was made a priest of state in permanent charge of that function (*publicum id perpetuumque sacerdotium fuit*), conducted him to the citadel . . .

1,18,6

The *augur* took his *lituus*, the crooked staff, marking out the right and left sides of the heavens, and pointed to where the gods should send signs, which accordingly they did (1,18, 7–10). Livy therefore connected special acts of augury with Numa's second founding of Rome after Romulus. This fact on its own might not appear significant, but Livy then immediately associates the event with Augustus' establishment of the principate:

When he was thus empowered with kingship (*qui regno ita potitus*), he prepared to found the new city afresh (*urbem novam . . . de integro condere parat*), that had been founded on force and armed might (*conditam vi et armis*), upon law, and statutes, and morals (*iure eam legibusque ac moribus*) . . . He thought it necessary that his warlike people should be softened by the disuse of arms, and built the temple of Janus at the bottom of the Argiletum, as an index of peace and war . . . Twice since Numa's reign it has been closed: once in the consulship of Titus Manlius, after the conclusion of the First Punic War; the second time, which the gods permitted our own generation to witness, was after the battle of Actium, when the emperor Caesar Augustus had brought about peace on land and sea . . .

1,19,1–3

Thus there is a parallelism between Numa and Augustus, who also sought to replace power based *vi et armis* with an authority that was founded *iure eam legibusque ac moribus*. Furthermore, the inauguration of peace was associated with the Temple of Janus. Would not Livy's lost ending have exploited further this parallel?

Augustus himself gives direct confirmation that this is the case in the *Res Gestae*. He records that on his return from his successes in Spain and Gaul:

The altar of the peace of Augustus (*aram Pacis Augustae*/βωμὸν Ειρήνης Σεβαστῆς) the Senate, in thanks for my return (*pro reditu meo*/ὕπὲρ τῆς ἐμῆς ἐπανόδου) ordered to be consecrated in the Campus Martius, in which it ordered that magistrates and priests and Vestal Virgins should make an annual sacrifice.

The temple of Janus on the Quirinal, which our ancestors wished to remain shut, when peace (*pax*) had been secured by victories throughout the whole Roman empire, by land and by sea, had been remembered to have been closed only twice from the foundation of the city

(*a condita urbe*) before I was born, this the Senate decreed should be closed three times while I was *princeps*.

Res Gestae 12–13

This passage therefore clearly connects the annual sacrifices at the *Ara Pacis* with augury and the *pax deorum*, and also with the Temple of Janus. The *Res Gestae* may only survive in one of its several reproductions as the monument from Ankyra. But the original of that inscription, by its own admission, was on two bronze pillars set up at Rome,²⁸ presumably in relation to the monumental complex of *Solarium* and Mausoleum of which the *Ara* originally formed part.²⁹

The remains of the *Ara Pacis*, dedicated in 9 B.C., were identified originally by F. von Duhn in 1879, under the Palazzo Fiano on the west side of the Via Flaminia, and accordingly reconstructed (Plate 1).³⁰ On the southern side of the altar Augustus and Agrippa (at that time his designated successor), are both depicted wearing veils that are the symbols of priestly office: priests wore veils for sacrifice. Around Augustus stand the *pontifices* and *augures*, with *flamines* in their helmet-like leather head covering, the *galerus*, with the point or *apex* at the top. The cultic emphasis on the *pax deorum* is quite transparent. The *Pontifex Maximus* is Augustus himself, who, assisted by his heir Agrippa, is to perform the rite himself that is to secure that metaphysical *pax*.³¹

In the iconography of the *Ara Pacis*, Augustus at first sight may

²⁸ *Res Gest.* praef.: "... incisarum in duabus aeneis pillis, quae sunt Romae positae, exemplar subiectum."

²⁹ E. Bianchi, *Ara Pacis Augustae*, (Rome: Fratelli Palombi 1994), pp. 7–8. The accuracy of the reconstruction has been questioned by N. Hannestad, in *Tradition in Late Antique Sculpture. Conservation-Modernisation-Production*, in *Acta Jutlandica* 69,2, Humanities Series 69, (Aarhus: University Press 1994) who argues that continuous reworking has removed any original Augustan content to the friezes. But see in reply A. Claridge, *Late-antique reworking of the Ara Pacis and other imperial sculpture?* in *JRA* 10 (1997), pp. 447–453.

³⁰ E. Peterson, *Ara Pacis Augustae*, in *Sonderschriften des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts in Wien*, Bd II, (Wien: Alfred Hölder 1902), pp. 138–139; E. La Rocca, *Ara Pacis Augustae in occasione del restauro della fronte orientale*, (Roma: "L'Erma" di Bretschneider 1983); G. Koepfel, *Die historischen Reliefs der römischen Kaiserzeit*, V, *Ara Pacis Augustae*, in *BjB*, 187 (1987), p. 102; D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West: Studies in the Ruler Cult of the Western Province of the Roman Empire*, in *EPRO* 108 (1987) 1,1, p. 98 discusses the precise dating of the completion after its original "constitution" in 13 B.C. See also *ibid.* pp. 203–206.

³¹ Bianchi (1994) pp. 13–16; D. Castriota, *The Ara Pacis Augustae and the Imagery of Abundance in Later Greek and Early Roman Imperial Art*, (Princeton: U.P. 1995), pp. 124–144.

appear to be *Pontifex Maximus* and *augur* simply priest at an altar of an *augurium* of extraordinary dimension that produces the golden age over which *Tellus*, and *Pax* preside, in which the earth yields its abundance (Plate 2). It might be thought therefore that augury, the *pax deorum*, and the *aetas aurea* form one distinct aspect of the religious significance of Augustus quite different from that of his deification as Roman emperor. The two strands are often considered to be quite separate. My argument here will be that nevertheless in the ideology of the Imperial Cult both strands were in fact conflated, at least in many instances of “the reciprocal relation of art-object and viewer, viewer and art-object that creates a ‘dialogue’ out of which meaning is born.”³²

Firstly, as Fears pointed out,³³ abstract qualities and virtues such as *Pax* and *Concordia* were personified in the form of gods and goddesses. The *Ara Pacis* was therefore not simply the means of securing *pax* through *augurium* but also the means of worshipping the goddess *Pax* herself. But note the addition of the adjective that points to the divinity of the Emperor himself (*Augustus/Σεβαστός*). The full title of the altar is the *Ara Pacis Augustae* or the βωμὸς Ειρήνης Σεβαστῆς. Both the sacerdotal and augurial strand is thus in process of conflation with that which asserts the emperor’s divinity. The divine essence of *Pax* loses its independence and is made part of the divine essence of the Emperor whose name is Augustus.

Secondly the distinction between the priest of a cult and the divinity worshipped was not always strictly maintained. Augustus may appear depicted on the *Ara Pacis* as a priest veiled for sacrifice. But Tiberius was so depicted in the Temple at Smyrna erected in his honour as a priest of the cult of whose worship he was the object. As Price points out, “the gods often held their own eponymous priest-hoods, and are often shown making sacrificial offerings,” presumably to themselves.³⁴

We must note therefore the centrality of the cult to the Augustan settlement, and to the personal role of both Augustus himself and his successors in the sacral acts or *auguria* of that cult. *Pax Augusta* is an abstraction, personalised as a divinity, but related when used as

³² Elsner (1991) p. 52, and footnote 1 and related text.

³³ J.R. Fears, *The Cult of Virtues*, in *ANRW* 2,17,2 (1981), pp. 827–948.

³⁴ S.R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor*, (Cambridge: U.P. 1984), p. 185.

a qualifying adjective to the emperor's own divinity. There would therefore seem to be a connection between the *Res Gestae*, Livy's concerns with prodigies and the cultic means for dealing with these through *augurium*, and developing concepts of the emperor's own divinity. The remark that the temple of Janus had only been closed twice *a(b) condita urbe* in *Res Gestae* 13 recalls, after all, the title of Livy's own work. Furthermore, it will be impossible to separate the augural and priestly themes of the *Ara* with those of the process of divinisation of the emperor himself. We do well therefore to ask whether such a role was not present in the lost ending of Livy.

Numa's authority, moreover, as Livy describes it, was clearly related to the official cult of augury, to the *publicum id perpetuumque sacerdotium*. We may well ask whether it is not possible that Livy ended his history by drawing similar features in the case of Augustus, particularly to his securing the *pax deorum* after centuries of civil strife and divine portents. Certainly in the second reference to Augustus we find prefigured his claimed, universal reign of peace. Regarding Spain, he records that in 206 B.C. it was only partly conquered and continues:

Accordingly the first of the provinces entered by the Romans (*Itaque ergo prima Romanis inita provinciarum*), at least those of the mainland (*quae quidem continentis sint*), are the last to be conquered in our own age by the leadership and good fortune of Augustus Caesar (*postrema omnium nostra demum aetate ductu auspicio Augusti Caesaris perdomita est*).

28,12,12

We can parallel the importance of the victory in Spain with the ideology of Augustus' nascent Imperial Cult. The annual sacrifices of thanksgiving at the *Ara Pacis* were, according to *Res Gestae* c. 12, for his return (*pro reditu/ὕπερ τῆς ἐμῆς ἐπανόδου*) *ex Hispania Galliaque*. The sacerdotal rather than imperial role, witnessed as we have seen in the south panel of the *Ara*, would also support this conclusion.

Livy's lost ending cries out for the feature that other sources by themselves would be sufficient to establish. Roman political theology connected Augustus' *ius augurium* with his office of *Pontifex Maximus*, and also with his historical role as achieving the *pax deorum* where others had failed. Before therefore we look at Livy's treatment of prodigies, let us record two writers who connect Augustus' office specifically with this augural function. In both Suetonius and Dio Cassius we have later references to the original significance of Augustus' title and role in connection with the *ius augurium*.

2A 4.2.2. *Suetonius Augustus 7*

Suetonius, writing in the reign of Hadrian (A.D. 120), clearly regards the divine title of Augustus, taken by Octavian, as closely connected with his augural function. This may reflect the extension of the Imperial Cult under Domitian that we shall describe and evaluate in a later chapter. But the iconography of the *Ara Pacis* had reflected such a function, as we shall argue further (2B 1). Suetonius may have used Livy as a source, and we may therefore here too catch the tenor and tendency of Livy's lost ending.

Suetonius records that Octavian took Caesar's name under his great uncle's will, and that of Augustus, on the advice of Munatius Plancus. Rather than call himself Romulus as founder of the city, he chose the name Augustus. The reason that Suetonius gives connects that title with the *ius augurium*:

He preferred to be called Augustus (*Augustus potius vocaretur*), not only with a new but more significant surname (*non tantum novo sed etiam ampliore cognomine*), but also because religious places which are consecrated by an "augur's" ritual (*quod loca quoque religiosa et in quibus augurato quid consecratur*) are called "august" (*augusta dicantur*), either from the increase or from the movement and feeding of birds (*ab auctu vel ab avium gestu gustuve*) just as Ennius informs us when he writes (*sicut etiam Ennius docet scribens*):

Afterwards Rome had been founded by an august augury
(*Augusto augurio postquam incluta condita Roma est*).

Suetonius, *Augustus*, 7

Thus Suetonius regarded the title *Augustus* as meaning and implying someone associated with the office of *augur* and the practice of *augurium*.

We shall now, from a different perspective, see how Dio Cassius also makes this connection.

2A 4.2.3. *Dio Cassius 37,24,1 and (Epitome) 51,20,4*

Dio wrote his work, of which a large part survives only in the form of an *Epitome* (51–77), during the reign of Alexander Severus and ended it at his own second consulship in 229 A.D. It seems clear that until the end of the Second Punic War Dio has an alternative source to Livy. But from then onwards, there is a clear dependence on the latter as is shown by the overlap with the books that survive for the period until 167 B.C. when Livy's account breaks off. Dio explicitly refers to Livy, Sallust, and Arian as his sources.³⁵

³⁵ 67,12,4; 40,63,4; 69,51,1.

Millar has described Dio's account of the reign of Augustus as "the most complete and satisfactory one that we have."³⁶ The question of Dio's sources is a complex one. There is a dispute regarding whether 53,17–19 marks the transition from Livy's lost ending and the beginning of the lost history of Aufidius Bassus, or whether to the contrary the break with Livy comes at Book 54. But since the passages on which I will rely are before either putative point of departure, this dispute need not detain us here.³⁷

In view of what we have argued to be the role of the *prodigia* in Livy as an index of the breakdown of Republican constitutional order, we may be confident that Dio, at least in his explanation of the meaning of Augustus' name, is following Livy. Stoic natural theology as a theology of the *augurium* is specifically reflected in both accounts. Dio does not however follow Suetonius, another of his sources,³⁸ in his derivation of the name of "Augustus." Mentioning Octavian's desire to be called Romulus, repressed in favour of this title, Xiphilinus' *Epitome* claims that the title refers to "what is more than human (πλείον τι ἢ κατὰ ἀνθρώπους)," and to how precious and sacred objects are described (πάντα γὰρ τὰ ἐντιμώτατα καὶ τὰ ἱερώτατα αὔγουστα προσαγορεύεται). Furthermore, it is the equivalent of *Sebastos* (Σεβαστός) in Greek, which comes from the verb "to revere (σεβάζεσθαι)." (53,16,8) Thus this title does not immediately suggest any connection with the name of "augur" as it did in Suetonius.

Yet Dio (Xiphilinus) makes the connection in another way, and one that relates his account to the underlying theology of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, if not Livy's. Dio records a short respite from war during the events of the First Triumvirate in 63 B.C. It is at this point that he refers to the *augurium salutis*, the sacred ritual for securing salvation or safety, for the celebration of which these events call. He claims: "... they even held the so called *augurium salutis*, after a very long interval. For this of course is a kind of augury."³⁹ He explains that permission was sought whether they could ask for prosperity,

³⁶ F. Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio*, (Oxford: Clarendon 1964), p. 83.

³⁷ In favour of the former, see M.A. Levi, *Dopo Azio: appunti sulle fonti augustee: Dione Cassio*, in *Athen.* 15 (1937), p. 3; in favour of the latter see F.A. Marx, *Die Quellen der Germanenkriege bei Tacitus und Dio*, *Klio* 29 (1936), p. 94. See also Millar (1964) pp. 83–87 ff.

³⁸ Millar (1964) pp. 85–87.

³⁹ 37,24,1: ὥστε καὶ τὸ οἰώνισμα τὸ τῆς ὑγείας ὀνομασμένον διὰ πάνυ πολλοῦ ποιῆσαι. τοῦτο δὲ δὴ μαντείας τις τρόπος ἐστί.

and that this special augural rite would only be offered on a day in which there was a complete military cessation (37,24,2). Thus during civil war it was impossible to celebrate this rite. Their attempt nevertheless on this occasion is thus described:

Nevertheless it was in some way possible at that time for the divination to be held (τὸ οἰώνισμα ἐκείνο ποιηθῆναι), but it was impure (οὐ μέντοι καθαρὸν ἐγένετο). For certain birds flew from the unlucky quarter, and for this reason they repeated the augury (ἀνεμαντεύσαντο). Other unlucky omens too occurred.

Dio 37,25,1

Amongst these were thunderbolts from a clear blue sky, earthquakes, and ghosts (εἰδωλά τε πολλαχόθι ἀνθρώπων ἐφαντάσθη).

Dio therefore records the firm belief that due to civil war, the means for securing by augury the *pax deorum* were not effective. Whenever they were tried, they proved to be counterproductive: augury at that time only resulted in further supernatural disturbances. But when his Epitomist, Xiphilinus deals with his account of Augustus, and the opening of the doors of the temple of Janus, which as we have seen Livy most certainly described, he is able to show how Augustus has achieved the *pax deorum* and performed the *augurium salutis* with favourable outcome. Of all the honours that Caesar (Augustus) received, this was the most significant:

Nevertheless the action which pleased him more than all the decrees was the closing by the senate of the gates of the temple of Janus, implying that all their wars had entirely ceased, and the taking of the *augurium salutis* (τὸ οἰώνισμα τῆς ὑγείας), which had at this time fallen into disuse for the reasons that I have noted.

Dio (Xiphilinus) 51,20,4

Xiphilinus has already explained that Caesar (Augustus) by now controlled the state cult, and although he does not use the title *Pontifex Maximus*, which by his time was an ecclesiastical title, he nevertheless tells us that Augustus could “choose as many priests as he wished and appoint them in office (ιερέας . . . ὅσους ἂν αἰεὶ ἐθέλησει προαιρεῖσθαι προσκατεστήσαντο).” (51,20,3) Thus for Dio there is a direct connection between Augustus’ role in history, the Imperial Cult, and the cultic means of achieving the *pax deorum* through augury that appears to reflect what he found in Livy as the primary source for this part of his work.

We shall shortly see that the *pax deorum*, that fails in the civil war

together with the augury whose function it is to secure it, is a theme too of Lucan's *Pharsalia*. But let us briefly now see whether Livy shows any indication of subscribing to such a theology of history as well.

2A 4.2.4. *Livy and Augustus: portents and auspicia*

In 4,20,7, of which we have already made mention, Livy credits Augustus with rebuilding the temples as the *conditor et restitutor omnium templorum*. In *Res Gestae* c. 19 and 21 he boasts, amongst other things, of erecting the temples of Apollo in the Palatine, of Divus Julius in the Circus Flaminius, and at the Capitol of *Juppiter Triumphans* and *Juppiter Tonans*. He also restored sacred ornaments to the shrines of "all the provinces of Asia." (c. 24) It must be admitted in Livy's case that the nature and type of prodigies are similar throughout his work, and no difference in this respect appears in *Julius Obsequens* as events draw nearer to the death of Caesar in 44 B.C. But the sheer volume of these prodigies, occurring now every one year or two, shows a dramatic increase on his earlier books. The century before the civil war was one in which the *ira deorum* increased, requiring stronger and diviner means of securing their more lasting *pax*.

Prodigies from time to time throughout Livy's history are recorded with such features as lightning striking temples, showers of earth or stones, a mule producing a colt, a twelve year old hermaphrodite executed by order of the *haruspices*, a rain of blood, a new island in the sea, a mule with three feet, Juno's image shedding tears, turning heads of images of the gods during an earthquake, absence of vultures over corpses, blood trickling from land, wool growing from trees, water dripping from a statue, a kite dropping a weasel in the Senate, a meteor seen in the sky, and a boy born with four hands and feet, etc.⁴⁰

The cultic means of dealing with such *prodigia* so as to restore the *pax deorum* are from time to time recorded in answer to such *prodigia*. But, from the beginning until 176 B.C., the records of divination are records of continually successful conduct of the ritual whether it records favour or hostility for a proposed course of action. For example, in 340 B.C. Decius and Manlius the consuls offer sacrifice and the *haruspices* are present to inform them of whether the gods have been propitious:

⁴⁰ 1,20,7; 4,21,5; 5,14,4; 5,15,1; 24,10,13; 27,37,6-8; 41,16,6, etc.

The *haruspex* is reported to have indicated to Decius that the head of the liver (*caput iocineris*) had been cut on the friendly side (*a familiari parte caesum*): otherwise the victim had been accepted by the gods (*alioqui acceptam dis hostiam esse*); Manlius had succeeding in gaining propitiation (*Manlium egregie litasse*).

8,9,1

But from 215 B.C., although some *auspicia* are still successful, examples are introduced in which the *auspicium* fails or encounters great difficulty. In 215 B.C. in the war against Hannibal, Fabius did not venture to lead his armies across the river Volturnus:

... he was concerned at first (*occupatus primo*) that he should repeat the *auspicia* (*auspiciis repetendis*); then with portents (*dein prodigiis*) which were reported one after another (*quae alia super alia nuntiabantur*) and while he was making expiation (*expiantique*) the *haruspices* continually replied that it was by no means easy to gain propitiation (*ea haud facile litari haruspices respondebant*).

23,36,9–10

The cult itself was beginning to fail to achieve the *pax deorum* that was the object of *expiare* and *litari*, and to fail because the cultic ritual itself was unsuccessful.

In 212 B.C., in the midst of the Punic War, the consul Tiberius Gracchus experienced a more serious failure of the apparatus of *haruspicum*:

As Gracchus was sacrificing (*sacrificanti*) before he left Lucania, an unfavourable portent (*triste prodigium*) occurred. When sacrifice had been accomplished (*sacrificio perpetrato*), two snakes glided stealthily up to the entrails (*ad exta*) and set about devouring the liver (*adedere iocur*). When for that reason the sacrifice was repeated (*sacrificium instauraretur*) on the advice of the *haruspices* (*haruspicum monitu*), and the entrails were preserved with greater care (*intentius exta reservarentur*), they relate that a second and third time the snakes slithered forward, and, having tasted the liver (*libatoque iocinere*) escaped unharmed. Though the *haruspices* had forewarned that the portent applied to the general (*ad imperatorem id pertinere prodigium*) and that he should beware of the hidden plans of men, still the impending fate could not be averted by any foresight (*nulla tamen providentia fatum imminens moveri potuit*).

25,16,1–4

Thus for Livy the cultic means for securing success show contamination and failure at a critical moment in Rome's history, at the pivotal moment for that history and its subsequent development that was the war with Carthage. This passage is of interest for the further

reason that Livy reveals that, beyond his scepticism about the myths of the gods, there lies a Stoic conviction of the natural order and the way in which Nature loses its harmony.⁴¹

Livy continues with some examples of favourable uses of the cult. In 209 B.C. the *auspicia* are unfavourable in that they give warning, but still there is not failure of the ritual itself. Thus Fabius is preserved through augury from Hannibal's trickery.⁴² Similarly in 27,26,14 Marcellus simply ignored the *hostia caesa iocur sine capite* and is defeated, without any failure of the cult itself. In the Macedonian war in 200 B.C. the Consuls' ritual (*rem divinam rite peractam*) finds approval by the *haruspices* when they pronounce the *exta* to be *laeta*. They even on this occasion claim that the entrails "portend extension of the borders, victory and triumph (*prolationem finium victoriamque et triumphum portendi*)." (31,5,7) Similar scenes are witnessed in 191 B.C. as well as in 172 B.C.⁴³ But it remains possible that, given an event such as the civil war from 44 B.C. onwards, and the decades that lead up to it, Livy should have recorded the failures of the *augurium* and *haruspicium*, aimed at securing the *pax deorum* that had emerged in the earlier crisis of the Punic War. In that case a far stronger expiation and cleansing of the city would be required, in the form of an Augustan Imperial Cult that would have the support of *fortuna*, *fatum*, and *providentia* that Tiberius Gracchus had lacked in 212 B.C.

As I have already mentioned, from 171 B.C. onwards our only source that will enable us to study Livy's use of *prodigia* is *Julius Obsequens*.⁴⁴ Here we find some evidence of an intensification both of *prodigia* and the incapability of the Republican cult to deal with them without reformation. In 176 B.C. the liver of an animal, sacrificed by the consul, melted away (*Julius Obsequens* 9 cf. Livy 41,14,7). The Consul Postumius in 152 B.C. found no head on the liver of a large number of sacrificial animals whilst sacrificing before departure for battle (17). In the same year, all magistrates and priests resigned

⁴¹ Walsh (1989), pp. 54–61.

⁴² 27,16,15: "Fabio auspicienti, priusquam egrederetur ab Tarento, aves semel atque iterum non addixerunt. Hostia quoque caesa consulenti deos haruspex cavendum a fraude hostili et ab insidiis praedixit."

⁴³ 36,1,3: "ea omnia sacrificia laeta fuerunt, primisque hostiis perlitatum est, et ita haruspices responderunt, eo bello terminos populi Romani propagari. . . ." Cf. also 42,20, 2–4.

⁴⁴ The numbers cited are from the edition by A.C. Schlesinger and R.M. Geer, in vol. 14 of Livy in the *Loeb Classical Library* (London/Massachusetts: Heinemann/Harvard 1967).

when *haruspices* prophesied that they would all die following a whirlwind that destroyed a gilded statue in front of the temple of Jupiter (18). While the auspices were being taken, in 137 B.C., the chickens escaped and fled (24).

At Julius Caesar's sacrifice as dictator (44 B.C.), the *exta* were discovered to be devoid of a heart (*exta sine corde*). (67) But Gaius Octavius, as he entered Rome to be enrolled in the *gens Julia*, appeared surrounded by a rainbow-like arc. A comet appeared as he sacrificed at the temple of his divine mother, Venus. A howling of dogs was heard by night before the house of the *Pontifex Maximus*, amongst many other portents (68). But at this point, in 42 B.C., *Julius Obsequens* breaks from the lurid details only to recount, not in the usual year or two afterwards, but in 17 and 11 B.C. some small details concerning an earthquake and the swarm of bees around Drusus.

Where *Julius Obsequens* fails, Dio from his source enables us to continue Livy's story. In 47,40,1–5 he lists the portents of 42 B.C. in lurid details, but then goes on to point to cultic irregularity when he records that the *praefectus urbanus* celebrated the festival of Jupiter Latiaris that was neither his prerogative, nor was it ordinarily observed at that time.

We see therefore that the scene was set for the religious reformation of the Imperial Cult. The granting to Augustus of the *ius augurium* could have prefigured in Livy's final book.⁴⁵ When we now turn to Lucan's treatment of the events of the civil war, we are on firmer ground. Here, less speculatively, it can be established that Lucan clearly conceived the supernatural character of the *pax Augusta*, which he saw as the achievement of the *pax deorum* through the *ius augurium* of the Imperial Cult. Furthermore, that concept of *pax* is underpinned by a Stoic metaphysic of *fatum* and *fortuna*, and by the concept of a rational, metaphysical order that unites the rational action of nature with the rites of the *haruspicium* performed to divine the future and indeed in some sense to control it. It is therefore to Lucan's treatment of such themes that we now turn.

2A 4.3. *Lucan's Stoic theology and haruspicium*

Livy was undoubtedly sceptical about the myths and legends of the gods and their cult, although his grasp of Stoic concepts of *fatum*

⁴⁵ *Res Ges.* 7,2: *pontifex maximus, augur, XV virum sacris faciundis, VII virum epulonum, frater arvalis, sodalis Titius, fetialis fui.*

and *fortuna* was slight. We saw in connection with Tiberius Gracchus in 212 B.C. that Livy was prepared to set *fatum* and *fortuna* against the operations of *augurium* and *haruspicium*, and to argue that the former had vanquished the powers of the latter. Lucan will not agree to such a possibility.

Lucan does not introduce into his epic poetry, quite contrary to convention, the intervention of gods and goddesses. These he rather replaces with the Stoic conception of *fatum* and *fortuna* underpinned by the Stoic monism of nature or φύσις as the matter whose ultimate character is λόγος and which is therefore reasonable, divine and endowed with purpose. But though he will dismiss an anthropomorphism that conceals the true nature of the divine Whole and its operation, he will not dismiss also the cult of *augurium* and *haruspicium*, and so set this against *fatum* and *fortuna* as Livy had done.

The reason is to be found in the Stoicism of his uncle, Seneca, with whom he was to be involved in a conspiracy against Nero that would cost both of them their lives. Seneca replies to the question of the way in which things such as *auspicia* reveal future events without being deliberately sent to do so by some anthropomorphically conceived divine agency in the following way:

You make God too lazy and the administrator of something trivial, if he is the disposer of dreams to some people but *exta* to others. The latter nonetheless are conducted under the resources of the divine (*ista nihilominus divina ope geruntur*), even if the wings of birds are not directly guided by a god (*si non a deo pennae avium reguntur*), nor the entrails of cattle shaped by their very axe (*nec pecudum viscera sub ipsa securi formantur*). The scroll of fate is unwound on a different, rational principle (*alia ratione fatorum series explicatur*), which issues everywhere indications of the future (*indicia venturi ubique praemittens*), some of which are propitious to us (*ex quibus quaedam nobis familiaria*) and others unknown (*quaedam ignota sunt*). Whatever has happened is a sign of some future event (*Quicquid fit, alicuius rei futurae signum est*). Chance events and random occurrences without λόγος (*fortuita et sine ratione vaga*) do not allow divination (*divinationem non recipiunt*); in whatever subject matter there is order (*cuius res ordo est*), there is also the possibility of prediction (*etiam praedictio est*).

Seneca *Quaestiones Naturales* 2,32,4

The wings of birds are not directed by the god (*non a deo pennae avium reguntur*), but divine resources are still involved (*divina ope geruntur*). That divinity is the immanent *ratio* or λόγος of the world and because the world consists of an orderly series of events, the future is predictable (*cuius res ordo est, etiam praedictio est*) and can be read in present objects

such as *exta* or flights of birds. Divination therefore becomes a rational possibility. Seneca has clearly forged a necessary link between *ordo* (in contrast to *fortuita et sine ratione vaga*), *ratio* (λόγος), *fatum* and *divinatio*. He has also demythologised his theology in the process. We shall now see this perspective reflected in Lucan's historiography.

2A 4.3.1. *Lucan's Pharsalia and the pax deorum*

Lucan in *Pharsalia*, 1, 522–605 describes the natural turmoil of the civil war but also emphasises its supernatural counterpart. The chaos of society was mirrored in a chaos in nature. The images of the *Lares* in homes began to sweat (57), and wild beasts left the woods by night and made their lairs in the city (559–560). Monstrous births took place (562–563). The ancient, Sybilline prophecies, foreboding ill (*diraque per populum Cumanæ carmina vatis*), were repeated again (*volgantur*). (564–565) A Fury with a flaming pine tree held downwards with hissing hair and of gigantic size stalked the city (572–574). The ghosts of Sulla and of Marius, themselves the former destroyers of the civil peace, were seen to walk again amid these supernatural disorders:

... e medio visi consurgere Campo
 Tristia Sullani cecinere oracula manes,
 Tollentemque caput gelidas Anienis ad undas
 Agricolaë Marium fracto fugere sepulchro.

Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 1, 580–583.⁴⁶

A cultic note is sounded in the passage by the use of the term *tristia*. *Tristis*, as we have seen in connection with Livy's account of Tiberius Gracchus in 212 B.C., often contrasts with *laeta* as an adjectival description of an unfavourable as opposed to favourable consultation of the *exta*.⁴⁷ The inhabitants of Ariminum, when they see Caesar's legions having crossed the Rubicon, cry over their "city walls damned because of their unlucky site (*o tristi damnata loco*)," and sigh for "deep peace and tranquility (*pax alta . . . tranquilla quies*)." (1, 248–250)

Arruns the old Etruscan *haruspex* is now summoned (*Tuscos de more vetusto/acciri vates*), of whom it is said:

⁴⁶ . . . From the centre of the Campus Martius was seen to rise,
 The shade of Sulla prophesying inauspicious things,
 And rearing his head beside Anio's cool streams,
 Marius burst from his sepulchre and put the farmer to flight.

⁴⁷ Livy, 25,16,3–4, quoted above p. 48; 27,26,14.

.... *Quorum qui maximus aevo*
Arruns incoluit desertae moenia Lucae,
Fulminis edoctus motus venasque calentes
Fibrarum et monitus errantis in aere pinnae.

1, 585–588.⁴⁸

He orders the burning of the monsters “which nature, at variance with herself, had brought forth (*discors protulerat natura*).” (589–590) Clearly the *ratio* or λόγος that follows a progression of *ordo* was not now present in Nature which has lost its *pax*.

The pontiffs, who alone clearly have the authority (*pontifices, sacri quibus est permissa potestas*), including the “Flamen sporting around his pointed cap on his exulted head (*tollens apicem generoso vertice flamen*),” (604) perform the ceremony of purification that he recommends around the *pomerium*, or city boundary (591–595), just as Livy had frequently described a similar practice following *prodigia tristia*.⁴⁹ But according to Lucan, who may have had some support in Livy’s lost closing books, they are unsuccessful. For Arruns is finally to fail to achieve the *pax deorum*.

He tries expiation over the remains of the fallen thunderbolts (606–610). Having performed of all these rites, he tries to perform a sacrifice. The bull’s neck, when subjected to a blow of the knife, produced a terrible venom instead of red blood (*diffusum rutilo dirum pro sanguine virus*). (609–615) He is mortified (*palluit attonitus*), and consults the entrails to see there, not the peace, but the anger of the gods (*iram superum raptis quaesivit in extis*). (617) Quite apart from the sickly and deformed organs, a second lobe is growing upon one lobe of the liver (617–629).

Thus Arruns, *maximus aevo* of all the Etruscans, fails to secure the *pax deorum* but only their *ira*, even though he is *edoctus* in the science of the *haruspex*. Furthermore, the *pax* rather than the *ira* is marked by the observation of a chaotic natural order of things. The ghosts of Sulla and of Marius had walked again, women had given birth

⁴⁸ ... one of whom of greatest age,
 Arruns dwelt in the deserted site of Lica,
 Learned in thunderbolt’s clash and in the warm entrails,
 And in danger heralded aloft the air by each winged bird that
 wanders there ...

⁴⁹ E.g. Livy 39,22,5: “Hostiis maioribus consules procurarunt urbemque lustraverunt”; 45,16,6: “Et aliorum prodigiorum causa . . . sacrificatum est et urbs lustrata.” *Julius Obsequ.* 12: “Urbe lustrata pax domi forisque fuit.”

to monstrous children, and Arruns' conclusion from his observation of the strange and monstrous *exta* was that the infernal gods had entered the body of the slaughtered bull (*caesique in pectora tauri inferni venere dei*). (633–634) Clearly the obtaining of the *pax deorum* required the correction of *discors natura*.

2A 4.3.2. *Lucan's explanation of the ira deorum*

Nigidius Figulus now makes clear what is at stake (638–672). The universe may be forever governed by no law (*nulla cum lege per aevum/mundus, et incerto discurrunt sidera motu*), or by a fate from now on hostile to Rome and humanity (*aut, si fata movent, urbi generique paratur/humano matura lues*).” (641–645) The person of the Emperor himself may not yet be, before Decius Trajan, regarded generally, even by the Greek city-states that sought to establish his cult, as the sacramental bond that established political and natural order throughout an empire that sought to encompass the world. But it is significant that Lucan regards the problem of securing political order at Rome as a concomitant of righting through its official cult—through the *pontifices, sacri quibus est permessa potestas*—an upset and chaotic natural order (*discors natura*), which has consequences therefore for the human race (*urbi generique . . . humano*).

According to Lucan (Figulus), a political solution would go hand in hand with a religious and cultic solution. The political chaos of the civil war of some seventy years before Octavian was thus but a reflection of the mysterious cosmic chaos which was the *ira deorum*. Both needed to be righted, and by a difficult, mysterious process, the *pax deorum* obtained. That *pax* will only come with a *dominus* (*cum domino pax ista venit*). (670) Rome's freedom (*civili tantum iam libera bello*) (672) is but a reflection of cosmic disorder: it is but the civil war as a reflection of constellations straying from their courses (*cur signa meatus/deseruere suos mundoque obscura feruntur?*). (664)

In setting the scene for his epic poem on the civil war Lucan has therefore effectively ruled out the kind of role for the gods which they were given by Vergil in imitation of Homer.⁵⁰ The gods play

⁵⁰ S.H. Braund, *Lucan: Civil War: Translated with Introduction and Notes*, (Oxford: Clarendon 1992), pp. xxii–xxiii; F.M. Ahl, *Lucan: An Introduction*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell 1976) remarks perceptively, p. 283: “The role of the gods in traditional epic is superseded by a kind of Stoic hylozoism; the Olympians yield to the workings of natural phenomena. For between man and nature there is still a bond that no longer exists between man and the gods.”

no direct part in the action: they do not intervene to give succour or encouragement to the heroes in the tale. They are replaced by the Stoic concepts of *fortuna*, *fatum*, or *fata*. Thus the centrality of the cult of augury at the opening of the work is of great significance in describing the ultimate meaning of the historical events. The *pax deorum* and the *ira deorum*, reflected in the natural as well as in the civil order, play a significant role in determining the ultimate character of Roman political life. Thus Lucan's Stoicism demythologises his account, but leaves it nevertheless with a φύσις which is ultimately endowed with λόγος, but with an ὀρθὸς λόγος fractured by the mysterious supernatural forces at work within both nature and human society.

Thus Lucan produced a theology explicitly in Stoic terms that justified both the emperor as *Pontifex Maximus* and procurer of the *pax deorum*. His success was moreover ironical in view of his clear mistrust of Nero's ambitions,⁵¹ and his clear regrets at the loss of republican liberty.⁵² But his doctrine of fate, justified in terms of Stoicism, with its clear implications for the legitimacy of augury and divination, seems to have made what had come to pass necessary and inescapable. His conspiracy, after all, was not aimed at the restoration of the republic, but simply the removal of the tyrant Nero in favour of another *princeps*.

Lucan ends his clearly unfinished work in the year 48–47 B.C. This is unfortunate for our purpose since we do not know on what note he was to conclude his epic. Some counterpart seems required to the *ira deorum* described so vividly in such lurid hues. By what successful means, as the counterpart to Arruns' failure, was the final *pax deorum* to be secured? Surely by means of something like the *augurium salutis* that Dio (Xiphilinus) had claimed that Augustus successfully celebrated where older, Republican magistrates, had failed? Where and when was enacted the successful cleansing of the *pomerium*, and the sacrifice of a bull which went normally with this ceremony?

⁵¹ Lucan, *Pharsalia* 1, 265–330 ff.

⁵² In view of this I find too strong J.C. Bramble, Lucan, in E.J. Kenney and W.V. Clausen (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, Vol. 2: Latin Literature, (Cambridge: U.P. 1982), pp. 543–545: "there is nothing in the poem to warrant the hypothesis of a growing discontent with Caesarism," quoted in Braund (1992), p. xvi. It is however true that Nero would have identified himself with Pompey as opposed to Caesar in view of his great-great grandfather Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus, Pompey's general who is described most favourably in *Pharsalia* 2, 478–525, see Braund (1992), p. xv.

In what form, according to Lucan, was Tacitus' message of *pax et princeps* finally represented in the aftermath of 44 B.C.? By what cultic means otherwise could *natura discors* be restored to its natural order? By the census and *suovetaurilia* of 9 B.C. commemorated on the side of Augustus' *Ara Pacis* (Plate 6), to which we have seen Livy points in 1,19, 1-3 and 28,12,12 (2A 4.2.1, see also 2B 1):⁵³

We shall never know for certain because Lucan was forced to commit suicide after a failed attempt on Nero's life, along with his uncles Seneca and Gallio. It is however impossible that for him personally the answers were all tragic, and that nature had forever lost its benign order. He did after all imply in Book 1 that the sequel in Book 10 would have been that nature was set right. Fate would provide in civil society a reflection of nature at harmony with itself in which *pax* was accompanied by a *dominus* (1, 670). The work may have been intended to end with the death of Cato, or that of Caesar, or the battle of Philippi or that of Actium. From my argument it will be clear why I would support the return of Augustus from Spain and the dedication of the *Ara Pacis* in 9 B.C. as its logical conclusion: the theological assumptions of its Stoic determinism required the fully recovered *pax deorum* that the *Ara* clearly celebrated and secured.⁵⁴ It is impossible, furthermore, given the history of the hereditary, imperial *pontifices maximi* from Augustus onwards that he would not have seen that *pax* in terms of an Imperial Cult that exercised the republican political functions of the *ius augurium* now adopted and reformed by the Principate.

Let us now see how Augustus claimed the role of *Pontifex Maximus* and both the philosophical and cultic requirements for the *pax deorum*.

2A 5. Augustus, the *pax deorum*, and the *ius augurium*

We have established a clear connection between the *ius augurium* and the *pax deorum*. We have shown the rational justification of that con-

⁵³ For the argument that the *Ara* depicted a *suovetaurilia*, see C.A. Raleigh Radford, Some Recent Discoveries in Rome and Italy, in *JRomS* 29 (1939), pp. 45-56, see also 3B 1 and Plate 6.

⁵⁴ R.T. Bruère, The Scope of Lucan's Historical Epic, in *CIPI* 45 (1950), pp. 217-235, is the principle supporter of this point of view, for references and a discussion of which see Ahl (1976), pp. 308-314 ff. In opposing this view Ahl (pp. 310-311), misrepresents the role of Nigidius Fibulus' "cum domino pax ista venit" as in some way advocating freedom against a *dominus*, which I have argued was quite contrary to Lucan's Stoic determinism.

nection in terms of Stoic metaphysics regarding εἰμαρμένη or *fatum* or *fortuna*, and *ratio* or ὀρθὸς λόγος in Stoic theology. Moreover we have established a strong sense in the literature of the Augustan age that the civil war had constituted a supernatural disturbance in the order of nature as well as society unparalleled in Rome's history. Such a disturbance required an equally unparalleled setting right through the medium of the imperial *augurium*. We have seen such a theological diagnosis of constitutional failure in Lucan and Livy, and in writers such as Seneca or Dio.⁵⁵

The traditional cult, no more than the traditional constitution, had established either religious or civil peace. Augustus was required to perform an act of augury which would be sufficiently powerful, as the existing cult was not, to cope with this disorientation of the natural order of things, and thus to provide the sacramental means of setting both nature and society right. As we have seen, Augustus made possible according to Dio the celebration of the *augurium salutis*, and his name for Suetonius was synonymous with one who possessed the *ius augurium* (*Augustus = augur, augurium*).⁵⁶

In *Res Gestae* c. 4,2 Augustus claims that his "successful military achievements, by land and by sea, directly or through legates (*res a me aut per legatos meos . . . terra marique prospere gestas*)," are under "my favourable omens (*auspiciis meis*)," accordingly translated αἰσίοις οἰωνοῖς in the Greek inscription of the *Res Gestae* whose original position was on two bronze columns associated with the *Ara Pacis* from the reign of Tiberius onwards. There had been mention in c. 3 of the oath sworn to him personally (*sub sacramento meo*) by "three thousand Roman citizens." The *Ara Pacis* is not yet the altar on which his divinity is directly worshipped, with the peace of the emperor supplicated with incense accompanied by an oath of imperial loyalty as it was to become in the reign of Decius Trajan (A.D. 251). It is as yet the immortal gods who are to be thanked for his victory, by decree of the Senate (*ex senatus consulto*), and not his divine personage itself. But we have argued that the appropriation of the divine and personalized *Pax* by the qualification *Pax Augusta* shows the discrete assimilation of *Pax* to the emperor's own divinity.

⁵⁵ For nature responding to the chaos and order of civil society see Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 4, 49–130, especially e.g. 121–126, where "... parvo Fortuna viri contenta pavore, plena redit..." and "... servatoque loco rerum discessit ab astris umor, et ima petit..."

⁵⁶ Ross Taylor (1931), pp. 158–159.

In c. 7,3 we read: *Pontifex Maximus, augur, XV virum sacris faciundis, VII virum epulonum, frater arvalis, sodalis Titius, fetialis fui*. Thus as part of the process that linked divination with the peace of the Gods, Augustus was to reorganise the four major colleges (*fetiales, Salii, Sodales Titi*, and the *fratres Arvales*). The ability of these colleges through augury to affect the political process was radically reduced. After 44 B.C. there was only one case of the temporary blocking of an election, and two consultations of the Sibylline books.⁵⁷ Their mark of submission to him as newly hereditary *Pontifex Maximus* was to make sacrifices annually at the *Ara Pacis* and on imperial anniversaries at the *Ara Numinis Augusti* on the Capitol and in the Temple of *Mars Ultor*.⁵⁸ The achievement by society of the *pax deorum* was from now on to be through the office of the *princeps*.⁵⁹

That his office as *Pontifex Maximus*, though *de iure* for life, was now to be *de facto* hereditary is implied in c. 10:

I refused the office of *Pontifex Maximus* when the people offered me that priesthood (*populo id sacerdotium deferente mihi*) which my father had held, so that I should not replace my still-living colleague. After some years, when he [Lepidus] who had occupied this priesthood (*quod sacerdotium*) at the outbreak of the civil war had died, I accepted it, during the consulship of P. Sulpicius and C. Valgo [12 B.C.], from all Italy when such a multitude had gathered together for my *comitia* as never before was reported at Rome.

Clearly it was not an office from which Augustus would admit, following his self-serving example, that a person could be deposed by popular constitutional means. It was not an ordinary but an extraordinary gathering that had conveyed the title on him. In assuming the position of *Pontifex Maximus* he had united the Roman Religion organically in his person.⁶⁰

From earliest times, the *ius divinum* was exercised by the college of pontiffs and augurs. Indeed, before the development of republi-

⁵⁷ Warde Fowler (1911), pp. 435–437; Liebeschuetz (1979), p. 63.

⁵⁸ Ross Taylor (1931), p. 199 and pp. 222–223.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* p. 65.

⁶⁰ Bayet (1957), p. 179: “Lépide mort, August fut plébiscité Grand Pontife. Et soudain il affirma des droits exorbitants sur la fonction. Non seulement il ne descendit pas au Forum occuper la demeure officielle de sa charge, près de la *Regia*; mais il nationalisa pour y suppléer une partie de sa demeure du Palatin; y consacra officiellement une statue et un autel de Vesta; unit le culte de la déesse à celui de ses Pénates.”

can government, the president of that college seems to have been the king, and the *leges regiae* were about the ritual and moral means of achieving the *pax deorum*, before the publication of the Twelve Tables.⁶¹ The king, originally, advised by the two augurs who with him constituted a college, possessed this right to take the auspices (*habere auspicia*).⁶² The *ius divinum* that had passed to the *Pontifex Maximus* with the advent of republican government was now to pass again to a hereditary ruler,⁶³ even though Augustus might cloak his monarchical principles under the republican forms of *princeps*, *tribunicia potestas*, *imperium proconsulare* etc.⁶⁴ His very title of a reconstructed *imperator* in preference to *rex* further emphasised the continuity of autocracy legitimised in republican forms. But as Liebeschuetz pointed out, the emperor had the responsibility of taking the *auspicia* with the result that the lifelong and hereditary *Pontifex Maximus* was now the religious equivalent of the now lifelong and hereditary *imperator*. If political power was to be for life, then clearly religious power with which it was inextricably associated must be so too. The result was thus the further concentration of both secular and spiritual power in the hands of a single person.⁶⁵

From his assumption of the final control of the *ius divinum* as *Pontifex Maximus* certain eschatological and even—to transpose a Judaeo-Christian concept into a pagan context—"messianic" consequences thereby followed. The reorganisation of the cult in terms of the extraordinary *pax* of an extraordinary *princeps* was the solution to the

⁶¹ Warde Fowler (1911), pp. 272–273.

⁶² *Ibid.* pp. 301–301.

⁶³ Bayet (1957), p. 101: "... ce Grand Pontife ne put prendre compétence religieuse "royale", à côté du *Rex Sacrorum*, qu'après la fin de la monarchie: à lui alors appartint la haute main sur le foyer public, voisin de la *Regia*; sur le calendrier et les fêtes; le choix des Vestales, du *Flamen Dialis*; la discipline sacerdotale; la surveillance des religions familiales et du culte des morts... Pourvu du droit d'auspice et de commandement (*auspicium* et *imperium*), il dominait l'ensemble de la religion..."; E. Pais, Le relazioni fra i sacerdoti e le magistrature civili nella Repubblica romana, in *Ricerche sulla storia e sul diritto pubblico di Roma*, I, (Rome 1915), pp. 273–335: "Con Augusto si chiude il ciclo dei rapporti dei sacerdoti de fronte ai magistrati curuli... Con Augusto si ritornò allo stesso periodo regio, quando l'autorità sacra, il comando militare e la giurisdizione civile si trovavano riunite nella unica persona del *rex*." (Quoted Bayet 1971), p. 276 footnote 2.

⁶⁴ *Res Gest.* 6,2; 10,1 cf. R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, (Oxford: U.P. 1960), pp. 313–336 ff.

⁶⁵ Liebeschuetz (1979), p. 10: "The constitutional authority which entitled a Roman magistrate to give orders, the *imperium*, had a religious counterpart, the *auspicium*, which entitled its holder to receive divine communications on behalf of the community by taking the auspices."

theological problem of how to secure an extraordinary *pax deorum* from quite extraordinary dissolution of the natural order: the chaos of nature mirrored the political chaos, to which the *prodigia* that marked the failure of the republican *auguria* and *haruspicium* bore witness. Thus Augustus was duly authorised to use the sacramental means of *augurium* to continue the incorporation of political society into a nature whose order, in terms of ὁρθὸς λόγος, had been extraordinarily restored. It was a golden age of *pax* and *fortuna* that was accordingly now coming about. We shall now trace some literary examples of how this new construction of social reality was accomplished.

2A 6. Augustus' Messianism and the *pax deorum*

In *Res Gestae* c. 11 we read of the altar of *Fortuna Redux*, consecrated by the senate before the temple of *Honor* and *Virtus* at the Capenan Gate, in thanksgiving for Augustus' safe return (*pro reditu meo*). Immediately following, in c. 12, we also find that Augustus describes the *pax* that he brings in the context of a returning age of peace, plenty and happiness. That context can be read already in the early work of Vergil. In *Eclogues* 4 we read of a new age, associated with the ancient kingdom of Saturn, in which the Virgin Astraea or Justice is to return, having been the last of the gods to leave the earth.

The "last age (*ultima aetas*)" foretold by the Sibylline books (*Cumaei carminis*) had come, which was the age of the race of iron (*ferrea*). Now with the birth of the boy-child (*nascenti puero*), the golden age returns to the earth (*aetas aurea mundo*), and with it the kingdom of Saturn and Astraea goddess of Justice (*iam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnina regna*). Thus the *aetas aurea* is associated with a divine child born of a Virgin. The *puer* is addressed as: "dear offspring of the gods (*cara deum suboles*), great source of growth from Juppiter (*magnum incrementum Iovis*)."⁶⁶ (l. 49) Although we may describe this ode as "messianic," it is important to remember that the golden age that is here in view is not one that exists eternally as the goal of history, but is rather a returning golden age (*Eclogues* 4, l. 4–10).⁶⁶ "The great series

⁶⁶ A.J. Boyle, *The Eclogues of Virgil: Translated with Introduction, Notes, and Latin Text*, (Melbourne: Hawthorn Press 1976), pp. 111–112 mentions that, according to the Sibylline oracles, there were to be ten ages with the last ruled by Apollo. The Great Year (*magnus ordo*) is an astrological reference to the completion of a vast period of time completed when the planets occupied the positions they had held at the beginning of the world. See Hesiod, *Works and Days*, and cf. Plato *Repub.* 415A–C. See

of the centuries is born anew (*magnus ab integro saeculorum nascitur ordo*)." (l. 5)

In *Dan.* 2,33–45 the eternal kingdom comes after the iron age, as the final goal of history. But, in the Stoicism represented by Zeno and Poseidonius, history is cyclic and has no final goal. Livy was influenced by Polybius,⁶⁷ who had written a history of Rome up until 146 B.C., the underlying historiography of which represented such a Stoic philosophy of historical development. As Aristotle (*Pol.* 6,7) had said, each good form of government had its pathological counterpart in which monarchy became tyranny, aristocracy became oligarchy, timocracy became plutocracy, and democracy became mob rule. The best form of government existed as a mean between two extremes, as quite frequently ethical virtues were a mean between two vices. Such was Aristotle's preferred πολιτεία in which stability was achieved through the mixed constitution.⁶⁸

Polybius had taken this Aristotelian schema and produced from it a theory of historical development and change. Monarchy (μοναρχία), which appears to represent the amoral exercise of power by one person in a state of nature which first generates (γεννᾶται) kingship (βασιλεία),⁶⁹ but then takes the degenerated form (μεταβαλλούσης δὲ ταύτης εἰς τὰ συμφυῆ κακά) of tyranny (τυραννίς). This in turn generated (φύεται) aristocracy (ἀριστοκρατία) which declined (ταύτης . . . ἐκτραπέισης) into oligarchy (ὀλιγαρχία) which generated democracy (δημοκρατία) which declined into mob-rule (ὄχλοκρατία) which produced in turn kingship once again.⁷⁰

The cyclic process of change, like the Stoic εἰμαρμένη, could not be reversed. But it could be delayed so as to produce lengthy periods of stable and enduring forms of government. Livy had spoken of a historical decline in morals which over the centuries had produced personal ruin and the destruction of all things (1 *praef.* 9 and 12). A

also R.G.M. Nisbet, Virgil's Fourth Eclogue: Easterners and Westerners, in *BICS* 25 (1978), pp. 59–78.

⁶⁷ H. Tränkle, *Livius und Polybius*, (Basle/Stuttgart: Schwabe 1977); T.J. Luce, *Livy: The Composition of his History*, (Princeton: U.P.); L. Bessone, *La tradizione liviana*, in *Contributi didattici di storia antica*, 3, (Bologna: Pàtron 1977); E. Lefèvre and E. Olshausen, *Livius: Werk und Rezeption: Festschrift für Erich Burck zum 80. Geburtstag*, (München: Beck 1983).

⁶⁸ Polybius, *Historiae*, 6,4,5–10; 6,57,9.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 6,4, 7: "The first (πρώτη μὲν οὖν) is monarchy which exists naturally and unformed (ἀκατασκευῶς καὶ φυσικῶς συνίσταται μοναρχία)."

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 6,9, 10–14.

significant means for achieving such a relative stability was Augustus' augural office and acts, central as we have argued that these were to the Imperial Cult. Indeed, such a cult was a sacramental necessity given the instability promised by a cyclic view of history: spiritual power was exercised over the course of history by the *Pontifex Maximus* who controlled the cultic means of securing and protracting the *pax deorum*. Certainly Vergil in the Fourth *Eclogue* has transcended such a cyclic view which it otherwise presupposes. We are far closer in these lines, as Nisbet has pointed out, to the Judaeo-Christian idea that: "when a new creation is complete there is no second deterioration."⁷¹

But Vergil here associates the *aetas aurea*, whose turn in the cycle of *Fortuna* has come round, uniquely with the birth of a boy-child (*nascenti puero*; l. 8). That birth is associated with the return of the Virgin Astrea (*Virgo*) and the kingdom of Saturn, and the "descent of a new offspring from highest heaven (*nova progenies caelo demittitur alto*; l. 5-6)." The child:

will receive the gift of the life of the gods and will see gods,
ille deum vitam accipiet divosque videbit,
 mixed with heroes and himself by them will be seen,
permixtos heroas et ipse videbitur illis,
 and will rule the globe that he sets at peace by his paternal virtues
pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem.

l. 15-17

There follows a natural order that arises devoid of serpents and their poison, where goats produce milk in abundance and there need be no fear of lions. The earth untilled abounds with fruit (l. 18-25). But the past repeats itself in the future, and there is a second Tiphys, a second voyage of Argo, and a second Achilles sent to Troy (l. 26-36). But when the child becomes an adult, trade by sea will cease because every land will be self-sufficient in abundance. Yoke and oxen, and pruning hook, shall be cast aside. Lambs will produce wool of different colours (l. 37-45). Such is the picture of the *aetas aurea* ushered in with the birth of the child. The *pax deorum* accomplished by the child has now extended to all the globe, and extends beyond the restored moral order of human society to the natural order itself (*pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem*).

⁷¹ Nisbet (1978), p. 61.

It is interesting to inquire whom Vergil intended the child to be. Asinius Pollio, the consul who in 40 B.C. negotiated the treaty of Brundisium uniting Anthony and Octavian, is mentioned in the text (*l.* 12).⁷² But clearly the identification with his new-born child would have been highly embarrassing if not actually dangerous for Pollio in view of the masters whom he clearly served. Either, as has most plausibly been suggested, Vergil refers to the expected child of Octavian and Scribonia, or the child is simply an ideal bucolic image.⁷³ But according to what has been described by Nisbet as the 'eastern' interpretation of the Eclogue, Vergil does not necessarily need to have any particular birth in mind. There were a whole variety of eastern religious expectations and connotations, from the Alexandrian festival of Helios where the initiated proclaimed the increase of light following a Virgin birth, through Horus born of Isis, to Jewish Messianism (*Is.* 7,14). The image of the divine child is part and parcel of the description of a millennial future.⁷⁴

The identity of the *puer* is however for our purposes irrelevant. By the time that Vergil had written the *Georgics* (29 B.C.), he had become friend of Maecenas and member of his circle around Octavian.⁷⁵ In *Georgics* 1, 24–42, he clearly reflects, two years after Actium, the ambiguity intentionally cultivated by the Imperial Cult regarding Caesar's divinity. Not yet divine, Vergil nevertheless ponders on:

*tuque adeo, quem mox quae sint habitura deorum
concordia, incertum est, urbisne invisere, Caesar,
terrarumque velis curam te maximus orbis
auctorem frugum tempestatumque potentem
accipiet, cingens materna tempora myrto,*

⁷² C. Bailey, *Religion in Virgil*, (Oxford: Clarendon 1935), p. 192, saw it purely in terms of the expected heir of Octavian. Boyle (1976), p. 113 lists other possibilities as (i) the hoped-for child of Anthony and Octavia (sister of Octavian), (ii) Asinius Gallus, Pollio's baby, (iii) Aion Hellenistic god of time and renewal, (iv) Marcellus, Octavia's son by a previous marriage.

⁷³ W. Berg, *Early Virgil*, (London: Athlone Press 1974), pp. 167–172 presents the solution that *puer* is an ideal image throughout the *Eclogues* for his bucolic heroes, his shepherd poets who must have child-like souls. Daphnis has this title in *Eclogues* 5,54, cf. 4,11 where he is "adornment of the world and adornment of the age." The *iuuenis* in *Eclogue* 1 and the *puer iuuenis* and Daphnis are deified heroes. Vergil's relation to Pollio was literary and not political, and he was honouring him with allusions to his poetry (pp. 158–162).

⁷⁴ Nisbet (1978), p. 62.

⁷⁵ Bailey (1935), pp. 187–196.

*an deus immensi venias maris ac tua nautae
numina sola colant, tibi serviat ultima Thule . . .*

*l. 24–30*⁷⁶

Clearly here the *puer* whose birth was responsible for the *pax deorum* shown in the natural order in which earth yielded its bounty and who would rule the globe in *Eclogue* 4,17 (*reget patriis virtutibus orbem*) has become Octavian. In *Georgics* 1,27 it is Octavian who, when accepted by the gods into their number, will prove to be both the “increaser of the crops (*auctorem frugum*)” and “the master of the seasons (*tempestatumque potentem*)”, and welcomed as such by the “great world (*maximus orbis*).” (*l. 26*) But apparently the gods have not yet decided to admit Octavian to their ranks. Later Vergil chastises the gods on Octavian’s behalf for their envy of him (*l. 502–503*), and entreats them: “Prevent not this young man (*iuvenem*) from aiding an age upturned (*verso . . . succurrere saeculo*).” (*l. 500–501*) The *puer* has become a *iuvenis*, like Daphnis in the *Eclogues*.⁷⁷

When Vergil writes the *Aeneid* (29–19 B.C.), Augustus duly emerges as bringer of the golden age and at least destined for divinity. Trojan Caesar shall descend from Julius “who shall limit his empire with the ocean, and his fame with the stars.” (1,287) When Venus his mother welcomes him to heaven, then “the harsh ages shall soften when wars have ceased (*aspera tum positis mitescent saecula bellis*).” (1,291) Thus in the famous lines Vergil can sing the prophecy of the Sibyl heard in the underworld:

*Hic vir, hic est, tibi quem promitti saepius audis,
Augustus Caesar, divi genus, aurea condet
saecula qui rursus Latio regnata per arva
Saturno quondam . . .*

6,791–794⁷⁸

⁷⁶ “And You O Caesar, what the councils of the gods will decide for you ere long, only in this is uncertain, whether you choose to look to the care of the city and of [all] lands, and the mighty world welcome you as the augmentor of their crops and the potentate of the seasons, wreathing your brow with your divine mother’s myrtle, or whether you come as god of the vast sea and sailors worship your divinity alone, to you farthest Thule will submit . . .”

⁷⁷ See note 49 above. See also *Georg.* 3, 13–44; 4,560. See also Horace *Epode* 16; Ovid, *Metamorph.*, 15, 867–870. Cf. Ross Taylor (1931), pp. 175–180.

⁷⁸ “This is the man, this is he whom you have often heard promised, Augustus Caesar, son of God, who shall found the golden age once more over the fields where Saturn once reigned . . .”

The golden age has come round again in the cycle of *fortuna* or εἰμαρμένη, and a specific person is to bring it—Augustus the *vir* and neither the *puer* nor the *iuuenis*. The golden age as at the first, and the kingdom which Saturn rules, have returned in the unending cycle. We here see the miraculous achievement of the *pax deorum* through the imperial, augurial rites. The *pax* that he has thus executed subdues nature as well as societies, and has stabilised and made relatively permanent the return of the golden age.

It was necessary for Augustus to control the apparatus of prophecy along with *augurium* and *haruspicium*. In *Res Gestae* 7,3 Augustus had listed his membership of the *quindecim virum sacris faciundis* whose responsibility it was to consult the Sibylline books. His membership amounted to control of that body. As Suetonius points out (*Augustus* 31, 1–2), on the death of Lepidus he assumed this office, and collected anonymous oracles including some parts of the Sibylline oracles of which he clearly intended to provide his own approved version. He burned more than two thousand books of oracles in general circulation, but also removed some of the books of the Sibylline oracles themselves. The definition of the *saecula aurea*, and the conditions for its existence and continuance were securely under his control.

Vergil had lived to see neither the deification nor the inauguration of the *saecula aurea*, which took place in 17 B.C. one year after his death, as we shall now briefly discuss.

PART B. THE INAUGURATION AND RECEPTION OF THE IMPERIAL CULT

A Sibylline oracle was produced which prophesied the celebration of the *ludi saeculares* in order to inaugurate the new age (17 B.C.). This was one positive fruit from Augustus' membership of the *quindecimviri sacris faciundis* before his assumption of the position of *Pontifex Maximus* on Lepidus' death (13 B.C.). Horace composed the *Carmen Saeculare* for this occasion, in which special honour was given to Apollo and Diana, the patron gods of Augustus on the Palatine hill.

There was a local temple of Apollo in the vicinity of the field of Actium on which Octavian won the critical battle in 31 B.C. As one of the acts of commemoration, this temple was extended, and coins were struck in Asia Minor showing Octavian wearing a laurel crown fashioned like that of Apollo. But in Rome itself the temple of Apollo

was dedicated next to Octavian's home on the Palatine (9th October, 28 B.C.), on the doors of which displayed the form of *Apollo Vindex*. In the library adjoining the temple were to be found a statue of Octavian, *habitu ac statu Apollonis* (Suetonius, *Aug.* 29,3).⁷⁹ As we have seen, this was the form of dress which a Marcus Furius Camillus could only have worn with irreverence (Livy 5,23,4–11), but which the Augustus, of superhuman proportions (*visa species viri maioris quam pro humano habitu augustiorisque*), could now wear as befitting his *status* nearing divinity (8,6,12).

Thus the first point of a long line of development was established that was to lead to the Emperor being regarded as Apollo, *Sol Invictus*, of a universal imperial and pagan religion. Apollo was the god who, according to Propertius, had established by his command to Octavian a new world order as *mundi servator*.⁸⁰ It was Apollo who had presided at Actium.⁸¹ We should however note that dedication of the *Forum Iulium* and the temple of *Divus Julius* in 29 B.C. emphasised the connection with Vergil's *filius dei*, *genus deorum* and thus bound eschatology and cult securely together. The *carmen saeculare* invoked Apollo and not Jupiter Capitolinus.⁸² Let us see how the *Ara Pacis* proved to be an icon of this development.

2B 1. *The Ara Pacis and the pax deorum*

The *Ara Pacis*, dedicated in 9 B.C., gave prominence to Augustus and Agrippa as veiled *sacerdotes* about to preside over the sacrifice as part of the *augurium pacis* that provided the *pax deorum*. This was the event that we have argued was anticipated by both Livy (1,19,1–3; 28,12,12) and by Lucan as the outcome to the latter's unfinished epic of the Civil War (2A 4.2.1 and 4.3.1). The iconography of the *Ara* associated these cultic acts with the beginning of the *saeculum aureum*. On the left panel of the eastern side we find a depiction of Tellus (Plate 2), whose loins abound with the increase of the earth promised as in Vergil, *Eclogues*, 4, 18–25. In the *Carmen Saeculare*, composed for the *Ludi Saeculares* of 17 B.C., Horace had taken up this theme and sung:

⁷⁹ Fishwick (1987), 1,1 pp. 81–82.

⁸⁰ Propertius 4,6,37.

⁸¹ See also Vergil, *Aen.* 8,704–705: "Actius haec cernens arcum intedebat Apollo desuper . . ."

⁸² Fishwick (1987) 1,1 p. 88.

*Fertilis frugum pecorisque Tellus
spicea donet Cererem corona
nutriant fetus et aquae salubres,
et Iovis Aurae . . .*

Carmen Saeculare, 29–33.⁸³

Oxen and sheep accompany *Tellus* in the panel while two nymphs, one with a swan and the other a dragon, the *Auræ Velificantes*, symbolise air and water respectively (Plates 3 and 4). Moreover, the internal decorations of the enclosing wall continue this theme of the *saeculum aureum*. The upper strip of this decoration “is punctuated by twelve luxuriant garlands, made up of different kinds of fruit—grapes, figs, apples, pears, olives, plums, pine cones, pomegranates—and even spontaneous vegetation—oak, ivy laurel, and poppies.”⁸⁴ Thus the *saeculum aureum* is the unmistakable and intentional point of the iconography of the *augurium pacis*. Around the head of *Tellus*’ child cluster the produce of suberabundant nature (Plate 5).

In 13 B.C., on *Lepidus*’ death *Augustus* became *Pontifex Maximus*. It was at this point that he handed over the official residence of the *Pontifex Maximus* in the forum to the Vestal Virgins, and turned his own house into the Temple of *Vesta*. Here, illuminated by a fire that was ever burning, worship was offered to *Vesta* and the *Penates* of *Augustus*.⁸⁵ It is important to note how, with the removal of his own house and its household gods from the private to the public domain, *Augustus* had given the common practice of ancestor worship a new and public focus. Oaths were now to be sworn by his divine *Genius*. It was the swearing by the *Genius* of the emperor that was the essential feature of that cultus opposed by early Christianity.

2B 2. Lares and Penates: From Manes to Genius

In 30 B.C. the senate had passed a decree that a libation be poured to *Octavian*’s *Genius* at every banquet, both public and private (Dio 51,19,7). Thus the cult of the *Genius* of *Octavian* found its way into

⁸³ Fertile in crops and cattle shall Mother Earth,
crown Ceres with her garland of woven corn,
may they increase the produce those healthy rains,
and Jove’s gentle winds.

⁸⁴ G. Sauron, *Le Message symbolique des rinceaux de l’Ara Pacis Augustae*, in *CRAI* 126 (1982), pp. 81–101; Zanker (1990), pp. 172–183; Galinsky (1992), pp. 458–468; Bianchi (1994), p. 25.

⁸⁵ Ross Taylor (1931), pp. 177–179.

private houses, since libations had become a regular feature of the Roman dinner.⁸⁶ Now in 12 B.C., when he had become *Pontifex Maximus*, the emperor's *Genius* was made part of the official oath of the state.⁸⁷ Altars were dedicated to the *Lares Augusti* (Plate 10).

One critical feature of Republican, Roman religion, which should not be overlooked, was the household cults to ancestral *genii*, and to the *Lares* and *Penates*, the so-called gods of hearth and home. The hearth of the house was sacred, festooned with flowers at each phase of the lunar month, at *Kalendae*, *Nonae* and *Idus*. There burned the fire that was considered sacred. Here each day the *paterfamilias* offered a portion of food, assigned to the sacrificial flames, for the *Genii* of the departed of the family, who were the semi-divine *Lares et Penates*.⁸⁸

Though doubts have been expressed about the precise historical origin of the cult, Ovid (*Fasti* 3,55,57) portrays the developed form of the cult of the goddess *Larentia* as a festival of the dead.⁸⁹ The private ceremonies for the *Lares* that Ovid describes seem to be ancient. It must be remembered that originally the *Di Manes* were shadowy and only vaguely personal beings, made fully personal only by the development of a concept of personal immortality in the first century B.C. Clearly the departed cannot be venerated as individual personalities before the development of the idea of personal immortality has taken place. Although therefore it might be true that: "Generally however, where the souls are thought to be present one made a sacrifice to them," this could only be possible when such souls were conceived as distinct and distinguishable personal entities, that is to say when the concept of personal immortality had achieved a clear articulation.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 151-152.

⁸⁷ F. Bömer, *Der Eid beim Genius des Kaisers*, in *Athen.* 44 (1966), pp. 77-133.

⁸⁸ Bayet (1957), p. 65: "La grande fête du Genius est à l'anniversaire de naissance du paterfamilias. Mais originellement le Genius est bien autre: principe de fécondité génétique, comme l'indique son nom, et assurant par l'individu auquel il est attaché la perpétuité des générations."

⁸⁹ E. Samter, *Familienfeste der Griechen und Römer*, (Berlin: Reimer 1901), pp. 115-117 where he concludes: "Da nun das Fest Larenta, die Larentalien, ein Totenfest ist, so ist aus seiner Bedeutung ein Schluss auf den gleichartigen Charakter des Larenkultes erlaubt." Wissowa (1890) had argued against the derivation of the cult from the worship of the souls of the departed. p. 119.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 121: "Überall aber, wo die Seelen anwesend gedacht werden, opfert man ihnen. Darum werden die Seelen der Ahnen von den Römern ausser am Grab und im Hause auch am Kreuzweg verehrt." See also E. Jobbé-Duval, *Les Morts mal-faisants: "Larvae, Lemures" d'après le droit et les croyances populaires des Romains*, (Paris: Recueil Sirey 1924), pp. 2-6.

The change from the *Di Manes* as a generalised collectivity of the departed to a designation of a personal surviving soul is marked well in examples taken from the excavations under St. Peter's of the pagan tombs that stood originally on the Vatican hillside. An individual name following this general designation shows the conservatism of funerary epitaphs in evoking a world view that has been transcended. Cicero's description of the dream of Scipio Africanus (*De Republica* 6,10) in which he is alive and with the immortals in the milky way, or the individual souls described in Aeneas' visit to the underworld in Vergil, *Aeneid*, 6, is a whole conceptual world away from epitaphs such as *sit sibi terra levis* ("may the earth rest light upon you") and the amorphous union with the earth goddess expressed in such lines as: *cinis sum cinis terra est terra dea est ergo ego mortua non sum* ("I am ash, ash is earth, earth is divine, therefore I am not dead").⁹¹ The representations of such inhabitants of the Vatican mausolea as Marcius Hermes or Marcia Thrasonis, or the imagery of the isles of the blessed or the Bacchic menagerie where the individual would repose in eternal blessedness, all revealed a culture which, from the late first century B.C., had become obsessed with personal immortality.⁹²

This change to a conviction of personal immortality undoubtedly served to give sharper definition to the *genii* of hearth and home, the *Lares* and *Penates*, who were no longer the generalised spirits of the dead but could be regarded as distinctly surviving individuals. It was this individualism that Augustus could now deploy in making the emperor worship of the eastern cults consistent with Roman religious tradition. In 7 B.C. he set up the *Lares Compitiales*, the "*Lares* at the crossroads" where he set the image of his own *Genius* amongst the statues.⁹³ We have preserved an altar on which *ministri* of a *compitium* are depicted holding statuettes of the *Lares* and *Genius Augusti* (Plate 11).

We may now see how, in the unfolding logic of the Imperial Cult, deified individual qualities could now form a coherent connection between the new public cult of the Augustan *Lares* and the *saeculum aureum*.

⁹¹ *CIL* 6,4, 29609 and 9, 3184 discussed in J. Toynbee and J. Ward Perkins, *The Shrine of St. Peter and the Vatican Excavations*, (London: Longmans Green 1956), pp. 109-116.

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 73-93.

⁹³ Ross Taylor (1931), pp. 184-186; Fishwick (1987) 1,1 pp. 84-85.

2B 3. *The cultic deification of virtues*

The sharpening of individuality of the *Lares*, their transformation from the *Di Manes* (the “Ghost Gods”) into distinct, personalised *genii*, enabled a new public cult of the emperor’s individual qualities to be formed. Such qualities as *Concordia*, *Pax*, *Fortuna*, or *Salus* in turn connected well with the messianic qualities of these virtues as characterising the *saeculum aureum*. Let us sketch briefly our justification for such an assertion.

Cults of virtues were established in Republican times. We find for example the temple of *Concordia*, built in 216 B.C., vowed by the praetor L. Manlius for deliverance from sedition, of *Salus* and *Victoria* after the Samnite Wars, and of *Fors Fortuna* built by Sp. Carvilius after his campaign at Cominium and in Etruria.⁹⁴ As such the deification of such virtues in early Roman religion was of a piece with similar practices in the Hellenistic East. Here we find cults of Νίκη, Εἰρήνη, Πίστις, Εὐσέβεια, Εὐνομία, Φιλανθρωπία, Φιλοστοργία, and Δικαιοσύνη.⁹⁵

The cult of *Genius Publicus* moreover was to form a bridge between the private and home-based libations and the *genii* of departed ancestors, and public personifications of Δῆμος in the Greek city states.⁹⁶ Now the divine essence worshipped was not that of shadowy, individual spirits in process of development into full personalities by the late Republic. Rather it was the collective personality of the social group. Furthermore the cult of the goddess Roma as a personification of Rome itself was clearly linked with such an objectification of the collective personality.

At first such deified virtues were seen as the god or goddess that accompanied the republican general. But from the time of Sulla onwards the Hellenistic tendency was not simply to see the deified virtues as accompanying, but indeed as being incarnate in, the ruler himself. Sulla adopted the title of *Felix* for himself after his victories in 82 B.C.. From that time he wrote his name as L. Cornelius Sulla Felix. Likewise his associate, Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius, used the title of Pius in his name.⁹⁷ Cicero, in *Pro Lege Manilia* (6 B.C.), dis-

⁹⁴ Livy 22,37,5; 22,33,7; 10,46,14. See also Fears (1981), pp. 834–835.

⁹⁵ Xenophon, *Cyrop.*, 1,1,3; 8,1,21–2,28; 8,6,23; 8,4,6–8; 8,5,1–16. Cf. Fears (1981), pp. 849–850.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 851–852.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 877.

tinguished between *virtutes populi Romani* and *virtutes imperatoris* when he claimed that the gift of *Fortuna* along with Pompey's other superhuman attributes (*haec divina atque incredibilis virtus imperatoris*),⁹⁸ could only be theirs by accepting Pompey himself as their incarnation. As he says:

... since you are able to put in charge of the war a commander (*imperatorem*) in whom is a remarkable knowledge (*in quo sit eximia scientia*) of war, exceptional virtue (*singularis virtus*), brilliant authority (*clarissima auctoritas*), exceptional fortune (*egregia fortuna*), why are you hesitating, O Romans, from using this great benefit which is offered and granted you by the immortal gods, in order to preserve and increase the Republic?

Pro Lege Manilia, 16.⁹⁹

Thus *Virtus* and *Auctoritas* could also be said not simply to be *cum eo* but rather *in quo sit*. *Salus* was also to appear on coins in prayer for Pompey's personal recovery in 50 B.C.¹⁰⁰

Res Gestae 12 records the erection of an altar not simply to *Pax* but to *Pax Augusta*. The iconography of the altar's relief shows "the epiphany of *Pax*, *Felicitas*, *Concordia* and *Pietas* in the person of Augustus and his restoration of the Roman and universal order."¹⁰¹ His achievement of the extraordinary *pax deorum*, required by the extraordinary convulsion of nature as well of society that was the civil war, was therefore through the existence of these divine entities exclusively in himself alone. Tiberius was to provide the final consummation of this development in 10 A.D. when he rededicated the temple of *Concordia* specifically as that of *Concordia Augusta*. Such adjectival qualifications such as *Juno Sospita* or *Janus Quirinus* defined "the sphere, functional or temporal, in which the deity has manifested her characteristic power."¹⁰² From Tiberius onwards we find examples of the continued qualification of each individual deity in the cult of virtues that shows their gradual assimilation by the godhead of the Imperial

⁹⁸ Cicero, *Pro Leg. Manil.*, 13.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 882: "... the Virtues work their beneficent influence upon the Roman People through the person of the charismatic saviour; these Virtues are embodied in his person, and thus upon his safety depends the welfare of the commonwealth." For a full discussion, see J.R. Fears, *The Theology of Victory at Rome*, in *ANRW* 2,17,2 (1981), pp. 797-800.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 882-883.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.* p. 885.

¹⁰² *Ibid.* p. 886.

Cult. Such virtues had thereby ceased to be separate divinities, but now became as it were part of the collective personality of the divine emperor.

Thus the golden age prophesied in Vergil and inaugurated, with its characteristics such as *Fortuna*, *Providentia*, *Salus*, *Concordia*, *Pax*, *Victoria* etc., can be located as flowing from the divinity of the emperor. The cult of Roma herself, originating in the Hellenistic East, could now be assimilated in the West to the Imperial Cult itself. The personality of individual emperors could now be identified with the corporate personality of the Roman Empire.¹⁰³ Augustus and his successors are thus made the sacramental sign by virtue of which the golden age has returned, and by which its continuance is guaranteed. But such a state of peace and felicity does not simply require the presence of the emperor, but also his performance of cultic, sacramental and augural acts.

The central concept of the emperor as *Genius Publicus* enables him to act as both priest and god of his own cult and to sacrifice as it were to himself. As we have seen, the *saeculum aureum* is inaugurated by an *augurium pacis* which no one else had been able to perform. Indeed others than Lucan's Figulus had tried and failed. Sulla, at the commencement of the extraordinary metaphysical disturbance that was the civil war, was shown on his coins simply as a mediator through whom *Felicitas* and *Concordia* operated. As with Metellus Pius before him, the jug and the *lituus*, those symbols of the *ius augurium*, are also shown.¹⁰⁴ Thus Sulla produces such virtuous social conditions by an augural act that is in one sense sacramental. We find a similar iconography in connection with Pompey's coinage.¹⁰⁵

Finally, Augustus was to combine messianic and augural themes within his own person. From 19 B.C. we find such examples as portrayals of Capricorn with a cornucopia of plenty together with, in some issues, the *augur's lituus*. On the *Gemma Augustea* at Vienna there is commemorated the scene in 12 A.D. when Tiberius threw himself at Augustus' feet, on return from Germany, whilst the former was presiding over the ceremonies (Plate 13).¹⁰⁶ *Roma* appears along-

¹⁰³ R. Mellor, The Goddess Roma, in *ANRW* 2,17,2 (1981), pp. 984-998 ff.

¹⁰⁴ Fears (1981), p. 791 and Plate IV,22; pp. 880-881 and Plate III,17.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* p. 803 and Plate VI,34.

¹⁰⁶ Suetonius, *Tiberius*, 20: "Ac prius quam in Capitolinium flecteret, descendit e curru seque praesidenti patri ad genua summisit." Cf. Mellor (1981), pp. 1012-1013 and Plate I and Ross Taylor (1931), pp. 226-227.

side representations of *Victoria*, *Oikumene*, and *Tellus*. Alongside *Roma* sits Augustus with the cornucopic sign of Capricorn over his head, and in his right hand is the *lituus*. *Fortuna* is depicted crowning him. The divine *augur* has issued in the golden age as he sits already amongst the gods and looks down on lesser mortals.¹⁰⁷ Nowhere is more clearly to be seen the sacramental character of the Imperial Cult which through its ritual maintains the extraordinary *pax deorum*. On the altar of the *Lares* Augustus is depicted as *augur* with *lituus* (Plate 7).

Let us now see how the Imperial Cult was received in Asia Minor as well as Palestine and Syria. Here we can examine the material fabric of the cult whose iconography and the religious message that it bore was to set the scene in which early Christianity developed. It was in the context of Asia Minor that, in particular, *Luke-Acts*, *Clement Corinthians*, the *Apocalypse*, and the Ignatian Letters were all to be written.

2B 4. *The reception of the Imperial Cult in the East*

The reception of the Imperial Cult in Asia Minor confirms an embryonic systematic theology of the Imperial Cult that we have outlined in which the Stoic λόγος determines all things by Πρόνοια, or by *Fatum* or *Fortuna*.¹⁰⁸ Such was the ultimate philosophical or metaphysical justification which was left when all demythologising imagery of any personal deity had been excised, as Lucan had wished to excise it. But we have seen how that metaphysic serviced an eschatology, cyclic in character, in which the age of iron and bronze could return to gold once more. We have also seen also how the ideology of the divine emperor made that golden age dependent both on the emperor's person, in that he incarnated its qualities of *salus*, *fortuna*, *pax*, etc., and on the cultic rites of the *auspicium*. Through an

¹⁰⁷ Fears (1981), p. 810: "The iconography of the Gemma itself boldly proclaims this intimate connection of Capricorn and triumph, marking the felicitas and virtus of Augustus, which have brought about the restoration of the golden age for mankind. . . . Flanked by Roma and crowned by Fortuna, the emperor holds in his right hand the lituus, the medium through which the will of the gods is manifest in his person and the emblem of those auspices by which Tiberius has triumphed."

¹⁰⁸ I say "a systematic theology" rather than "the" because I take Elsner's point ((1991), p. 52) that reactions to imperial worship in general were never complete "and yet always temporarily fulfilled by the viewers own participation" in not only the sacrificial rite but also in the general developing and incomplete theological discourse that gave meaning to that rite. We have here the phenomenon of polysemy to which Galinsky (1992) pointed.

extraordinary act of augury he had thus been able to restore a golden age of order to both nature and political society that had previously collapsed into evil and irrational chaos.

The celebration of this *Pax Augusta* on the *Ara* that thus bore his divine name was associated not simply with a limited, Republican *augurium salutis* but with Augustus' return from Spain and Gaul (*pro reditu meo*/ὕπερ τῆς ἐμῆς ἐπανόδου; *Res Gest.* 11) bearing a universal peace that was now (16–13 B.C.) inseparable from his own person as the *Pax Augustea*. First the *Ara Fortunae Reducis*/βωμὸς Τύχης Σωτηρίου) was erected at the *Porta Capena* (19 B.C.), after successful campaigns in Sicily, Greece, Asia, and Syria, with annual sacrifices. Then followed in 13 B.C. the consecration of the *Ara Pacis* itself in the *Campus Martius* (*Res Gest.* 12), followed by its dedication in 9 B.C. at the conclusion of a *lustrum* and a *suovetaurilia*, the implications of which we discuss in our next chapter (3B 1).

The response of the province of Asia expressed in the decrees and letter of its proconsul in 9 B.C. mirrors a systematic theology, justified in terms of Stoic metaphysics. Here we find the ancient augural quest for the *pax deorum* united with dreams of a golden age of plenty and peace, and with a single bringer of that age. The date itself shows the inauguration of the Imperial Cult there was co-terminus with the consecration of the *Ara Pacis* in the *Campus Martius* itself. The *saeculum aureum* that now begins for the cities of Asia Minor needs a new Calendar that begins with the birthday of Augustus. The document, copies of which we have from Priene, Apamea, Eumonia, and Dorylaeum, reads as follows:

... from previous gods we have received favour (παρὰ τῶν πρότερον παρειλήφαμεν ... τῶν θεῶν εὐμενὲς καὶ) ... whether the birthday of the most divine Caesar is more pleasant or more beneficial (πότερον ἡδεῖων ἢ ὠφελιμωτέρα ἐστὶν ἢ τοῦ θειοτάτου Καίσαρος γενέθλιος ἡμέρα) which we would justly consider to be a day equal to the beginning of all things (ἦν τῇ τῶν πάντων ἀρχῇ ἴσην δικαίως ἂν εἶναι ὑπολάβοιμεν) ...¹⁰⁹

Lines 1–6.

At this point there is note of hesitancy in the text about the real character of this new ἀρχή. The proconsul of Asia seems to hesitate

¹⁰⁹ V. Ehrenberg and A.M. Jones, *Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Augustus and Tiberius*, (Oxford: Clarendon 1955), no. 98, cf. also *OGIS* 458; *SEG* 4,490. R.K. Sherk (Ed. and Trans.), *Rome and the Greek East to the Death of Augustus*, in *Translated Documents of Greece and Rome*, 4, E. Badian and R. Sherk (Eds.) (Cambridge: U.P. 1984), no. 101 pp. 124–127.

lest he be overwhelmed by the force of his own rhetoric. Is the ἀρχή one in which the natural world is set right from its previous metaphysical collapse, or is it merely a question of the beginning of a new political order? He thus continues:

If not [the beginning of all things] in nature, at least in the order of the useful, (εἰ μὴ τῇ φύσει, τῷ γε χρησίμῳ) for even if there is nothing in a fallen condition (εἴ γε οὐδὲν οὐχὶ διαπείπτον) and changed into an unfortunate condition (καὶ εἰς ἀτυχῆς μεταβεβηκὸς σχῆμα) that he has not set right (ἀνθρώψεν), he has given to the whole world a different appearance (ἐτέραν τε ἔδωκεν παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ ὄψιν), which would [as a world] have gladly welcomed its destruction (ἥδιστα ἂν δεξαμένῳ φθοράν) had not for the common good fortune Caesar been born (εἰ μὴ τὸ κοινὸν πάντων εὐτύχημα ἐπεγεννήθη Καίσαρ).

Lines 6–9.

Despite therefore a certain reluctance about full commitment to the metaphysics of the *saeculum aureum*, the themes of the deified qualities of Τυχὴ (εἰς ἀτυχῆς τὸ κοινὸν πάντων εὐτύχημα) are still found associated with the beginning of a new political order in which matters have been “set right (ἀνθρώψεν).”

If we turn from the letter of the proconsul to the 1st Decree of the Koinon of Asia, also in 9 B.C., we also find evidence that Stoic metaphysics gives intellectual justification to the connections between *Fortuna*, augury and the *saeculum aureum*. The reason Augustus’ birthday begins the new Calendar is that:

The Providence that has divinely ordered our life (ἡ θεῖως διατάξασα τὸν βίον ἡμῶν πρόνοια), has brought us regard and honour (σπουδὴν εἰσενεγκαμένη καὶ φιλοτιμίαν) and arranged our life with perfect goodness (τὸ τελειότατον τῷ βίῳ διεκόσμησεν ἀγαθόν) when it brought to us Augustus (ἐνεγκαμένη τὸν Σεβαστὸν), whom Providence has filled with virtue for the benefit of mankind (ὄν εἰς εὐεργεσίαν ἀνθρώπων ἐπλήρωσεν ἀρετῆς) and granted both to us and to those after us as our saviour (ὥσπερ ἡμεῖν καὶ τοῖς μεθ’ ἡμᾶς σωτήρα χαρισαμένη) who has made war to cease and ordered the world with peace (τὸν παύσαντα μὲν πόλεμον, κοσμήσοντα δὲ εἰρήνην).

Lines 32–37.

Thus we have Stoic Πρόνοια combined both with the reign of peace and the personal mediator of that peace (Σεβαστὸν . . . κοσμήσοντα δὲ εἰρήνην).¹¹¹ The ἀρεταί are no longer individual deities but divine

¹¹¹ This theme is also found in an inscription from Athens in 1 A.D., see *ibid.* no. 128 p. 95 (*JGR* 4,180; *CIG* 3642) where Πρόνοια is identified with Julia Augusta.

characteristics with which Πρόνοια has filled Augustus (ὄν . . . ἐπλήρωσεν ἀρετῆς). The divinity *Salus* or Σωτηρία does not simply accompany Augustus, but is identified with the person of him who is σωτήρ, as he is also in other similar inscriptions.¹¹² As the passage continues, Caesar is associated with an ἐπιφανεία (ἐπιφανείς), ἐλπίς and εὐαγγέλια which surpass all other hopes and promises made. Thus we find concepts held both by the Imperial Cult and by the writers of the New Testament (l. 37–40).¹¹³

A similar inscription from Halicarnassus at this time substitutes for the idea of Πρόνοια the even stronger Stoic concept of “the eternal and undying nature of the universe (ἡ αἰώνιος καὶ ἀθάνατος τοῦ παντός φύσις).”¹¹⁴ In the words that follow, the Emperor is linked as *pater patriae* with the homeland of the Goddess Roma (πατέρα μὲν τῆς ἑαυτοῦ πατρίδος θεᾶς Ῥώμης), as well as identified with “the Father Zeus (Δία δὲ πατρῶον) and saviour of our common human race (καὶ σωτήρα τοῦ κοινού τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένους).” (l. 6–7) Furthermore, the virtues are once again associated with the divine mediation of the *saeculum aureum* through Augustus when it is claimed that “. . . cities (πόλεις) . . . flourish (ἀνθοῦσιν) with Good Government (Εὐνομία), Concord (Ὁμονοία), and Prosperity (καὶ Εὐετηρία), and the flower and harvest of all good (ἀκμή τε καὶ φορὰ παντός ἐστιν ἀγαθοῦ).” Dio Cassius might well inform us that, “when the senate and people once more contributed money for statues of Augustus, he would set up no statue of himself, but instead set up statues (εἰκόνας) of *Salus Publica* (Ῥυγείας Δημοσίας), *Concordia* (Ὁμονοίας), and *Pax* (Εἰρήνης).” (54,33) These divine qualities according to this inscription were already in a state of near identification with his divine, augural powers in bringing in the *saeculum aureum*.

From the West, from Narbo in Gaul, A.D. 12–13, we have corroboration of the augural theme that we have emphasised in connection with the Imperial Cult. A *votum perpetuum* is made to the *Numen* of Augustus. An altar was erected in the forum of the city at which sacrifice was to be made for the number of years after the 9th Kal. October, (23rd September), on which day, his birthday: “The blessed

¹¹² Cf. the decrees Myra in Lycia *IGRR* 3,721 (= Ehrenberg and Jones (1955) no. 88): Τιβέριον Καίσαρα θεὸν Σεβαστὸν θεῶν Σεβαστῶν υἱὸν αὐτοκράτορα γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης, τὸν εὐεργέτην καὶ σωτήρα τοῦ σύνπαντος κόσμου, Μυρέων ὁ δῆμος.

¹¹³ Ehrenberg and Jones (1955) no. 98 lines 35–41.

¹¹⁴ Ehrenberg and Jones (1955) no. 98a l. 3; *IBM* 4,1, no. 894, line 1.

Fortune of the age made him ruler of the world (*saeculi Felicitas eum orbi terrarum rectorem edidit*).” Not only then, but on *Idus Januar.* (7th January), the day on which he first assumed the *fasces*, incense and wine are to be offered because: “on that day first he entered upon (*auspicatus est*) the empire of the world (*imperium orbis terrarum*).”¹¹⁵

If we return once again to the East, we find at Gytheion in Laconia an inscription and a letter regarding the extension of the cult to include Tiberius. Augustus is called here “god the son of the god Caesar (θεοῦ Καίσαρος θεοῦ υἱοῦ), Saviour who brings liberty (Σωτήρ Ἐλευθερίου).”¹¹⁶ Julia Augusta is equated with Τύχη, and Germanicus with Νίκη. These examples could be extended. We have produced therefore sufficient examples for the moment to establish our case for various, different strands in the conceptual discourses that were coalescing to form theologies of imperial worship. The discourse of augury and priesthood were being juxtaposed with messianic themes. Moreover the Stoic theology of divination and *Fortuna* was also making its own contribution to part of the iconography of the cult of emperor worship in cities both of the Eastern and Western Empire.

Let us draw some preliminary observations for the rise of early Christianity from what has preceded.

2B 5. *Implications of the Imperial Cult for early Christianity*

We saw in the decree of the Koinon of Asia an example of the ideology of the Imperial Cult in Asia Minor that was to prefigure in the *Apocalypse*, and which was part of the scene in which both *Luke-Acts* and the letters of Ignatius of Antioch made their appearance. The Koinon that speaks for all Asia Minor reflects the theology of the cult that I have described in this chapter. We find a *pax deorum* achieved by an extraordinary act of augury that issued in no temporary εἰρήνη but the peace of the golden age. We find Stoic concepts of Πρόνοια and of φύσις intellectually justifying both the *augurium* and the coming of that age. We find concepts of σωτηρία through a σωτήρ expressed in that cult. Later (3D 3.2) we shall discuss further inscriptions such as one from Sardis in which a new addition

¹¹⁵ Ehrenberg and Jones (1955) no. 100 A, lines 20–27 = *ILS* 112 = *IGRR* 4,1756, I; Fishwick (1991) 2,1 p. 482.

¹¹⁶ See also a papyrus fragment on an association for an imperial cult *ibid.* no. 118 p. 93 and an inscription (A.D. 1) from Tentyrae, Egypt (*OGIS* 659) where Ἐλευθέριος is also found, *ibid.* no. 116, p. 93.

to the cult is accompanied by the “good news” of its proclamation. “The city is evangelised (εὐαγγελίσθη ἡ πόλις)” and “prayers for salvation (κατευχᾶς . . . ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας)” are offered “by sacred heralds (διὰ ἱεροκηρύκων).”¹¹⁷

At other places in Asia Minor such as Halicarnassus, and Gytheum, we found too such titles proclaimed in the inscriptions and in the prayers of the cult as σωτήρ, εἰρήνη, ἐλευθέριος, νίκη, υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐλπίς, ὑγίεια, ὁμόνοια, πρόνοια, ἐπιφάνεια, εὐαγγέλια etc. The cultural and religious terrain in which early Christianity developed was thus saturated by such concepts deeply embedded in the material and iconographic fabric of Graeco-Roman civilisation. Nor did this simply apply to Christian writings emanating from Asia Minor itself. Herod the Great had erected in Caesarea itself (20–19 B.C.) a temple in which stood a colossal statue of Augustus constructed on the model of the Olympian Zeus and a further statue to Roma, on that of Hera at Argos.¹¹⁸ Caesarea Philippi was to be the scene of the confession of Peter regarding Jesus not only as the Christ, but as the Son of the Living God (*Mk.* 8, 27–30).

It will be our objective now to attempt to assess, by looking at late first and second century Christian writings, the effect of this Imperial Cult in terms of how early Christians shaped their community and its structures in reaction (whether conscious or not) to the background of the Imperial Cult.

¹¹⁷ Ehrenberg and Jones no. 99 = *I. Sardis* 7,1,8, l. 12–14; Price (1984), p. 66 and p. 259 cat. no. 56.

¹¹⁸ Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* 1, 414 cf. *Antiqu.* 15,339; Fishwick (1987) 1,1 p. 129 and 147.

CHAPTER THREE

IMPERIAL IDEOLOGY AND THE ORIGINS OF CHURCH ORDER

Reformed Judaism in Luke-Acts and the Christian pax dei

In this chapter and the next two, we shall deal with the developments in the life of the early Church which mirrored the Imperial Cult as it developed in the social and political context of pagan Rome. We shall deal in this chapter exclusively with *Luke-Acts*, for which we accept a date after Nero, but before Domitian, of about 85 A.D.¹ We shall, in Chapter 4, consider the community of Clement at Rome and their relations with the Imperial Cult both intellectually and practically, in comparison with the circle of in Asia Minor in Domitian's time, to which *Luke-Acts* was addressed. In Clement's *Corinthians* the demands for order are self-consciously constructed after Roman models and express the very concerns with natural and social chaos that the Stoic metaphysic of the Imperial Cult had sought to address. We shall then (Chapter 5) consider what we will argue to be the Domitianic text of the *Apocalypse*, and its quite different approach to the Imperial Cult. The *Apocalypse* mirrors Domitian's changes in the Imperial Cult, and, in a manner different from *Luke-Acts*, formulates a distinctive contra culture that reverses the images and values that define the concept of power in the host culture.

In Chapter 6 we shall find reflected in Ignatius of Antioch, particularly in his *Romans* and *Ephesians*, the martyrological aspect of a contra culture. Ignatius described the ministerial representatives who joined him from various Churches as a cultic procession. The procession has the features of a Christian Eucharist, as its members lead Ignatius across Asia Minor to the arena at Rome. Thus we shall be able to complete our argument that the Order of the Imperial Cult finds a form and an iconography reflected in the Order of the

¹ For a defence of this dating, see P.F. Esler, Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The social and political motivations of Lucan theology, in *SNTMS* 57 (1987), pp. 27-30.

Christian Cult as it emerges in the early second century. That reflection was destined to continue and to develop into a new form in the confrontation between Cyprian and his fellow-bishops, and the Roman Empire of Decius Trajan.

But let us turn first of all in this chapter to the reformulation of early Christian eschatology in *Luke-Acts*. We shall argue that the purpose of that reformulation was to enable the author to define the Order and worship of the Christian cultus analogously with that of the Imperial.

We shall endeavour to answer two critical questions:

1. Why did Luke reshape Christian eschatology so that he could defer the expectation of the day of judgement to an indefinite future? (*Lk.* 21,24d; *Acts* 1,7)
2. Why, furthermore, did Luke, clearly a deutero-Paulinist in the generation after the death of his community's founding apostle, stress that Christianity was the fulfilment of Judaism in a way that was even more sympathetic to the latter than even Paul's final position (in contrast to *Galatians*) in *Romans* 9–12?

The traditional answer to 2. has been that Luke's two-volume work was intended to be an ecumenical document, reconciling differences between Paul's churches and the original Jerusalem community. We could respond by pointing out that Paul never really attacked Judaism in the way this view presupposes, but in fact stressed its continuity in terms of fulfilment. But then we must ask why Luke should stress that continuity when writing for a gentile audience. The traditional answer has always been suspect in terms of historical method since it implies that late first century communities developed according to the logic of his Christian community's own internal discourse that was only minimally related historically and culturally to the developing wider, pagan culture.² *Luke* is supposed to be solely concerned with healing internal divisions within the community in order to make the community stronger and more self-secure.

More recent literature has, moreover, acknowledged the problem

² The most recent statement of this case, with bibliography, is J. Jervell, *Luke and the People of God: A new Look at Luke-Acts*, (Minneapolis: Augsburg 1972), pp. 153–183, criticised in R. Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke-Acts*, in *FRANT* 126 (1982), chapter 3. For an earlier and provisional treatment of the themes of this chapter, see A. Brent, *Luke-Acts and the Imperial Cult in Asia Minor*, in *JThS* 48,2 (1997), pp. 111–138.

that Israel is recognised in *Luke-Acts* in a way that surpasses even Paul as the necessary precursor to Christianity.³ *Lk.* 1–2 locates the origins of Christianity in the circle of such priests and prophets of the Jerusalem Temple as Zachariah and Anna. Would even the Paul of *Romans* 9–11 have begun a Gospel addressed to gentile Christians in the words of *Lk.* 1,5 (ἐγένετο . . . ἱερεὺς τις ὀνόματι Ζαχαρίας)? Certainly, in order to explain such features in *Luke* as a deutero-Paulinist, Houlden postulated the existence of “pre-Marcionite Marcionites” as influencing the quite un-Pauline significance of the Temple in *Luke-Acts*.⁴ I reject as pure hypothesis such an undocumented movement within the early Church. I propose instead to produce documented evidence from the literature and background of the Imperial Cult to support my claim that the fulfilment of the object of republican religion by Augustus was the real counterfoil to *Luke’s* picture of Christianity as the fulfilment of the cult of the Temple of Judaism.

The traditional answer to 1 is that the delay of the Parousia caused *Luke* to reshape primitive eschatology so as to provide a space for the Church in normal history.⁵ But a phenomenon such as Montanism or millenarianist groups demonstrate that the delay of the Parousia did not of itself necessarily produce such a perceived need for a space for the church in normal history.

Esler’s recent study of the immediate historical and social background to *Luke-Acts* has focused on the need to replace the thesis of *Luke-Acts* as *apologia*, founded on the dubious legal notion of the quest for status as a *religio licita*, with a thesis about legitimation.⁶ Focusing

³ V. Fusco, *Luke-Acts and the Future of Israel*, in *NT* 38,1 (1996), pp. 1–17. J.L. Houlden, *The Purpose of Luke*, in *JST* 21 (1984), pp. 53–65 criticised Maddox (1982) for his attempts to modify what he saw as the extreme view of the centrality of Judaism represented by such writers as Jervell (1972) and G.D. Kilpatrick, *The Gentiles and the Strata of Luke*, in *Verborum Veritas*, (Ed.) O. Böcher and K. Haaker (Wuppertal: 1970).

⁴ Houlden (1984), p. 62. See also J. Jervell, *Retrospect and Prospect in Luke-Acts Interpretation*, in *SBL.SPS* 30 (1991), p. 384. For further bibliography, see F. Bovon, *Études lucaniennes. Rétrospective et prospective*, in *RThPh* 125 (1993), pp. 125–129, who poses two questions: “Le premier. . . La Loi mosaïque est-elle encore valide pour Luc?. . . Le second dirige le regard vers la position sociale de Luc.”

⁵ H. Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, translated by G. Buswell (London: Faber 1961), pp. 202–206.

⁶ The existence of a formal legal status of a *religio licita* was originally proposed by Harnack and Wendt. For references and further support for this point of view see Conzelmann (1961), pp. 137–144. This view has been questioned recently by Maddox (1982), pp. 91–93 and Esler (1987), pp. 211–214.

on *Luke's* gospel in the present chapter, I wish to argue that the legitimisation thesis is only partially true and possibly misleading. Legitimation in sociological discourse normally refers to the way in which one group, in its own self-interests, justifies its privileged position in power relations to another. I wish to emphasise here that the particular theology of *Luke* is a political theology in terms of which Theophilus and his group did not simply justify their position to others but to themselves.

The immediate historical and social context in which Theophilus and his circle found themselves was one in which the values of Imperial Order were reflected in the developing Imperial Cult in Asia Minor, whose origins and development we have traced in Chapter 2. That continuing development reinforced, under Domitian in the last quarter of the first century, the ideology of a religious reformation that had accompanied a political revolution under Augustus from 31 B.C. onwards.⁷ That religious reformation emphasised the religious role of the emperor as the fulfilment of the Republican cult (as opposed to its abrogation), originally conducted by elected magistrates who also held its priesthoods. Christianity, as commended by *Luke* to Theophilus' circle, was Judaism fulfilled.⁸ But *Luke* envisaged that fulfilment, to use Bovon's phrase, as 'une contrepartie religieuse' specifically to the religious claims implied by Augustus' constitutional reforms: it was not simply a general parallel with Imperial universalism, as Bovon originally thought.⁹

I will argue that Theophilus' circle inherited the values of an imperial order and peace that bore the form of Stoic metaphysics in which nature and society were one. Its members accepted the imperial values, deified as Virtues, of *Victoria*, *Pax*, *Concordia*, *Salus* etc.,

⁷ For developments of the Imperial Cult in Asia Minor specifically in the eighties such as cults to Domitian at Ephesus and Laodicea, see S.R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: U.P. 1984), pp. 140, 183–185, 197–198, 255.

⁸ F. Bovon, Israël, die Kirche und die Völker im lukanischen Doppelwerk, *ThLiZ* 108 (1983), col. 404: "Die Entwicklung des Kaiserkultes wäre eine weitere, wirkungsvollere Lösung, der bunten Vielfalt der unterworfenen Völker eine ideologische Einheit zu verleihen . . . Wie verhält sich die christliche *vocatio gentium* zu dieser Eingliederung der Völker in die römischen Strukturen?"

⁹ Bovon (1993), p. 128: "La défense et l'illustration de l'universalisme au long de toute œuvre de Luc représent, à mes yeux, une contrepartie religieuse des ambitions impériales romaines."

since they had been conditioned socially to take seriously the claim that an originally imperfect republican religious cultus had been reformed and perfected by the Augustus as *princeps*. The use of the methodology of narrative criticism in New Testament studies will help us here since we will seek to reconstruct the ideal reader for the text that Luke has reshaped in terms of the images of the imperial ideology.¹⁰ We shall argue that *Luke* has reformulated early Christian eschatology, initially in chapters 1–3, in a way that reflects the impress of the ideology of the *saeculum aureum* in the Imperial Cult. Furthermore, we shall witness throughout his work conceptual reflections of *pax*, *concordia* and *providentia* that bear witness to a concern with the theological implications of Augustan settlement. In consequence of such social conditioning, Theophilus and his circle shrank with horror at the prospect of a return to civil chaos marked by the events that lead to Actium (31 B.C.), and which they saw as the culmination of a century of increasingly devastating civil wars. Under the influence of such a historiography of decline, they experienced their metaphysical terror associated with the *ira* as opposed to the *pax deorum*.

Luke's solution was to encourage them to see Christianity, as the fulfilment of Judaism (2) which paralleled Augustus' fulfilment of that to which the religious practices of Republican magistrates had aspired, namely the divine *pax* in both nature and society. The Order of the Christian community, constituted by an apostolate whose *κοινωνία* continued the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus along with the breaking of bread (*Acts* 2,42), was the true means of producing the *pax dei*, in contrast to Augustus' *pax deorum* (the ἐπὶ γῆς/ἐν οὐρανῶ εἰρήνη; *Lk.* 2,24; 19,38). Here we find, in the context of imperial order, a refashioned Christian version of the Augustan *saeculum aureum*. Consequently *Lk.* 1–3 reshaped primitive Christian eschatology by removing themes of tribulation, chaos, and of the future role of the Son of Man in judgment, so as to produce, for Theophilus' circle, a Christian, present counterpart to the imperial peace, and the cultic means for securing this (1).

¹⁰ See e.g. M.C. de Boer, Narrative Criticism, Historical Criticism, and the Gospel of John, in *JNTS* 47 (1992), pp. 35–48 and the criticisms of S. Motyer, A Method in Fourth Gospel Studies: A Way out of the Impasse, in *JNTS* 66 (1997), pp. 27–44.

PART A. *LUKE-ACTS*: TRADITIONAL ESCHATOLOGY TRANSFORMED

The uniqueness of the eschatology of *Luke-Acts* cannot be overestimated. I will argue that this uniqueness is highly influenced by Augustus' *saeculum aureum* secured through the reformed Imperial Cult that was perceived, following our discussion in Chapter 2, to be alone able to secure the *pax deorum* (2B). But first let us establish that uniqueness in its own right by comparing Lukan eschatology with that of *Matthew* and *Mark*, before we offer any particular account of the influences that produced it.

3A 1. *Mark and the primitive kerygma*

There is very little attempt on the part of either *Matthew* or *Mark* to relate their story to secular history. Mark notoriously begins his gospel with the ministry of John the Baptist, like those primitive Christian sermons exemplified in the mouths of some of the twelve apostles, the deacon Stephen, and Paul in *Acts*. There is no birth story and the gospel begins as it were from nowhere. But *Mark's* purpose is to do more than reproduce the primitive *kerugma* in expanded form.¹¹

In comparison with its total length, a large section of *Mark* is taken up with the *Apocalypse* of *Mk.* 13. Earlier, before the scene of the Transfiguration, Jesus had declared that there were some standing there who would not taste of death until they had seen the kingdom of God come in power (*Mk.* 9,1). Originally the Transfiguration might have counted as the realisation of that declaration. But for Mark the coming of that kingdom is to be when the events of his *Apocalypse* are fulfilled, namely when the armies of Titus surround Jerusalem in A.D. 65 at the time when he writes from Rome. Jerusalem was not yet destroyed but the news reached the Roman community that it was about to be, and then the "abomination of the desolation" would be set up in the Temple as the day of the Lord set in blood and fire. After describing the shaking of the powers of nature in earthquake and famine, the expansion of error, and persecution and betrayal, *Mk.* 13,14 continues:

¹¹ J. Schniewind, Zur Synoptiker Exegese, in *ThR* 2 (1930), pp. 129-189 and C.H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments*, (London: MacMillan 1956), pp. 16-32 ff., cf. H. Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels, Their History and Development*, (London: SCM 1990), pp. 26-29 ff.

But when you shall see the Abomination of the desolation (τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως) [*Dan.* 9,27; 12,4; 10] standing where it ought not (ἐστηκότα ὅπου οὐ δεῖ), let the reader grasp the meaning, then let those in Judaea flee to the hills . . . For in those days shall be the tribulation (θλίψις) such as not come about from the beginning which God created until now [*Joel* 2,2].

Thus the Roman community, having experienced Nero's persecution in Rome (13,9–13), heard the news from Jerusalem of the gradual crushing of the revolt by Titus. The author informs them that Nero is about to fulfil the mysterious sacrilege prophesied by *Daniel*, the τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. It is the immediate consequence of this imminent and strange act that the last events of the world's history are to occur (13,20–28).¹²

Far from *Mark's* gospel therefore, as the theory of the interpreter of St. Peter suggests, being written for a generation to come who would otherwise lack Peter's teaching now that he had been martyred, the author expected no future history for which to write.¹³ His community was the community of the End time, with no need for a continuing authority structure with a continuing tradition handed down. For him there was to be no future history of this world, and therefore there was little need to write the events of Jesus' ministry, death and resurrection as dated events in a history that would continue. His written account was a reassurance to the Roman community that they had little longer to wait, and the eschatological events justifying their faith would soon take place.

We shall now see that *Matthew* deals with the problem of the delay of the *parousia*, which had not immediately followed the destruction of Jerusalem, quite differently from the way that *Luke-Acts* was to propose.

¹² S.G.F. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots: A Study of the Political Factor in Primitive Christianity*, (Manchester: U.P. 1961), pp. 387–391 dates *Mark* post 71 A.D. on the grounds that account of the rending of the veil in *Mk.* 15, 38 reflects the writer's experience of the triumphal procession of Vespasian at Rome in which the purple temple-curtains were included in the spoils and were afterwards deposited with copies of the Torah in the imperial palace, see Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* 6, 387–391 and 7,162. But even if this were the case, the historical closeness of the Roman community to the events of which they as yet had no certain account could still result in what had happened nourishing the imminent apocalyptic expectations to which *Mark* bears witness.

¹³ Papias *apud* Eusebius *H.E.* III,39,15 is clearly legendary and based upon the priority of *Matthew* as an apostolic authority.

3A 2. Matthew's *heightened apocalypticism: a hope frustrated*

Matthew was written at a similar time to that of *Luke-Acts*, but with a considerably different purpose. Redaction criticism has shown reflected in the various pericopes conflicting traditions bearing the marks of transmission through rival groups in a divided Christian community. Egalitarian, clericalist, and charismatic groups vie with one another, and *Matthew's* solution is presented in the person of a bridge-builder and reconciler, whether actual or ideal, who will bring the groups together.¹⁴ But the shadow of the End Time still hovers over the author's perspective. The Twelve Apostles are sent forth, and Jesus assures them that, though they will experience persecution, they will be beaten in synagogues and lead before synagogue courts and handed over to gentile magistrates for punishment, nevertheless:

Go not into the way of the pagans, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel . . . You shall not have completed the cities of Israel until the Son of Man shall come.¹⁵

But the author of *Matthew* knew at the time of his writing, in the late eighties in Antioch in Syria, that Jerusalem had been destroyed. The use of that gospel by early writers associated with Syria and Antioch clearly determines this as his place of origin. The citations of this gospel by Ignatius of Antioch (*circa* 107 A.D.),¹⁶ and particularly the appearance of single bishops in his writing where *Matthew's* clericalist faction has only presbyters and teachers, reveal the mid-eighties as the most likely date. Ignatius' single bishops have at the later time seemingly absorbed the charismatic functions of one of the opposing groups.¹⁷

But though Jerusalem has been destroyed, this does not lead him to tone down or limit the scope of the Markan apocalypse. *Mk.* 13, with its 37 verses has been expanded into two chapters, *Mat.* 24–25,

¹⁴ R.E. Brown and J.-P. Meier, *Antioch and Rome: New Testament Cradles of Catholic Christianity*, (New York: Paulist Press 1983), pp. 57–72 cf. A. Brent, Pseudonymity and Charisma in the Ministry of the Early Church, in *Aug.* 27,3 (1987), pp. 369–374.

¹⁵ *Mat.* 10,1–23.

¹⁶ Ignatius, *Ephes.* 14,2 (*Mat.* 12,33); *Smyrn.* 1,1 (*Mat.* 3,15); 6,1 (*Mat.* 19,12); *Polycarp* 2,2 (*Mat.* 10,16).

¹⁷ C. Trevett, Prophecy and Anti-Episcopal Activity: A Third Error Combated by Ignatius? in *JEH* 34 (1983), pp. 165–171, for qualifications of which see, Brent (1987), pp. 347–376.

with 51 and 46 verses respectively. The chapters owe their expansion to parables of the Last Judgement, such as the Days of Noah (24,37–42), the Lazy Servant (24,43–51), Wise and Foolish Virgins (25,1–13), the Talents (25,14–30), and the Sheep and the Goats (25,31–46). But where *Mk.* 13,14, in its reference to the τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως ἐστηκότα ὅπου οὐ δεῖ, refers to what stands in its temple before the imminent destruction of Jerusalem, *Mat.* 24,15 simply transfers the prophecy to what will stand “in an holy place (ἐν τόπῳ ἁγίῳ)” unspecified. The *Markan* apocalypse is still to be fulfilled imminently even though, since the Jerusalem temple already now been destroyed, the particular place where its fulfilment is to begin can no longer be specified.

But for the author of *Luke-Acts*, this conception of the End time found in one of his early Christian sources, *Mark*, cannot and will not be any longer sustained.¹⁸

3A 3. Luke's transformation of the apocalyptic tradition

Whilst not abrogating the original apocalyptic description of the coming of the End, *Luke* dissociates this description from the destruction of Jerusalem. All references to the shadowy and mysterious βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως are omitted. In *Lk.* 21,20–24 we read:

When you shall see Jerusalem encircled by armed camps, then know that its desolation (ἡ ἐρήμωσις αὐτῆς) has drawn nigh . . . and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the pagans until the times of the pagans (καιροὶ ἐθνῶν) are fulfilled.

Only after the unspecified and protracted καιροὶ ἐθνῶν will the heavenly powers be shaken and the signs seen (21,25–27). The ἐρήμωσις of Jerusalem is taken out of salvation history and placed securely in secular history in which the church is to have a mission and organisation that endures in secular time.

The particularly Lucan account and doctrine of the Ascension also implies this. Jesus is lifted up into heaven from whence in the unspecifiable future he will one day return. (*Acts* 1,9.) For forty days

¹⁸ D.E. Nineham, *The Gospel of St. Mark*, (London: A. and C. Black 1968), p. 354 footnote: “St. Luke’s version is not a verbatim reproduction of the original but an attempt, alternative to St. Mark’s, to deal with a well-known prophecy of profanation which had not been fulfilled with reference to the temple.” Cf. G.B. Caird, *St. Luke*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin 1963), pp. 231–232.

before, one question that is highlighted is the question about the occurrence of the apocalyptic events, but Jesus will give no answer, let alone any assurance of their immediacy, but rather points to a continuing temporal mission in which the church can expand from Jerusalem to Samaria and indeed to the uttermost parts of the earth (1,6–8). Present and future time no longer coalesce imperceptibly into one as the End remorselessly floods into the present, as in early Christian eschatology. The apostles are not to stand gazing into heaven (1,9–11), as if for the imminent return of Jesus, but are to repair the organisation of an indefinitely continuing community by replacing Judas with Matthias in order to bring the number of the apostles back up to twelve (1,15–26).

Thus, according to Conzelmann's original thesis, the author of *Luke-Acts* has removed the present from any immediate contact with the eschaton. He has thus created a space for the existence of a community which will function in secular history with an ecclesiastical Order that will preserve its identity and continuity. But let us now examine how the Church Order for which the author now makes provision was shaped against the background of the imperial reconstruction of secular history by his pagan contemporaries, and which it in consequence reflected.

PART B. *LUKE-ACTS* IN THE CONTEXT OF IMPERIAL HISTORY

Luke introduces his birth narrative with a chronological note linking Christ's birth with Augustan history in his story of the census (2,1–3). In 3,1 the ministry of Jesus is recorded as beginning "in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar," hence 30 A.D., with Pontius Pilate named as the "governor" (ἡγεμονεύοντος) of Judaea, Herod as tetrarch of Galilee, Philip of Ituraea, and Lysanias of Abilene. The action of Claudius in expelling the Jews from Rome is recorded, in explanation of the presence of Aquila and Priscilla (*Acts* 18,2). Gallio is mentioned as "pro-consul (ἀνθυπάτου) of Achaëa" (18,12), with whom we have already met as Lucan's uncle who committed suicide with him on the failure of their conspiracy to take Nero's life (2A 4). We also meet with Porcius Festus, succeeding Felix as governor (ἡγεμών). (*Acts* 23,25–27; 24,27)¹⁹

¹⁹ We know further what transpired regarding Festus and his succession by Cestius Florus from Josephus, *Antiqu.* 20, 197–203; *B.ell. Jud.* 2,166.

But we do well to ask whether this interaction with secular history is purely chronographic, or whether there is some further purpose reflected in the choice of at least some of these dates and figures. Such a purpose, moreover, may reflect in some way the concerns reflected in the imagery of the Imperial Cult as we have outlined in our second chapter.

3B 1. *The Augustan census of Lk. 2,1-2*

It is easy to dismiss this passage for historical reasons for which no doubt it ought to be dismissed. For this author, unlike *Matthew*, Mary did not originally live with Joseph in Bethlehem, only to move to Nazareth from the house in which Jesus was born due to the malignancy of Herod and Archelaus (*Mat.* 2,1; 11; 13; 22-23). Instead the author of *Luke-Acts* envisages Joseph and Mary living in Nazareth, and, in order to explain the fulfilment of *Micah* 5,2, invokes the Augustan census. It is quite impossible that there was any census involving each person within the Empire returning to their birth-place. There were however provincial censuses.²⁰

That each Roman citizen throughout the world had to enrol for sacrifice at the altar of the Imperial Cult was to await the later general citizenship law of Caracalla in 212 A.D., which made the Decian persecution (251 A.D.) possible as we shall see. But that at this time “the whole world should be enrolled (ἀπογράφεσθαι πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην)” in consequence of a “decree (δῶγμα)” of Augustus is problematic apart from the additional problem of migration to one’s place of birth. A more local *census* under Cyrenius as governor of Syria would seem more credible. Certainly we have recorded in Josephus a census conducted with great opposition by this governor in A.D. 6 or 7.²¹ But why should this local census (αὕτη ἡ ἀπογραφὴ) be associated with some general world-wide edict of Augustus by the author of *Luke-Acts*? A careful examination of the motivation for his exaggeration will expose his discrete purpose.

The author of *Luke-Acts* clearly wished to associate the birth of Jesus with Augustus, the mention of whose name in connection with

²⁰ P.A. Brunt, *Roman Imperial Themes*, (Oxford: Clarendon 1990), pp. 329-331.

²¹ Josephus *Antiqu.* 20,102. For a discussion of the relation between this census and *Lk.* 2,1-3 see E. Schürer, G. Vermes, and F. Millar, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark 1973), p. 381 and pp. 416-427. See also J.M. Creed, *The Gospel According to St. Luke*, (London: MacMillan 1930), pp. 28-31.

the this particular account of the birth of the true Messiah is evocative of many of the themes of the Imperial Cult to which we drew attention in our second chapter.²² We have seen how, particularly in the Asia Minor of the Proconsular decree of 9 B.C., Augustus' birthday was celebrated as the beginning of the *saeculum aureum* (ἡ τοῦ θειοτάτου Καίσαρος γενέθλιος ἡμέρα ἦν τη τῶν πάντων ἀρχῆ ἴσην . . .). (2B 4) Asia Minor was of course the scene of much of the second half of *Luke-Acts*.

Regarding the role of census taking, Augustus states:

In my sixth consulate [28 B.C.] I conducted a census [*censum populi*] of the people with my colleague Marcus Agrippa. I held a *lustrum* after an interval of forty-two years. At this *lustrum*, 4,063,000 Roman citizens were registered (*censa sunt capita*). I performed a second *lustrum* in the consulship of Gaius Censorinus and Gaius Asinius [8 B.C.] acting alone, by virtue of consular *imperium*. At this *lustrum* 4,233,000 Roman citizens were registered. I held a third *lustrum*, by virtue of a consular *imperium*, with my son, Tiberius Caesar, as my colleague, in the consulship of Sextus Pompeius and Sextus Appuleius [A.D. 14]. At this *lustrum* 4,937,000 Roman citizens were registered.

Res Gestae 8,2

It is important, however, to emphasise that, as the word *lustrum* suggests, there was a religious dimension to such acts. The *lustrum* was properly the completion of the census, as is seen in Livy's account of Servius, one of the legendary founders of the Roman constitution (534 B.C.). The *lustrum* here refers to the "purification" of the citizen body after its numbers had been determined (*censu perfecto*), and the capacity of each person in the rank now allotted them to contribute to the cost of the war against the Vei. The ceremony (*suovetaurilia*) was performed in the Campus Martius where a pig, sheep, and bull were sacrificed (Livy 1,44,2). It was this ceremony that was depicted in relief on the *Ara Pacis* (2A 4.2.1 and 2B 1 and Plate 6).

We have argued in our second chapter that, in his reconstruction of the cult within the reconstruction of the constitution, Augustus

²² For Luke's use of secular chronography to such a parallel between Jesus' kingdom and that of Augustus, see C. Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes, and the Genre of Luke-Acts*, in *SBLMS* 20 (1974), pp. 44-45; R.E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, (Garden City NY, Doubleday 1977), pp. 241-243. These reflections are also taken up in his account of *Luke-Acts* as *apologia pro imperio* to a Christian group by P.W. Walasky, "And so We Came to Rome": The Political Perspective of St. Luke, in *SNTSMS* 49 (1983), pp. 25-28. See also K. Wengst, *Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ*, trans. J. Bowden, (London: SCM 1987), pp. 89-105.

presupposed a kind of systematic theology in which the different cultic functions of the state were brought under his control as *Pontifex Maximus* and thus head of the Imperial Cult. We argued that the *saeculum aureum* could only return and be guaranteed long endurance by a particular act of *augurium*, which he uniquely performed and which Dio mentioned as the *augurium pacis* (2A 5). The *pax deorum* proved constantly elusive to the Republican cult, even though, following various outbreaks of the strangest prodigies, ritual attempts had been made to obtain it (2A 4.1).

We may now add that a *lustrum* of the city was performed following many of these outbreaks in order to set the metaphysical order right again and to produce the required *pax* that was to be the achievement of Augustus alone. We have countless examples of this in Livy.²³ We have argued that implicit in Livy is the notion that such examples became increasingly more frequent as the political breakdown of the Republic was reflected in the increasingly chaotic supernatural order. Arruns moreover required the purification of the city limits, its sacred boundary the *pomerium*, but to no avail when he saw what the *haruspicia* indicated (Lucan *Pharsalia* 1, 593–595). (2A 4.2)

It would be easy of course to secularise the process of the census and cut it off from its religious roots so as to make a *lustrum* after portent quite different from a *lustrum* after a census.²⁴ The roots of both is in the apotropaic function of the cult, as the *suovetaurilia* clearly indicated.²⁵ The reformed cult in which Augustus as *Pontifex Maximus* achieved the *pax deorum*, now almost equivalent to the *saeculum aureum*, requires a census.

Though the *lustrum* is related originally to the *imperium proconsulare* and not to the office of *Pontifex* or *augur*, they are in process of association through the appropriation of these offices, once held by different republican magistrates, by the same emperor. The evidence for this process of association is the iconography of the *Ara Pacis* itself. The *suovetaurilia* in the Campus Martius (Livy 1,44,2) provided the scene around Servilius, one of the traditional founders of the

²³ Livy 39,22, 4–5; 42,20; *Julius Obsequ.* 13; 44; 46; 49; 52; 63.

²⁴ This point is well made by Berve, *Lustrum*, in *PWK* 13, 1–2 cols. 2040–2059, see e.g. 2041: “Man wird durchaus an eine ‘sakral-profane’ Einheit als Wurzel zu denken haben, die auch der realistische Charakter der römischen Religion und die Heiligkeit des Staatsrechtes geradezu fordert . . .”

²⁵ *Ibid.* cols. 2043–2046.

constitution of old Republican Rome. Within the enclosure around the altar, we find the *Dedicatio* of 9 B.C. the iconography of which, as Radleigh Radford argued, took the form of a *suovetaurilia*.²⁶ Clearly this ceremony follows the second *lustrum* recorded in *Res Gestae* 8,2 in the consulship of Gaius Censorinus and Gaius Asinius (8 B.C.). Thus the *Ara Pacis*, in Augustus' *respublicae restitutae*, has depicted on its frescoes the new *suovetaurilia* of the new Servius celebrated once more in the Campus Martius where the *Ara* originally stood (Plate 6).

But new connections are made with the *Ara*'s iconography, which clearly relates the *saeculum aureum* to the *pax* of nature as well as of society, and that deified peace was mediated through Augustus as the *Pax Augustea*. Thus previous disparate images are being combined in the developing and legitimating discourse of the Imperial Cult. Using the iconography of the *Ara Pacis* as a commentary on the *Res Gestae* at this point, we can therefore demonstrate that Augustus' second *lustrum* was followed by a *suovetaurilia* celebrated as a critical turning point in Rome's history with a truly Livian significance. Indeed, as Buchner has shown, we cannot divorce the purpose of the construction of the *Ara* from the *Horologium* nor indeed from the whole complex in the Campus Martius which included the Mausoleum and the *Ustrinum* of Augustus.²⁷

Elsner makes no reference to Raleigh Radford's identification of the *suovetaurilia* on the *Ara Pacis*.²⁸ But in any case, I would accept his general thesis that the significance of such an artefact does not rest on the received "naturalism" in art-historical interpretation which entails that, because art imitates nature, then each figure must refer to a specific historical situation. I have referred to the origins of the

²⁶ C.A. Raleigh Radford, Some recent discoveries in Rome and Italy, in *JRomS* 29 (1939), p. 49: "The reconstructed upper frieze on the two sides of the enclosure is a historical record of the procession on the occasion of the solemn Consecratio in 13 B.C., a ceremony in which the Flamines, magistrates, senators, and members of the imperial family took part. Within, the frieze around the altar records the Dedicatio in 9 B.C. and the ritual laid down for periodic sacrifices. Only a small part of this frieze survives, but sufficient to show that the scene represented is the Suovetaurilia." See also P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, (trans. A. Shapiro), (Ann Arbor: U. of Michigan 1990), pp. 72-73 and fig. 57; p. 144 fig. 116.

²⁷ E. Buchner, *Die Sonnenuhr des Augustus: Nachdruck aus RM 1976 und 1980 und Nachtrag über die Ausgrabung 1980/1981*, (Mainz am Rhein: Philip von Zabern 1982), pp. 345-348.

²⁸ J. Elsner, Cult and Sculpture: Sacrifice in the *Ara Pacis Augustae*, in *JRomS* 81 (1991), pp. 50-61.

iconography, accepting that such an approach is not so much wrong as limited. The Livian themes of *lustrum* and *suovetaurilia* were to become part of the general and open-ended conceptual organisation of images, only loosely related to any one individual. They entered and formed part of a collective and ongoing social response in which the perception of any one individual contributed to but was not exhaustive of the whole. "A Jewish view, for instance, or a Pythagorean one might have been very different from that of a Roman priest . . . The sacrificial process . . . of which the Ara Pacis was the setting, was permanently incomplete and yet always temporarily fulfilled by the viewer's own participation in the sacrificial rite."²⁹ I propose seeing the discourse in which *Luke-Acts* operates as embodying a subset of general and open-ended imperial images, not every one of which will be consistent with every member of the general set. We can add the name of the Christian Theophilus and the third Evangelist to different kinds of persons, like Elsner's Jewish sage or Pythagorean philosopher, whose reactions to the developing iconography of the Imperial Cult in Asia Minor, in parallel with that of Rome, were similarly open-ended.

We can now begin to see why the author of *Luke-Acts* wished to give a local census of Quirinus such a universal, world-wide perspective, quite apart from the added, migratory feature which could bring ordinary residents of Nazareth to Bethlehem. He has taken a memory or record of the census of Quirinus in 6–7 A.D. and applied this to the birth of Christ, even though there was clearly no chronological connexion between this event and the reign of Herod the Great, nor indeed with the *suovetaurilia* at Rome in 9 B.C. that had followed the *lustrum* of 8 B.C. Taking a narrative-critical approach, we may say that he needed to parallel for his readers in Theophilus' circle the birth of Jesus with the founder of the Imperial Cult, and thus to compare the religious claims made by the former with his claims for the latter.

Luke needed a census in Judaea—even though this only occurred in 6–7 A.D.—in order to parallel the *lustrum* at Rome in 8–9 B.C. His desire to lead his readers to associate the imagery evoked by chronologically unrelated events has led him to confuse his chronology. In this parallel, Luke was strangely prophetic, and showed a sensitivity to what the Imperial Cult implied and into what it was

²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 52.

to develop finally, under Decius Trajan (A.D. 251). According to this later conception, the Imperial Cult required a census of all those Caracalla had made citizens (A.D. 212) in order that their participation in the Imperial Cult could thus be secured with the object of securing once again the *pax deorum*. A δόγμα was therefore required that ἀπογράφεσθαι πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην, even though in Caracalla's or in Decius' case the place of residence and not a journey to the place of birth to be enrolled was to prove sufficient.

Let us now pursue this possibility further, and see how the author of *Luke-Acts* presupposes, in contrast to his earlier and traditional apocalyptic archetypes, an eschatology closer to the pre-occupations of the vision of Vergil's Fourth Eclogue and the role that it came to play in the Imperial Cult (2A 6).

3B 2. *Cultic background of the altar of incense in Lk. 1,5–2,52*

The scene that surrounds Christ's birth, according to the author, is a cultic one. The narrative opens with an angelic visitation by an altar of incense. In fact the verb θυμιᾶσαι occurs once and the noun θυμίαμα twice within two sentences which read:

It happened while [Zachariah] was exercising his priesthood (ἐν τῷ ἱερατεύειν) in the daily order (τῇ τάξει τῆς ἑφημερίας) before the Lord, he was chosen by lot to offer incense (ἔλαχε τοῦ θυμιᾶσαι) according to the custom of priestly officiants, when he entered the temple of the Lord, while all the multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense (ἔξω τῆ ὥρᾳ τοῦ θυμιάματος). And the angel of the Lord appeared standing on the right hand side of the altar of incense (τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου τοῦ θυμιάματος).

Luke 1,8–11

As we shall see when we discuss the *Apocalypse*, incense was a characteristic feature of the Imperial Cult and is clearly reflected in the imagery there. Here we should note that the practice of offering incense was part of the Old Testament cultus, and that the author refers primarily to one particular practice from that cultus which he has selected for a particular purpose. Aaron burns incense on the altar before the Tabernacle veil every morning and there is no cultic arrangement by hours (*Exodus* 30,1, and 7). In *1 Chronicles* 13,10–11, however, we read of the priests and levites who, in their daily divisions (ἑφημερίας), burn incense to the Lord early in the day.³⁰

³⁰ For their 24 divisions see *1 Chron.* 23,16; 28,13 and *Josephus Antiqu.* 12, 265.

But it is interesting also to note that the Jewish cultic act of offering of incense with which *Luke-Acts* chooses to begin the announcement of the forerunner of the Messiah was also characteristic of the Imperial Cult. The inscription from Gytheum regarding the decree of Tiberius refers to three images (εἰκόνας) of divine Augustus Caesar (θεοῦ Σεβαστοῦ), Julia, and Tiberius Augustus, displayed on three successive days. It then continues:

... let a table (τράπεζα) be set up by him in middle of the theatre and let an incense charger (or altar) (θυμιατήριον) be placed upon it (ἐπικείσθω) and let the councillors and all ranks together offer sacrifice (ἐπιθύετωσαν) before the players (ἀκροάματα) enter for the safety (τῆς τῶν ἡγεμόνων σωτηρίας) of the rulers.³¹

We have, moreover, a bronze statuette from Lugdunum depicting a priest of the Imperial Cult holding an incense box in his left hand and with his right depositing a few grains on an altar (Plate 15). A statuette conveys the image of a characteristic pose of the office of the person depicted.³² The image of an act of censuring for a priest of the Imperial Cult is as characteristic as that of the depiction of a medieval priest performing manual acts at Mass with the Host in his hands.

Augustus is depicted on one cult statue wearing a Roman toga but veiled as a priest with a *patera* (φιάλη) in his right hand, which was used to hold incense as well as wine or other cereal offerings.³³ However, there are clear associations between the φιάλη and incense in early Christian images as *Apoc.* 5,8 makes clear. There are clear references to incense associated with the Imperial Cult at Gytheum in A.D. 15 and at Pergamon *circa* A.D. 138.³⁴ The burning of incense and libations was already common in the Hellenistic ruler cult in Ptolemaic Egypt before its adaptation to emperor worship.³⁵ There is arguably, therefore, a clear association between the Imperial Cult, the practice of general ruler-worship from which it was derived, and

³¹ S.R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power. The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor*, (Cambridge: U.P. 1984), p. 208.

³² D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West: Studies in the Ruler Cult of the Western Province of the Roman Empire*, in *EPRO* 108 (1991) 1,1, p. 133 footnote 246 and Plate 19, and 2,1 p. 504 and pp. 565–566.

³³ Price (1984), p. 185 and Plate 1 b.

³⁴ *SEG* 11,922–933 (Gytheum); Ehrenberg and Jones (1955) no. 102 (a); *IGRR* 4, 353 b 20 attests the use of incense on Trajan's altar at Pergamon.

³⁵ Fishwick (1991) 2,1 p. 513.

the offering of incense and wine in the pagan religious cultural heritage of Theophilus and his circle (Plate 14).³⁶

The author of *Luke-Acts* therefore has selected from the Jewish cult a particular act that evokes particular comparison by gentile readers in Asia Minor and in Syria, and even by Jewish readers in Caesarea Philippi where the Herodian temple of Sebaste stood, with the Imperial Cult. It is arguable that the Imperial Cult represents the real, pagan backcloth for his seemingly Jewish backcloth, if *Luke* is written after A.D. 70 when the Jewish Temple rites have been abolished. Indeed, the Jewish backcloth would have had no value for Luke as a deutero-Paulinist unless Jewish imagery could be re-serviced as a contra-cultural response to pagan ritual. It is with the Hellenistic, pagan incense-ritual with which his readers would be familiar. Yet in the open-ended, developing conceptual discourse of participants in the cult, new Judaeo Christian concepts are now devised and assimilated with pagan ones. Elsner's formulation of art-historical interpretation has clearly general relevance. We have seen however that the *Ara Pacis* of Augustus (2B 1) had expressed iconographically the message of a Messianic golden age well reflected in the literary works of his court poets (2A 6). We shall now see how that golden age is now reflected by the author of *Luke-Acts* and the reformed Jewish cult that he sets in contrast with the reformed Roman cult of a divine and augural emperor.

3B 3. *Eschatological promise and the reformed Jewish Cult*

We have already outlined the way in which the author has broken with traditional apocalyptic descriptions, not so much denying them but simply insulating the present from their effect by placing them in a far and indefinite future. The kind of golden age eschatology with which he replaces this apocalyptic imagery is being fulfilled in the present by the birth and ministry of Jesus the Messiah. But it should be noted that the announcement of that golden age is made, not through John the Baptist alone even without his apocalypse of blood and fire. The forerunner is given a supernatural birth even though of a different kind to that of Jesus.

³⁶ Such also was the position argued in M. Nilsson, *GGR*³ 2, p. 337.

Both are announced in the context of the temple cult and its priest (Zachariah) and female prophetess. Female prophetesses were not usually associated with the Jewish Cult, unlike the Sibyl in the Roman cult. The announcement of the golden age is through the medium of cultic hymns (*Magnificat*, *Nunc Dimittis*, etc.), like the *Carmen Saeculare* of Horace. The announcement of John's birth that makes Zachariah dumb took place in the temple at the altar of incense (*Lk.* 1,5–25). His aged wife Elizabeth, miraculously with child given her age, may leave the temple precinct to visit Mary in Nazareth in Galilee, and there she may hear from Mary's lips the *Magnificat* (1,26–56). He may recover his voice at the birth of John and sing his hymn of thanksgiving (1,57–80).

But the scene will return, after the Angels' Song, to the Shepherd and the birth of Christ (2,1–21) once more to the Temple, where Mary and Joseph take the Christ child in order to offer the sacrifices for purification and there Symeon will sing the *Nunc Dimittis* (2,22–35). Anna pursues her widowhood in the temple from which she never departs, and where she fasts and prays, like the Sibyl, telling what has occurred to all who await redemption in Jerusalem (πᾶσιν τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρῳσιν Ἰερουσαλήμ; 2,36–39). Finally the special material of *Luke-Acts* ends at this point with the young Christ in the Temple astounding the teachers in the Temple (1,41–52).

But given that it is a reformed cult of Judaism from which arises the hope of the golden age, in what terms is such an age expressed, which, like Augustus' *augurium pacis*, the cult will through its central figure usher in (2B 1)? We shall now see the close connections between the imagery of the various cultic hymns and that of the Imperial Cult.

3B 3.1. εἰρήνη, σωτήρ and the *pax deorum* in *Luke-Acts*

We have already drawn attention to the way in which such virtues as Εἰρήνη-*Pax*, Ὁμόνοια—*Concordia* are not merely independent deities but are associated, as they had been from Sulla's time, with the personality of the *imperator* (2B 3). It was necessary therefore now to have the Augustan presence in order to secure the *saeculum aureum* in which these virtues would be realised. Similar themes are now reflected in the special time that has come round, the ἐνιαυτὸν Κυρίου δεκτόν which, in the author's own special additions to *Mark* and *Q*, is what Jesus begins his ministry by "heralding (κηρῦξαι)." (*Lk.* 4,18)

This passage by itself parallels the Imperial Cult without there appearing at first sight to exist any necessary connection between such a contingent and parallel theme. The reference is to the freeing (λύτρωσις) of the land every 50th year, the year of Jubilee (*Lev.* 25,10). The parallel in the Imperial Cult is with a Stoic return of the golden age after the disintegration into iron, after which the cycle of history makes its full turn to the *saeculum aureum* with *Fortuna Redux*. We have examined how the metaphysics of such a notion was incorporated into the fundamental assumptions of the Imperial Cult (2A 6). But like Augustus, and unlike Old Testament forshadowings, the ἐνιαυτὸν Κυρίου δεκτὸν and the consequent λύτρωσις is made dependent for its fulfilment on a unique person, Jesus. Thus the appearance of contingency in the parallelism is mistaken. There is a direct connection between the use of Old Testament promise and the matrix of the ideology of the Imperial Cult which shapes the envisaged fulfilment of that promise.

Σωτηρία was another of these virtuous conditions associated with the extraordinary *pax deorum* which Augustus as *augur* was to achieve. Zachariah prophesies on the birth of John his son the fulfilment of promised λύτρωσις in that God has “raised up the horn of salvation for us (σωτηρίας ἡμῖν; *Lk.* 1,69).” Here again σωτηρία has an Old Testament background where such phrases as “salvation from our enemies (σωτηρίαν ἐξ ἐχθρῶν; 1,71)” are derived from 2 *Sam.* 22,3, and *Ps* 17,18–19 in the process of his construction of a hymn (*Lk.* 1,71–72). In preparing the way for the Lord John is “to give knowledge of salvation (τοῦ δοῦναι γνῶσιν σωτηρίας) to his people (τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ) in the forgiveness of their sins (ἐν ἀφέσει ἁμαρτιῶν; 1,77).” Here also the Old Testament background reveals a fulfilled Judaism which parallels the imperial ideology but shows no necessary connection with it.

But when we turn to *Luke's* association of the divine plan (πρόγνωσις, βουλή) with themes of σωτηρία and σωτήρ, we find more than a merely contingent parallelism but rather a more positive connection. Squires has emphasised the at least partial roots of *Luke's* concept of providence in the linguistic usage of πρόνοια in Hellenistic universal histories such as Diodorus Siculus and Dionysius of Halicarnassus.³⁷ But there is a more direct connection in the association of

³⁷ J.T. Squires, *The Plan of God in Luke-Acts*, in *SNTS* monograph series 76 (Cambridge: 1993), pp. 15–17; 38–46; 103–108.

πρόνοια with σωτήρ in the ideology of the Imperial Cult. It is this association in the template of imperial ideology that arguably determines *Luke's* association of such Old Testament themes as he constructs these around Jesus as σωτήρ.

We have already noted from the *Koinon* of Asia's decree in 9 B.C. the description of Augustus as the one "Providence (Πρόνοια) granted to us as our saviour (ὡσπερ ἡμεῖν καὶ τοῖς μεθ' ἡμᾶς σωτήρα χαρισισμένην) who has made war to cease and ordered the world with peace (τὸν πάσαντα μὲν πόλεμον, κοσμήσοντα δὲ εἰρήνην)."³⁸ We have examples too from Sardis between 5–2 B.C., and Gytheion in Laconia in Tiberius' reign (2B 4). We may note further examples in the case of Antiochus IV and Julius Caesar.³⁹

The passage continues:

through the compassion of our God,
in which the dawn (ἀνατολή) from on high has visited us,
to appear to those seated in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide (κατευθῦναι) our feet into the way of peace (εἰς ὁδὸν εἰρήνης).
Luke 1,78–79

The feeling of gloom and despondency, of darkness and the shadow of death, is not to be attributed to an expression of the feeling of Israel under enemy occupation. Were that the focus of these sentiments, they would not have been included in this highly crafted literary text addressed to Theophilus, a Roman of some rank, as is shown by his being addressed as "Your Excellency (κράτιστε Θεόφιλε),"⁴⁰ about whom we shall have some more to say later (3C 2). The theme is not of revolutionary chaos or natural convulsion but of a golden age

³⁸ Ehrenberg and Jones (1955), pp. 82–83 no. 98 (b) lines 34–36 and 1B 4.

³⁹ See also M.P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion in HA* 5,2,2 (1974), pp. 371–372 for examples in the case of Caesar and Antiochus IV. Cf. Fishwick (1987) 1,1 pp. 11–12, 27, 48, 50.

⁴⁰ *Lk.* 1,3. L. Alexander, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel. Literary convention and social context in Luke 1.1–4 and Acts 1.1*, in *SNTS* monograph series 78 (1993), p. 133: "... κράτιστος was applied properly to people of equestrian rank. But it is now accepted that it is found with wider application... and so its use does not prove that Theophilus was a Roman official." But Luke uses this word only in one other place, *Acts* 23,25, where Claudias Lysias addresses his letter: τῷ κρατίστῳ ἡγεμόνι Φήλικι. Clearly Luke understands this term as that of a high ranking official, and therefore in a sense consistent with *OGIS* 614, 4–5 (governor of Arabia); 629,168 (Corbulo); 667,4 (prefect of Egypt); Josephus, *Antiqu.* 20,12 (governor of Syria). See also R.L. Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin 1986), pp. 430–431. On Theophilus as a real person and not a pseudonym for a "typical" Christian, see Alexander (1995), pp. 188–190 ff.

of guided order (κατευθύναι) in the path of peace (εἰς ὁδὸν εἰρήνης). There are no concessions here to the traditional eschatological themes, derived from *Mk.* 13 and found in *Lk.* 21,7–28. The ἀπολύτρωσις of 21,28, set in the context of the “signs in the sun and moon . . . distress of nations in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves men fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken” (25–26), is clearly different from the context of the λύτρωσις of 1,68 which is set in the context of ἄφεσις and εἰρήνη (1,77–79). As an expression of a people oppressed seeking freedom from the Roman yoke, it would have been far more appropriate for the author of *Luke-Acts* to have retained the apocalyptic framework of *Mark*, as *Matthew* does (3A 1–2).

The sense of πρόνοια too in the “destiny (ἡ πρόνοια) which fulfils the prayers of all”⁴¹ is reflected in the homily attributed to Peter in *Acts* 2,23 where Jesus’ betrayal by Judas and the Crucifixion is “by the predetermined counsel (τῆ ὀρισμένη βουλῇ) and foreknowledge (προγνώσει) of God.” In the Proconsul of Asia’s letter, it is fitting that Caesar’s birthday should mark the entry of magistrates into office, since this “signifies (δηλονότι) of the rank thus marked out (οὔτως τῆς τάξεως προτετυπωμένης) that it is according to a divine wish (κατά τινα θεῖαν βούλησιν).”⁴² Jesus according to *Acts* 2,22 is “a man depicted (ἀποδεδειγμένον) by God to you by miracles and wonders and signs.” His entry into office, as it were, through the resurrection is here viewed as part of the divine plan or purpose.

As we saw from the letter of the proconsul of Asia in 9 B.C. (2B 4), Augustus “had set right (ἀνῶρθωσεν)” by the “good fortune (εὐτύχημα)” of his birth (γενέθλιος ἡμέρα) a world whose collapsed form has been transformed into a fortunate condition (εἰς εὐτυχὲς μεταβεβηκὸς σχῆμα).⁴³ That “setting right” was associated conceptually with the Augustus’ augural act in producing an extraordinary *pax deorum* (2A 5). In *Lk.* 1,79 there is a similar “setting right” in connection with εἰρήνη or *pax* in the description of John as “guiding (κατευθύναι) our feet into the way of peace (εἰς ὁδὸν εἰρήνης).” When she is healed, the crippled woman is described as “being set right (or stood upright = ἀνωρθώθη),” uniquely in the New Testament, in *Lk.* 13,13.

⁴¹ Ehrenberg and Jones (1955) 98a. line 6 and *IBM* 4,1, no. 894.

⁴² *Ibid.* no. 98 (a) line 15.

⁴³ *Ibid.* no. 98 (a) line 6 and 1B 4.

Furthermore those “seated in darkness and in the shadow of death” in *Lk.* 1,79 are members of the world described in the proconsul of Asia’s letter as one that “would have gladly welcomed its destruction (ἡδιστα ἂν δεξαμένῳ φθοράν).”⁴⁴ The birth of Augustus had been the “beginning of the good life of nature and of society (ἀρχὴν τοῦ βίου καὶ τῆς ζωῆς), which is the end and limit of feeling regret (τοῦ μεταμέλεσθαι).”⁴⁵ Likewise in the angels’ song to the shepherds, peace (εἰρήνη) is announced “upon earth amongst men with whom God is well pleased (ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας; *Lk.* 2,14).”⁴⁶ Finally Symeon in the *Nunc Dimittis* links his departure “in peace (ἐν εἰρήνῃ)” with “thy salvation (τὸ σωτήριόν σου; 2,29–30).”

But the presence of salvation, peace, and the *saeculum aureum* was associated, according to Vergil’s Fourth Eclogue, with the birth of a child who (*l.* 15), possessed the “life of the gods (*deum vitam*).” By the time he wrote *Aeneid* 6, 791–794, Vergil associated the divine personage with *Augustus Caesar, genus divorum, qui condet saecula aurea* (2A 6). Augustus moreover was quite literally *filius dei* since he was not only Caesar’ son but also of the *gens Julia* whose divine ancestor had been Venus. It would be quite wrong to underrate the strong religious impression made by such expressions and attributes on the way in which the Emperor was regarded in Asia Minor in the late first century.⁴⁷ Let us now examine the Lukan parallels with such imperial titles. Once again we shall note that it is the imperial ideology that controls his selection of Old Testament themes and provides the pattern into which he fits them.

3B 3.2. *Virgin Birth and Jesus as Son of God* (*Lk.* 2,26–35)

The author of *Luke-Acts* did not invent the story of the Virgin Birth. A variant of that same tradition is found in *Mat.* 1,18–25. On the generally accepted, four document hypothesis, Luke did not know

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* line 8.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* line 10–11.

⁴⁶ See also Nilsson (1974), p. 371.

⁴⁷ Thus I find quite facile B.W. Jones, *The Emperor Domitian*, (London: Routledge 1992), pp. 108–109 where he regards Domitian’s divine appellation as: “all but incredible . . . terms used by flatterers such as Martial, Statius, Juventius Celsus (or Pliny) to secure a favour from an autocrat hardly constitute proof that they were instructed or required to use them . . .” I have followed here the general thesis of Price (1984) and Fishwick (1987) that it is wrong to secularize Roman politics and to marginalize the religious dimension in this way. See also K. Scott, *The Imperial Cult under the Flavians* (New York: Arno 1975), pp. 102–103 and footnote 7 above.

Matthew's special material, or *vice versa*. But there are significant differences.

Firstly, in *Lk.* 1,32, what Mary is to conceive is to be called "Son of the Highest (υἱὸς ὑψίστου)," and therefore Son of God already by conception. Moreover this title is linked with not only the "throne of David his Father" and rule "over the house of Jacob forever," but also with an everlasting kingdom, since: "of his kingdom (τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ) there shall be no end (οὐκ ἔσται τέλος; 1,32-33)." But in *Mat.* 1,18-25 this connection is not made.

Jesus is referred to simply as "king of the Jews" in the question of the Magi (2,1-2). The adoration of the Magi foreshadows the homage of the Gentiles to be given to Israel's Messiah. Mary is to have a child and "what is begotten (γεννηθὲν) is of the Holy Spirit (ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου; 1,20)." His name Jesus implies that "he shall save (σώσει) his people from their sins." (1,21) *Matthew* here uses the verb σώσει rather than the Augustan title σωτήρ which, as we have seen, is used by the author of *Luke-Acts* (3B 3.1). The child is born in Bethlehem (the city of David) (2,5-6). In *Matthew* what is γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματος . . . ἁγίου is not connected therefore with the title υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ. The child "begotten of the Holy Spirit" is a miracle that indicates Mary's purity, so that Joseph shall not "put her away," (1,20) and simply fulfils a Messianic prophecy (*Is.* 7,14) about a virgin and a child called Emmanuel (1,22-23). Υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ is not therefore connected in *Matthew* with the mode of Christ's virginal birth nor therefore with the golden age as both in Augustan literature and in *Luke-Acts*. Jesus is called "Son of God" in *Mat.* 2,15, but, as with the divine voice at his baptism first in *Mat.* 3,17 as in *Mk.* 1,11, the title has the sense of adoption rather than birth, in allusion to the adoption of Israel in *Hos.* 11,1 or the king as Israel's representative in *Ps.* 2,7. Thus in *Matthew* no conclusion is drawn from the Virgin Birth to Jesus' divine status other than that of Messiah in fulfilment of *Is.* 7,14.⁴⁸

The adoption of the Augustan equation *genus divorum* (= *filius dei* = *saeculum aureum*) is, therefore, by the author of *Luke-Acts* alone. Mary asks how this can be since she has not carnal knowledge of a man

⁴⁸ For a further discussion and full bibliography, see J. Nolland, No Son-of-God Christology in Matthew 1.18-25, in *JSNNT* 62 (1996), pp. 3-12.

(*Lk.* 1,34) and therefore invites Gabriel's rather clinical and technical explanation. He replies:

The Holy Spirit (πνεῦμα ἅγιον) shall come upon you (ἐλεύσεται ἐπὶ σέ), and the power of the Highest (καὶ δύναμις ὑψίστου) shall overshadow you (ἐπισκιάσει σοι); therefore that holy thing which is born (διὸ καὶ τὸ γεννώμενον ἅγιον) shall be called a son of God (κληθήσεται υἱὸς θεοῦ).

Luke 1,35

Clearly the author of *Luke-Acts*, just like the Augustan poets, wishes to show how the figure at the centre of his Christian cult is quite literally divine by procreation, and in no analogical or allegorical sense. In *Ecl.* 4,6, the mother of the child to be born was a *Virgo*, and her seed the "dear offspring of the gods (*cara deum suboles*)" (*l.* 49) so that τὸ γεννώμενον clearly parallels *suboles*.

Our comparison of Mathaeian and Lukan accounts of the Virgin Birth show that not every selection and development of Old Testament proof texts will yield the sense in which *Luke* uses his divine titles. *Luke* affirms the use of Old Testament concepts of σωτηρία in support of his title of σωτήρ because he can thereby construct a parallelism with the imperial ideology, just as he does when he interprets Old Testament prophecies of the Virgin Birth as a divine procreation.

But it is not the case that the author will take on the categories of the Imperial Cult without radical reinterpretation. It is not a pagan cultus with which we are presented but a reformed Jewish one in which Jesus' Messiahship stands realised. Contra-cultures to some extent produce mirror images of their host culture: they reverse the categories and values of what they reflect. And this is what is clearly happening here. *Luke* is holding up to Theophilus and his circle inverse mirror images of their pagan culture that reverse the categories and values of what those images reflect.

It has often been pointed out that the language of *Lk.* 1,35 almost self-consciously rules out any humanly conceived activity of God on Mary's womb, such as when Anchises fathered by the seduction of Venus Aeneas and thereby the *gens Julia* (Vergil *Aenid* 1, 617–620). The divine activity in the miraculous birth is described in highly abstract terms. The anthropomorphism of "shall come upon you (ἐλεύσεται ἐπὶ σέ)" is all but obliterated by making the subject of this verb "holy spirit (πνεῦμα ἅγιον)." The equivalent expression in different terms, in the second stanza of a Hebrew poem, likewise makes it clear that πνεῦμα ἅγιον is the depersonalised "power of the Highest

(δύναμις ὑψίστου)” and its action is devoid of directly physical contact (“shall overshadow you (ἐπισκιάσει σοι)”).⁴⁹

It is strictly therefore through this depersonalised process that the “holy thing which is born (διὸ καὶ τὸ γεννώμενον ἅγιον) shall be called a son of God (κληθήσεται υἱὸς θεοῦ; *Lk.* 1,35).” Yet as we have pointed out, there was no such connection between the title son of God and divine progeny in the tradition which preceded *Luke*, and no justification from his Old Testament material. His theology of the Virgin Birth is the result of the impress of the template of imperial ideology upon that material. *Mk.* 15,39 places that title in the mouth of the centurion where the author uses it as a *double-entendre*: his readers knew what the title really meant, without any concession such as *Luke* makes to a pagan theology of divine procreation. The author of *Luke-Acts* is therefore creating a metaphysical sense in which Jesus can be seen as a divine progeny in self-conscious reflection on the position of Augustus in the Imperial Cult. He refashions the concepts of that cult and the community at the centre of which it stood in order to present his own contra-cultural image that identifies his own counter group.

But we shall now examine a third strand in the cultic hymns, and aetiological stories associated with it, in terms of the contra-cultural response of the community of *Luke-Acts* to Augustan concept of *Victoria*, its messianic associations, and its divinisation from an abstract term into a personal one.

3B 3.3. *Victoria and the Magnificat (Lk. 1,46–55)*

We saw how in the republican cult *Victoria* was turned into one of the divine personalities of the emperor. We observed moreover the iconographic expression of this process in the inscriptions on the *gemma Augustea* where *Roma* appears alongside representations of *Victoria*, *Oikumene*, and *Tellus*. Alongside *Roma* sits Augustus with the cornucopic sign of Capricorn over his head, and in his right hand is the *lituus*. *Fortuna* is depicted crowning him (2B 3 and Plate 13). Thus *Victoria* and *Salus* were qualities achieved through the sacerdotal qualities of the figure of Augustus, *genus divorum*, standing as presiding priest of a cult which sacramentally could secure the *saeculum aureum*.

⁴⁹ V. Taylor, *The Historical Evidence for the Virgin Birth*, (Oxford: Clarendon 1920); Brown (1977), pp. 314–316.

There is no necessary connection, in a logical sense, between the concepts of *Victoria* and *Salus* in battle, a golden age, a human figure of divine and supernatural parentage, and a series of sacred acts centred upon a cult. In terms of traditional Christian theology post Chalcedon, Mary's virginity and the manner of her conception has significance for the theology of incarnation. But there is as a background to the original account in *Luke* none of the latter theological and philosophical concerns of Chalcedon. Without such a context, there is no necessary connection between the Annunciation and the contents of the *Magnificat*. That hymn, from the centre of the Christian cultus, considered as Judaism reformed, does not have Mary meditating on and glorying in the two natures made one in what she conceives.

Rather she interprets the significance of the *genus dei*, the υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ which she bears, in terms of a military victory. Though formally speaking the actual term *Victoria* (Νίκη) is not explicitly used, other terms indicative of such a divine abstraction are. Mary's ταπείνωσις has been ended by God who is ὁ δυνατός, and who has "shown (ἐποίησεν) the might (κράτος) of his arm (ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ)" and "scattered the proud (διεσκόρπισεν ὑπερφάνους; *Lk.* 1,48–51)." "He has cast down (καθεῖλεν) the mighty (δυνάστας) from their thrones (ἀπὸ θρόνων; 52)." Previously the promised birth of Mary's child has been associated with the θρόνος and βασιλεία of David which, like the ideal *imperium Romanum*, will have no end (*Lk.* 1,32–33). Furthermore, Zachariah's thanksgiving for the birth of John the Baptist sets the themes of σωτηρία, λύτρωσις, and ἄφεσις in the militaristic context of the κέρασ σωτηρίας which gives deliverance ἐξ ἐχθρῶν (1, 69–70; 73). Though not specifically named, the kind of emotional investment in the deified *Victoria* was not absent from the worship of Mary's child by Theophilus and his circle.

We can, following partially a narrative-critical approach, construct the ideal reader from such passages and find that our construction is informed by the cultural and historical template which orders the theme of *Victoria* (Νίκη) in the Imperial Cult. Such a template makes intelligible how Theophilus and his circle would regard the record of the events of a supernatural birth and a divine Child which ushers in a reign of *Pax* or εἰρήνη as alternative images to those of the Imperial Cult (Plate 5). That cult, from 9 B.C. onwards, transfigured the landscape of religious architecture and culture in the Asia Minor of the provenance of the Lukan writings, as well as at Caesarea

Philippi in Palestine itself.⁵⁰ Some traditional, Jewish prophetic elements might contribute to that picture, such as the vision of the Golden Age in *Is.* 2,1–4, or 11,1–11 where nature is at peace, part of which involves a young child leading wild animals without danger. But in the latter case there is no a messianic child born supernaturally who is the sacramental sign of that *saeculum aureum*.

Elijah is mentioned in the latest recension of Malachi but there the scene is of judgement and purification, and not of peace and security. *Lk.* 1,15–17 applies the description of Elijah (*Mal.* 3,22–23) to John, but without the addition of threatened judgement (μὴ ἔλθω καὶ πατάξω τὴν γῆν ἄρδην). The original description of the messenger is one of terror (*Mal.* 3,2–6). Thus the description here of the future ministry of John the Baptist blends with the εἰρήνη of a Judaeo-Christian *saeculum aureum* without themes of judgement associated with John elsewhere (*Mat.* 3,7–12; *Mk.* 1,6–8). *Lk.* 3,7–15 modifies the judgemental picture of John, even though he retains the “wrath to come,” (7) by the addition of more peaceful features. John, shorn of Elijah’s dress and diet, exhorts the giving of food and clothing to those in need. Tax-collectors are not to exact more than their allotted amount. Roman soldiers are to be content with their wages (10–14). The Lukan Golden Age has no such elements of judgement, but has instead a supernaturally born Divine Child, and themes of *Victoria* and *Pax*. Indeed, judgement and purification would have been as alien to the background to *Luke’s* own material in chapters 1–3 as the *fascēs securēsque* would have been to the lictors pointedly depicted without them on Augustus’ *Ara Pacis* (2B1). Thus the template which relates such disparate themes into a logically interrelated whole is that of the Imperial Cult whose foundation is a sacramental, augural act initiating and perpetuating the *saeculum aureum*.

But it would be wrong to understand the development of Lukan imagery as simply cloning in Christian terms that of the Imperial Cult with which the environment both of political culture and architecture was clearly saturated. The writer of *Luke-Acts*, we are arguing, should not be understood as producing a picture of an alternative

⁵⁰ Caesarea Philippi is not given in *Lk.* 9,18–20 as the location of Peter’s confession of Jesus’ Messiahship. Luke wishes to correct a seditious misreading of *Mk.* 8,27–33. The *pax Christi* is the Christian counterpart to the *pax Augusta* which points to the proper fulfilment of its true aspirations rather than denying them completely. See Brent Kinman, *Jesus’ Entry into Jerusalem in the Context of Lukan Theology and the Politics of His Day*, in *AGJU* 27 (Leiden: Brill 1995), pp. 89–90.

society with which to replace the present. This is a charge that we might lay rather at the author of the *Apocalypse*, as we shall see. A contra-culture is not an alternative culture, as we must now—and in a Lukan context—explain.

PART C. LUKAN IMAGES OF CONTRA-CULTURE

A creation of a contra-culture is a symbiotic strategy leading to social integration rather than *anomie*. A contra-culture is not a mirror image of the culture that it reflects, with different persons replacing the authority figures with the authority structures that they inhabit and their web of relationships left unaltered. In that respect a contra-culture is not a revolutionary alternative (Chapter 1, pp. 11–14 ff.). Cohen's juvenile gangs, for example, were not challenging the *status quo* but creating a solution which enabled them to live symbiotically within it. Their reversal of society's values was part of the creation of a social reality which gave them status that broader society denied them, and thus in one way protected that society from revolutionary destruction. The consequence of the delinquent solution as such was not a revolutionary solution.

Similarly *Luke-Acts* represents a contra-cultural solution which is social integrative, overcoming as it does the psychological state of *anomie* in the inhabitants of that contra-culture and thus reducing pressures towards actual and disruptive *anomia* within the host culture in which it is found. That the themes of *Victoria* and *Pax* are not to be interpreted in a politically revolutionary way is made quite clear by *Luke's* radical adjustment, unique amongst the synoptic evangelists, of the apocalyptic message of John the Baptist when the latter is recorded as exhorting the giving of food and clothing to those in need. Tax-collectors are not to exact more than their allotted amount. Roman soldiers are to be content with their wages (*Lk.* 3,10–14).

But let us now examine how the theoretical perspective of contra-culture informs both parts of *Luke-Acts*. We begin briefly with the Lukan eschatology (3C 1) and follow with a more extended treatment in *Acts* (3C 2).

3C 1. *The imperial banquet* (*Lk.* 1,52–53; 3,1)

Pax and *Victoria* in the context of the reformed Judaistic cult, and its promised golden age ushered in by a Son of God born of a Virgin, were not exact mirror images of the Imperial Cult which they thus

reflected in the form of their preferred distortions. The reformed, Judaeo-Christian cult provided a solution for the hungry and meek who were satisfied with good things with the rich sent away empty (*Lk.* 1,52–53). The Virgin's child, who is the sign of the *saeculum aureum* of *λύτρωσις*, *εἰρήνη* and *σωτηρία*, is born in a manger (*Lk.* 1,11), like the hungry and the oppressed. *Luke's* scene is thus his contra-cultural creation of a scheme of significance in which the dispossessed and marginalised are given their own, new construction of reality that assigns them dignity and status withheld by "normal" society. As such Luke was inviting Theophilus and his circle to accept also the egalitarian demands of the Jesus Movement, possibly overlooked by Paul.⁵¹

The "judgement" which might be seen in *Lk.* 1,52–53, where the mighty are thrown down and the humble and meek exalted, fits far more closely with parallels in the Augustan revolution than with Old Testament themes of judgement. But the beneficiaries in Mary's song of *Σωτηρία* and *Λύτρωσις* have no counterpart in the social revolution marked by the advent of the Imperial Cult and its celebration of *Νίκη*. In the latter it was not the humble and meek, but leading freedmen and members of the *Ordo Equester* who benefited from the Augustan revolution.

As Zanker points out, these groups previously without social status could now achieve social recognition through the religious responsibilities of priesthoods. The sacrificial procession depicted on the *Ara Pacis* displays the newly constituted, leading aristocracy.⁵² For example, the equestrians were made priests of the cult of the *Lupercalia*. Moreover, leading freedmen (*liberti*) gained religious functions and corresponding social status through the cultic shrines of their various guilds and as *magistri* in the cults of the *Compitalia* which were the 265 *vici* or city-districts created by Augustus in 7 B.C., and for which we have commemorative altars (Plate 8). Even worthy slaves could participate as *ministri* at these shrines who thereby achieved the status of public office and could record their new status by their participation in processions on imperial feast days. The Altar of the Lares shows probably Augustus handing over two statuettes of the *Lares*

⁵¹ G. Theissen, *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity*, trans. J. Bowden, (Philadelphia: Fortress 1982), pp. 7–30.

⁵² Zanker (1990), p. 123.

to the *ministri* of a *compitum* (Plate 9). The latter wear slaves' dress.⁵³

The reference to banqueting in *Lk.* 1, 52–53 is significant in view of our location of the Lucan eschatology and its mythology in the imagery of the Imperial Cult. Civic banquets, like civic games, were linked to cultic celebrations of imperial birthdays in the lectionary that Fishwick posits and attempts to reconstruct.⁵⁴ Part of the largesse required of the prestigious priests of the Imperial Cult was the provision of lavish civic banquets. These too, like those who held the priesthoods at Rome, were using such offices as a means of upward social mobility from the increasingly wealthy groups of freedmen and tradesmen. *Luke* has a vision of an even more radical revolution as a counterpart to that of Augustus. In the case of the latter, the previously mighty are thrown from their seats by an increasingly powerful, mercantile and trading class newly admitted to power. Augustus is depicted on one altar as presenting a statue of Minerva to the *magistri* of a guild of woodworkers (Plate 12). For the former it is the poor and humble that benefitted from the changed status brought about by the reversal of power.

A decree of the provincial council of Asia, a copy of which is preserved in an inscription from Hypaepa, records the choir of Asia holding a banquet after hymns and sacrifices in honour of Tiberius' birthday.⁵⁵ In the games which preceded such banquets, with the procession of imperial images from a *Sebasteion* to the games themselves, the rich would have places of honour around the presiding governor, with the emperor's chair occupied by his image if he was not there in person.⁵⁶ The newly emerging ranks and degrees of political authority represented and reinforced social integration within the new imperial order. But the order that was celebrated here was a new social order. The payment for the cult and associated games, and the priesthood awarded for such a benefaction, formed part of a social phenomenon of upward mobility. Augustus' revolution, unlike *Luke's*, had not proposed to "exalt the humble and meek." But, as my references to Zanker have shown, that revolution had certainly raised seats of honour for a social class that had not possessed them

⁵³ Zanker (1990), p. 131 and p. 133 fig. 109.

⁵⁴ Fishwick (1991) 2,1 pp. 482–501.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* p. 586, citing *IGRR* 4, 1608c. See also 3C 3.2.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* p. 575 cf. F. Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World*, (London: Duckworth 1977), p. 36 and p. 365; J. Gagé, *Apollon Romain*, in *BEFAR* 182, (1955), pp. 257–296; Martial *Ep.* 3.

before, but which could rise socially through its benefactions to a new cult celebrating a political revolution. To that extent *Luke's* eschatology reflected the Augustan settlement.

Before Decius Trajan (A.D. 251) participation was voluntary and without any legal compulsion to participate. But social pressure, as Tertullian's later *De Corona* was to indicate, could have the same practical conclusions of drawing hostile attention to non-participants and the drawing up of charges of *scelera* or of *contumacia* against them.⁵⁷ Furthermore, Pliny's remarks show that, as a social event, the cult would not simply have made Theophilus as a provincial aristocrat and his associates feel constrained, but also members of the general populace who did not participate in the wearing of festal garlands or the general adulations and horseplay of a public holiday.

Thus Christianity as the reformed cult of Judaism changes the order of prestige as the divine Child born of the Virgin issues in the new age. The eschatological banquet is to exult to its positions of honour the *ταπεινοί* and the *πεινῶντες*. These themes moreover can be found outside the birth stories in the specifically Lukan material that interleaves the Gospel tradition as he takes it over. The beginning of the *εὐαγγέλιον* with John the Baptist, as in *Mark* and the early Christian homiletic preserved in the speeches of Peter etc. in *Acts*, is marked by the Chronology of imperial history. In *Lk.* 3,1 that beginning is given "in the fifteenth year (*ἐν ἔτει δὲ πεντεκαιδεκάτῳ*) of the consulship (*τῆς ἡγεμονίας*) of Tiberius Caesar," but there are mentioned also the offices of both Pilate (proconsul of Judaea), Herod (tetrarch of Galilee, Iturea and Trachontis), Lysanias (tetrarch of Abilene).

Then, in the specifically Lucan account of the Rejection at Nazareth (*Lk.* 4,16-30), we see the divine Child now grown, who has already appeared at the centre of the old Temple cult. There he astonished the teachers of that cult with his understanding of the Law (*Lk.*

⁵⁷ A.N. Sherwin-White, The early persecutions and Roman Law again, in *JThS* 3,2 (1952), p. 210 with which at least in this respect agrees G.E.M. De Ste. Croix, Why were the early Christians persecuted? in *Past and Present*, 26 (1963), p. 10 where he says: "In fact emperor worship is a factor of no independent importance in the persecution of Christians." See also A.N. Sherwin-White, Why were the early Christians persecuted?—An Amendment, in *Past and Present*, 27 (1964), pp. 23-27; G.E.M. De Ste. Croix, Why were the early Christians persecuted?—A Rejoinder, in *Past and Present*, 27 (1964), pp. 28-33; F. Millar, The Imperial Cult and the Persecutions, in *Culte des Souverains dans l'Empire Romain*, in *Entretiens* 19 (1972), pp. 143-175.

2,46–48). Now he announces (4,19) in the synagogue the “year of the Lord’s favour (ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν).” Thus the Lukan *saeculum aureum*, begun with the divine Child, now is continued by the Man. Using the words of *Is.* 61,1–2 combined with 58,6, he is able to define the ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν as one in which there would be “preaching the good-news to the poor (εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς), . . . proclaiming release to the prisoners (κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεςιν) and seeing-again to the blind (καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν), . . . to set at liberty those who are oppressed (ἀποστείλαι τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει).”

That we are dealing with Lucan special material here thus enables us to forge links with the eschatology of *Lk.* 1–2, and hence with the imagery of the Imperial Cult and its *saeculum aureum*. The Koinon of Asia had, on the motion of the high-priest Apollonius son of Menophilos from Aizanoi, in an inscription to which we have already frequently referred, claimed that Πρόνοια “had granted them and their successors a saviour (τοῖς μεθ’ ἡμᾶς σωτήρα χαρισσαμένη)” in Augustus “who had made war to cease (τὸν παύσαντα μὲν πόλεμον) and had adorned peace (κοσμήσαντα δὲ εἰρήνην).” These sentiments we saw reflected in *Lk.* 1,55,71,77,79; 2,11,14,29. But the decree of the Koinon had also stated that “Caesar, on his appearance (ἐπιφανείς δὲ) had exceeded the hopes of all those who had received glad tidings before us . . . (τὰς ἐλπίδας τῶν προλαβόντων [εὐαγγέλια πάντων ὑπερ]έθηκεν).”⁵⁸ The restoration of the text can be justified with reference to at least two further inscriptions, one from the Peloponnese referring to a priest sacrificing (θύσαντα) in view of “good news (εὐανγέ[λια]),” concerning the imperial family (ὑπὲρ οἴκου παντὸς τ[ῶ] Σεβα-[στω]), and another from Samos in the time of Augustus referring to a festival (ἡμέραν εὐα[γγελίου]) celebrating good news from Rome.⁵⁹

When the good news of the granting of permission for an Imperial Cult is brought to a city such as Sardis, the city is described as “evangelised.”⁶⁰ When *Luke* says εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς in the context of his contra-cultural eschatology, we may locate his “good news” in such a context. But for him the εὐανγέλια are not for the benefit of the new wealthy leaders of the city states of Asia Minor or of

⁵⁸ Ehrenberg and Jones (1955) 98 (= *OGIS* 458), l. 37–38, cf 2B 4.

⁵⁹ Both are cited in Horsley *New Documents* III, p. 13. The Peloponnese inscription is reconstructed in L. Moretti, *ArcCl* 5 (1953), pp. 255–259, and the Samian in *IGRR* 4, 1708.

⁶⁰ *IGRR* 4, 1756 l. 14: εὐαγγελίσθη ἡ πόλις. See also 3D 3.2.

Syria, whose position was being redefined by the Augustan revolution, but for the poor. Priesthoods of the Imperial Cult itself had been an important vehicle for individuals to increase their personal status amongst the freeborn urban elite of those cities. A rising individual could use such priesthoods to publicize their new rank marked by the possession of the *προεδρία* at the events that were part of the celebrations of the Imperial Cult in the theatres and amphitheatres.⁶¹

But we must remember that *Luke-Acts* is a two volumed work, and its separation by the position of the Fourth Gospel in the usual order of *New Testament* contents has perhaps served to obscure this fact. We must now address the essential continuity of the themes that Luke impressed upon his traditional material as they are found in *Acts*.

3C 2. *Images of contra-culture in Acts*

The reintroduction of Theophilus as the Roman of rank to whom the two volumed work is addressed has been the focus of attention for hypotheses regarding the apologetic character of *Luke-Acts*. Though the first volume gives no great indication of the apologetic interests of the author, it might nevertheless be argued that *Acts* more than compensates.

The foundation of the apologetic thesis is undoubtedly the way in which wise Roman magistrates are represented as always understanding that any civil unrest is never the fault of Christian missionaries but is due to the factitiousness of unwanton Jewish opposition. Without such a foundation, it is difficult to lay too much stress on the rank of Theophilus, since the words of *Lk.* 1,3–4 suggests that this particular *κράτιστος* has already received catechetical instruction (*ἵνα ἐπιγνῶς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν*). This would hardly therefore suggest a pagan magistrate needing to be convinced of the harmlessness of Christianity in order to give it the protection of being declared a *religio licita*.⁶²

Let us for the moment consider such an apologetic interpretation.

3C 2.1. *The interpretation of Acts as apologia*

In *Acts* 18,4–17 the famous events take place at Corinth where Jewish opposition and blasphemy ends Paul's normal practice of persuading

⁶¹ Zanker (1990), pp. 129–131; pp. 319–328.

⁶² See footnote 6.

by public argument Jews and Hellenists every Sabbath in the synagogue (*v.* 4). Paul transfers his preaching to the house of Titus Justus which “bordered on the synagogue (συνομοροῦσα τῇ συναγωγῇ; *v.* 7).” Crispus the ἀρχισυνάγωγος is converted with his household and they are baptised (*v.* 8). But after six months “the Jews cause an uproar against Paul (κατεπέστησαν ὁμοθυμαδὸν τῷ Παύλῳ), and bring him to court (ἤγαγον αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὸ βῆμα).” The presiding proconsul of Achaia is Gallio (Γαλλίωνος δὲ ἀνθυπάτου ὄντος τῆς Ἀχαΐας; *v.* 12).

Gallio, in the scene which follows, rejects the charges of illegality, and claims that they are purely “disputes about a discussion regarding names (ζητήματά ἐστιν περὶ λόγου καὶ ὀνομάτων) and your particular law (καὶ νόμου τοῦ καθ’ ὑμᾶς).” In consequence, he refuses to act as judge (κριτὴς ἐγὼ τούτων οὐ βούλομαι εἶναι; *v.* 15). In final exasperation he expels them from the immediate area where he sits in judgement, while nearby and within his view Sosthenes the ἀρχισυνάγωγος is beaten, whilst Gallio looks on with indifference (*v.* 16–17).

The scene described here in detail exemplifies a theme now well developed in summary throughout *Acts*. In 17, 5–9 the Jews are held responsible for “stirring up the rabble (ὄχλοποιήσαντες) and causing uproar in the city (ἐθορύβουν τὴν πόλιν)” of Thessalonica, with the result that the city magistrates (πολιτάρχαι) fined Jason and others in Paul’s absence, but nevertheless released them. In 14,2 the Jews of Iconium are held responsible for “corrupting the hearts of the gentiles (ἐκάκωσαν τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν ἐθνῶν).” At Antioch (13,50) “the Jews incite (παρώτρυναν) pious women of noble rank (σεβομένας γυναῖκας τὰς εὐσχήμονας) and the leading citizens (τοὺς πρώτους τῆς πόλεως) and aroused a persecution (ἐπήγειραν διωγμὸν) against Paul and Barnabas . . .” At Lystra it is “Jews from Iconium and Antioch” who persuade the crowds, that had hitherto treated them as almost divine, to stone them (14,19).

The seemingly hidden, apologetic message is that any civil unrest attributed to Christianity was in fact due to Jewish agitation, and that Gallio had demonstrated the attitude of the wise magistrate. Such a message seemed reinforced by the closing chapters of *Acts*. Here it is expressly claimed that Felix was favourably impressed by Paul (*v.* 24–25) in the face of accusations by Tertullus at the instigation of Ananias the high priest of disturbing the peace and instigating στάσεις (24,1–9). Felix therefore could have given no credence

to these charges and only wished for a bribe in order to release him (v. 26).

Paul makes his famous appeal to Caesar before Porcius Festus, Felix's successor and thus preempts any further judicial proceedings at his hands (25,1–11). Agrippa too hears him, and both gentile governor and Jewish king conceded that had he not made his appeal, he could have been released (26,30). But there are a number of problems with regarding *Acts* as a straightforward apology, however much there may be clearly peripheral apologetic concerns implied in that work.⁶³

3C 2.2. *Modifications of the apologetic thesis*

The probable date of *Luke-Acts*, demanded by most source critical approaches regarding the compilation of the Gospels, is A.D. 75–85. The use by *Luke* of *Mark's* gospel, itself datable around A.D. 65, requires *Luke* to be writing after the persecution of Nero in which Paul died. Why is there no record of Paul's trial and execution before Nero? The apologetic thesis in some of its forms has led in consequence to the demand that *Acts* must have been written before that event, and therefore before A.D. 65. In other forms it has required the hypothesis that the trial and execution of Paul had to be deliberately suppressed, otherwise the apologetic force of what the author wrote would be lost. If furthermore, as Jackson and Lake suggested, Paul was acquitted simply because of a time lapse of two years, then such a verdict of not-proven rather than of innocence would not have helped his case.⁶⁴ But either of these argumentative moves clearly face insuperable difficulties, the first because of the impossibility of the early date in the light of cogent, source-critical, hypotheses, and the second because simply ignoring Paul's martyrdom would not deprive it of its force against a primary apologetic case.

Theophilus could not fail to have known of the fate of Paul at

⁶³ For a full discussion of the apologetic motive and its limitations, together with a summary of literature, see Esler (1987), ch. 8, with whose conclusion I am clearly in substantial agreement, namely that *Luke-Acts* is concerned with constructing a legitimation for a community.

⁶⁴ F.J. Foakes Jackson and K. Lake, *The Beginnings of Christianity, Part 1: The Acts of the Apostles*, (London: MacMillan 1933) 1, 4 pp. 348–350. For bibliography and a discussion of the various solutions to this problem see Walaskay (1983), pp. 18–22, who concludes with Cullmann from Clement, *Cor.* 5 that the author was embarrassed because the charges against Paul arose from within the Church.

the court of Caesar Nero, and indeed the stress throughout *Acts* on Paul's Roman citizenship would have emphasised the need to make due inquiries should he have been uncertain of what had actually transpired. But Theophilus, and the instructed Christian circle that he represented, would have been fully aware of the possibility of being brought before the magistrate themselves, should there have been any question of their sacrificing as part of the Imperial Cult, or even, as was more likely at their time, from charges resulting from suspicions about the true motives for their non-participation (3C 1). The purpose of *Luke-Acts* was to strengthen and reassure this inner-Church group of their association with the humble and meek, and to convince them that they were honoured and valued in terms of the contra-culture, against which there was no justification for such imperial hostility. They well knew of the charges on which Paul was condemned but of which they would have experienced unease at being reminded. They knew such charges but wished for quietness about them in view of their own difficult position, just as Luke well knew the ideology of the Imperial Cult, mirrored in his eschatology with its Virgin and divine Child, but chose to make only oblique references to that ideology (3B 3.2).

3C 2.3. *Acts and the existence of the Imperial Cult*

We read of events at Ephesus, one of the centres of the Imperial Cult along with Smyrna and Tralles, where the officials, the Asiarchs, have been regarded as both leaders of the Koinon of Greek city states throughout Asia and also high-priests of the Imperial Cult.⁶⁵ This conclusion has been challenged recently on the grounds that there is epigraphic evidence for several Asiarchs in Ephesus and Tralles at one time which would not be consistent with the equivalence of this office with that of ἀρχιερεὺς τῆς Ἀσίας.⁶⁶ But notwith-

⁶⁵ Although they were originally simply high priests of the cult of the goddess Roma, they became high priests of the imperial cult when her cult was assimilated to that of the emperors, see L. Ross Taylor, *The Asiarchs*, in F.J. Foakes Jackson and K. Lake, *The Beginnings of Christianity, Part 1: The Acts of the Apostles*, (London: MacMillan 1933), vol. V, pp. 256-262; G.R.H. Horsley, *The New Testament and the Ephesian Inscriptions*, in *NT 34* (1992), pp. 134-141; Horsley, *New Documents IV*, pp. 46-55. See also *SEG* 36, 1518; 42, 1029; 1097.

⁶⁶ Strabo, XIV, 1,42, cf. *SEG* 38, 1973 which cites this inaccurately as 2,42, and which summarises R.A. Kearsley, *The Asiarchs*, in *The Book of Acts in Its Graeco-Roman Setting*, (Ed. W.J. Gill and C. Gempf), in *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*, Vol. 2 (Michigan and Carlisle: Eerdmans/Paternoster 1994), pp. 263-376.

standing whether or not these offices were the same, there was at the time of writing an ἀρχιερεὺς of the Imperial Cult. *Luke* avoids direct mention of such an official of the cult that would have been a present reality by A.D. 75–85 to both the author and Theophilus to whom his work was addressed.⁶⁷ Both would be keen to avoid open conflict with that cult, just as they were anxious to be worshippers in the new, reformed Jewish cult whose eschatology fulfilled all its aspirations regarding σωτηρία, εἰρήνη, πρόνοια etc.

The avoidance of such a clash was possible, at least before the Domitianic developments of that cult, which, we shall argue later, can be soundly documented from the literary evidence. Indeed it is arguable that there was a certain novelty in Pliny's act of inviting Christians to sacrifice, *tunc ac vino*, before the Emperor's image (*imagini tuae*) as a test of whether they were truly criminals (Pliny, *Ep.* X, 96,5). The risk of being charged by the state at this time was not from non-participation in the cult which had no organised enforcement at this time as a deliberate test of loyalty to the state, as it was to become in the time of Decius. Rather the risk came from the charge of στάσις.⁶⁸

It should be remembered that Tacitus, in his account of Nero's persecution, shows that this was the main claim. Prior to their cruel deaths in Nero's circus, there had been a trial in which *Christiani* are described as made defendants (*rei*), and as being examined in a judicial context where "by their evidence (*indicio*) a large multitude of them were convicted (*convicti*) not so much for the charge of incendiarism (*in crimine incendi*) but of hatred of the human race (*odio humani generis*)."⁶⁹ In Suetonius *Claudius* 25,4 we read that the Jews were expelled from Rome because "they were always causing uproar at the instigation of Chrestus (*impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantis*)." In Suetonius *Nero* 16,2 we read: "Christians were afflicted with punishment (*afflicti suppliciis Christiani*), a class of men of a new and malevolent superstition (*genus hominum superstitionis novae ac maleficae*). In each of these cases there is no issue of being unwilling to participate in the Imperial Cult. Rather the crime (*flagitium*) warranting (*supplicia*) is one of a *superstitio malefica*. Thus Suetonius repeats Tacitus' charge

⁶⁷ *SEG* 43, 746. The title ἀρχιερεὺς τῆς Ἰσίας is first attested from Miletus (A.D. 40).

⁶⁸ See Chapter 1 footnote 14.

⁶⁹ Tacitus, *Annal.* XV,44,3 and 5, cf. Wilken (1984), pp. 48–50.

(XV,44,4) of *exitiabilis superstitio*. It has often been pointed out that *superstitio*, in terms of a degenerate form of religion, exemplified in Dionysiac *mania*, was a threat to public order as recorded by Livy in terms of the Bacchanalian riot. Thus *superstitio*, *στάσις*, *tumulare*, and *flagitia* were conceptually linked.

Primarily, therefore, the potential conflict between Church and State was over the perceived threat of the former as a threat to public order because it was a *superstitio*. But again it must be stressed that, although the focus may not yet have been directly the scene before the altar of incense of the Imperial Cult, the set of assumptions behind that cult were not far from the scene. Though essentially the judicial focus may have been on the *στάσις* caused by a *superstitio*, nevertheless there was always the further question as to what it was about a particular *superstitio* that led to *στάσις*.⁷⁰ The latter, as we have seen, was clearly linked to the *pax deorum* that it was the purpose of the Imperial Cult to secure, following a century of Republican constitutional disintegration (2A 4.1–2).

De Ste Croix was therefore quite mistaken in describing the Imperial Cult as having “almost no *independent* importance in the persecution of the Christians.”⁷¹ The *pax deorum* no longer had a relationship of contingency (if that is what is meant by “independent”) to the Imperial Cult, any more than the cult of divine virtues had a contingent relationship with the worship of the emperor’s person, for the reasons established by Fears’ analysis of the development of the former cult from the ascendancy of Sulla through Julius Caesar to Augustus (2B 3). Pliny’s order (*Ep. X*, 96,5) that accused Christians *deos adpellent et imagini tuae . . . ture et vino supplicarent* no longer referred unambiguously to different entities that could be contingently separated.⁷²

⁷⁰ L.F. Janssen, “Superstitio” and the Persecution of the Christians, in *VCh* 33,2 (1979), pp. 131–159, explores fully the conceptual relationship between concepts of *humanitas* and the *nomen Romanum* that must always survive (*superstes*), and what were perceived to be Druidical and Gallic denials of such a Roman and imperial reality, which bear striking similarities with charges of *odium generis humanae*, *superstitio prava*, *flagitium*, etc. associated with bearing the *nomen Christianum*. Such religions or rather *superstitiones* were clear denials of both imperial Order and Roman citizenship. See also R.L. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans saw them*, (New Haven and London: Yale U.P. 1984), pp. 41–44.

⁷¹ De Ste Croix (1963), p. 10, my italics.

⁷² In the light of Fears’ discussion, the inadequacy is exposed of the statement in De Ste Croix (1963), p. 10: “It is true that among our records of martyrdoms emperor-worship does crop up occasionally; but far more often it is a matter of sacrificing to the *gods* . . . And when the cult act involved does concern the emperor,

Furthermore, the enthusiasm of the worshippers in the Dionysiac rites indicated that they were possessed by spiritual ecstasy. But in the Christian *superstitio* was it not that the worshipper owed allegiance to another king? Certainly the Hegesippan fragment that describes the descendants of Jesus avowing a purely spiritual kingdom when summoned before Domitian reflects in legend the fact that some such connection was drawn at this time (Eusebius, *H.E.* III,20,3–4). We find continued in *Acts* reflections of the ideology of the Imperial Cult that we documented in *Luke* (3C 1).

In the light of our first chapter, it is important to realise that the notion of political *στάσις* like *εἰρήνη* had a metaphysical context, particularly in Stoicism. The century of civil strife was regarded as a metaphysical disturbance reflected in the natural order and requiring an extra-ordinary *augurium salutis* in order to secure the *pax deorum* (2A 4.1.3; 2A 5–6). The concerns of the Imperial Cult and its participants were related therefore to *στάσις* and its sacramental removal. The Christian community represented by Theophilus needed for their legitimation not simply an apologetic account which assured them that they were not threatening by their worship both the order of nature and the order of society bound together by the Stoic holistic and pneumatic metaphysic. They needed rather a more positive assurance regarding the “discourses of their catechesis.” (*Lk.* 1,4) They needed to have their convictions strengthened by an articulate account which showed, as we have argued regarding the first three chapters of *Luke*, a reformed Jewish cult which fulfilled all the messianic promise of the Augustan cult, and secured society’s true *εἰρήνη* and *σστηρία*, in which Jew and Greek, high and low, rich and poor were included equally.

We shall now show that the specific charges as they are given against Paul both reflect and continue this perspective with which *Luke* began and which *Acts* thus continues.

3C 2.3.1. *Tertullus’ case against Paul; Acts 24,1–9*

Firstly we should note the character of the conceptual discourse in which Tertullus makes his charge. We should moreover treat that discourse seriously and not simply dismiss his speech as a mere

it is usually an oath by his Genius (or in the East by his Τύχη) or a sacrifice to the gods on his behalf.” For the essential fluidity of terminology witnessed in the use of *divus*, *deus* and *θεός*, see S.R.F. Price, *Gods and Emperors: The Greek Language of the Roman Imperial Cult*, in *JHS* 104 (1984), pp. 79–95.

rhetorical flourish. It does not make sense to regard the words of *v.* 2–3 as simply a *captatio benevolentiae*. This was not, after all, a speech that anyone actually gave verbatim. Rather it was a summary of charges that Luke sought to rebut. He deals with these charges by his use of the literary devices of expressing them in speeches on the lips of the main protagonists. For Luke these words are intended to reveal the character of the opposition as more than merely users of polished rhetorical devices. In these words he shows unreformed Judaism in alliance with an Imperial Cult both of which could achieve neither of their objectives without a Christian transformation. Tertullus thus addresses the Emperor's representative:

Since we enjoy great peace owing to you (πολλῆς εἰρήνης τυγχάνοντες διὰ σοῦ), and since by your Providence restorations are being carried out (καὶ διορθωμάτων γινομένων . . . διὰ τῆς σῆς προνοίας) for this nation, in every way and in every place we welcome it, your Excellency Felix, with all thankfulness.

Thus the very concepts εἰρήνη, πρόνοια, and διορθωμα, associated with the Imperial Cult in the decrees of the *Koinon* of Asia, set the context to the accusations against Paul. Augustus “had set right (ἀνώρθωσεν)” political and even natural disorder, just as Festus is credited with διορθώματα. Πρόνοια, one of the personified abstractions associated with the person of deified emperors (2B 3), had produced a σωτήρ, who had arranged a world of εἰρήνη (3B 3.1 and footnote 23).

From Luke's contra-cultural perspective a saviour had come, if not exactly through πρόνοια, at least through “the predetermined counsel (τῇ ὀρισμένη βουλῇ) and foreknowledge (προγνώσει) of God.” (*Acts* 2, 23) John, in preparation for this σωτήρ, engaged in his own διορθωμα in that his mission was τοῦ κατευθῦναι τοὺς πόδας ἡμῶν εἰς ὁδὸν εἰρήνης (*Lk.* 1,79). Furthermore εἰρήνη was a political peace set in the eschatological context of the Divine Child that brings the age of fulfilment (*Lk.* 1,14).

But it is not simply the ideology of the Imperial Cult that the author seeks to refashion with his new discourse in which the εὐαγγέλιον of his new and reformed cult legitimates the position of Theophilus and his group. The express charge is that the new religion upsets the order of πρόνοια, εἰρήνη and διορθωμα by fomenting στάσις within Judaism. Paul is “a mover of unrest (κινεῶντα στάσεις) amongst all the Jews throughout the inhabited world (πᾶσιν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τοῖς κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην), and the leader of the faction of the Nazarenes

(πρωτοστάτην τε τῆς τῶν Ναζωραίων αἰρέσεως).” “He has tried to defile the sanctuary of the Temple (τὸ ἱερόν ἐπέιρασεν βεβηλῶσαι; *v.* 5–6)” according to the false allegation that he had taken the gentile Trophimus of Ephesus there (21, 28–29).

For *Luke* it is not therefore only the Imperial Cult that the Gospel surpasses while satisfying its basic human aspirations for peace and order. *Lk.* 1 also portrayed an older Judaism being replaced by a reformed and renewed cult, beginning with Gabriel’s appearance at an altar of incense (*v.* 9). Let us pursue that theme now as it evolves in opposition to Jewish charges.

3C 2.3.2. *Felix, Agrippa and the pax dei* (Acts 22–23)

The author has already established that an unreformed Judaism could not secure the *pax dei*, and Tertullus’ charges are to support this thesis. The proceedings against Paul begin before the Sanhedrin (*Acts* 22,30–23,10).⁷³ Here the *pax dei* of the Divine Child and the promised new age remained unsecured by Judaism. When Paul claims the support of Pharisaism for the doctrine of the resurrection of the body the result is division (ἐσχίσθη τὸ πλῆθος) and στάσις (ἐγένετο στάσις/πολλῆς δὲ γινομένης στάσεως; *v.* 7 and 10). Here, contrary to the apologetic thesis, the author admits στάσις as a result of Paul’s words. But the στάσις is a consequence of an unreformed religion such as the Judaism that Paul opposed, just as στάσις was the product of the unreformed Republic before Augustus.

Such a theme moreover has been constantly reiterated throughout *Luke-Acts*. Judaism unreformed cannot secure the *pax dei*, and cannot achieve the eschatological order in nature and in society and so fulfil the aspiration of those who sought the *pax deorum* through the Imperial Cult. Εἰρήνη is characteristically used by *Luke*, often in reformulation of his traditional material, in connection with the stability of the political as well as the natural world. In addition to *Lk.* 1,79; 2,14,29 already discussed, we have some parallels with the few references in other gospels,⁷⁴ but some significant additions of the author’s own.

⁷³ Whether this was because that body had the authority to impose the death penalty without the consent of the civil power, or whether it met as a council of advice for Claudius Lysias remains unclear, see H.J. Cadbury, *Roman Law and the Trial of Paul*, in F.J. Foakes Jackson, *The Beginnings of Christianity, Part 1: The Acts of the Apostles*, (London: MacMillan 1933), vol. V, pp. 297–338, especially pp. 302–305.

⁷⁴ εἰρήνη occurs once only in *Mk.* 5,34 (= *Lk.* 7,50; 8,48), and four times in *Jn.* 14,27, 16,33, and 20,19,21,26 (= *Lk.* 24,36). In all of these instances, the reference

In parabolic additions in *Lk.* 11,21 the armed strong man's possessions are consequently held ἐν εἰρήνῃ. In 14,32 the king sends an embassy and ἐρωτᾷ τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην. The latter phrase is then used in 19,42 in order to describe why the unreformed Jewish cult had failed. "Jesus drew near to the city [Jerusalem] and wept over her (ἐκλαυσεν ἐπ' αὐτήν) saying "Would that even you had known in this day (εἰ ἔγνωσ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ταύτῃ καὶ σὺ) the things that make for peace (τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην)." The immediately preceding context makes it clear that this phrase refers to the specifically Lucan εἰρήνη announced by the angels to the shepherds and proclaimed by Symeon as the counterpart to Augustus' *saeculum aureum* that had achieved the *pax deorum* through the Divine Child of Vergil's shepherds (2A 6). *Luke* alters the position of Jesus' lament in his Marcan source so that we hear his words only after those of the crowd of disciples (πλήθος τῶν μαθητῶν) at the Triumphal Entry. The latter's words themselves *Luke* has refashioned. Their proclamation directly parallels what the angels' song at Bethlehem had promised (*Lk.* 19,37–38). In *v.* 38 we read:

Blessed is the king (βασιλεύς) who comes in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven (ἐν οὐρανῷ εἰρήνη) and glory in the highest (καὶ δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις).

Εἰρήνη ἐν οὐρανῷ thus parallels the εἰρήνη ἐπὶ γῆς of *Lk.* 2,14.

In none of the other Gospel parallels is the insertion into the pilgrim *Ps.* 118 that of an unqualified βασιλεύς. Indeed, *Mat.* 21,9 reads in its place τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ, and *Mk.* 11,10 speaks of a kingdom but no king (ἡ ἐρχομένη βασιλεία τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Δαυίδ).⁷⁵ Only *Jn.* 12,13 approaches the Lucan usage with the qualified ὁ βασιλεύς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. The author's monarch has no nationality, but he stands like the Divine Child of *Lk.* 1–2 at the centre of a reformed cult bringing the *pax dei* just as the figure of Augustus had stood on the on the Gemma securing with his augur's wand the *pax deorum*. (2B 3, 3B 3.1 and Plate 13).

is to the psychological calm produced through Jesus' spiritual presence. In *Mat.* 10,13 it is used in the sense of righteous indignation which can be given or withheld to the advantage or disadvantage of those who receive the mission of the Twelve. Only in *Mat.* 10,34 (= *Lk.* 12,51) is it used in the sense of social disturbance.

⁷⁵ Walaskay ((1983), p. 9) rightly criticises Conzelmann's characterization of the Lucan alterations as non-political, in order to favour his interpretation of *Luke-Acts* as *apologia pro ecclesia ad imperium*. Cf. Conzelmann (1961), p. 139. For other examples inconsistent with a political apology before a Roman magistrate, see *Lk.* 6,15 and *Acts* 1,13; *Lk.* 22,35–38; 19,38 and *Acts* 1,6 all discussed in Walaskay (1983), pp. 16–18.

The goal of the Triumphal Entry was indeed the Last Supper, for which its events have prepared the way. The author now chooses to introduce here the theme of the authority structure of the reformed Jewish cult that Jesus is creating through his death.

3C 2.3.2.1. The Last Supper and the reformed Jewish cultus

The Twelve are entrusted with the kingdom in the following words:

And I entrust to you (καὶ γὰρ διατίθεμαι ὑμῖν) even as my Father has entrusted to me (καθὼς διέθετό μοι) a kingdom (βασιλείαν) in order that you may eat and drink with me in my kingdom (ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ μου) and sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (καὶ καθήσονται ἐπὶ θρόνων τὰς δώδεκα φυλάς κρίνοντες τοῦ Ἰσραήλ).

Luke 22,28–30

The final words are traditional (Q) and found in *Mat.* 19,28 in a different context. Here the promise to sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes is not associated with the βασιλεία but the παλιγγενεσία, and there is no reference to the Messianic banquet. Thus *Luke* wishes to associate these words with the Order and organisation of the reformed community, and with the central cultic meal that replaces original Judaism. But this gospel suggests in turn a contra-cultural counterpart to the sacrificial gathering at the Imperial Cult, with its celebration of the social hierarchy of the imperial city state, and the Christian *saeculum aureum* foreshadowed in chapters 1–2, in which the hungry would be fed and the rich sent away empty. Whether one accepts the textual tradition which omits *Lk.* 22,19b–20 or that which retains it, there remains nevertheless a foretaste of the eschatological banquet. The breaking of bread by the community of the Twelve (*Acts* 2,46) partially fulfils that eschatology.

The dispute about greatness occurs immediately before the promise of the twelve thrones to the Twelve (*Lk.* 22,24–27). Here once again there is a significant recasting of the tradition by the author in pursuance of his special theme. The parallel passages, both *Mat.* 20,20–28 and *Mk.* 10,35–45, are addressed in the former case to the specific claim of the mother of the sons of Zebedee, and in the latter to James and John themselves. In *Lk.* 22,24 the dispute is a general one about “which of them should be greatest.” Thus *Matthew* and *Mark*’s specific question of a position for two individuals in an assumed hierarchical authority structure (*Mat.* 20,23; *Mk.* 10,40 = οἷς ἡτοίμασται) is transformed by *Luke* into the quite general question of the kind of structure of authority itself in the community and its cult.

The ἄρχοντες τῶν ἐθνῶν and the μεγάλοι are described in *Mat.* 20,25 and *Mk.* 10,42 in identical terms. But in *Lk.* 22,25 Luke readapts these words diplomatically for Theophilus. He does not refer to a single βασιλεύς and thus does not single out the Emperor too blatantly. Rather the expression οἱ βασιλεῖς τῶν ἐθνῶν cushions the blattness of such a direct reference by the obliqueness of a general plural. The readaptation of κατεξουσιάζουσιν to ἐξουσιάζοντες enables Luke then to add εὐεργέται καλοῦνται.⁷⁶ Εὐεργέτης was the characteristic term for the benefactor of a Greek city-state in Asia Minor, and the term was particularly used of someone who endowed a temple and cult to the Emperor. Once again we see the contra-cultural images in the reformed cult of Judaism with its reverse reflections of social structure and order. That order was represented and celebrated in the assigned seating places for the banquet ensuing from cultic sacrifice. It is in such a context that *Luke* chooses to locate the reversal of role-values, in which the greater in age (ὁ μείζων) must become as the younger (ὁ νεώτερος) and the (consular) ruler (ὁ ἡγούμενος) as the one who serves at table (ὁ διακονῶν; *Lk.* 22,26–27). Unlike in *Mat.* 20,26–27 and *Mk.* 10,43–44, there is no hint that you can become great and a leader in the community by first becoming humble. Jesus asserts rather that to be great at the Messianic/Imperial banquet would be to recline (ἀνακείμενος), yet he is not great because he himself does not recline but is amongst them as one who serves (ἐγὼ δὲ ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν εἰμι ὡς ὁ διακονῶν; *Lk.* 22,27).

That reformed cult can now be shown to exhibit the *pax dei* as a counterpart to the *pax deorum*.

3C 2.3.2.2. The *pax dei* and the early community in *Acts*

The Twelve, as the foundation of the reformed cult, are attended by those who “continued with one accord (προσκαρτεροῦντες ὁμοθυμαδόν) in the temple (ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ), breaking bread at home . . .” (*Acts* 2,46). This takes place in the community of equals promised by Mary (*Acts* 2,44–45; 4,32–37 cf. *Lk.* 1,52–53) in contrast to the dynasts of the city states of Asia Minor whose imperial sacrificial banquets celebrated rank and power. It is in the Portico of Solomon that the “signs and wonders (σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα)” take place “through the hands of the apostles (διὰ τῶν χειρῶν τῶν ἀποστόλων)” where “they

⁷⁶ Walaskay (1983), p. 36 regards the removal of κατὰ from the Marcan κατακυριεύουσιν and κατεξουσιάζουσιν as a modification of the severity of these expressions.

were all of one accord (ὁμοθυμαδόν; *Acts* 5,12).” The reformed cult thus continues its presence, as with Anna and Zechariah, in the shell of the old: it demonstrates its unity and lack of στάσις in its ὁμοθυμαδόν, a word that is here repeated a second time in the context of the old Temple.

The promise “to set right our feet in the way of peace (κατευθῆναι τοὺς πόδας εἰς ὁδὸν τῆς εἰρήνης)” is thus continued. But so also is the theme that the *pax dei*, as the counterpart to the *pax deorum*, is marked by absence of strife and unity (ὁμοθυμαδόν) in the reformed cult that emerges out of Judaism. Augustus’ cult had similarly emerged out of Republican religion that possessed cults of individual Virtues, but which were now collectively associated with the corporate personality of the emperor. The cult of Virtues, like Christianity as reformed Judaism, was marked by *Concordia* (Ὁμόνοια), *Disciplina*, *Simplicitas* (ἀφελότης cf. *Acts* 2,46 see also 2,42, etc).

It is as the representative of the reformed cultus that began with Anna and Zechariah that Paul appears before both Festus and Herod Agrippa at the conclusion of *Acts*. Before the former he rebuts the charge of Tertullus that the reformed cultus cannot satisfy the contra-cultural requirements of achieving what the Imperial Cult set out to achieve in terms of the *pax dei* (2A 2.1). But the main people addressed in his speech in the presence of Porcius Festus who has by this time replaced Felix (*Acts* 24,27) are the latter. Agrippa and Bernice appear here as the representatives of unreformed Judaism (25,13–26–32).

As Campenhausen has pointed out, Paul stands here as the surviving apostolic witness, the original Twelve now having vanished from the scene. Indeed, the Twelve always were shadowy figures in *Acts*: they function as literary constructs that support the distinctive Lucan theology that overlays earlier material.⁷⁷ The Paul that now stands alone insists to Agrippa that he represents the reformed cultus of Anna and Zechariah:

⁷⁷ An earlier tradition of the church of Jerusalem and their eschatological expectations significance may nevertheless have been present in the material that the author uses. See H. von Campenhausen, *Der Urchristliche Apostelbegriff*, in *StTh* Vol. 1 Fasc. I–II (1947), pp. 96–130; 133–144. *Idem*. *Kirchliches Amt und geistliche Vollmacht*, in *BeitrHistTh* 14 (1963), chapter 2; W. Schmithals, *Das Kirchliche Apostelamt. Eine Historische Untersuchung*, in *FRLANT* 61, (1961). *Acts* is really not the acts of the Twelve Apostles, but of Peter, James, John, and Paul.

And now for the hope of the promise (ἐπ' ἐλπίδι τῆς εἰς τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν ἐπαγγελίας) made by God to our fathers I stand condemned (κρινόμενος), to which our Twelve Tribes (τὸ δωδεκάφυλον ἡμῶν) hope to attain worshipping in intense expectation (ἐν ἐκτενείᾳ) day and night, concerning which hope I am under indictment (ἐγκαλοῦμαι) by the Jews, O king.

Acts 26,6-7

Thus the scenes in the closing chapters of *Acts* conclude what the opening chapters of *Luke* began. John the Baptist, son of the priest Zachariah faithfully serving at the altar of incense, was destined to ἐτοιμάσαι κυρίῳ λαὸν κατεσκευασμένον (*Lk.* 1,17). The conception of Jesus was the action of God (μνησθῆναι ἐλέους) in fulfilment of his promise to the fathers (καθὼς ἐλάλησεν πρὸς τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν), the very promises (ἐπ' ἐλπίδι τῆς εἰς τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν ἐπαγγελίας) for which Paul here was on trial. Regarding John, Zachariah speaks of ποιῆσαι ἔλεος μετὰ τῶν πατέρων καὶ μνησθῆναι διαθήκης ἀγίας αὐτοῦ (1,72-73). We have seen how the Twelve, who continue the reformed cultus in the Temple in *Acts*, by providing the *pax dei* which unreformed Judaism could not provide, would sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve Tribes of Israel (3C 2.3.2.1). Paul here affirms that he is the representative of τὸ δωδεκάφυλον ἡμῶν, which is the mark of the ordered, reformed cult which Jesus inaugurated at the first Eucharist.

We thus see that the author's legitimation of the community of Theophilus and his circle has been on at least two fronts.⁷⁸ He gives assurance to that community that it is not a Bacchanalian *superstitio*, and that indeed in Christ the end of σχίσμα and στάσις has come since, in Peter's words to Cornelius, divisions between Jew and Gentile have been dissolved by the word "which preaches peace (εὐαγγελιζόμενος εἰρήνην) through Jesus Christ." (*Acts* 10,36) On the contrary, στάσις and σχίσμα were the characteristic of unreformed Judaism that opposed its reformation in Christ. To this end the author was prepared to leave in the background any further way in which the reformed cult could clash with the Imperial Cult over emperor worship, even though the social reality of the latter was

⁷⁸ A third front would be that constituted by the followers of John the baptist, who, the author assures us, accepted the eschatology of the Christian *saeculum aureum* shorn of traditional apocalyptic, and whose followers readily went over to the community of Jesus (*Acts* 18,25; 19,1-4).

present throughout Asia Minor, as it would have been obliquely in the trial and martyrdom of Paul at Rome before Nero.

But an important question for our account now emerges. If both before the Sanhedrin, before Felix, and before Agrippa and Festus the Imperial Cult was the backcloth to what *Luke-Acts* proclaims both about paganism and the Judaism which Christianity reformed, why is there such a silence about the Imperial Cult itself in the cities of Asia Minor that Paul visits, and in particular at Ephesus?

3C 2.3.2.3. Paul in Ephesus (*Acts* 19,21–40)

Nowhere was the silence more deafening than at Ephesus where, in *Acts* 19,21–40, there is recorded a disturbance (*v.* 23: *τάραχος*) that almost leads an indictment for *στάσις* (*v.* 40: *κινδυνεύομεν ἐγκαλεῖσθαι στάσεως*). The riot of the silversmiths over the attack on their trade in connection with the cult of Artemis is described in high relief. Though the Imperial Cult experienced under Domitian a considerable development specifically in Ephesus, as we shall see (5A 2), nevertheless it was already established there in more than rudimentary form in Paul's time. There was a *Sebasteion* or cult room, a *νάος*, within the *τεμένος* of the *Artemesium*,⁷⁹ a temple of Augustus within the city itself dating from 27 B.C.,⁸⁰ and an earlier temple of Roma and Julius Caesar.⁸¹ The *Sebasteion* was the work of P. Vedius Pollio under private instructions from Augustus to incorporate his cult into Greek temples under guise of financial and legal reorganisation.⁸² Clearly Ephesus had been at the very centre of the developments which first associated the Emperor with an existing cult whether of Roma, the Virtues, or of Artemis, and then by slow degrees synthesised the worship of one with the other.

Certainly *Acts* 19,35 knows of the distinguished title of “temple-keeper (*νεωκόρος*)” held by the city, although it focuses on being *νεωκόρος τῆς μεγάλης Ἀρτέμιδος*. Yet where assimilation with emperor

⁷⁹ *IBM* 522 = *ILS* 97 and *CIL* 3, 7118. For further bibliography see Price (1984), p. 254 and 134 footnote 7.

⁸⁰ *I. Eph.* III,902 = *SEG* 26,1243; *I. Eph.* 404 = *SEG* 39, 1210. See also Price (1984), p. 254.

⁸¹ Dio Cassius, 51, 20,6: Καίσαρ δὲ ἐν τούτῳ τὰ τε ἄλλα ἐχρηματίζει, καὶ τεμένη τῆ τε Ῥώμῃ καὶ τῷ πατρὶ τῷ Καίσαρι, ἥρωα αὐτὸν Ἰούλιον ὀνομάσας, ἐν τε Ἐφέσῳ καὶ ἐν Νικαίᾳ γενέσθαι ἐφήκεν· αὐταὶ γὰρ τότε αἱ πόλεις ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ καὶ ἐν τῇ Βιθυνίᾳ προετείμνητο. καὶ τούτους μὲν τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις τοῖς παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐποικουδοῖσι τιμᾶν προσέταξε· τοῖς δὲ δὴ ξένοις, Ἑλληνάσ σφας ἐπικαλέσας, ἑαυτῷ τινα, τοῖς μὲν Ἀσιανοῖς ἐν Περγάμῳ, τοῖς δὲ Βιθυνοῖς ἐν Νικομηδείᾳ, τεμενίσαι ἐπέτρεψε.

⁸² *SEG* 40, 1001.

worship had proceeded as at Ephesus, there would be "a union of neocorates."⁸³ Although evidence for this title specifically for a city with an imperial temple is clearer in the time of Domitian, Hadrian, and Caracalla, those developments were founded on earlier assimilation.⁸⁴ The Asiarchs have been identified contentiously with priests of the Imperial Cult, and certain of these officials are described in *Acts* 19,31 as Paul's friends (τινὲς δὲ τῶν Ἀσιαρχῶν, ὄντες αὐτῷ φίλοι). And this was in a principle city, after Pergamon, of the Koinon of Asia which had issued the decree of 9 B.C. to which we have made frequent reference,⁸⁵ and which possessed shrines of the Imperial Cult there under Claudius and Nero.⁸⁶

On the apologetic thesis, the omission of such references would be to defend Christianity before the magistrate. The defence, however, would be, as it is presented in *Acts*, to say the least, poorly constructed. Rather, we have argued, the apologetic motif should be subsumed under and made subsidiary to *Luke's* general purpose in legitimating the social construction of reality of Theophilus and his Christian group. There need not be any final clash between the Roman empire and the faith that they avow. If not until under Domitian, then at least until Pliny's correspondence, sacrificing in the Imperial Cult was no litmus test for Christian loyalty to the empire. The earlier question was rather whether adherence to Christianity lead to the Bacchanalian *supersitio* that lead to στάσις and thus upset the *pax deorum*. It could therefore be supposed that Christians were absent from imperial festivals in consequence of such a malign intention.

Luke-Acts has shown that, to the contrary, Theophilus' faith leads to the true εἰρήνη, the *pax dei*, with σωτηρία, νίκη and a *saeculum aureum* promised to the Jewish Fathers and fulfilled in a reformed cult in which a new age has dawned through a Divine Child born of divine parentage by means of a human Virgin. At one point Festus might accuse Paul of behaving like a Bacchic maenad, when he says: "You are raving, Paul (μαίνῃ, Παῦλε), your many words have turned your mind to a frenzy (τὰ πολλὰ σε γράμματα εἰς μανίαν περιτρέπει)." But Paul is recorded as replying, in the full context of the discourse

⁸³ Foakes Jackson and Lake (1933) 1,4, p. 250.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 1,5 pp. 244-256; Price (1984), pp. 65-66; pp. 72-73; Fishwick (1987), 1,1 p. 22.

⁸⁵ 1B 4 and 2C 1.

⁸⁶ Ross Taylor (1933), p. 257.

of legitimation constructed by the author: “I am not raving (ὀμαίνομαι) . . . but I speak the words of truth and of self-discipline (ἀλλὰ ἀληθείας καὶ σωφροσύνης ῥήματα ἀποφθέγγομαι; *Acts* 26,24).”

Theophilus and his contemporaries had been brought up in a pagan background, outlined in our first chapter, of a civil war requiring an extraordinary act of *augurium*, in order to set right a disordered nature as the metaphysical counterpart of a disordered empire (2A 5). These keenly felt, religious aspirations, were witnessed by the ideology of the Imperial Cult found in Vergil, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan, amongst others, and by the inscriptions such as that of the Koinon of Asia. Such religious aspirations could now find their satisfaction in the new, reformed Judaeo-Christian cult, with its contra-cultural reversal of imperial power and privilege. *Luke* will therefore not allow his purpose to be destroyed by suggesting a head on collision between Christ and Caesar in which the one must nihilate the other. Rather than being nihilated, imperialist religious aspirations must be better satisfied and fulfilled by the εὐαγγέλιον τοῖς πτωχοῖς (*Lk.* 4,18).

But although the possibility of ultimate conflict between the religious needs of the empire and those of Christianity is placed in the background, the possibility of that clash is nevertheless still tactfully represented, as we shall now see.

3C 2.3.3. *Implied references to the Imperial Cult*

We shall now examine a number of passages in which the Imperial Cult and its ramifications are implied, even though the author has, for the reasons that we have given, suppressed any overt references.

3C 2.3.3.1. The death of Herod Agrippa (*Acts* 12,21–22)

In Caesarea the temple of Τύχη or *Fortuna* had become assimilated with the *genius* of Caesar, by the process of gradual imperial deification that we have described.⁸⁷ The scene takes place “on a Calendar date (τακτῆ ἡμέρᾳ).” Here we have, arguably, the festival of the *dies natalis*

⁸⁷ Eusebius, *Mart. Pal.* 11,30; Josephus, *Antiqu.* 16,136, cf. K. Lake, The Chronology of Acts, in Foakes Jackson and Lake (1933) 1,5 pp. 450–452 cf. L. Levine, Caesarea under Roman Rule, in *SJLA* 7 (1975), pp. 27–29. See also A. Raban, The Harbours of Caesarea Maritima: Results of the Caesarea Ancient Harbour Excavation Project, 1980–1985, in *BAR International Series* (1989) 491, pp. 51–53; *Idem.* Καισάρεια ἢ πρὸς Σεβαστῶ λιμῆνι: two harbours for two entities? in Caesarea Papers, Straton’s Tower, Herod’s Harbour, and Roman and Byzantine Caesarea, (Michigan: Ann Arbor 1992), in *JRA* Suppl. Ser. 5 (1989), pp. 68–74; E. Krentz, Caesarea and early Christianity, in *JRA*, Suppl. 5 (1989), pp. 261–265.

of Augustus at Caesarea, or if not his *Quinquennalia* commemorating his defeat of Anthony in the month of August that bears his name.

The scene is therefore, from the outset, surrounded by repressed images of the Imperial Cult. Herod appears like a divine monarch of the Greek city states of Asia Minor and Egypt “clothed in royal raiment (ἐνδυσάμενος ἐσθήτα βασιλικήν), and, having taken his judicial seat (καθίσας ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος), he made a speech (ἐδημηγόρει) to them.” The δῆμος retorts that they hear “the voice of God and not of a man,” and in consequence Herod is eaten with worms because “he did not give glory to God.”

As Eusebius (*H.E.* II,10,3), following Josephus (*Ant.* 19,343–351) well knows, Herod’s activity on this occasion was his celebration of “spectacles in honour of Caesar (συνετέλει δ’ ἐναυῦθα θεωρίας εἰς τὴν Καίσαρος τιμὴν).” Furthermore, Herod “knew that the festival was for the latter’s safety (ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐκείνου σωτηρίας ἐορτὴν τινα ταύτην ἐπιστάμενος) and at it were assembled (καὶ παρ’ αὐτὴν ἦθροιστο) a multitude of those in office and of high rank in the province (τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἐπαρχίαν ἐν τέλει καὶ προβεβηκότων εἰς ἀξίαν πλῆθος).” Clearly the games (θεωρίας), associated with the emperor’s safety (σωτηρίας), at which the events of *Acts* 12,21–22 took place, are held at Caesarea where a temple of his cult was to be found. Those games therefore imply a celebration in connection with that cult. There is thus implicit in this example a warning to the circle of Theophilus that the worship of divine rulers is quite foreign to the Judaeo-Christian traditions. A similar example against what is regarded as a typical pagan (as opposed to a Jewish) tendency is given at Lystra: Paul and Barnabas are identified with Hermes and Zeus, and the priest of Zeus expresses willingness to offer them sacrifice. They vehemently object with the traditional monotheistic Jewish argument in rebuttal (*Acts* 14,11–18).

Thus Theophilus and his circle are tacitly warned that though there need be no conflict between their religious convictions and the Imperial Cult, such a conflict might arise. In their reformed Jewish cult they had received the true means for obtaining the *pax dei* both for themselves and for the empire, and with *pax* the true *saeculum aureum* initiated by the Divine Child who was the only true *filius dei*. Whether the στάσις was in society or reflected metaphysically in the world of nature, the true εἰρήνη and νίκη was through Bethlehem and finally the Triumphal Entry and the blood of the cross. But though they might avoid the *appellatio* that called on all members of

a particular Asiatic city state to worship on one or several of the many birthdays celebrating the divination of Augustus and his heirs—and with full confidence (ἀσφάλεια, *Lk.* 1,4) that they were obtaining the *pax dei* by better means—, nevertheless there was a danger that the cult might develop further. Pliny, if not Domitian, was to show how it could become a full-blown loyalty test and lead inevitably to a clash of allegiance.

That the author was aware of such a possibility is shown in the next passage that we shall consider.

3C 2.3.3.2. *Acts* 17,7 and 18,13

Having charged the Jews at Thessalonica with a θόρυβος, the author recounts how Jason and others are hauled before the politarchs for having given house-space to “those who have placed in a state of agitation (ἀναστατώσαντες) the civilised world (τὴν οἰκουμένην).” (*Acts* 17,6) This was the self-same οἰκουμένη or Roman Empire that receives the δόγμα regarding the *census* in *Lk.* 2,1, which we argued would have been associated, in terms of a Graeco-Roman religious context, with the ritual *lustrum* of the city boundaries over the reforms of which Augustus took control (*Res Gestae* 8,2) in becoming *Pontifex Maximus* (3A 1.1). *Luke* has assimilated—and in so doing distorted—an event which, if historical, was a *census* that pertained to Syria, with an event involving the οἰκουμένη in which Augustus himself was immediately involved and with it by implication his cult.⁸⁸ Furthermore, this self-same οἰκουμένη is recorded as worshipping along with all Asia, Artemis of Ephesus, but in a context in which the universal character of that worship was becoming increasing guaranteed by the association of the Emperor with the cult of this goddess (*Acts* 19,27).

In this context therefore we can read the accusation of Jason, and Paul and his companions to whom the latter had given shelter:

All these are acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar (οἱτοὶ πάντες ἀπέναντι τῶν δογμάτων Καίσαρος πράσσουνσι), saying that there is a different emperor, Jesus (βασιλέα ἕτερον λέγοντες εἶναι Ἰησοῦν).

Acts 17,7

This passage clearly cannot be used to support the view that *Luke-Acts* is addressed as an apology to a Roman magistrate. The politarchs simply do not judge the accuracy of the accusation at all, nor hear

⁸⁸ See footnotes 20 and 21 above.

any formal reply. They simply dismiss Jason, and the brotherhood then sends Paul and Silas away by night to Beroea (*v.* 8–9).

We saw that the author has already made clear Jesus' claim to kingship, and that claim would have been readily accepted by Theophilus and his circle. In that respect they clashed with the ends of the state. But *Luke* can reassure them that the clash is with the perceived cultic and religious means to achieving the state's religious ends, and not the ends themselves. Thus discretely opting out of the Imperial Cult does not conflict fundamentally with the social, religious, and political ends of such a society. Theophilus and his circle could not of course avow allegiance to imperial authority only in a non-religious, secular sense: their universe of discourse did not make the distinction between the secular and the sacred.⁸⁹ The object of participating in the Imperial Cult and using the special act of augury was to secure the *pax deorum*, the *saeculum aureum* and the divine Child leading to the fulfilment of promises of σωτηρία etc., and these were proper religious ends. But the true fulfilment of those ends was through the true counterparts to their means found in the reformed Jewish cult.

Discretely, therefore, and in the language of tangential reference, the Imperial Cult is present as a potential source of clash with Theophilus' circle which may nevertheless still be avoided. Christianity itself, as expressed in *Luke*, will never upset the *pax deorum* and never therefore require imperial intervention at the cultic level in order to set the world right. They might simply avoid conflict as the politarchs at Thessalonica had done.

But although in the sunlight of his Christian-imperial eschatology *Luke* might convey feelings of great optimism to Theophilus and his circle, he nevertheless encapsulates his concern about other aspects of their legal position in the passages that we shall now examine.

3C 2.3.3.3. Legal Obligation and Custom: *Acts* 16,20–21

Having argued that *Luke-Acts* is a reconstruction both of Graeco-Roman and Jewish social reality so as to legitimate Christianity in the Roman Empire, we are now in a position to read the message of this further text through the eyes of Theophilus and his circle, to

⁸⁹ That the clarity and validity of the modern distinction between the secular and the religious are only apparent can be seen if one tries to apply the distinction in the specific areas of abortion, denominational education, euthanasia etc.

whom the Imperial Cult, whether in Rome or Asia Minor, would have clearly been of religious significance.

We need to consider what message Theophilus would have derived from the incident at Philippi in which Paul and Silas are brought before the ἄρχοντες/στρατηγοί. The slave owners of the exorcised maid charge that:

These men are causing disturbance to our city (οὗτοι οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἐκταράσσουσιν ἡμῶν τὴν πόλιν), and as Jews (Ἰουδαῖοι ὑπάρχοντες καὶ) are proclaiming customs (καταγγέλλουσιν ἔθνη) which it is unlawful for us to accept or practice being Romans (ἀ οὐκ ἔξεστιν ἡμῖν παραδέχεσθαι οὐδὲ ποιεῖν Ῥωμαίοις οὖσιν).

Acts 16,20–21

Paul and Silas, after a miraculous freeing from their prison bonds, are finally released by officials who are embarrassed that they have publicly beaten uncondemned Roman citizens. This fact however does not of itself acquit them from the main charge. Whether they were Jews who were Roman citizens or not, and whether they had caught the magistrates off-guard on another matter, the central charge nevertheless remained.

That central charge was that though Jews might be exempt from Graeco-Roman religious customs, Gentiles were not, particularly those with Roman citizenship throughout the Greek city states of Asia Minor. And this leads us directly to the means by which Jews could avoid the requirement, whether purely social or legal, to take part in the Imperial Cult, and thus to refrain from appearing in processional white, following the *supplicatio*, with myrtle wreathes on their heads and myrtle branches in their hands. The grounds of the social acceptability of non-participation, later with Decius Trajan to become the legal acceptability, was ancestral custom. In the specific words of the charge against Paul:

This man persistently persuades people (ἀναπέθει οὗτος τοὺς ἀνθρώπους) contrary to the law (παρὰ τὸν νόμον) to worship God. (σέβεσθαι τὸν θεόν).

Acts 18,13

Theophilus, κράτιστος, and his circle, living in Asia Minor in the eighties of the first century, would have found this argument of great significance for their personal circumstances (3B 3.1). Standing at the forefront of the successors to the Greek city states in communities such as Ephesus, Pergamon, Antioch in Pisidia, etc., they well knew that there was no legal compulsion on them to participate in

the Imperial Cult. Yet the Hellenistic culture that had formed their perspectives on the world was one to which that cultus was critical. The Augustan revolution had produced the *pax deorum*, and re-ordered the cosmic and metaphysical dislocation of the natural order witnessed in a century of civil wars with which countless prodigious natural disasters were associated (2A 4). There was a strongly felt moral and patriotic compulsion to continue what had been celebrated in the decrees of the Koinon of Asia and elsewhere (2B 4). But they had been catechetized and received into the post-Pauline communities in Asia Minor, and were now Christians.

How could their new faith enable their reintegration into the community from which it had alienated them? How could this perceived, social-psychological need for the celebration of social order after bloody social strife, fulfilled in the Imperial Cultus that had secured the *pax deorum*, now experience new fulfilment by the new religion? One way would be to identify their religion as a valid form of Judaism, and thus the social acceptability of non-participation be understood and acknowledged by their society. But historically Paul had suggested, at least to the Galatians, a radical disjunction between the Law and Christ on whose cross the commandments had been destroyed (*Gal.* 3,10–14). The radical character of this disjunction had been considerably softened in *Rom.* 9–11.⁹⁰ But here the Gentile mission was still emphasised as distinct from the Jewish, with the latter to experience purely eschatological fulfilment, despite the metaphor of the grafting of the wild olive onto the original stem (*Rom.* 11,17–24).

The deutero-Paulinist author of *Luke-Acts* offers a reconstruction of the theology of the historical Paul. The Christian cultus into which Theophilus has been catechetized is the Jewish cultus, but a *reformed* Jewish cultus (3B 1–3). If the non-participation of unreformed Israel is socially acceptable, *a fortiori* a reformed Israel should be, which is the true fulfilment of patriarchal promised from time immemorial. But the reformed cult has gone far beyond the social acceptability of a merely passive non-participation. *Luke-Acts* offers a positive reason for non-participation, namely that the purpose of the Imperial Cult, namely the *pax deorum* and the sacramental means for the continuance of the *saeculum aureum* is far better achieved through the εἰρήνη of Bethlehem (3B 3.1–3) and the Triumphal Entry (3C 3.2.1),

⁹⁰ Brown and Meier (1983) chapt. 2.

and the *νίκη* and *σωτηρία* that follow from the birth of Child from the Virgin, and his death and resurrection.

Such an ideology thus opened the prospect for Theophilus and his group to overcome their alienation and positively, through the creation of a contra-culture, to reintegrate themselves into the social fabric of their societies by means of a new religion that would achieve the perceived objective of those societies. As such, the ideology was doomed to fail and the attempt prove to be in vain. But the Lucan writing remain an enduring testimony to such a failed attempt.

According to Fox and others Theophilus may have witnessed the trial and also perhaps the execution of St. Paul.⁹¹ They could have comforted themselves in the light of the imagery of *Luke-Acts* that even a less tyrannical emperor than Nero would not have been justified in executing Paul for *στάσις* and for teaching non-ancestral religious customs. The *pax* that *Sebastos* had claimed through his reformed cult, Christ had achieved through his. This comforting reassurance had anchored the questioned legitimacy of the reformed Christian in the unambiguous legitimacy of the Jewish cult. But the re-assurance was now to collapse with the final exclusion of any representative of Christianity on the roll of Jewish names that had paid the tax for the destroyed Temple at Aelia directly into the treasury as required by law.

Vespasian had imposed the *fiscus Iudaicus* on every Jew of at least 20 years of age. What they had previously paid to the Temple at Jerusalem destroyed in the crushed revolt was now paid into the imperial treasury.⁹² According to Suetonius, this tax applied to all Jews observing their ancestral *ἔθνη*.⁹³ Domitian now encouraged denunciations of those who lived as Jews without making open professions as well as those who concealed their Jewish origin. Keresztes argues convincingly that the former class indicated gentiles who were considered to be converts to Judaism to whom the infamous physical inspection for circumcision would not necessarily apply. The *σεβόμενοι* often stopped far short of conversion to full Judaism.⁹⁴ It was the

⁹¹ R.L. Fox, *Pagans and Christians in the Mediterranean World from the second century to the conversion of Constantine*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin 1986), pp. 430–432 ff.

⁹² Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* 1,152.

⁹³ Dio Cassius 65,7,2; Suetonius, *Domit.* 12,2 cf. P. Keresztes, *The Jews, the Christians, and the Emperor Domitian*, in *VCh* 27 (1973), pp. 1–28 to which I am heavily indebted for my comments here.

⁹⁴ Keresztes (1973), p. 5 quoting G. La Piana, *Foreign Groups in Rome during*

scandal of these denunciations that Nerva ended and which forms the significance of the inscription *FISCI IVDAICI CALVMNIA SVBLATA* s.c.⁹⁵ It should be remembered that prosecutions under Roman criminal law depended heavily on such informers in the absence of a regular police-force.

Dio Cassius 68, 1,2 refers to the *senatus consultum* under Nerva that prohibited accusations for following “a Jewish way of life (Ἰουδαϊκὸς βίος).” But with this was clearly bracketed also accusation of ἀσέβεια. Impiety towards the Emperor and the gods is not normally to be associated with tax evasion, but clearly it had been in some cases. These, as Keresztes argues, could not have been Jews by race who were entitled to practice their ancestral religion without participation in any pagan cult including the Imperial Cult. They must have therefore have been gentiles leading a Ἰουδαϊκὸς βίος.

Dio Cassius 67, 14,1-2 mentions the famous Domitianic case of Flavius Clemens and Flavia Domitilla who were accused of ἀθεότης because they had strayed into τὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἥθη: in consequence Flavius was executed and Flavia banished to Pandateria. Included with them as victims of Domitian’s terror were many others who are described as “turning away to Jewish customs (ἐς τὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἥθη ἐξοκέλλοντες).” It was conversion that Domitian was therefore attacking.

We need not here re-open the hoary debate on the specific question as to whether Flavius and Flavia were Christians rather than Jews. Theophilus and his group in Asia Minor were Christians, but in a society in which they would be readily identified phenomenologically with leading a Ἰουδαϊκὸς βίος. Under Domitian Gentiles converting to such a life were clearly considered socially deviant, with the result that initial claims that they should be punished for non-payment of the *fiscus Judaicus* was then followed by charges of ἀσέβεια and of being ἄθεοι. Indeed it could well be argued that, as good deutero-Paulinists, such uncircumcised σεβόμενοι were unlisted on the rolls of Jewish synagogues and unrecognised by those following the *birachoth haminim*. Thus they could not have paid the *fiscus Judaicus* even though they had wished to do so. Yet now, accused under Domitian’s

the First Centuries of the Empire, in *HTHR* 20 (1927), pp. 275-390 and G.F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era*, (Harvard: U.P. 1927), p. 5. More recently see *SEG* 39, 1840-1841; 40, 41, 918; 1840; 42, 726; 1226; 1813; 43, 1298.

⁹⁵ Keresztes (1973), p. 6.

policy for not having paid the tax whilst they followed a Ἰουδαϊκὸς βίος, they were in a cleft stick. The fact of their conversion could be held against them and the charge of ἀσέβεια accordingly follow.

Thus the scene at Ephesus in *Acts* 16,20–21 finds reflection in these Domitianic events as Theophilus and his circle experienced them. The σεβόμενοι of Asia Minor were Roman citizens who, despite their contra-cultural ideology, were regarded as having no legal right to the Lukan reformed Judaism that encapsulated their imperialist aspirations to be good citizens as well as good Christians. In the last analysis *Luke* will admit that he leaves unanswered what the legacy of Paul was to do for them in their own day as it had in the days of the Ephesian magicians. As a Jew Paul had persuaded them to become σεβόμενοι, “contrary to the law to worship God (παρὰ τὸν νόμον σέβεσθαι τὸν θεόν),” and thus to accept “ἔθνη unpermitted to Romans (ἃ οὐκ ἔξεστιν ἡμῖν παραδέχεσθαι . . . Ῥωμαίοις οὖσιν).” In Domitian’s time it was thus also un-permitted ἔθνη that lead to charges of ἀσέβεια for a temple tax which was not only unpaid but for which names had been absent from synagogal registers that would have otherwise have implied obligation to make such payment.

Let us now summarise the point to which this chapter has lead us.

PART D. CHURCH ORDER AND IMPERIAL SOCIETY

We have thus argued that *Luke-Acts* represents ideology but not in the sense of the apology of an individual or group to a hostile Roman magistrate. We agree thus far with Esler that this work represents in-house legitimation and not apology.⁹⁶

But the general concept of legitimation is to be sharpened specifically in terms of a sociological theory of contra-culture. The group legitimates itself by constructing an alternative frame of reference with a related alternative scale of values that justified both its significance and indeed its very existence. But that reconstruction is parasitic nevertheless on the social construction of reality of the host culture, which provides the raw material out of which to construct the reversal of images. Those images we have seen to be the complex of ideas of augury, of *census* and of *lustrum*, of *pax deorum*, of

⁹⁶ Esler (1987), pp. 220–223.

saeculum aureum, of *victoria* and *concordia* which cluster around the developing ideology of the Imperial Cult.

The particular alternative Christian construction of reality could sustain its plausibility to a maximum extent only during the period immediately preceding the accession of the emperor Domitian. The parallel to the reformed, pagan Imperial Cult, achieving the *pax deorum* where its republican predecessor had failed, was Christianity as reformed Judaism, fulfilling the promises of the Divine Child and the *saeculum aureum* promised to the Jewish patriarchs. Domitian was to emphasise through the Imperial Cult the responsibility of the Jews to pay the Temple Tax as the socially acceptable proxy for participation in the cult. But the Jews themselves at this time through the *biracoth haminim* were finally to exclude even Jewish Christianity, practiced by the survivors of the tradition of James the Lord's brother, from constituting a valid form of Judaism.

Thus from now on any adherent of any other form of Judaism than what Theophilus' group would regard as unreformed Judaism would stand exposed by their non-participation in the Imperial Cult. It would not be so easy to avoid inviting the question as to whether their refusal to participate in the sacramental means for obtaining the *pax deorum* implied upsetting that *pax* through *στάσις* fomented by other *scelera* such as magic and witchcraft. Ἀσέβεια was the charge that followed from the fact that they had followed, by their own contra-cultural claim, a reformed Ἰουδαϊκὸς βίος that was the reversed image of Augustus' reform of the republican magisterial *auguria* to produce the *pax deorum*. They had no right to depart from ancestral ἔθη, so that they must be punished for this as much as non-payment of the *fiscus Judaicus*. The contra-cultural ideology had failed in its initial, Lucan form to reintegrate the contra-culture within the host culture.

It is however important to note that part of the contra-cultural construction that reveals itself as more than legitimation is to be seen in the formation of an ideology of Church Order. *Luke* founds the church on the Twelve apostles, who continue with Jesus in his trials, to whom he entrusts the kingdom delivered by his Father, and who are appointed to eat at his table in his kingdom and to sit "on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (*Lk.* 22,30) Although this saying is found also in *Matthew* (19,28) and comes therefore from Q, *Luke* makes the promise applicable to the Twelve alone in the specific

context of the Last Supper (3C 2.3.2.1).⁹⁷ The reapplication of the saying to the kingdom, not given to all disciples, but “willed” or “given as the right of inheritance to (καὶ γὰρ διατίθεμαι ὑμῖν καθὼς διέθετό μοι ὁ πατήρ μου βασιλείαν)” the Twelve alone is therefore indicative of *Luke’s* own construction of the authority structure of the community. Let us examine briefly his reconstruction of authority in the Christian community.

3D 1. *The introduction of the apostolic college*

Luke’s sources are indicative of an awareness that the Twelve did not constitute an exclusive, authority group in the earliest communities, nor were they alone allowed the title of “apostle.” *Acts* 13,1–3 describes the ministers at Antioch as “prophets and teachers . . . who lay hands on Barnabas and Saul.” Apparently in consequence of their being thus “sent out” as travelling missionaries, they are both called ἀπόστολοι in *Acts* 14,4 and 14. Perhaps, alternatively they are called such because in 11,28–30, when the prophet Agabus prophesied a famine, the brethren at Antioch send relief (ἀποστείλαντες) “for the brethren in Judaea . . . to the elders through the hand of Barnabas and Saul.” (v. 30) Such a concept of apostolicity is supported in *Didache* 11,3–6 where the travelling missionary is associated closely with the prophetic office held additionally. Furthermore, in 1 *Cor.* 15,6 and 7 the resurrection appearance “to James and all the apostles” is quite different from, and several stages later (Peter/the Twelve/five hundred brothers/James) than, the appearance to the Twelve.⁹⁸

Thus *Acts* 1,15–26 is clearly *Luke’s* own reconstruction, when it makes the Twelve and the fact of their being eyewitnesses uniquely

⁹⁷ *Mat.* 19, 23–30 places this statement in the context of the Rich Young Man (16–21) and is a promise not only to Peter but to all who follow Jesus (οἱ ἀκολουθήσαντές μοι) “in the rebirth” (ἐν τῇ καλιγγενεσίᾳ).

⁹⁸ Cf. also *Rom.* 16,7 where Andronicus and Junia are described as ἐπίσημοι τοῖς ἀποστόλοις, and in 2 *Cor.* 8,23 (ἀδελφοὶ ἡμῶν ἀπόστολοι ἐκκλησιῶν) and 11,5 and 13 and 12,11. In the latter case the ὑπερλίαν ἀπόστολοι appears to refer not to those who have passed the test as witnesses to the resurrection, but to the charismatic and prophetic test of performing τὰ σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου. Furthermore in *Mat.* 10,2; *Mk.* 3,14; 6,30; *Lk.* 6,13; 9,10; 11,49 the reference is to those who travelled either with Jesus or who were sent out by him as missionaries, and not as witnesses to a resurrection that had not as yet occurred. See also Campenhausen (1947), pp. 96–130; K. Lake, *The Twelve and the Apostles*, in Foakes Jackson and Lake (1933) 1,5 pp. 37–59.

central to the authority structure of the community, (*v.* 22) conjoining incidentally with them the “Lord’s Brothers” (*v.* 14). The addition of Matthias in replacement of Judas is also clearly the author’s own construction. In *Acts* 12,2 James the apostle is martyred by Herod Agrippa, but the apostolic body does not meet again in order to replace the deceased office-bearer.

However, the author’s purpose in constructing a putative Order for the primitive Church is clearly not that of later Hegessipus or Irenaeus, or of the Clementine *Homilies*.⁹⁹ The apostles do not initiate an episcopal succession list. They do however ordain the seven deacons but only according to the Western text of *Acts* 6,1–6. The *ms.* tradition otherwise implies that the community itself ordains with apostolic approval.¹⁰⁰ Both Paul and Barnabas (*Acts* 14,21), whilst travelling through Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia, “ordain presbyters in every church (χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς κατ’ ἐκκλησίαν πρεσβυτέρους),” by virtue presumably of the apostolicity of the travelling missionary and not the apostolicity of the eyewitness to the resurrection.

Yet there is no clearly articulated theory of ministerial Order systematically imposed upon the text since there are mentioned elders (*Acts* 11,30), but not apostles (nor deacons), over the church in Jerusalem who receive the relief-gift as a result of Agabus’ prophesying, but of whose ordination, unlike that of the deacons, we have no mention. Furthermore, presbyters are regularly associated with the apostles throughout *Acts*, but no account of the origin of their office, unlike that of apostles and deacons, is ever given.¹⁰¹ Yet the supposed ordinations of presbyters by Paul and Barnabas, and the summoning of the Ephesian presbyters by Paul himself in *Acts* 20,17, was clearly important to the author as an apostolic function. In *v.* 28 Paul addresses these same presbyters as ἐπίσκοποι, though, as in Clement *Romans* 44,1–5, there is a plurality of such ministers and the terms are evidently interchangeable.

⁹⁹ A. Brent, Diogenes Laertius and the Apostolic Succession, in *JEH* 44,3 (1993), pp. 375–386; *Idem*. Hippolytus and the Roman Church in the Third Century: Communities in Tension before the Emergence of a Monarch-Bishop, in *SupplVCh* 31 (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1995), pp. 476–501.

¹⁰⁰ *Acts* 6,6 οὓς ἔστησαν ἐνώπιον τῶν ἀποστόλων, καὶ προσευξάμενοι ἐπέθηκαν αὐτοῖς τὰς χεῖρας. The subject of ἔστησαν is clearly the Hellenists themselves who lay hands on the seven like the prophets and teachers of Antioch on Barnabas and Saul (*Acts* 13,3). Foakes Jackson and Lake (1933) 1,4 p. 65, and 1,5 note 11 p. 137.

¹⁰¹ *Acts* 15, 2,4,6,22–23; 16,4.

There is no primary historical evidence for the existence of a presbyterate in the original Pauline communities. Thus the existence of the institution here is a clear contrivance of the deutero-Paulinist author which he nevertheless shares with the pseudonymous Pastoral Epistles written contemporaneously with him.¹⁰² The connection of the Pauline congregation through ordination of office-bearers is intended to emphasise the unity of the reformed cult of Judaism, which begins in Jerusalem and proceeds to Samaria and then to Rome with each movement leading back to Jerusalem itself.

Paul ordains presbyters just as Peter and the original apostles had ordained the deacons (*Acts* 6,1–6) even though there the account is also constructed, and the deacons were originally the self-standing office bearers of a culturally separate congregation.¹⁰³ The ministries of Peter and Paul must be seen to be not only symmetrical with each other but organisationally related through the Council of Jerusalem in *Acts* 15,1–35. The latter event has been notoriously impossible to reconcile satisfactorily with the primary source of *Gal.* 1–2. Furthermore, even the prophets and teachers of Antioch cannot be allowed to come into existence independently, but must be shown to have migrated there originally, with Agabus, from Jerusalem (*Acts* 11,27). Peter must report back to the apostles in Jerusalem all that has happened in his missionary activity (*Acts* 11,1).

If the author's purpose is clearly not to legitimate later, catholic

¹⁰² *Philip.* 1, 2 mentions ἐπίσκοποι and διάκονοι as office-holders. The deutero-Pauline 1 *Tim.* 5,17 distinguishes πρεσβύτεροι from elder men by the fact that they are προεστῶτες and therefore unambiguously officer-holders, and *Tit.* 1,5 contains an injunction to ordain them in a phrase reminiscent of *Acts* 14,21 (ἵνα . . . καταστήσης (χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς) κατὰ πόλιν (κατ' ἐκκλησίαν) πρεσβυτέρους). Διάκονοι are otherwise mentioned in 1 *Tim.* 3,8 and 12, although a certain ambivalence is maintained by the fact that "Timothy" himself is called a διάκονος in 4, 6. ἐπίσκοποι are mentioned in the generic singular in 1 *Tim.* 3,2 and *Tit.* 1,7 but no-where as unambiguously distinct from the πρεσβύτεροι. In the Pastorals, as in *Luke-Acts*, we would seem therefore to be in a time contemporary with Clement of Rome and therefore around 95 A.D. To that extent I would be prepared to accept the assessment of S. New, *The Name, Baptism, and the Laying on of Hands*, in Foakes Jackson and Lake (1933) 1,5 Note 11 pp. 137–138 that here were laid the foundations of later catholic practice. I cannot therefore accept either Campenhausen (1969), pp. 156–165 ff. that would date the Pastorals later on the grounds that they presuppose single-bishops, nor R. Brown, *Priest and Bishop: Biblical Reflections*, (New York: Paulist Press 1970), pp. 67–70 ff. who was prepared to defend the existence of a presbyterate in the original Pauline communities.

¹⁰³ H.J. Cadbury, *The Hellenists*, in Foakes Jackson and Lake (1933) 1,5 Note 7 pp. 59–74.

Church order through his not always neatly constructed edifice, what role does that construction play? We are now, in the light of our account so far, in a position to give a fresh answer to an old problem.

3D 2. *The centrality of the Temple to reformed Judaism*

It is necessary firstly, and perhaps least controversially, to portray Christianity as a reformed Jewish cult. The world-wide cult of Judaism was united around the Temple, and a practical expression of that unity was in the *fiscus Judaicus*. Likewise *Luke's* reformed cultus must be located and centred on the Jerusalem Temple, where the disciples gather with the apostles for worship whilst continuing at home in the apostles' doctrine, in synagogal prayer, and in the breaking of bread that continues the Last Supper. Here missionaries return for direction and re-assurance, and the expansion of the Church takes place around this hub, as I have described. Here is sent a collection for poor-relief. The author's reconstruction of early Christian history in this regard was no doubt considerably assisted by a historical collection, resonant of submission to an authority ambivalently interpreted on both sides, described in 2 *Cor.* 8–10. In *Gal.* 2,6 and 10 Paul agreed to remember the poor, which he professes eagerness always to do. Thus Paul may have regarded the collection purely as poor-relief and Christian charity, but James the Lord's brother, and Peter and John, presiding over the Jerusalem Church, may have interpreted it as a grudging acknowledgment of the authority of the original community. In their eyes the "pillars" of the Church as the New Israel had the same right to support as had the Temple of the Old Israel.

But we are now able, in the light of our argument, to go further in our interpretation of the construction of Church Order in *Luke-Acts*. We have further argued that the portrayal of Christianity as a reformed Judaism is a conscious reflection of Augustus' reformation of the old, pagan cultus in the direction of a construction of imperial unity on the foundations of the Imperial Cult (3B 1–3). We can now note Augustus' reformation of the college of the *Fratres Arvales*, and similarities with *Acts* 1,12–26.

3D 3. *Fratres Arvales: apostolic college as contra culture*

The reformed cult of Judaism had been founded on the Twelve apostles whose judgement of the twelve tribes of Israel was self-consciously

associated with the foundations of the cult at the Last Supper (3C 2.3.2.1). Thus kingdom and cult was associated—just as the *pax dei* or εἰρήνη were associated—with the King at the Triumphal Entry (3C 2.3.2) and with the Virgin and Child in the angels' song at Bethlehem (3B 3.1). That *pax* and *concordia* was extended through the cult—through the apostles doctrine, breaking of bread, and prayers—as through the ministry of Paul (3C 2.3.2.2–3C 2.3.2.3). The contra-cultural image of the imperial banquet associated with that cult was reflected in both the *Magnificat* and in *Luke's* recasting of the words on True Greatness at the Last Supper (3C 1 and 3C 2.3.2.1).

The apostolic foundation of the Christian cultus is therefore to be seen reflecting contra-cultural images with reference to the college of the *Fratres Arvales*. These were originally a republican college of great antiquity who celebrated spring sacrifices. The college was an important part of Augustus' reformation of Roman Religion. Furthermore their ceremonial arrangements, like the Calendar of festivals of the Imperial Cult, clearly influenced celebrations in the provinces where they were known.¹⁰⁴ The inscriptions from which the *Acta* have been reconstructed were found in 1570 in the Vigna Vignoli, and preserved in the Vatican, though the seven or nine statues of emperors on whose bases they were originally inscribed have perished. According to legend, Acca Laurentia, Romulus' nurse, lost one of her twelve sons at birth, and so substituted him and made him her son (Gellius, *N.A.* VII, 8,7). They wore white fillets and crowns of corn ears (Pliny, *H.N.* XVIII, 2,6). As a college, they were always, like the apostles, twelve in number. Augustus joined their number (*Res Gestae* 4,7) in accordance with the legend and in accordance also with his claim to be the new Romulus presiding over the second founding of Rome.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ See Fishwick (1987) 2,1 pp. 482–485 and *PWK* (1899), Bd. 2, col. 1471: "... man sieht deutlich, dass dem Kaiser Augustus bei seiner Reorganisation des Collegiums die Wiederbelebung des halbvergessenen Dienstes der Dea nur ein Mittel zum Zwecke, und die sacrale Verherrlichung des Kaiserhauses durch die mit besonderem Ansehen bekleidete Priesterschaft die Hauptsache war."

¹⁰⁵ Macrobius, *Sat. Conv.* III, 5,7. See also J.B. Carter, Arval Brothers, in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, (Ed.) J. Hastings, J.A. Selbie, and L.H. Gray, (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark 1909), vol. II pp. 9 ff.; J. Scheid, Les Frères Arvales. Recrutement et origine sociale sous les empereurs julio-claudiens, in *Bibliothèque de L'École des Hautes Études: Section des Sciences Religieuses*, 77 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France: 1975), pp. 343–351; M. Nacinovich, *Carmen Arvale*, I Il Testò, (Rome: Bardi 1933); *Idem*.

The *Fratres Arvales* became closely connected with the Imperial Cult, offering *vota* for the imperial household: they made sacrifices on imperial birthdays, and on the occasion of accessions to the throne. Any vacancy in the number of twelve was filled by the college itself, just like the twelve apostles, though in the latter case we have already noted the incongruity of the replacement of Matthias with the failure to replace James (*Acts* 1,24–26 cf. 12,1–5). In *CIL* 6, 2080 line 22 ff. we have recorded the election of Publius Manlius Carbo “in the place of Q. Bittius Proculus” in consequence of the emperor Hadrian’s letter casting his vote for his *collega*. Thus we find paralleled Matthias, chosen λαβεῖν τὸν τόπον τῆς διακονίας ταύτης καὶ ἀποστολῆς (*Acts* 1,25). The parallel is, I submit, not accidental in the light of what I have established to be the context of the theology of *Luke-Acts* in imperial ideology.

PART E. IN CONCLUSION: THEOPHILUS AND HIS CIRCLE

Theophilus and his circle were not in a relationship of open conflict with the Imperial Cult, as was the writer of the *Apocalypse*. Standing at the forefront of the successors to the Greek city states in communities such as Ephesus, Pergamon, Antioch in Pisidia, etc., they well knew that there was as yet no legal compulsion on them to participate in the Imperial Cult. Before Decius Trajan (A.D. 251) such participation was voluntary in the sense that there lacked any legal compulsion to participate. But social pressure, as Tertullian’s later *De Corona* was to indicate, could have the same practical conclusions of drawing hostile attention to non-participants and the drawing up of charges of *scelera* or of *contumacia* against them.¹⁰⁶

Yet the Graeco-Roman religious culture that had formed their perspectives on the world was one to which that cultus was becoming increasingly critical. The Augustan revolution had produced the *pax deorum*, and reordered the cosmic and metaphysical dislocation of the natural order witnessed in a century of civil wars with which countless prodigious natural disasters were associated. There was a strongly felt moral and patriotic compulsion to continue what had

Carmen Arvale, 2 I Fonemi e le Forme, con un excursus ed indici, (Rome: Bardi 1934).

¹⁰⁶ Sherwin White (1952), pp. 210–211 cf. De Ste Croix (1963), pp. 18–21 and Sherwin White (1964), pp. 24–26.

been celebrated in the decrees of the Koinon of Asia and elsewhere. But they had been catechetized and received into the post-Pauline communities in Asia Minor, and were now Christians.

How could their new faith enable their reintegration into the imperial order from which they now felt alienated? How could this perceived, social-psychological need for the celebration of social order after bloody social strife, fulfilled in the Imperial Cultus that had secured the *pax deorum*, now experience new fulfilment by the new religion? The way the writer chose was to deconstruct early Christian eschatology to remove all judgement and tribulation, so as to assimilate Christian eschatology to that of Augustus' *saeculum aureum*. Thus we have answered the first question with which we began and explained the reason for *Luke's* recasting of early Christian eschatology.

In answer to the second question concerning *Luke's* modification of Paulinism, we have seen that the *saeculum aureum* was initiated through an act of augury, Augustus' special *augurium pacis* which had succeeded in achieving the *pax deorum* where republican religion had failed. The answer to the second question was to be found in the Christian counterpart to Augustus' Cult, which could alone achieve the refashioned Christian *saeculum aureum*. The author now had to identify the religion into which Theophilus has been catechetized as a reformed Jewish cult. He was thus prepared to deconstruct Paul's radical disjunction between the Law and Christ (*Gal.* 3,10–14), even in the softened form in *Rom.* 9–11.¹⁰⁷ *Luke* now offered a positive reason for non-participation, namely, the purpose of the Imperial Cult: the *pax deorum* and the sacramental means for the continuance of the *saeculum aureum* is far better achieved through the εἰρήνη of Bethlehem, the Triumphal Entry, and the νίκη and σωτηρία that follow from the birth of Child from the Virgin, and his death and resurrection. Thus Theophilus can know "the security (τὴν ἀσφάλειαν) regarding the discourses of his catechesis (περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων)." (*Lk.* 1,4)

Such an ideology thus opened the prospect for Theophilus and his group to overcome their alienation and to reintegrate themselves into the social fabric of their societies by means of a new religion that would achieve the perceived objective of those societies. But as an ideology for integrating Christianity into the imperial ideal it was

¹⁰⁷ Brown and Meier (1983) chapt. 2.

to prove abortive at this point in time, though later to be partially realized in the time of Eusebius and Prudentius.¹⁰⁸

There is therefore a clear connection between how *Luke-Acts* constructs Church Order and the creation of a contra-culture reflecting the Imperial Cult. We shall establish the continued connection of ecclesiastical and imperial order as in progress of time developments in the latter find developmental counterparts in the former. We will find in Clement of Rome a parallel with *Luke-Acts* in the transformation of traditional apocalyptic under similar imperial-ideological influences. Such a parallel will prove all the more remarkable in that there is no evidence of direct influence of the one work on the other. We shall see that the Domitianic changes in the Imperial Cult are reflected in how Ignatius of Antioch, following certain themes from the *Apocalypse*, constructs his theology of the threefold Order. We shall see later in connection with Cyprian changes in the ideology of Church Order that reflect the earlier changes by the Severans to the ideology of imperial power.

Thus we are brought to the subject matter of our next Chapter, and the immediate social and political context of Clement's, *Corinthians*, the *Apocalypse*, and the letters of Ignatius of Antioch.

¹⁰⁸ Bovon (1983) col. 404: "Für Lukas wäre die Weltdimension der Mission und dadurch der Kirche ein religiöses Gegenstück zum politischen Universalismus Roms. Lukas wäre dann ein Vorläufer von Euseb und Prudenz."

CHAPTER FOUR

CLEMENT OF ROME AND DOMITIAN'S EMPIRE

The fulfilment of the imperial peace in Clement's community

Clement's *Corinthians* has been convincingly dated as contemporary with Domitian's reign (A.D. 81–96), and more specifically between A.D. 94 and 97 during which the “sudden and repeated misfortunes (τὰς αἰφνιδίους καὶ ἐπαλλήλους γενομένας ἡμῖν συμφοράς) and calamities (καὶ περιπτώσεις)” occurred that had delayed the sending of the letter (*Cor.* 1,1).¹ Christian writers from Hegesippus and Melito of Sardis onwards claimed that Domitian persecuted Christianity, so that it would be reasonable to conclude that Clement's words here refer to that reign and such a persecution.² Furthermore, as Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* V, 30,3) connects the *Apocalypse* with the reign of Domitian, it would follow that this work is a reaction to that persecution. As that persecution can also be seen as part of the plan of Domitian, as the new Augustus, to reconstruct the Imperial Cult, the developing theology of these two chronologically contemporary works can be related to the developing theology of the Imperial Cult.

Since however it has been denied that Domitian persecuted Christianity and particularly influenced the Imperial Cult itself, we will begin by discussing the question of Domitian's persecution (section A) as a background to an analysis of the contra-cultural ideology of Order as it appears in Clement's *Corinthians* (section B). We shall reserve for Chapter 5 our further discussion of Domitian's reform of the cult and the reflection of that reform in the *Apocalypse*. In Chap-

¹ L.W. Barnard, Clement of Rome and the Persecution of Domitian, in *NTS* 10 (1963–64), pp. 251–260; *Idem.* St. Clement of Rome and the Persecution of Domitian, in *Studies in the Apostolic Fathers and their Background*, (Oxford: Blackwell 1966), pp. 5–18. See also P. Keresztes, The Jews, the Christians, and the Emperor Domitian, in *VChr* 27 (1973), pp. 1–28.

² Hegesippus (Eusebius *H.E.* III,20); Melito of Sardis, *Apology* (Eusebius *H.E.* IV,26); Tertullian, *Apol.* 5; *De Pall.* 2; Lactantius, *De Mort. Pers.* 3; Eusebius, *Chronicon.* II, p. 160; Jerome, *Ep.* 108,7; *Chronicon* Ann. Abr. 2112, Domit.16; Theodoret, *Graec. Affect. Cur.* 9; Joannes Malalas, *Chronograph.* 10 etc.

ter 6 we shall argue that the subsequent development of Church Order a generation later in Ignatius of Antioch was historically influenced by both Domitian's cultic reforms and by the *Apocalypse* itself.

PART A. DOMITIAN AND THE WRITING OF CLEMENT'S *CORINTHIANS*

Attempts to deny Domitian's persecution—that would break the links between both Clement's *Corinthians* and the *Apocalypse*, and the cultic reforms upon which my argument relies—rest upon three premisses, namely:

1. The absence of any mention in pagan sources that Domitian persecuted the Christians,
2. The ambiguity of archaeological evidence for Eusebius' identification of Flavius Clemens, Flavia Domitilla, and Acilius Glabrio as Christian and not Jewish martyrs, and
3. The absence of pagan evidence for persecution under Domitian and thus for martyrdom of Christians with these names.

Let us now, in our first section, examine each of these assumptions in turn.

4A 1. *Pagan evidence: Dio Cassius 67, 14,1-3*

Suetonius (*Domitian*. 15,17) and Quintillian (*Inst. Orat.* 4, proem.) had mentioned the names of Flavia Domitilla, Flavius Clemens, and Acilius Glabrio, but not the charges against them. However, Dio Cassius (LXVII,14, 1-2) claims that Flavius Clemens the consul (ὑπατεύοντα), and his wife the emperor's kinswoman (συγγενῆ) Flavia Domitilla were charged both with ἀθεότης and with "turning away to Jewish customs (ἐς τὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἦθη ἐξοκέλλοντες)." In consequence Flavius was executed and Domitilla was exiled to Pandateria. Acilius Glabrio, who had held consular office along with the young Trajan (τὸν μετὰ τοῦ Τραϊανοῦ ἄρξαντα), was also condemned. But Dio also mentions (14,3) that this was more than a trial of the individuals mentioned and that on the same charges "many . . . others (ἄλλοι . . . πολλοί) were condemned (κατεδικάσθησαν), some who died (καὶ οἱ μὲν ἀπέθανον) and others who were deprived of their property (οἱ δὲ τῶν γούν οὐσιῶν ἐστερήθησαν)." There was therefore a quite general movement against τὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἦθη.

We appear *prima facie* to have a conflict therefore between Dio on the one hand and Eusebius on the other, who claims on the authority of Brettius that Flavius and Domitilla were Christians (*Chronicon* II ann. Abr. 2110 Domt. 14 and *H.E.* III,18). That Dio fails to describe them as Christians is arguably unremarkable since he never mentions Christianity throughout his work even though he must have known of its existence. Tacitus and Pliny before him had clearly known of the existence of Christianity. Dio's second consulship was in A.D. 229, in the reign of Severus Alexander, whose mother Julia Mamaea had sought from Origen an account of the Christian faith (Eusebius *H.E.* VI, 21, 3-4). Moreover, if SHA, *Sev. Alex.* 29, 2-3 is to be relied on, Alexander's *lararium* possessed a statue of Christ. As we have already argued, Theophilus and his circle in Asia Minor conceived Christianity itself to be a reformed Judaism, with the result that, viewed externally, Christianity may have appeared to Dio as a form of Judaism so that no distinction needed to be made between them (3C 2.3.3.3).

4A 2. Cimiterium Domitillae and Eusebius' claim

The discovery of certain artefacts associated with the names of Flavius Clemens and Acilius Glabrio, that initially appeared to corroborate their Christianity, has bedevilled this discussion. It may be that De Rossi was originally mistaken because the Christian part of the *cimiterium Domitillae* and of Acilius Glabrio may be late second-century and the product of their descendants' conversion to a Christianity in which their ancestors had not believed.³ But, having failed to prove too much, it is a contrary error to hold that too little is proved.

Even if Dio has recorded accurately the Jewish character of their belief and has been able to distinguish that from Christianity proper, the case does not hinge on these individuals alone. We have seen that "many others" were also deprived, and it would be reckless to allow too much to rest on Dio's ability to distinguish Judaism from Christianity when writing during a period free from a general policy of persecution such as in Severus Alexander's reign. Both Tertullian (*Apol.* 5) and Melito (Eusebius *H.E.* 4,26) mention Domitian as a

³ J.B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, (London: MacMillan 1885), 1,1 pp. 35-39 and 82 cf. B.W. Jones, *The Emperor Domitian*, (London: Routledge 1992), p. 115. See also Barnard (1964-5), p. 260 and (1966), p. 15 and W.C.H. Friend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church*, (Oxford: Blackwells 1965), pp. 212-217.

second Nero, without any reference to Flavius Clemens and Flavia Domitilla.

It is further quite false to claim that there is no pagan evidence for a persecution of Christianity under Domitian.

4A 3. *Evidence from Pliny Ep. X, 96,1*

Pliny states in his letter to Trajan: "I have never been present at judicial examinations of Christians (*cognitionibus de Christianis interfui numquam*)," (*Ep. X, 96,1*) which could indicate that such examinations had been held though not in recent memory. Furthermore he records of those examined that (a) "they had ceased to be Christians two or more years previously, and some of them twenty years ago (*non nemo ante viginti*)," and (b) apostates were prepared to make "offerings of wine and incense (*ture ac vino*)" to Trajan's imperial statue.

The significance of *non nemo ante viginti* (a) points, in A.D. 112–113, to Domitian's reign in A.D. 93 and to a persecution under pressure of which such apostasies took place. Pliny may himself have devised the loyalty test mentioned in (b). But if it were an already established practice, it would point to former times when Christians had been persecuted, and in which they had been subject to *cognitio*.⁴ Clement's letter itself, it must be emphasised, though a Christian source, is itself good evidence for a Domitianic persecution. His account does not rest upon any particular characterisation of the religious beliefs of a Flavius, a Domitilla, or an Acilius, sanctified by later hagiographic fable, whom he never mentions. But he does compare Peter and Paul, and those who suffer martyrdom with them, as "those who contended in the days nearest to us (τοὺς ἔγγιστα γενομένους ἀθλητάς), the noble examples of our own generation (τῆς γενεᾶς ἡμῶν τὰ γενναῖα ὑποδείγματα)" (*Cor. 5,1*) with his contemporary situation in which he claims that "we are in the same arena (σκάμματι) and the same contest (ἀγών) weighs upon us." (*Cor. 7,1*) Clearly the expressions ἔγγιστα and τῆς γενεᾶς ἡμῶν imply a time recent and yet distinct. With no martyrological axe to grind, Clement therefore bears witness to the contention of both Melito and Tertullian that Domitian was the second Nero.

But the requirement of our argument to place the αἰφνιδίους καὶ ἐπαλλήλους . . . συμφοράς (*Cor. 1,1*) in the context of persecution by Domitian is nevertheless not a requirement to regard that persecution

⁴ Keresztes (1973), pp. 20–21 cf. Jones (1993), pp. 114–115.

as following from a general decree. That Eusebius insisted in seeing such a persecution as general was a product of his historiography that had no concept of development so that the Church of the first century had to be identical with that of the fourth. In consequence, since persecutions since Decius Trajan (251) were seen by Eusebius to have been general, so must persecutions have been so before.

We have argued that persecution resulted not from general imperial decrees but from the social isolation that resulted initially from non-participation in the Imperial Cult, and from suspicion leading to accusation of *superstitio* (3C 2.3). This was the real context in which the αἰφνιδίους καὶ ἐπαλλήλους . . . συμφορὰς were experienced, as was the situation in Asia Minor faced by Theophilus and his circle. Domitian instigated certain changes in the Imperial Cult itself so that he emerges in the literature as a new Augustus worshipped as a *dominus et deus praesens*. The *Apocalypse* too we shall argue is one group's highly illuminating reaction to those changes, but a reaction quite different either to Theophilus' group in *Luke-Acts* or to Clement's reflected in *Corinthians*. Jones and Schowalter have denied most recently a Domitianic date.⁵ A discussion of the Imperial Cult under Domitian, and the *Apocalypse* as evidence for a Domitianic persecution, must, however, await our treatment of the *Apocalypse* in Chapter 5.

Let us now turn to Clement's *Corinthians*. We shall trace here evidence for the development of a Church Order that parallels the development of the Imperial Cult with which it contains several analogies.

PART B. CLEMENT: CHURCH ORDER AND IMPERIAL PEACE

The Twelve, as founders of the apostolic college that orders the reformed Jewish cultus achieving the true *pax dei*, did not in *Luke-Acts* provide any means of appointing bishops as their collegial successors. However, Clement in *Corinthians*, writing some ten years later in the reign of Domitian, was to supply this lack. Like *Luke-Acts*, Clement's *Corinthians* is concerned, not simply with restoration of proper church Order at Corinth, but with the general concern of the legitimation of the Christian cultus. His stress on the Order of the

⁵ See footnote 3 above.

Christian community reflects the imperial, metaphysical background of the fear of *στάσις* as reflecting an upsetting of the *pax deorum*. *Στάσις* is *άνόσιος*. The Corinthian community, previous to such *στάσις*, had conducted themselves, not with the *άσέβεια* that Clement's pagan fellow-citizens would have associated with failure to conform socially if not legally with the festivities of the Imperial Cult, but with a *ευσέβεια* that was both *σώφρων* and *έπιεικής* (Clement, *Cor.* 1,1–2). Let us now analyse in detail how the theme of imperial peace finds expression in Clement's social construction of ecclesial reality that will reveal some interesting parallels with what we have observed in our treatment of *Luke-Acts*.

4B 1. *Metaphysics of ecclesial peace: society reflects nature*

We have seen what shuddering horror the prospect of upsetting the *pax deorum* caused in Rome's collective memory, shaped and fostered by historians and poets such as Livy, Vergil, and Lucan after a century of social upheaval and civil strife, which was the foundation of Augustus' *augurium salutis* inaugurating the Imperial Cult (2A 5–6). So too for Clement "all insurrection (*πάσα στάσις*) and all division (*καί πάν σχίσμα*) is to be abominated by you (*βδελυκτόν ύμίν*)." (2,6) *Βδελυκτός* is an expression evocative of sacrilegious defilement that destroys the efficacious operation of cultic ritual, as in the *βδέλυγμα έρημώσεως* (*Mk.* 13, 14). The order of the community is to reflect the order of creation that is characterised by the *pax dei*. In 20,1–3 we read:

The heavens (*οί ούρανοί*) though agitated by his governance (*τή διοικήσει αύτου σαλευόμενοι*) are subject to him in peace (*έν ειρήνη ύποτάσσονται αύτῳ*) . . . Sun and moon (*ήλιός τε και σελήνη*) and choirs of stars (*άστέρων τε χοροί*) according to his decree (*κατά την διαταγήν αύτου*) encircle in harmony free from all deviation (*έν όμονοία δίχα πάσης παρεκβάσεως έξελίσσουσι*) their appointed bounds (*τούς έπιτεταγμένους αύτους όρισμούς*).

The metaphysical peace (*ειρήνη*) of the natural order is represented therefore by a *διαταγή* that is specifically reflected in imperial society. As Clement says later:

Let us march (*στρατευσόμεθα*) therefore, men and brothers, with all eagerness (*μετά πάσης έκτενείας*) in his (God's) blameless orders (*έν τοίς άμόμοις προστάγμασιν*): let us take cognisance (*κατανοήσωμεν*) of those who enlist as soldiers (*τούς στρατευομένους*) under our [temporal] rulers

(τοῖς ἡγουμένοις), how orderly (εὐτάκτως), how yieldingly (εἰκτικῶς), how submissively (ὑποτεταγμένως) they execute (ἐπιτελοῦσιν) what they have been commanded (τὰ διατασσόμενα). All are not eparchs (ἔπαρχοι) or chiliarchs (χιλίαρχοι) or centurions (ἐκατόνταρχοι) or pentacontarchs (πεντηκόνταρχοι) or people like that: but each in his own rank (ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ τάγματι) perform what is ordered by the Emperor and his rulers (τὰ ἐπιτασσόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ τῶν ἡγουμένων) . . . Let us take as an example our body: the head without the feet is nothing, so neither the feet without the head: the least members of our body are necessary and useful for the whole body: but all members conspire (ἀλλὰ πάντα συνπνεῖ) and employ one subjection (καὶ ὑποταγῇ μιᾷ χρῆται) for the preservation of the whole body (εἰς τὸ σώζεσθαι ὅλον τὸ σῶμα).

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We have already indicated how a Stoic hylomorphism justified this parallelism between nature and society, and how, through a justification of divination, it was to give a rational justification for the religion of the Imperial Cult that secured the *pax deorum*. We see therefore in Clement a clear reflection of such themes in his examination of the Order of the Christian community and the disturbance of that Order in the events that had led to the deposition of the ἐπίσκοποι-πρεσβύτεροι (2A 4–5).

A general philosophy of imperial Order had led through the cultus to a definite understanding of the sacramental role of emperor as high-priest of the Imperial Cult and the deity venerated by that cult sometimes in his lifetime but usually *post mortem*. Clement derives from this general, pagan philosophical background a parallel theory of Church Order. In consequence he was to produce a theory of the Christian cult and its ministers themselves. Let us now turn to this dimension of his claims for a valid and efficacious Church Order.

4B 1.1. *Order is secured through cultic authority*

Clement understands the Old Testament cultus as type, and Church Order as antitype, in such terms as τάξις, τάγμα, ὑποταγή, εὐταξία and προστάγμα etc. which are concepts derived from the order of the imperial army and Roman society. But nature reflects society, and vice-versa. The descriptions ἐπιτεταγμένοι ὀρισμοί, διοικήσις, and ὁμοιοῖα δίχα πάσης παρεκβάσεως of the natural order find their reflections in such terms of political relations as διαταγή and ἐν εἰρήνῃ ὑποτάσσεσθαι. As Clement now continues:

. . . We ought to do all things in order (πάντα τάξει ποιεῖν ὀφείλομεν) that the master has commanded to celebrate (ὅσα ὁ δεσπότης ἐπιτελεῖν

έκελευσεν) at the appointed times (κατὰ καιροὺς τεταγμένους). He ordered the offerings and liturgies (τάς τε προσφοράς καὶ λειτουργίας) to be celebrated carefully and not rashly or with disorder (ἐπιμελῶς ἐπιτελεῖσθαι καὶ οὐκ εἰκῆ ἢ ἀτάκτως) but at the appointed times and seasons (ὠρισμένοις καιροῖς καὶ ὥραις): and where and through whom he wished them to be celebrated (ἐπιτελεῖσθαι), he himself stipulated (ὠρισεν) by his supreme will (τῇ ὑπερτάτῳ αὐτοῦ βουλήσει) in order that all things might take place holily (ὁσίως) in his good pleasure (ἐν εὐδοκίῃσει), and be well-pleasing to his will (εὐπρόσδεκτα. . . τῷ θελήματι). They then who make their offerings (τάς προσφοράς) at the appointed seasons (τοῖς προστεταγμένοις καιροῖς) are well-pleasing and blessed (εὐπρόσδεκτοί τε καὶ μακάριοι), for in following the decrees (τοῖς νομίμοις) of the master, they do not miss the mark. For to the high-priest (τῷ γὰρ ἀρχιερεῖ) are given his own liturgies (ἴδια λειτουργία δεδομένοι εἰσίν), and to the priests (τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν) an individual place is assigned (ἴδιος ὁ τόπος προστέτακται), and for the levites (λεβίταις) their own ministries (ἴδια διακονία) are laid down (ἐπίκεινται). The lay-man (ὁ λαϊκὸς ἄνθρωπος) is bound by lay instructions (τοῖς λαϊκοῖς προσταγμασιν δέδεται).

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On the basis of this Old Testament type, Clement now proceeds to the antitype in the Christian ministry. But his exegesis continues to be saturated with the Stoic metaphysics of a rational, divine, natural order that is incarnated in any proper, valid political order. Each of them is to make their Eucharist “in his own rank (ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ τάγματι),” a secondary reflection of which might be in the Roman army but the primary one is in nature. No-one is to be found “moving aside (παρεκβαίνων) from the appointed rule of his liturgy (τὸν ὠρισμένον τῆς λειτουργίας αὐτοῦ κανόνα),” just as in the providential order of nature sun, moon and stars move ἐν ὁμοιοῖα δίχα πάσης παρεκβάσεως and κατὰ τὴν διαταγὴν within ἐπιτεταγμένους ὀρισμούς (41,1 cf. 20,3).

It must however be emphasised that it is important for Clement that Church Order is cultic Order, whether prefigured in the imperial order, in nature, or in *O.T.* typology. Not only can valid offerings be made only in Jerusalem at the altar there, but part of that validity is “the inspection of what is offered (μωμοσκοπηθὲν τὸ προσφερόμενον) through the high-priest (διὰ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως) and the previously stated ministers (καὶ τῶν προειρημένων λειτουργῶν).” To do anything contrary to God’s will in such cultic matters involves the threat of κίνδυνος and θάνατος (41, 3–4).

In this light we have been correct to translate λειτουργία as “liturgy” in a cultic sense, as opposed to that of “ministry of state.” However, we have been at pains to emphasise that in the Graeco-Roman world there was no final distinction between the two. Cicero (*De Nat. Deor.*

2,4) made it quite clear to Cotta that consuls had been deposed from their office, their λειτουργία, for not performing the *auspicia* correctly. Natural and political disorders and their στάσις formed a conceptual continuum with cultic disorder and the shuddering horror of sacrilege. And we have argued that the political transformation from republic to empire involved the Imperial Cult as the sacramental expression of this nexus of ideas.

It is in such a cultic context that we should now interpret Clement's famous account of the apostolic appointment of ἐπίσκοποι and διάκονοι.

4B 1.2. *The apostolic succession as the foundation of the cult*

Indeed, although Clement seems not to know *Luke-Acts*, such an interpretation will not seem strange in view of the clearly cultic foundations that we claimed for the latter in the author's construction of Christianity as reformed Judaism. The twelve tribal apostles, as regulators of the cult (doctrine, breaking of bread, prayers), mirrored the Twelve Arval Brethren and their role in the Imperial Cult (3D). Yet both Clement and the author of *Luke-Acts* are reflecting the general social construction of imperial reality of which they are producing their distinctive reversed, contra-cultural reflections.

Clement gives us no succession list such as Hegesippus was later to compose and Irenaeus to follow.⁶ His emphasis once again is on order reflected in *O.T.* typology. The apostles came from Christ, and Christ from God so that each were εὐτάκτως ἐκ θελήματος θεοῦ. The ἐπίσκοποι and διάκονοι were appointed by the apostles as their first fruits (ἀπαρχάς) after they had examined them through the Spirit (δοκιμάσαντες τῷ πνεύματι). Thus *Is.* 60,17, on a loose reading, was fulfilled (42, 4–5). Clement later continues this theme:

Our apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife over the name of the bishop's office (ἐπὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς). For this reason, having obtained perfect foreknowledge, they ordained (κατέστησαν) the previously mentioned, and meanwhile made them permanent in order that, if they should fall asleep, other duly examined men (ἕτεροι δεδοκιμασμένοι ἄνδρες) should succeed to their liturgy (διαδέξωνται . . . τὴν λειτουργίαν αὐτῶν). Those therefore ordained by them (τοὺς οὖν κατασταθέντας ὑπ' ἐκείνων) or afterwards by other approved men (ἢ μεταξὺ ὑφ' ἄλλων ἐλλογίμων ἀνδρῶν), with the consent of the whole Church, and who have performed their liturgy blame-

⁶ Eusebius *H.E.* V,6; IV,22, 1–3; Irenaeus *Adv. Haer.* III,3, 3.

lessly (λειτουργήσαντες ἀμέμπτως) . . . these we consider not justly (οὐ δικαίως) to have been expelled from their liturgy (ἀποβάλλεσθαι τῆς λειτουργίας). For it will be no small sin for us if we expel from the episcopate (τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἀποβάλλωμεν) those who blamelessly and holily have offered the gifts (τοὺς ἀμέμπτως καὶ ὁσίως προσενεγκόντας τὰ δῶρα). Blessed are the presbyters who have gone before . . . : for they have no fear that anyone should remove them from their appointed place (ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰδρυμένου αὐτοῖς τόπου).

Corinthians 44

It would clearly be a mistake to regard the phrase ἕτεροι δεδοκιμασμένοι ἄνδρες who “succeed (διαδέξωνται)” as a reference to the later succession lists. I have argued elsewhere that these later lists are related to the ideology of the philosophical school, and to the concept found there of διαδοχαὶ φιλοσόφων. Clement’s apostolic successors succeed to the apostles’ liturgical function (διαδέξωνται . . . τὴν λειτουργίαν αὐτῶν) and we have shown generally, no less than in this passage, λειτουργία is used in a cultic sense. Clement describes these men as τοὺς ἀμέμπτως καὶ ὁσίως προσενεγκόντας τὰ δῶρα, with clear reference to the cultic character of their collective office as presbyters exercising ἐπισκοπή. But we need not return to the succession lists of Maccabaeian high-priests, applicable to an alleged Caliphate of James the Lord’s brother and his successors at Jerusalem and derived historically from that source, in order to locate the model underlying Clement’s claim.⁷ I have also given grounds elsewhere for rejecting Ehrdhardt’s thesis on this subject.⁸

Bammel has, I believe, opened the way for understanding Clement’s language cultically, but with reference primarily to the Roman legal provisions for suppressing cults that provoke στάσις and therefore threaten the *pax deorum*. On the basis of a papyrus fragment discovered originally by Schubart, he claims that the principle underlying the latter succession lists and reflected in this passage is found in a certificate in which a priest had to declare an ordered succession of three predecessors who had maintained both the ritual and

⁷ A. Brent, Cultural Episcopacy and Ecumenism, Representative Ministry in Church History from the Age of Ignatius of Antioch to the Reformation, with special reference to contemporary ecumenism, in *Studies in Christian Mission* 6, (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1992), pp. 132–137.

⁸ A. Brent, Diogenes Laertius and the Apostolic Succession, in *JEH* 44,3 (1993), pp. 372–380; *Idem*, Hippolytus and the Roman Church in the Third Century: Communities in Tension before the Emergence of a Monarch-Bishop, in *Suppl. VChr* 31 (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1995), pp. 475–501.

the ἱερός λόγος of the cult.⁹ The priest in question was of the cult of Dionysus, and clearly the certificate was required under a law of Ptolemy Philopator IV. The cult itself was significant for it was not a native Egyptian cult, though Philopator adhered to it himself. Bammel therefore claims that the principle of certification had application to priests of foreign cults who were treated as strange by their native and familiar counterparts.

A second inscription¹⁰ evidences the generality of the principle. At Delos the Egyptian cult of Sarapis was clearly considered equally strange and foreign. Though worship took place, a building for worship, a *Serapion*, could not be erected for at least two generations. In the inscription, three priests are named, grandfather, father, and son. In the face of suspicion of disorder, the existence of an ordered, continuous succession had to be established. Bammel sees the same concern for three generations also reflected in the later, Hegesippus-Irenaeus list, with the recording of Clement τρίτῳ τόπῳ, Xystus ἕκτος and finally Eleutheros νῦν δωδεκάτῳ τόπῳ . . . ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων.¹¹ It is in such a light that we should presumably therefore understand Clement's reference in 61,2 to the authors of the στάσις as those who "bring judgement against themselves (μᾶλλον δὲ ἑαυτῶν κατάγνωσιν φέρουσιν) rather than against the harmony that has been well and justly handed down to us (ἢ τῆς παραδεδομένης ἡμῖν καλῶς καὶ δικαίως ὁμοφωνίας)."

Bammel now is able to connect the eastern practice with western by pointing to the resemblance between these examples of foreign, even Dionysiac cults, and the famous account of the Bacchanalian Riot in Livy 39,8, 1–19. Following this precedent, Caesar forbade *collegia praeter antiquitus constituta*, and Augustus his heir opposed all cults constituted *praeter antiqua et legitima*.¹² Thus the principle was established, regardless of whether formally such a certificate was required in the West, that cultic legitimacy could be established through the establishment of such a hierocratic succession. The eastern model would have suggested an apologetic defence given such Roman predilections regardless of whether or not such a document was legally demanded.

⁹ E. Bammel, Sukzessionsprinzip im Urchristentum, in *StEphAug* 31 (1990), pp. 63–65.

¹⁰ *I.G.* 11, 4, 1299.

¹¹ Bammel (1990), p. 70.

¹² *Ibid.* p. 66.

In consequence Bammel will claim for Clement the apologetic status that others have claimed for *Luke-Acts*, and which we have argued to the contrary requires some modification. Let us now examine the critical passage for such an apologetic interpretation.

4B 1.2.2. *Clement Cor. 60,4–61,3: the prayer for imperial pax*

The strife within the Christian community at Corinth regarding the deposition of the blameless presbyter-bishops was not, in the light of such a policy of certification of new cults, of purely internal concern. The situation would have unwelcome external repercussions if it became too public and exposed the community to prosecution as a kind of Bacchanalian cult. This passage has therefore been seen as reassuring the authorities of Christian loyalty to the empire by suggesting the parallel of privileged Jewish status to that of the Christian cult. Christians, like Jews, could, so the encoded message runs, show their loyalty by praying for the emperor without participating in the Imperial Cult.

But, unlike later apologies or even *Luke-Acts*, there is here not even the initial, *prima facie*, appearance of an address to the pagan, Roman authorities. The epistle addresses the Christian community at Corinth itself (τῆ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῆ παροικούσῃ Κόρινθον). Furthermore an even partial address to such an audience seems in this instance counter-productive to the making of an apologetic case since it draws to the attention of the authorities behaviour that would falsify claims that the cult is innocuous. Consequently the following passage, which prays for the emperor, sounds to modern ears quite inconsistent with an address for calm within the Christian community itself:

Grant (δός) concord and peace to us (ὁμόνοιαν καὶ εἰρήνην ἡμῖν) and to all who dwell upon the earth (καὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν τὴν γῆν). . . . becoming submissive (ὑπεκκούς γινομένους) to your omnipotent and gracious name (τῷ παντοκράτορι καὶ παναρέτῳ ὀνόματι σου), as well as to our rulers and leaders (τοῖς τε ἄρχουσιν καὶ ἡγουμένοις ἡμῶν) upon earth (ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς). You, O Lord, (σύ, δέσποτα) have given to them the authority of the empire (ἔδωκας τὴν ἐξουσίαν τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῖς) through your glorious and unfathomable might (διὰ τοῦ μεγαλοπρεποῦς καὶ ἀνεκδιγήτου κράτους), to the end that (εἰς τὸ) we, knowing (γινώσκοντας ἡμᾶς) the glory and honour given to them by you (τὴν ὑπὸ σοῦ αὐτοῖς δεδομένην δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν), may be subject to them (ὑποτάσσεσθαι αὐτοῖς), making no opposition to your will (μηδὲν ἐναντιούμενους τῷ θελήματί σου); grant to them O Lord (οἷς δός) health (ὑγίειαν), peace (εἰρήνην), concord (ὁμόνοιαν), and stability (εὐστάθειαν), to the end that they may administer (εἰς τὸ διέπειν αὐτούς) the government given them

by you (τὴν ὑπὸ σοῦ δεδομένην αὐτοῖς ἡγεμονίαν) untiringly (ἀπροσκόπως). For you (σὺ γὰρ), O heavenly Master (δέσποτα ἐπουράνιε), king of the ages (βασιλεὺ τῶν αἰώνων), grant to the sons of men (δίδως τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων) glory (δόξαν) and honour (καὶ τιμὴν) and authority (καὶ ἐξουσίαν) over the things that exist on earth (τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ὑπαρχόντων); direct thou O Lord (σύ, Κύριε, διεύθυνον) their counsel (τὴν βουλὴν αὐτῶν) according to what is good and pleasing in your sight (κατὰ τὸ καλὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον ἐνώπιόν σου), that administering (ὅπως διέποντες) in peace and civility piously (ἐν εἰρήνῃ καὶ πραύτητι εὐσεβῶς) the authority given them by you (τὴν ὑπὸ σου αὐτοῖς δεδομένην ἐξουσίαν), they may obtain your mercy (ἴλεώ σου τυγχάνωσιν).

Corinthians 60,4–61,2

The apologetic thesis would require us to interpret these words as a sudden change of tack in order to appeal to a quite different audience. But it is important to observe the absolute coherence of the passage with Clement's theme so far, that leaves us without warrant for interpreting his words as such a change. This prayer for the Roman Empire is only part of a longer prayer with which, from 59,3 onwards, the author seeks to conclude and summarise his hope for an end to the στάσις within the Church at Corinth. That prayer begins with an exhortation to the worshipper who, amongst other things, is called to hope on (ἐλπίζειν ἐπὶ) God "... who scrutinised human works (... τὸν ἐπόπτην ἀνθρωπίνων ἔργων)." In *IGRR* 4,309 we have the description: "Emperor Caesar ([Αὐτοκράτ]ορ[α Κ]αίσαρα), the son of God ([Θ]εοῦ υἱὸν θεὸν), *Sebastos* (Σεβαστὸ[ν]), who scrutinises land and sea ([πάσης] γῆ[ς κ]αὶ θ[α]λάσσης [ἐ]π[ό]π[τ]η[ν])."¹³

The civil and imperial dimension is but part of the cosmic dimension. The God who is invoked has made manifest, not the στάσις but the σύστασις through the creation that he has energised (διὰ τῶν ἐνεργουμένων).¹⁴ Thus the Christian theologian addresses God in terms of the same Stoic theology that he had earlier employed in chapters 20 and 32. Clement may hesitate as yet to call Christ λόγος and to identify him with the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος and the λόγος προφορικός. But the idea of manifesting the structure of creation (σύστασιν ... ἐφανεροποίησας) is clearly an alternative expression for the same set of concepts. For the Stoics it was the breath of God, the fiery λόγος permeating all things that was the ground for fatalistic determinism.

¹³ A. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, trans. L.R.M. Strachan, (London: Hodder and Stoughton 1927), pp. 342 ff.

¹⁴ Clement *Cor.* 60,1: σὺ τὴν ἀέναντον τοῦ κόσμου σύστασιν διὰ τῶν ἐνεργουμένων ἐφανεροποίησας.

Clement, true to such a background, has spoken of God's "breath (πνοή) in us . . . and when he wills he withdraws it."¹⁵

Metaphysics in antiquity never serviced a disinterested pursuit of knowledge of the natural world for its own sake, as it has perhaps for us since the seventeenth century, though the sociology of knowledge has qualified even that assumption. Rather metaphysics serviced ethics, and with Stoicism, as we have seen, political philosophy. We have already seen how Stoicism gave rational justification to augury, and thus legitimised the republican political conventions that required such a religious practice (2A 2). We have also argued that Augustus' reorganisation of the religious cultus served the political end of imperial unity but also the felt religious need for the *pax deorum* (2A 3). The republican cult of abstract virtues came to express representations of a socially constructed, collective personality of the emperor at the centre of the Imperial Cult.

We see in Clement's prayer, along with its Stoic metaphysics in which the natural order is reflected in social order, the very deified abstract qualities that the emperor's cultic acts were to secure as guarantee of the *pax deorum*. In 61, 1 we read of health (ὑγίεια), peace (εἰρήνη), concord (ὁμόνοια), stability (εὐστάθεια), which were the virtues of the Augustan *saeculum aureum* and the product of his *augurium salutis* (2A 5 and 2B 3). These are to be given "to our rulers and leaders (τοῖς τε ἄρχουσιν καὶ ἡγουμένοις ἡμῶν)" as well as "to all who dwell upon the earth (καὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν τὴν γῆν)." (60,4)

It would be wrong, however, to interpret such lines as an apology for the Corinthian community to Roman magistrates dressed up in terms that they would find palatable.

4B 2. *Clement's concept of Order: legitimation not apologetic*

Clement has admitted the charge of στάσις within the Corinthian community that would immediately destroy any such apologetic case. Rather his words represent the use of a reformulated imperialist ideology that orders social relations within the community. The Roman magistrate would find little assurance that such virtues as ὁμόνοια or εἰρήνη were bestowed upon Rome's rulers by a God whom they

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 21,9: ἐρευνητῆς γὰρ ἐστὶν ἐννοιωῶν καὶ ἐνθυμήσεων· οὐδ' ἡ πνοὴ αὐτοῦ ἐν ἡμῖν ἐστίν, καὶ ὅταν θέλῃ, ἀνελεῖ αὐτήν. Cf. 21,2: λέγει γὰρ πῶς [Prov. 20,27]· πνεῦμα Κυρίου λύχνος ἐρευνῶν τὰ ταμεία τῆς γαστρῆς.

found alien, rather than by the dead and deified Augustus, and his dead and deified successors. He would certainly not be impressed that the prayers and acts of the Christian cult that was to secure these qualities and this authority for the empire were through a *Pontifex Maximus* or ἀρχιερεύς who was other than the emperor.¹⁶

We saw in *Luke-Acts* that early Christian apocalyptic had undergone radical reformulation in the light of the Augustan imperialist ideology. Such a reformulation was to be understood as legitimation rather than apology. Clement's group at Rome, like Theophilus' in Asia Minor, believed in the need for supernatural activity to assuage a disturbed nature reflected in a disturbed society. That belief, as we have shown, was reinforced by the experience of a century of late-Republican civil wars as constructed in the historiography of such writers as Livy, Tacitus, and Lucan. The thought of the shattering of the *pax deorum* elicited fears of κίνδυνος and ἀθέμιτος ὀργή that were the antithesis of ὁμόνοια and εἰρήνη (14,2; 53,2; 59,1). Κίνδυνος in 41,3-4 is treated in the context of violation of ritual. Violation of the divine decrees regarding how the High Priest is to examine the sacrifice in the divinely appointed place is deserving of death (οἱ οὖν παρὰ τὸ καθήκον τῆς βουλήσεως αὐτοῦ ποιοῦντές τι θάνατον πρόστιμον ἔχουσιν). It is not therefore primarily the fear of the danger of intervention by the secular authorities that is here in point rather than the holy fear of στάσις as a sacrilege in terms of the metaphysical order of nature reflected in civil society. Clement, like the author of *Luke-Acts*, was not satisfying the perceived needs of the external, pagan authorities, but the perceived needs of himself and his group in a Graeco-Roman cultural context being transformed by a Christian perspective.

Bammel was therefore wrong to claim that Clement's motive was primarily apologetic, and that to make a legal claim for recognition was not to make a theological claim. Clement's claim was not that of Hegesippus or Irenaeus in their articulations of the later episcopal succession lists. But it was theological in that the requirement of Roman law was a theological requirement not to take part in cultic activity that would upset the *pax deorum* and therefore the order of both nature and civil society. Clement and his group, just as in the case of Theophilus to whom Luke wrote, was an articulator of

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 61,3: . . . σοὶ ἐξομολογούμεθα διὰ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως καὶ προστάτου τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ . . .

a legal argument with the metaphysical basis for which his hearers had every sympathy. Both Clement and Theophilus shared the cultural and philosophic background of imperial society and were both as anxious as each other about the metaphysical catastrophe that had been the civil wars of the republic, and which the Imperial Cult was believed to have averted. They disagreed with the assumptions of their cultural background only in so far as in Christianity they believed they had found the true means of averting the *ira dei*.

Christian doctrine and Church Order as they had received it were in consequence transformed in the matrix of their imperialist philosophical and cultural, religious heritage. But with the enculturation of the gospel, it is ever and inescapably so. Clement and Theophilus were not insulated from the social construction of imperial reality by which their consciousness had been formed and developed. In consequence, they are not to be accused of the apologetic manipulation of an imperialist ideology about whose foundations they had no real convictions.

It is fascinating to observe parallels with *Luke-Acts* in Clement *Corinthians*, which we will now examine, where there are no direct quotations and no direct borrowing.

4B 2.1. *Parallels between Luke-Acts and Clement Corinthians*

Both see the apostles as the foundations of the Christian cult, though both account for this cultic significance differently. *Luke-Acts*, we have argued (3D), sees the Twelve by analogy with the Arval college in its Augustan transformation, whereas Clement regards it as a matter of the requirements of an orderly succession as in the case of official acceptance of a Dionysiac cult. Both will reconstruct the imperialist ideology in a contra-cultural fashion with a transparent reversion of values.

Clement quotes (in 59,3) 1 *Sam.* 2,7 and *Is.* 10,33 where God is addressed as τὸν ποιοῦντα ταπεινοὺς εἰς ὕψος καὶ τοὺς ὑψηλοὺς ταπεινοῦντα, τὸν πλουτίζοντα καὶ πτωχίζοντα, just as in the *Magnificat* (*Lk.* 1,52–53) we read: . . . ὕψωσεν ταπεινοὺς . . . καὶ πλουτοῦντας ἐξεπέστειλεν κενούς. Furthermore in *Lk.* 4,18 the ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν, which we argued to be the contra-cultural counterpart to the inauguration of Augustus' *saeculum aureum*, commenced with, the glad tidings for the poor (εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς) by contrast with the imperial birthday-banquets of the city states of Asia Minor.

Luke-Acts had reconstructed traditional apocalyptic with the ideology

of the Augustan *saeculum aureum* so that themes of cataclysmic apocalyptic judgement were absent and replaced by a reign of peace and fulfilment longed for hopes (3A 1–3). Clement in his prayer (60,3) asks:

that we may be supported (εις τὸ σκεπασθῆναι ἡμᾶς) by the strength of your mighty hand (τῇ χειρὶ σου τῇ κραταίᾳ) and delivered (καὶ ῥυσθῆναι) from all sin (ἀπὸ πάσης ἀμαρτίας) by your high-stretched arm (τῷ βραχίονί σου τῷ ὑψηλῷ): and that you deliver us (καὶ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς) from those who hate us unjustly (ἀπὸ τῶν μισούντων ἡμᾶς ἀδίκως).

Like the κράτος ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ of *Lk.* 1,51, or the σωτηρία . . . ἐκ χειρὸς πάντων τῶν μισούντων ἡμᾶς of *Lk.* 1,71, these expressions occur in the context of what has produced the Augustan *saeculum aureum* of σωτηρία, ὁμόνοια and εἰρήνη (61,1). Clement in 61,2 then prays for direction of the counsel of the imperial rulers (σύ, Κύριε, διεύθυνον τὴν βουλὴν αὐτῶν) just as in the Lucan contra-cultural *saeculum aureum* Zachariah's prayer was τοῦ κατευθῆναι τοὺς πόδας ἡμῶν εἰς ὁδὸν εἰρήνης (*Lk.* 1,79).¹⁷

As in *Luke-Acts* traditional apocalyptic is overlaid by the peace and security of a golden age long promised, so too in Clement the eschaton does not break into the present in any disruptive way that would destroy the *pax dei* or *deorum*. This point can be well established in his general eschatological references, and to the resurrection of the body (23–27), as we shall now see.

4B 2.2. *Apocalyptic cataclysm replaced by imperial peace*

Clement exhorts the community to order (21–22), and places this desire for order in an eschatological context. The Lord will come suddenly to his temple as expected, and not delay, in accordance with *Is.* 13,22 and *Mal.* 3,1 (23,5). But Clement has a sense of the delay of the *parousia*, and so, like pseudonymous 2 *Pet.* 3,4, quoted from possibly *Eldad and Modad*, also feels the force of the criticism of those who claim: “these things we have heard (ταῦτα ἠκούσαμεν) even from our fathers' time (καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν) and behold, we have kept watch (καὶ ἰδοὺ γεγηράκαμεν), and none of these things has happened to us (καὶ οὐδὲν ἡμῖν τούτων συνβέβηκεν).”¹⁸ Clement's reply firstly is to appeal to the well-used apocalyptic image of a plant

¹⁷ Cf. also *Ps.* 40,3 quoted in 60,2: κατεύθον τὰ διαβήματα ἡμῶν ἐν ὁσιότητι καὶ δικαιοσυνῇ.

¹⁸ Cf. 2 *Pet.* 2,4: ποῦ ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπαγγελία τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ; ἀφ' ἧς οἱ πατέρες ἐκοιμήθησαν, πάντα οὕτως διαμένει ἀπ' ἀρχῆς τῆς κτίσεως.

bearing fruit quickly but in due season.¹⁹ But he now extends the image so as to exclude any notion of apocalyptic cataclysm or disorder from his account of the resurrection of the body.

Beginning with the association of Christ's resurrection as the Pauline ἀπαρχή with the tree growing to fruition, he can now make the resurrection of the body almost into an event of orderly natural fulfilment. As he now continues:

Let us observe, brothers, (ἴδωμεν, ἀγαπητοί) that the resurrection takes place in due season (τὴν κατὰ καιρὸν γινομένην ἀνάστασιν). Day and night reveal the resurrection to us. The night goes to sleep, the day arises. The day departs, night comes on.

Corinthians 24,2

There then follows the famous chapter on the Phoenix (25). The Egyptian priests can measure accurately its five-hundred year life cycle. These natural events reveal the ability of the creator to bring about gradually and orderly, as part of the natural order of things, the resurrection of the body. Thus Clement's use of *Eldad and Modad* does not lead him, as it does the author of 2 *Pet.* 3,10, to claim that the universe will be dissolved in a sudden cataclysm. For him the resurrection on the Last Day remains part of a universe of Stoic ὁμόνοια, and its doctrinal reflection in the community will lead not to cataclysmic strife but to the εἰρήνη of the Christian, contra-cultural *pax dei* as opposed to the imperial *pax deorum*.

Clement therefore has his own distinctive variation on the Lukan theme of the supersession of apocalypticism by a refashioned and Christianized imperialist ideology. It will be interesting to ask the precise character of the group opposed by Clement who seem to have affirmed such an apocalypticism.

4B 3. *The character of the group responsible for the στάσις*

The question remains a tantalising one of what particular set of doctrines might have reinforced those in the Corinthian community who had apparently urged the deposition of the "blameless" presbyter-bishops. Would there be any justification in seeing them as the kind of group represented by the *Didache* in which any with the gift of a prophet could preside and teach, although by the time of writing of that document the abuses of such a Church Order were becoming

¹⁹ *Cor.* 23,4-5 cf. *Mk.* 13,28-31; *Mat.* 24,32-35; *Lk.* 21,29-33.

apparent? Such a group, as *Did.* 9,4 makes clear, would see their prophetic gifts in an apocalyptic context. The Eucharistic prayer is set in the context of the apocalyptic gathering together of the elect (*Mk.* 13,27). Like the later Montanists, the spirit-filled community would purport to be egalitarian, and without an ordered hierarchy, as it waited under the shadow of the *eschaton*.

Some indications that this was the case can be seen in the immediate context of Clement's introduction of the resurrection of the body. We find that this future hope has become the outcome of an orderly and harmonious, Stoic Nature rather than as an apocalyptic cataclysm that upset the normal course of nature. A common apocalyptic theme was the breakdown of normal family relationships, in which the cataclysm of nature was reflected in the breakdown of social order. In *Mk.* 13,12 we read that: "Brother shall deliver brother to death, and father child, and children shall rise up against parents and murder them." But immediately prior to Clement's discussion of the resurrection of the body we read:

Let us reverence those who rule us (τοὺς προηγουμένους ἡμῶν αἰδεσθῶμεν), let us honour our elders (τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους ἡμῶν τιμήσωμεν), let us discipline our young men (τοὺς νέους παιδεύσωμεν) with the discipline of the fear of God (τὴν παιδείαν τοῦ φόβου τοῦ θεοῦ), let us direct our women towards that which is good (τὰς γυναῖκας ἡμῶν ἐπὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν διορθώσωμεθα) . . . let them show their love, not in factitious preferences but equally in holiness to those who fear God (τὴν ἀγάπην αὐτῶν, μὴ κατὰ προσκλίσεις ἀλλὰ πᾶσιν τοῖς φοβουμένοις τὸν θεὸν ὁσίως ἴσην παρεχέτωσαν) . . .

Corinthians 21, 6-7

Those who were behaving in this way did not of course see their behaviour in such a light. For them the equality of charismatic spiritual endowment ended submission on grounds of sex and age. The inspired woman would feel love for the prophetic, spirit-filled person, and would incline towards them in their youth against the aged presbyter-bishops. The younger, taught by the Spirit, would seek to instruct the elder. And their justification would no doubt be the impending apocalyptic cataclysm and the outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh prior to the *eschaton*. Clement therefore denies this common apocalyptic motif in consequence of his reconstructed Stoic metaphysics.

Such behaviour in Clement's Christianised Stoic and Roman eyes was clearly *στάσις*. Such charismatic abandonment was reminiscent

of the Bacchanalian riot: it showed that *στάσις* is “foolish (*ματαιία*)” (63,1), but the kind of foolishness that leads to demented rage. “Jealousy (*ζήλος*)” has connotations of “enthusiasm”, which Clement directly associates with “envy (*φθόνος*)” (3,2). Clearly this is the psychological state in which Clement characterises his opponents. They are the “senseless (*οἱ ἄφρονες*)” against “those of right mind (*φρόνιμοι*)” (3,3), who lack such Stoic virtues of “self control (*ἐγκρατεία*)” “modesty (*σωφροσύνη*),” “patience (*ὑπομονή*)” or “forbearance (*ἐπιεικεία*)” (62,2; see also 64; 56,1). Their (charismatic) speech is an example of proud and overbearing recklessness (*αὐθάδεια*).²⁰ The personalities of their leaders, who are described as “unstable (*προπετῆ*)” and “reckless (*αὐθάδη*),” have lead to “such a pitch of madness (*εἰς τοσοῦτον ἀπονοίας*)”. Thus they are ritually contaminated with *μιαρὰ καὶ ἀνόσιος στάσις*.²¹

In a passage evocative of the Bacchic Maenads rending asunder the body of Kreon, Clement says:

Why do we tear (*ἴνα τί διέλκομεν*) and rip apart (*καὶ διασπῶμεν*) Christ's members (*τὰ μέλη τοῦ Χριστοῦ*), and create rebellion (*καὶ στασιάζομεν*) against our own Body (*πρὸς τὸ σῶμα τὸ ἴδιον*) and reach such a pitch of delirium (*καὶ εἰς τοσαύτην ἀπόνοιαν ἐρχόμεθα*) that we forget (*ὥστε ἐπιλαθέσθαι ἡμᾶς*) that we are members of one another (*ὅτι μέλη ἐσμὲν ἀλλήλων*).

Corinthians 46,7

Against such *ἀπόνοια* Clement has to remind members of the charismatic *στάσις* that they do not possess the Spirit alone but “we have (*ἔχομεν*) . . . one Spirit of grace (*ἐν πνεῦμα τῆς χάριτος*) poured out upon us (*τὸ ἐκχυθὲν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς*).” (46,6) Furthermore the apostles and their ordained, episcopal successors also had the “fullness of the Holy Spirit (*μετὰ πληροφορίας πνεύματος ἁγίου*),” (42,3) and the former examined the latter regarding their spiritual gifts before their ordination (*δοκιμάσαντες τῷ πνεύματι*). (42,4)

It is important to grasp that, in the light of our discussion, the concept of Church Order with the aid of which Clement seeks to put down the charismatic and apocalyptic *στάσις*, represents a secularisation of the Christian tradition as Clement had received it. Secularisation may, in Weber's terms, be irreligious. But in terms of

²⁰ *Cor.* 57,2: ἀποθέμενοι τὴν ἀλαζόνα καὶ ὑπερήφανον τῆς γλώσσης ὑμῶν αὐθάδειαν.

²¹ *Ibid.* 1,1: . . . *μιαρᾶς καὶ ἀνοσίου στάσεως*· ἦν ὀλίγα πρόσωπα προπετῆ καὶ αὐθάδη ὑπάρχοντα εἰς τοσοῦτον ἀπονοίας ἐξέκαυσαν. Cf. also 46,7.

the background to these late first century events at Corinth, the secularist invasion in this case was that of a religious *saeculum*. Clement has refashioned the Stoic, metaphysical justification of imperial order in terms of the *pax deorum* into the *pax Christi*. The Christian community is to be a mirror image of imperial order, albeit with many images reversed or transformed, as is characteristic of a process of contra-cultural creation.

Ἀθέμιτος ὀργή and ζήλος are opposed to the imperial ideals of εἰρήνη and ὁμόνοια (63,2-3), secured sacramentally by Augustus' cultic *augurium salutis* that ushered in Vergil's *saeculum aureum* (2A 5). Those concepts, now transformed into the *pax Christi*, provide us with the contra-cultural legitimation of a group excluded from the wider community but which now creates its own values and status-hierarchy by analogy with its host culture. Those who inhabit the social construction of reality thus created will see that they can conceive their status as possessing a παιδεία ("education", "discipline") by analogy with that of Roman civilisation (62,3 and 56). Zeno's ethical ideal, developed by Cleanthes, had been that ζῆν κατ' ἀρετὴν was the equivalent of τῆ φύσει ὁμολογουμένως ζῆν, which in turn was equivalent to κατ' ὀρθὸν λόγον ζῆν.²²

That ethical ideal, realised in imperial order and given religious expression in the Imperial Cult, was clearly contrary to the apocalyptic vision of cataclysmic judgement descending on the social order with its cataclysmic counterpart in the natural order. The egalitarian charismata of the end-time were reminiscent of the Bacchanalian riot as a symptom of the metaphysical catastrophe that marked the history of the final century of the constitution of the later Roman Republic. Such events were not portents of *salus* but of disaster, of what Clement calls: ζήλος, φθόνος, ἔρις, στάσις, διωγμός, ἀκαταστασία, πόλεμος, and αἰχμαλωσία (2,6), and which Roman historiography characterised as the condition of things before Augustus' *augurium pacis*, before, in the words of the proconsular decrees of Asia (9 B.C.), the εὐτύχημα of Augustus' birth that "had set right the scheme of things that had passed into calamity (εἰς ἀτυχὲς μεταβεβηκὸς σχῆμα ἀνὴρῶσεν)." (2B 4) Clement's Christian reconstruction of the imperialist social reality of his intellectual background could never see

²² J. von Arnim (Ed.), *Stoicorum veterum fragment*, (Leipzig: Teubner 1902-1903), 1, 179. Cf. J.M. Rist, *Stoic Philosophy*, (Cambridge: U.P. 1969), pp. 2-3.

disorder and chaos as a sign of the coming of Christ's kingdom.

The Stoic social ethic in the context of the imperial *pax deorum* became an ethic of imperial citizenship. To "live" in a moral sense became to "act as a citizen (πολιτεύεσθαι)." It is precisely this concept that Clement now uses in a Christianised sense in order to reject the apocalypticism of his charismatic opponents. The Corinthians, before the στάσις, or so he claims, were "adorned with a sacred life (σεβασμίῳ πολιτείᾳ κεκοσμημένοι)." ²³ (2,8) This, he pointedly asserts against his opponents, was because "there had been a full outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all (πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου ἔκχυσις ἐπὶ πάντα ἐγένετο)." (2,2) He accuses them, in consequence of their στάσις, of "not conducting themselves (μηδὲ πολιτεύεσθαι) according to what is becoming to Christ (κατὰ τὸ καθήκον τῷ Χριστῷ)." (3,4) Τὸ καθήκον was a technical term in Stoic ethics for "an appropriate action."²⁴ Those who have persecuted the righteous, as have those who have deposed the presbyter-bishops, are called ἄνομοι, ἄνόσιοι and παράνομοι (45,3), because their behaviour offends the norms of Christian citizenship by analogy with the ideal of imperial civil and cultic moral unity.

Let us now in conclusion summarise the significance of our discussion of Clement for our general argument that the development of Church Order follows the development of the Imperial Cult and its underlying ideology through a dynamic social interaction characterised in terms of sociological theory of contra-culture.

PART C. CLEMENT'S CONSTRUCTION OF CONTRA-CULTURE

We have traced not a merely incidental but a fundamental parallel between Clement's *Corinthians*, and the community of Theophilus addressed in *Luke-Acts*. The fundamental perspectives of both represent a refashioning of early Christian eschatology. Clement has refashioned the metaphysics of social order derived from the conceptual web that embraced the Imperial Cult as the sacramental means of obtaining the *pax deorum*. We saw however that this fundamental parallel, with incidental ones besides, was based upon no direct relationship such as would be evidenced by direct quotations of one by the other. But

²³ *Cor.* 2,8 cf. 51,2: οἱ μετὰ φόβου καὶ ἀγάπης πολιτευόμενοι . . .

²⁴ Rist (1969), pp. 98-99.

how are these parallels to be explained if there is no direct relationship? The *tertium quid* is the imperialist ideology focused on the emperor cult and the contra-cultural response both in Theophilus' community and that of Clement, both of whom thus exemplify a general sociological phenomenon.

The general phenomenon of contra-culture involves the reconstruction of social reality by an alienated sub-culture that seeks to legitimate its position with reference to the value system of the dominant culture. The sub-culture refashions for its own group the value system of the dominant culture so as to create a frame of reference in terms of which its members can achieve the status that the value system of the dominant culture denies them. The dominant culture remains unimpressed, and does not itself therefore enter into the social construction of reality thus created. The creation of a contra-culture therefore cannot function apologetically so as to gain recognition and status for the sub-culture from the dominant culture. But the dominant culture is nevertheless preserved by the creation of the contra-culture. The latter serves the end of re-integrating discordant elements within the social whole in a form that, though discordant, is nevertheless innocuous in that it cannot radically damage the existing social structure; its relation with that structure becomes one of symbiosis.

Hence, as we discussed in Chapter 1, criminal activity such as juvenile delinquency can be regarded as contra-culture in this sense. Activity that might otherwise be revolutionary is rendered marginally harmful to the social fabric when stolen vehicles driven at high-speed become constructed as showing the moral quality of "heart", giving prestige to the person who so acts by a contra-cultural value system that has thus reversed the social norms of "caution" and "safety," the avoidance of "recklessness," the "respect" for other people's property etc. So too Clement's reconstruction of pagan social reality, as that of the author of *Luke-Acts*, can be read in such a social-theoretical context. The σωτηρία and ειρήνη of Christ come not through apocalyptic cataclysm in which nature is uprooted and order within the community abolished. These objectives are achieved through the order and harmony breathed by God into nature being realised in the order of the community, and through the preservation of τάγμα in which one member subjects themselves to another through a παιδεία that is also a ὑποταγή.

Thus members of Clement's group, as we saw was the case with

that of Theophilus, made legitimate in their own eyes their position in relation to the dominant culture. That position for them thus became endowed with the status and dignity that the dominant culture denied them. They claimed to satisfy by means of the *pax Christi* the political and religious yearnings of those who participated in the *pax* of Augustus, and the cultic expression of that peace in emperor worship. In doing so they believed that they had done their duty by their fellow, pagan citizens. But the final peace with those citizens themselves could only come about, not by the construction of *ad hominem* apologetic, but by the creation of a transforming synthesis between Christian and imperial theology in which both sides found their religious and political convictions adequately fulfilled. Church Order would need still more to transform imperialist Order, but in turn to be transformed itself by that encounter, as the centuries moved towards Constantine and Julian.

In contrast to expressions that we will argue that the *Apocalypse* reveals to have been characteristic of the Imperial Cult, Clement's prayer for the rulers of the empire attributes to the God and Father of Christ alone such epithets as ὁ μόνος δύνατος, δεσπότης, and βασιλεύς to whom alone he attributes the final δόξα, μεγαλωσύνη, and κράτος (61,2-3). In our next chapter we shall find these expressions in the *Apocalypse* set in the context of a quite different conception of the Roman empire and the relationship of a Christian community with it. To a discussion of the *Apocalypse* we shall now turn.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE *APOCALYPSE* AND DOMITIAN'S ICONOGRAPHY

The Lamb's victory in sacrifice and the festal community

We argued in the last chapter (4A) the general historical reliability of the Christian tradition of Domitian as a second Nero in persecuting Christianity. Dio Cassius *Hist.* 67,14 was hardly contrary evidence since by the phrase τὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἥθη this author probably had no intention of identifying Judaism as distinct from Christianity (4A 1). Indeed he would not have registered any distinguishable difference between either faith at a superficial, phenomenological level. Furthermore, the claim that Domitian was a persecutor did not rest upon the Christianity of Flavius Clemens and Flavia Domitilla alone (4A 2 and 4A 3).

But in one respect the Eusebian tradition had been deceptive in that it presupposed a general edict of persecution impossible before A.D. 251. Our hypothesis was that non-participation in the Imperial Cult, whilst not in itself illegal, exposed the non-participant to other accusations of practicing a *superstitio* the purpose of which was to cause social disorder through creating metaphysical disorder that disrupted the cosmic harmony of the *pax deorum* (3C 2.3). But if this were the case, then it would be particular changes in the Imperial Cult itself that would cause persecution, since non-participation would attract particular notice.

Let us now consider those changes, and how they are reflected in the iconography of the *Apocalypse*.

PART A. DOMITIAN'S CULT AND THE DATE OF THE *APOCALYPSE*

The *Apocalypse* presupposes the reality of a particular and dangerous confrontation between Domitian and the Church. If no such novel and particularly vicious confrontation occurred in that reign, then this would be evidence against a Domitianic date for the *Apocalypse*, and hence its association with the situations presupposed in turn by

Clement *Corinthians* and reflected in the immediately succeeding generation of Ignatius of Antioch. Let us begin, therefore, with a consideration of the date of the *Apocalypse*, and the confirmation of that date in critical changes that occurred in the ceremonial and iconography of the Imperial Cult under Domitian that also find reflections there.

5A 1. *The date of the Apocalypse*

Rejecting the testimony of Irenaeus (*Adversus Haer.* V, 30,3; Eusebius *H.E.* III,18), Jones argues for a date in Nero's reign. His grounds are his belief in the greater probability that the description in *Apoc.* 17, 9–11 refers to that reign. The beast with seven heads is clearly the Roman empire since they correspond to the seven hills on which the harlot sits. But they are also seven kings (*v.* 9). "Five have fallen, one still is, and the other has not yet come . . ." (*v.* 10). Jones considers that all other solutions simply "avoid the obvious choice" that Augustus is the first and therefore Nero must be the fifth.¹

But I would suggest that the choice is only "obvious" to someone who is in a position to know the specific details of the history of the Principate. The author of the *Apocalypse*, which was a semi-literate work, was hardly such a person. In his situation in Asia Minor, he would get his information from non-literary artefacts like temples of the Imperial Cult such as those at Ephesus, Smyrna, or at Pergamon, and from prominent and striking statues and numismatic iconography of particular emperors to be found there. He took over such a kaleidoscope of non-literary imagery and refashioned his fragmentary images into new patterns. Though those patterns bear the influence of his Judaeo-Christian background, they also retain the impress of their original pagan matrix. There are five indications of a date in Domitian's reign in the text of the *Apocalypse* itself, from which we can conclude that the Seer's imagery was drawn from the specific background provided by his reign.

5A 1.1. *Domitian's edict on the vineyards*

Apoc. 6,6 ("a *choinix* of wheat for a denarius (χοῖνιξ σίτου δηναρίου), and three *choinikes* of barley for a denarius (καὶ τρεῖς χοῖνικες κριθῶν δηναρίου), and do not damage the olive and the vine (καὶ τὸ ἔλαιον καὶ τὸν οἶνον μὴ ἀδικήσης)") appears quite clearly to refer to Domitian's

¹ B.W. Jones, *The Emperor Domitian*, (London: Routledge 1992), p. 116.

unimplemented edict forbidding further planting of vines in Italy, and the reduction of acreage for vineyards in the provinces, if feasible, by one half.² It seems to have been a response to famine aimed at encouraging the growing of corn.³ The instruction τὸ ἔλαιον καὶ τὸν οἶνον μὴ ἀδικήσης seems therefore to be directed at a situation where famine prices for wheat were threatening olive and vine-growing.⁴ On the foundations of this clear indication of a Domitianic date for the *Apocalypse* it is then possible to point to other Domitianic allusions found generally in the *Apocalypse* as well as in the letters to the seven churches.

5A 1.2. *Domitian and Domitia: the divine child: Apoc. 12,1-6*

Domitia's child was born in 73 and died in 83. Domitia was described after this event as mother of gods on coins depicting her as Ceres, Demeter, and Cybele. It is interesting to compare the iconography surrounding this event with *Apoc. 12,1-6*.⁵ Here, essentially, there is a heavenly sign (καὶ σημεῖον μέγα ὄφθη ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ). There is "a woman clothed with the sun (γυνὴ περιβεβλημένη τὸν ἥλιον) and the moon under her feet (καὶ ἡ σελήνη ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν αὐτῆς) and upon her head a crown of twelve stars (καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτῆς στέφανος ἀστέρων δώδεκα)." (12,1) She is pursued by the seven-headed dragon, whose tail sweeps away one third of the stars, and who intends to devour her child, destined to rule the nations (2-4). Then "she brought forth a male child (καὶ ἔτεκεν υἱὸν ἄρσεν), destined to shepherd all the nations with a rod of iron (ὃς μέλλει ποιμαίνειν πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ). And the child was snatched away to God (καὶ ἠρπάσθη τὸ τέκνον αὐτῆς πρὸς τὸν θεὸν) and to his throne (καὶ πρὸς τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ)."

In a coin of A.D. 92, after her restoration to favour, Domitia is depicted draped and veiled, and seated on a throne extending her hand to touch a small boy. He holds in his left hand the sceptre of

² Suetonius, *Dom.* 7,2; Philostratus, *Vit. Apoll.* 6,42; *Vit. Soph.* 1,21. See also P. Southern, *Domitian, Tragic Tyrant*, (London and New York: Routledge 1997), p. 58.

³ Suetonius, *Dom.* 7,2; Statius, *Silvae* IV, 3,11-12.

⁴ C.J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in their Local Setting*, in *JSTNT.S* 11 (1986), p. 4, pp. 158-159 and p. 175.

⁵ E. Stauffer, *Christ and the Caesars: Historical Sketches*, (London: S.C.M. 1955), pp. 150-153, which however suffered greatly in argumentative force because of the author's refusal to document with detailed citation the claims that he made. I have sought to remedy this lack where I follow Stauffer in the following account.

world dominion whilst blessing the world with his right. The inscription reads: DIVI CAESAR[IS] MATRI (Plate 21). The obverse side of the coin depicts Domitia draped with her hair tied up at the back and raised in a dome at the front with elaborate coils (Plate 20).⁶ Domitia's child thus shows, with his sceptre and globe, close correspondence with ὃς μέλλει ποιμαίνειν πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρῇ.

Furthermore the child has died and become one with the imperial family in deification, just like the child of the *Apoc.* 12,5: καὶ ἠπάσθη τὸ τέκνον αὐτῆς πρὸς τὸν θεόν. A further earlier, gold coin of A.D. 83 bears the inscription: DIVUS CAESAR IMP DOMITIANI F[ILIIUS]. Here the naked infant, *divus Caesar* is depicted as baby Jupiter seated on a globe with seven stars around him (Plate 23). The obverse of the coin is inscribed DOMITIA AVGVSTA IMP[ERATORIS] DOMIT[IANI] (Plate 22).⁷ Thus in the image of *Apoc.* 12,1 we find the infant's circle or crown of seven stars interchanged with those of the woman who has ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτῆς στέφανος ἀστέρων δώδεκα.

The theme of the seven stars as an attribute of divinity appears also in the letter to Ephesus (2,1: τάδε λέγει ὁ κρατῶν τοὺς ἐπτὰ ἀστέρας ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ αὐτοῦ). Martial's poem describes the prince as moving through the air and playing with the seven stars, which indicate the seven planets.⁸ The theme of a divinised emperor being sent to the stars is typical of the Flavian dynasty, as we can see from Martial (*Epig.* 9, 101,22 and 14, 124) or Juvenal (*Sat.* XIII, 46–49).⁹

Regarding the association of the woman with the sun and the moon in *Apoc.* 12,1, we have the image of *Aeternitas*, standing holding the heads of the sun and the moon in her hands, as a special mark of Flavian coinage, with the inscription AETERNITATI AVGVST. S.C. (Plate 25).¹⁰ Silus Atticus describes Domitian when finally divinised giving forth rays near his son.¹¹ Again Statius (*Silvae*

⁶ *BMC* 2, p. 413 no. 501 and plate 82,8.

⁷ *BMC* 2, p. 311 no. 62 and plate 61,6. Cf. 63–65 plates 61,7–9.

⁸ Also Domitian's restoration of coin showing the head of Divus Augustus radiate to the left with a star above, and the inscription: DIVVS AVGVSTVS PATER with Victoria on the reverse side. *BMC* 2, p. 414 no. 504 and 505 plate 82,8. See also II p. 8 no. 47 pl. 1,15 bust of sol radiate Vespasian cf. *BMC* 1, p. 100 nos 611 ff. and p. 142 no. 155, plate 26,3 and 5.

⁹ Scott (1975) p. 71.

¹⁰ *BMC* 2, p. 364 no. 303, plate 71,6; p. 372 no. 346 plate 73,4 (Plate 24); 374, no. 353, cf. K. Scott, *The Imperial Cult under the Flavians*, (New York: Arno 1975), p. 95.

¹¹ Silvius Statius, *Punica* 3,629: "siderei iuxta radiabunt tempora nati."

4,1, 3–4) describes him on his entry to his seventeenth consulship (A.D. 91) as: “And he is rising (*atque oritur*) with the new sun (*cum sole novo*), with the lofty stars (*cum grandibus astris*), himself shining more brightly (*clarius ipse nitens*) and more greatly than the morning star (*et maior Eo*).” The “morning star (τὸν ἄστέρα τὸν πρωϊνόν) in *Apoc.* 2,28; 22,16 becomes a description of Christ or Christ’s gift.

5A 1.3. *The topography of Ephesus*

In *Apoc.* 2,7 the contra-cultural analogue of the sacred τέμενος of the temple of Artemis at Ephesus is the παράδεισος τοῦ θεοῦ. The cross that is the tree of life (δώσω αὐτῷ φαγεῖν ἐκ τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς) constitutes the contra-eikon of the tree-shrine depicting the birth of Artemis.¹² From long antiquity that τέμενος had been a place where criminals had sought and obtained asylum. There is evidence that Domitian extended this area and thus compounded the abuse to which two letters of Apollonius of Tyanna, allegedly contemporary with this reign, attest (65 and 66). Such extensions would have reactivated public alarm at the scandal of the criminal refugees in the area and given pertinence to this reference, since Augustus had tried to limit the area and therefore the abuse.¹³ Thus the case for a Domitianic date is strengthened. Furthermore we have already described the “union of necorates” in Asia formed from the assimilation of Ephesus as νεωκόρος τῆς μεγάλης Ἀρτέμιδος (*Acts* 19,35) with the Imperial Cult from Domitian’s time onwards (2C 2.3.2.3).

5A 1.4. *Jewish-Christian relations*

Hemer found the second firm Domitianic references in the allusions to the “synagogue of Satan” both in Smyrna (*Apoc.* 2,9) and in Philadelphia (3,9). Around A.D. 90 the *Beracoth ha minim* were inserted into the Eighteen Benedictions. In consequence it was no longer possible for Jewish Christians to use their ancestry as a means of removing the social opprobrium for their non-participation in the Imperial Cult. Thus there would have been as legal consequences the charges of *superstitio* or *contumacia*. Ignatius (*Philad.* 6,1) implies that even uncir-

¹² Hemer (1986), pp. 42–47.

¹³ *Ibid.* pp. 48–50 where Hemer quotes Strabo XIV, 1,23; Tacitus, *Annal.* III,60–63; Suetonius, *Tib.* 37 in connection with earlier problems. For evidence for the Domitianic extensions he relies on the reconstruction in *Syll*³, 989, *BMIInscr* 520.

cumcised Gentile Christians tried this escape route with the result that *ἰουδαϊσμόν* was heard *παρὰ ἀκροβύστου*.

This judaized form of Christianity in Asia Minor may have been highly similar to the conception of the reformed cult of Judaism that formed the legitimation of the uncircumcised Theophilus and his circle (3B). But such groups in the Seer's eyes were clearly a *συναγωγὴ τοῦ Σατανᾶ*. They claimed to be Jews (*ἐκ τῶν λεγόντων Ἰουδαίους εἶναι ἑαυτοὺς*) but they were not so (*καὶ οὐκ εἰσὶν ἀλλὰ ψεύδονται*).¹⁴ Moreover the bitterness of the language reflects persecution that Jews could easily activate against their now excommunicated co-fraternity for whom there was now no cultic proxy. We have seen that the issue of Judaism and the responsibility to pay the temple tax as a proxy for participation in the Imperial Cult was particularly critical at the time of Domitian (3C 2.3.3.3).

Given therefore the Domitianic background of the *Apocalypse*, we must now ask what specific features of the Imperial Cult under Domitian could have inspired such strong polemic from the Seer as *Apoc.* 17,1–6 where the “Whore of Babylon drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus” is described in such a lurid hue. More is clearly here implied than simply an increase in cultic building works such as the extension of the *τέμενος* of Diana at Ephesus associated with an imperial temple. To the question of Domitian's reconceptualisation and reorganisation of the cult we now turn.

5A 2. *The Imperial Cult under Domitian*

The clear documentary evidence for a change in the cultic position of the emperor at the time of Domitian confirms this hypothesis. Gaius' assumption of divine honours in his lifetime had been condemned at Rome, though of course there had never been any problem in the East about the theological justification for ruler worship. Nevertheless Suetonius (*Domit.* 13,1–2) informs us that “when he dictated a formal letter under the name of his procurators he began: “Your Lord and God (*dominus et deus*) orders this to be done. In consequence it became the custom that he should be addressed in no other way whether in writing or in speech.” In the same passage he records that Domitian, when taking back his wife after their divorce,

¹⁴ *Apoc.* 2,9 and 3,9, cf. Hemer (1986), pp. 4, 8–10, 66–67, 163, 175–176.

boasted that she had been summoned back to “the divine couch (*in pulvinar*).”¹⁵

Let us firstly consider literary evidence for Domitian’s divine titles, and then evidence for a change in the ritual and by implication underlying theology of the cult.

5A 2.1. *Domitian’s divine titles: dominus, praesens deus, tonans*

Though Statius appears not to use *dominus* as a divine title, Martial clearly does. He quotes an edict regulating seating in the theatre that begins *edictum domini deique nostri* (*Epig.* 5,5). Regarding the emperor’s breastplate, he writes in addressing it that it is *domini lorica*, and that “you are happy in your lot (*felix sorte tua*) whose destiny is to clothe the sacred breast (*sacrum cui tangere pectus*) and to feel the glow of the heart of our God (*et nostri mente calere dei*).” (7,2,2 and 5–6) Martial particularly mentions him as the *deus* who erected the shrine of Jupiter Capitolinus (13,74), who receives libations, and who grants the prayers of his worshippers (6,87).¹⁶

It would, I believe, be quite wrong to dismiss Martial’s words as of little significance, as mere flattery. Statius too speaks of Domitian in such terms as the *forma dei praesens*, or the *proximus ille deus* (Statius, *Silvae* I, 1,62; V, 2,70). Nor is the evidence for such a title in court poets alone. Dio Chrysostom (*Or.* 45,1) records that Domitian was called *κύριος καὶ θεός* by all Greeks and barbarians but that he himself did not “flatter in this way (*καὶ ταῦτα οὐ θωπεύων*).” This implies that even at Rome and not only in the East were some prepared to behave in this fashion.

The title *dominus* in association with *deus* was a blatant abrogation of the ideology of the principate that no doubt offended the senatorial class who had other reasons as well for resenting Domitian’s terror. Pliny certainly in *Panegyricus* 2,2–3 contrasts Trajan’s rule with that of Domitian:

Allow therefore to make their exit and go their way (*Quare abeant ac recedant*) those expressions which fear expressed (*voces illae quas metus exprimebat*). We do not have to speak as before, for we do not have to suffer the things we suffered before. Public addresses regarding the emperor shall not be the same (*nec eadem de principe palam quae prius*

¹⁵ Scott (1975), pp. 102–103.

¹⁶ See also Martial *Epig.* 5,5; 7,5,1–6; 34,8–9; 8,2,6–7; 82,1–5; 9,28,7–8; 66,3–4. These and other passages are discussed in Scott (1975), pp. 104–109.

praedicemus) since what we used to say before in secret is now also different (*neque enim eadem secreto quae prius loquimur*). The change of the times is revealed in our speeches (*discernatur orationibus nostris diversitas temporum*) . . . On no occasion (*nusquam*) should we flatter him as a god, nowhere as a divine presence (*ut deo, nusquam ut numini blandiamur*); for we are speaking not of a tyrant but of a citizen, not of a master but of a father (*non enim de tyranno sed de cive, non de domino sed de parente*).

Here then we find related the ideas of worship of an emperor during his lifetime (as opposed to posthumously), and the idea of being a *dominus* and *tyrannus* rather than *princeps* or first *civis*, with Domitian by contrast with Trajan having been responsible for both.

As it has become something of a commonplace that there was no theological significance to such descriptions that were but expressions of flatterers, we must now consider evidence to the contrary.

5A 2.2. *Theological significance of Domitian's changes*

The existence of such a theological justification constitutes cogent evidence against those who dismiss with scepticism the claim that Domitian believed himself to be divine and accepted divine honours. As part of the ideological apparatus that made the autocracy that was the principate acceptable was the refusal of monarchical titles such as *dominus* or *rex*. Augustus veiled his autocracy behind quite empty republican forms. But in reality he and his successors knew they possessed monarchical power. Likewise Augustus was circumspect in accepting cult from the Eastern Greek city states. But as we have seen (2B 2), the *Lares Compitales*, amongst whom Augustus was depicted, belied any notion that his refusal of present divinity was straightforward. Furthermore, the association of various cults of divinised abstract qualities or virtues with the collective person of the emperor also was indicative of a certain insincerity in rejecting divine titles (2B 3).

Indications therefore that Domitian only earlier in his reign refused the title of *dominus*, but changed his mind later must be interpreted with caution.¹⁷ Indeed, it may be asked why if, as is universally admitted, emperors were insincere about refusing political titles that

¹⁷ Scott (1975), pp. 102–103 proposed such a thesis in order to take seriously Domitian's allegedly later claim apparently belied by his earlier one. But Scott admits that Statius *Silvae* I, 6,83–84 on which his thesis rests is undated and can only therefore be dated earlier *ex hypothesi*.

identified them with autocratic power, they should be regarded as perfectly sincere in rejecting worship until they were dead. There was as studious an ambiguity about religious titles as there was about political ones. The ideology of the principate was designed to make impossible an either-or challenge to its claims of either the form “are you divine or human” or of “are you a *dominus* or a *princeps*?”¹⁸ We have witnessed the assimilation of the cult of Virtues to the Imperial Cult as forming a kind of collective personality worn by the deceased emperors as embodying the well-being of the Roman empire. Even in late republican times what were originally divine qualities of the Roman people became associated with specific persons such as Pompey or Sulla, and were conceived as only granted through the mediation of these rulers (2B 3). Such theological developments enabled a synthetic solution to the logical problem of how Augustus and his successors, as *Pontifex Maximus* of the Imperial Cult, could also be the object of its worship (2A 5).

It is therefore questionable to endeavour to down-play the role of the Imperial Cult in Church-state relations on the grounds that the main charge against the early Christians was that they refused to worship the gods of the state rather than the emperor, that the emperor was merely *divus* as opposed to *deus*, and that swearing by the genius of Caesar was somehow to be a softer alternative as a mark of loyalty to the state as opposed to full participation in its polytheism.¹⁹ Such would imply that the description of the living emperor as *divus*, and of the act of incense-sacrifice to his εἰκόων, belonged to a separate, political discourse from that of religious worship of the gods. But both kinds of discourse exhibited a growing confluence and interdependence between themselves, particularly in the case of the assimilation of the cult of Virtues with the emperor’s

¹⁸ Thus I find quite facile Jones (1993), pp. 108–109 where he describes the claim that Domitian was so addressed as “all but incredible. The best that an emperor could expect after death was to be declared a *divus* and never a *deus* . . . a living one had to do with even less . . . terms used by flatterers such as Martial, Statius, Juvenius, Celsus (or Pliny) to secure a favour from an autocrat hardly constitute proof that they were instructed or required to use them . . . Domitian was both intelligent and committed to the traditional religion. He obviously knew that he was not a God, and whilst he did not ask or demand to be addressed as one, he did not actively discourage the few flatterers who did.”

¹⁹ G.E.M. De Ste. Croix, Why were the early Christians persecuted? in *Past and Present*, 26 (1963), p. 10; S.R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor*, (Cambridge: U.P. 1984), pp. 221–222.

corporate personality. We shall argue that certain traditional sacerdotal functions adopted by Domitian assume a new significance against these developments in the conceptual backcloth of the Imperial Cult at the centre of which was the title *dominus et deus*.

Domitian made a serious claim for himself as a living, reigning emperor to be *deus* and not simply *divus*. Pliny's insistence of a particular emphasis by Domitian on his status as a *deus praesens* is indicative of an emphasis on the Imperial Cult centred on a living reigning emperor that was, apart from Gaius, almost unique to that reign. Certainly both Martial and Statius move beyond the traditional comparison of the emperor with Jupiter to claiming identity between the two.

5A 2.2.1. *Jovian ideology and Domitian's changes in the cult*

Virgil *Aeneid* 1,257–296 and 6,791–807 had described Augustus as chosen by Jupiter for Rome's *imperium sine fine* and the *saeculum aureum*. Horace's description of Augustus as *soter delapsus ex caelo* nevertheless preserves the distinction between the elect emperor and the supreme god himself (*Odes* I, 2,29–30; 41–52). *Ode* 3,5 describes Augustus like Domitian as soon to be a *praesens divus* on earth in tandem with *caelo tonantem* . . . *Iovem* who therefore by contrast reigns in heaven. Nevertheless there is even in such a close comparison no real equivalence. Similarly Ovid, in *Metamorphoses* 15,858–870, contrasts the heavenly Jupiter with the *terra sub Augusto*, with both described as *pater et rector*. But even in *Tristia* 5, 2,47–48, where Augustus is equated with Jupiter, there is nevertheless the qualification of Jupiter on earth.²⁰

But in the case of Domitian there is clearly a failure to preserve the nicety of this distinction which Pliny (*Panegy.* 80) is to reassert in the case of Trajan. Martial (*Epig.* 4, 8,12; 9, 86,7–8) equates Domitian with Jupiter. In Statius *Silvae*. IV, 3,128–129 Domitian stands as Jupiter's vicegerent on earth. But that Domitian chose apparently to celebrate uniquely this status iconographically on coins that depict him as Jupiter holding a thunderbolt and crowned by victory suggests that Martial's equations went beyond flattery and represented a critical development in imperial ideology.²¹ *Praeses*,²²

²⁰ Fears (1977), pp. 123–129.

²¹ *BMC* 2 p. 77 no. 381 cf. Fears (1977), pp. 134–135.

²² Martial, *Epig.* 5, 3,3 (*praeses mundi*); 7,4 (*praeses Romae*); 6, 2,5; 8, 80,5; 9, 18,1 (*te praeside*); Statius, *Silv.* I, 2,175 (*praeses Ausonius*); III, 3,183–184 (*numina magni praesidis*); 5, 2,176 (*magnus praeses*).

*pater*²³ and *parens*,²⁴ used generally of gods, are applied to Domitian as the Ausonian Jupiter, as also is the theme of *Juppiter tonans*.²⁵

Given therefore that such new conclusions were being drawn from the ideological premisses of the Imperial Cult on the part of court poets such as Martial and Statius, and subjected to critical comments by Pliny and Suetonius, we must now ask what evidence there is for such tentative developments being represented in the ritual of the Imperial Cult itself, and thus with what the writer of the *Apocalypse* was to find himself in direct conflict.

5A 2.2.2. *Domitian's changes in ritual*

In A.D. 69 Domitian raised at Rome a shrine to *Iuppiter Conservator* and also restored the temple of *Iuppiter Capitolinus*. Pliny's words to Trajan help us to assess the significance of that shrine:

With like reverence (*simili reverentia*), Caesar, you allow thanksgiving for your benevolence to be rendered, not in the presence of your genius (*non apud genium tuum*), but in the presence of the godhead of Jupiter the best and greatest (*sed apud numen Iovis optimi maximi pateris*) . . . Yet previously vast herds of sacrificial victims (*ante quidem ingentes hostiarum greges*), stopped for the most part on the way to the Capitoline (*per Capitolinum iter magna sui parte velut intercepti*) and were compelled to turn from the road (*devertere via cogebantur*) since the fearful image of the most cruel of tyrants (*cum saevissimi domini atrocissima effigies*) would be offered worship with as much the blood of sacrifices (*tanto victimarum cruore cole-retur*) as of human blood that he was accustomed to shed (*quantum ipse humani sanguinis profundebat*).

Panegyricus 52,6–7

Pliny clearly implies a confusion between the *genius* of Domitian and the *numen* of Jupiter that he claims that Trajan had clarified. As a result, there had been sacrifices at Domitian's statue, mentioned in Statius *Silvae* I,1, and set up in A.D. 89 at the west end of the forum.

²³ Martial, *Epig.* 9, 8,6 (*Ausonius pater*); Statius, *Silv.* I, 4,95 (*Latiae pater inclitus urbis*); III, 4,48 (*pater inclitus orbis*); IV, 8,20 (*Ausoniae pater augustissimus urbis*); V, 1,167 (*pater*).

²⁴ Statius, *Silv.* I, 2,178 (*parens Latius*); IV, 3,108 (*Romanus parens*); IV, 1,17 (*magnus parens mundi*); 2,14–15 (*regnator terrarum orbisque subacti magnus parens*); VII, 7,5 (*summus mundi rector et parens orbis*); IX, 6,1 (*parens orbis*).

²⁵ Martial, *Epig.* 6, 10,9 ([Minerva] *nostrum . . . conscia virgo tonantis*); 7, 56 (*nostro . . . tonante*); 14, 1,2 (*decent nostrum pillea sumpta Iovem*); 9, 18,7–8 (*Iovis imber*). For a fuller discussion of these passages (including footnotes 36–38) see Scott (1975), pp. 133–140.

Indeed, as Bömer pointed out, it is with Domitian that we find inscriptional evidence for the oath by the "genius of Caesar" that, in its continuance under Trajan, belies Pliny's hopes that such veneration has ended. Under Augustus the formula for an oath from Paphlagonia was to Ζεύς, Γῆ Ἥλιος, θεοὶ πάντες καὶ πάσαι καὶ αὐτοὶ ὁ Σεβαστός. In Caligula's time we find from Aritium in Spain and Assos in Troas both Latin and Greek versions of an oath in the name of *divus Augustus et ceteri omnes di immortales*/Ζεὺς Σωτήρ, θεὸς Καίσαρ Σεβαστός καὶ ἡ πάτριος ἀγνή Παρθένος. But with Domitian we find *per Iovem et divom Augustum et divom Claudium et divom Vespasianum Augustum et divom Titum Augustum et Genium imperatoris Domitiani Augusti deosque Penates*.²⁶ Here we appear to witness a transcendence of a mere contingent association of divine beings by means of a coalescing of Domitian's personal *genius* with the collective *genius* of members of the Imperial Cult and the *numen* both of Jupiter and the *dei Penates*.

It is in connection with Jupiter Capitolinus that we have some indication of ritual developments in the imperial ideology that these inscriptions illuminate. Suetonius recounts the scene accompanying the institution of quinquennial contests for this cult, consisting of music, horse-riding, and gymnastics:

He presided at the contest (*certamini praesedit*) in half-boots (*crepidatus*) clothed in a Grecian toga of purple (*amictus toga Graecanica*), sporting on his head (*capite gestans*) a golden crown with an image of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva (*coronam auream cum effigie Iovis ac Iunonis Minervaeque*), assisted by a priest of Jupiter (*adsidentibus Diali sacerdote*) and the college of the Flaviales (*et collegio Flavianium*) similarly dressed (*pari habitu*), except that his image was also on their crowns (*nisi quod illorum coronis inerat et ipsius imago*).

Domitian 4,4

We see in the *corona aurea* with its *effigies* a claim to represent especially and sacramentally Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva on the part of the high priest of the Capitoline games. It may be said therefore that propitiation is *per Iovem et Iunonem et Minervam*, as well as *per genium Domitiani* with whom and through whom, as it were, Domitian, *dominus et deus*, is propitious. Such archieratic *coronae* were customary in the East. But I submit that the introduction of the emperor's

²⁶ *CIL* 2,172 and 1963 cf. F. Bömer, Der Eid beim Genius des Kaisers, in *Athena* 44 (1966), pp. 123-124.

image onto the *coronae* of other priests implies a new stage of development of the collectivist imperialist ideology. The accompanying *collegium Flavianium* were *pari habitu* with Domitian, but the addition of his image to their *coronae* singled him out (*nisi quod illorum coronis inerat et ipsius imago*) and awarded him a new status. Suetonius was sufficiently impressed with the novelty of this event as to give it special emphasis.

In order to reinforce the notion that the sacrificial acts of other *pontifices* are both subject and dependent on his own, and that he is the equal source of the propitiation effected by their acts, they wear on their crowns both Domitian's image and the image of these deities as well with whom Domitian is thus declared to be equal. Thus such a collective comprehension of the deified Caesars in the person of the *Genius* of Domitian that we saw in the changes in the oath under Domitian is also reflected in the imagery of the *corona aurea*.²⁷ It must be emphasised that we are dealing here with no idiosyncrasy of Domitian in connection with the cult of Jupiter Capitolinus at Rome alone. Even in the West, as Tertullian bears witness (*De Idol.* 18,1), along with pagan, African and Dacian inscriptions (*CIL* 3,1433 and 8,17896), provincial priests of the Imperial Cult wore the *corona aurea* bearing the image of the emperor. In the East it had been common in Hellenistic ruler cults, for example, in the case of the priestess of Laodicea, as we learn from an edict of Antiochus III (204 B.C.) where a golden crown bearing the likeness of the queen was worn.²⁸ We have fragments of crowns themselves, and representations on coins which reveal a number of depictions of emperors.²⁹ There is therefore arguably under Domitian to be detected a theology of representation that postulated the equation of the *genius* of Caesar with the *numen* of divinity.

At all events in the East, in the province of Asia Minor, ruler worship progressed with its ordinary normality. At Ephesus Domitian erected a temple in the centre of a large precinct set on one side of the main square. On the adjacent side of that square stood a

²⁷ A. Alföldi, *Die Monarchische Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreiche*, (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1970), p. 74 and footnote 1, where he criticizes Mommsen's "Auffassung von der Belanglosigkeit des Kaiserkultes im Staatsrecht der früheren Kaiserzeit."

²⁸ D. Fishwick, The Imperial Cult in the Latin West: Studies in the Ruler Cult of the Western Province of the Roman Empire, in *EPRO* 108 (1991), 2,1 pp. 477-478.

²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 477 and Plate LXXXV b and LXXXVI a and b.

double temple of *Roma* and Julius Caesar, and at its centre a temple of Augustus. Along that adjacent side ran also the *στοά βασιλική* dedicated to Artemis, Augustus and Tiberius.³⁰

The erection of a temple to Domitian here reflected therefore both a reinforcement of the Imperial Cult through this emperor who is thus associated with both Augustus and Artemis. Domitian's statue is constructed in particularly large proportions.³¹ Indeed we can read in these architectural developments the development of the Imperial Cult itself, first with the association of the abstraction of *Roma* with Julius Caesar and thus its further personification in the collective personality of the emperor. We see also an integration of the tradition worship of Artemis with the patriotic and imperial emotions associated with the Imperial Cult.

Given therefore clear examples of changes in the ideology of the Imperial Cult accomplished under Domitian, let us examine the way in which those changes are reflected in the *Apocalypse*.

PART B. THE DOMITIANIC BACKCLOTH TO THE APOCALYPSE

We discussed earlier the imagery derived specifically from the Imperial Cult in connection with the Domitianic dating of the *Apocalypse*, in particular both the figure of Domitia, and specific features of how Domitian was represented in the Imperial Cult (5A 1). Our discussion here will be in two parts. We will summarise (5B 1) basically the position of Ramsay and Hemer, which we generally accept, on the reflections of the Imperial Cult specifically in the letters to the Churches (*Apoc.* 2,9–3,22). We will then show (5B 2) that similar themes continue in the text of the *Apocalypse* outside the letters to the seven churches, from chapter 4 onwards, particularly in the songs of the elders and living creatures. Here the heavenly cultus around the throne of God and of the Lamb reflects images of the Imperial Cult in a way that complements similar imagery in the letters to the seven churches.

³⁰ Price (1984), p. 139 fig. 3 and 140.

³¹ *Ibid.* p. 187.

5B 1. *Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia*

It is from Ramsay and Hemer's analysis of the letters that my thesis regarding the applicability of the sociological concept of contra-culture to the development of Order in early Christian communities finds its strongest support. Indeed, it will be my argument that their thesis should be extended to cover the themes of the *Apocalypse* itself outside of the letters. There is a strong parallel between the particular pagan cultus that existed in the local setting of the letters in the context of particular cities, and the eschatological promises that are made to the believer that resists that cultus. Hemer's account will therefore be shown to support the notion that those communities were forming a contra-culture in which the status denied by their rejection of the host-culture assumes the proportions of a highly organised complex of reversed images.

Let us now, therefore list the features of the local setting of the letters, and the contra-cultural order at the phenomenological level of social reality, to which they give rise.

5B 1.1. Apoc. 2,6 παράδεισος and the ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς

The overcomer (τῷ νικῶντι) is to eat (φαγεῖν) of the tree of life (ἐκ τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς) which is in the paradise of God (ὅ ἐστιν ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τοῦ θεοῦ).

These expressions are characteristic of *Gen.* 2,9 and derived literature. However in that passage the more usual term δένδρον is used. ξύλον can have that sense, though in the New Testament it is the cross of Christ to which the term usually refers (*Acts* 5,30; 10,39; 13,29; *Gal.* 3,13; 1 *Pet.* 2,24). Moreover this expression for the cross is also to be found elsewhere in the *Apocalypse* apart from this letter: the cross as the tree of life is to be found bearing healing and salvific fruit (22,2; 14; 19).

Undoubtedly both of these terms have an Old Testament and early Christian background but their meanings are totally unrelated to each other. Why should the gibbet of the cross be likened to the tree in paradise? Hemer's argument is that it is the particular local geographical and architectural environment at Ephesus that brings these two distinct images into their present relationship.

The Temple of Artemis and its cultus at Ephesus grew out of what was originally a tree shrine, as can be established by the literary allusions of Callimachus and Periegetes, and the excavations

of Hogarth.³² We have already seen how the τέμενος or garden-like enclosure, in which the tree of Artemis stood, constituted an asylum refuge for criminals. This description seems to have made reference to the scandalous state of affairs addressed there by Domitian (5A 1). But this did not prevent an erection of a temple to Domitian there and, more particularly, the association on coins of the cult of Domitian with that of Artemis. Some coins depict an imperial temple on either side of the *Artemesion*, with depictions of naked statues of emperors resting on their sceptres.³³ Here therefore the cross as the tree of life in the paradise of God is contrasted with the tree-shrine of Artemis to which criminals flee for life and safety. But that cultus is undergoing a process of association with the Imperial Cult in the developing iconography.

In the New Jerusalem there is no part for “the sacrilegious (τοις ἐβδελυγμένοις): the murderers (φονεῦσιν), the harlots (πόρνοις), the magicians (φαρμάκοις), and the idolaters (εἰδωλολάτραις; *Apoc.* 21,7–8)” are excluded, just as Apollonius of Tyana (*Ep.* 65) had “blamed (μεμπτοὶ δὲ) those who dwelt with the goddess (σύνοικοι τῇ θεῷ) . . . from where (ἢ οὐκ ἂν) thief (ὁ κλέπτης), robber (τε καὶ ληστής), slave dealer (ἀνδραποδίστης), and every kind of (καὶ πᾶς εἴ τις) law breaker and temple-robber (ἄδικος ἢ ἱερόσυλος) issued forth (ἦν ὀρμῶμενος αὐτόθεν).” The Judaic and early Christian use of these terms provide therefore the raw materials for the construction of the imagery, but the matrix which draws them into their new relations is to be found in the pagan cultic background, and moreover a pagan cultic background that is increasingly synthesised with the Imperial Cult. Ephesus was to boast that it was “twice neokoros” when the provincial temple of Domitian acquired an official with this prestigious title for which there was competition equal to that of obtaining permission for the cult itself.³⁴

5B 1.2. *Apoc.* 2,10–11 στέφανος τῆς ζωῆς

We have already made reference to the description of the magistrate-priests of Smyrna as στεφανηφόροι.³⁵ Furthermore, we have suggested

³² Hemer (1986), pp. 44–47.

³³ Price (1984), p. 183 and Plate 3 C.

³⁴ Price (1984), pp. 64–65 footnote 47. See also S.J. Friesen, *Twice Neokoros: Ephesus, Asia and the Cult of the Flavian Imperial Family*, in *Religions in the Graeco-Roman World*, 116 (1993).

³⁵ Hemer (1986), pp. 72–74 ff. does not support such an interpretation which he found represented in, for example, W.M. Ramsay, *Art in Hastings Dictionary of the Bible*, IV 555.

that it was under Domitian that the signification of the iconography of that cultus was more sharply defined with the intention of integrating further disparate elements of the pagan cultus into a general web at the centre of which was the emperor and his worship. We saw that the archieratic arrangements for the Capitoline games and the *coronae* was an important example of such integrating developments (5A 2.2.2). There was moreover at Smyrna a temple of the Imperial Cult that had been dedicated to Tiberius, Livia and the Senate, and in which a cult-statue depicts Tiberius in a toga and veiled for sacrifice. In his hand he holds a *patera* over the altar.³⁶ We shall argue in the next section the association of this symbolism and the angels with their φιάλαι (*Apoc.* 5,8; 15,7; 16,1–17; 17,1; and 21,9).

5B 1.3. *Apoc.* 2,13;17: θρόνος τοῦ Σατανᾶ, μάννα κεκρυμμένον, ψῆφος λευκή

Pergamon had a position of pre-eminence in the Imperial Cult although its precise status in comparison with that of Ephesus has proven difficult to determine. Tiberius defended himself before the Senate for allowing his cult in Pergamon on the grounds that Augustus had allowed there a Temple to himself and Roma.³⁷ Furthermore, there is evidence of an assimilation of the Imperial Cult with that of Asklepius, portrayed with a serpent evocative of the Satanic in the eyes of the Seer (*Apoc.* 20,2: ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος, ὅς ἐστιν Διάβολος).³⁸ In an inscription from Cos, Asklepius is described as the *Pergameus deus* and σωτήρ.³⁹

5B 1.3.1. θρόνος τοῦ Σατανᾶ

We have a Julio-Claudian inscription from Pergamon which honours Demetrios Milatus.⁴⁰ This text is highly instructive for the way in which images and ritual of Asclepius and of the Imperial Cult

³⁶ Price (1984), p. 185 and Tacitus, *Annal.* XV,55–56.

³⁷ Tacitus *Annal.* IV,37: "... Hispania ulterior missis ad senatum legatis oravit, ut exemplo Asiae delubrum Tiberio matrique eius exstrueret... Caesar... respondendum ratus iis... huiusce modi orationem coepit:... Asiae civitatibus nuper idem istud petentibus non sim adversatus... cum divus Augustus sibi atque urbi Romae templum apud Pergamum sisti non prohibuisset."; cf. Dio Cassius 51,20,7.

³⁸ C. Habicht, *Altertümer von Pergamon*, VIII, 3: Die Inschriften des Asklepieions, (Berlin: De Gruyter 1969), no. 71: Ἀσκληπιῶ Σωτήρι καὶ Ὑγίᾳ τὸν δεξιούμενον δρᾶκοντα; Taf. 32, 160b.

³⁹ *IGRR* 4, 1053 and Martial, *Epig.* 9,16; Philostratus, *Vit. Apol.* 4,34; Statius, *Silvae* III, 4,23–24 cf. Hemer (1986), pp. 85–86.

⁴⁰ Habicht (1969) no. 36.

were not only in spatial approximation but in a high state of synthesis. Demetrios is “high priest for life of the *Pietas Augustorum* (ιερέ[α] τῆς τῶν Σ[ε-] [βασ]τῶν Εὐσ[ε]βείας διὰ βί[ου]), who has founded a festival of *Sebastoi* Saviours within the temple of the Saviour Asclepius (([κ]αθευρόντα πανήγυριν ἐ[ν] [τῷ] τοῦ Σωτ[ῆ]ρος Ἀσκληπ[ι]οῦ) [τε]μένει Σεβαστῶν Σωτ[ῆ]- [ρω]ν).”⁴¹ The cult of the emperor and the cult of Asklepios are not simply associated spatially within the same temple. The same divine titles (σωτήρ and σωτήρες) are applied to both of them. The reference to the θρόνος τοῦ Σατανᾶ fits well therefore with the context of the pre-eminence of the Imperial Cult in Pergamon. The choir of Asia was commanded to gather at Pergamon to perform on the birthday of “*Sebastos* Tiberius Caesar god” and to perform sacrifices.⁴²

Furthermore, the reference (*Apoc.* 2,13) to “Antipas my faithful martyr (Ἄντιπᾶς ὁ μάρτυς μου ὁ πιστός μου) who was slain among you (ὅς ἀπεκτάνθη παρ’ ὑμῖν) where Satan dwells (ὅπου ὁ Σατανᾶς κατοικεῖ)” is indicative of persecution specifically in connection with that cult. The contrast between Christ’s coming and his promise: “I will make war with them with the sword of my mouth” suggests a contra-cultural parallel with the *ius gladii* of the pro-consul of Asia.⁴³ As one of the leading centres of the Imperial Cult in Asia Minor, Pergamon would have been the most likely place where non-participation in the cult would have exposed Christians to the Dionysiac charges, and where offence to the ideology of the Commune of Asia could be most sensitively felt.

In this pagan, cultic context the “teaching of Balaam” (2,14) can now be considered, which, it is claimed, involves the eating of idolatrous food (φαγεῖν εἰδωλόθυτα) and committing fornication (πορνεῦσαι). The latter charge is characteristic of Old Testament polemic against idolatry but the former is a distinctive characteristic of New Testament gentile or mixed Christian communities, as *Acts* 15,20 and 1 *Cor.* 8,1–6 makes clear.

Note however how at Pergamon *collegia* and their festivities were related to the Imperial Cult. It is in comparison with such festivities that both the μάννα κεκρυμμένον and the ψῆφος λευκή are, I will argue, to be understood.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* p. 81 taf. 13, lines 4–9.

⁴² *IGRR* 4, 1608c and Price (1984), p. 105.

⁴³ Hemer (1986), pp. 82–84.

5B 1.3.2. μάννα κεκρυμμένον

Hemer was right, I believe, to see in the μάννα κεκρυμμένον the Manna in the wilderness a portion of which was preserved in the Ark of the Covenant and either hidden on earth in Sinai until the Messianic kingdom when Jeremiah *redivivus* would place them in the new Temple (2 *Macc.* 2,4–7 cf. *Heb.* 9,4 and Rabbi Yoma 52b), or concealed in heaven by an angel (2 *Baruch* 6,7–10). Thus according to the latter view the “food of angels” (*Ps.* 78,25) would be the food of the saints in the Messianic kingdom (2 *Baruch* 29,8; *Sybilline Oracles* 7,148–149).⁴⁴ But such Jewish parallels do not preclude, as we have argued, references to the Imperial Cult as the template in which such Jewish imagery was refashioned.

There is in addition in this passage a parallel between the meals of the mystery cults with which sacrifices were associated, and the Imperial Cult: the “hidden manna” of the Old Testament and Rabbinic and Jewish apocalyptic (the Messianic Banquet) is becoming associated with the banquet of the imperial mysteries. We shall be considering shortly, in greater detail, epigraphical evidence for the imperial mysteries (*IGRR* 4,353) in which οἶνος, ἄρτος, and πόπανον (or sacred cake) are mentioned (*c.* 4–7) in the list of practical requirements for such rites. The author focuses on the Eucharist as the true mystery, the fulfilment of the “Manna in the wilderness” (*Jn.* 6,48–50), but seeks to construct such imagery once again in the matrix of the developing imperial ideology. Those who in faith refuse the οἶνος, ἄρτος, and πόπανον of the imperial mysteries will have a place at the marriage supper of the Lamb (*Ahoc.* 19,9). We are seeing once again the construction of a contra cultural edifice from the building bricks of Jewish tradition. The related image of the white stone (ψηφος λευκή) is however derived from a pagan background.

5B 1.3.3. ψηφος λευκή

One partial reference here must undoubtedly be, as Hemer argues, to the pebble cast by jurors into an urn in order to vote for acquittal, or perhaps more accurately with voting procedures to reach any decision.⁴⁵ There is therefore arguably here an eschatological reference to those persecuted and condemned in pagan courts, or indeed under general decrees passed by the Koinon of Asia and under which they

⁴⁴ Hemer (1986), p. 95.

⁴⁵ Ovid, *Metam.* 15,41–411; Plutarch, *Alcib.* 22,2 and *Moral.* p. 186F; Aeschyles, *Eumen.* 737–756 and Hemer (1986), p. 97.

suffered. Those addressed will be acquitted finally by Christ at his coming, or given a place in his kingdom denied by their present rulers.

But ψῆφος can also, I believe, have the meaning of *tessera* as a certificate of admission to and the custom of hospitality between members of pagan mystery cults. It is important to bear in mind that an inscribed ψῆφος can have the meaning of certificate of admission. But here if it is to have this sense we must also explain why if the ψῆφος λευκή is a certificate of admission, it has to have written on it the person's name which strangely only the bearer knows (*Apoc.* 2,17: ἐπὶ τὴν ψῆφον ὄνομα καινὸν γεγραμμένον ὃ οὐδεὶς οἶδεν εἰ μὴ ὁ λαμβάνων).

We have an inscription recording the articles of association of the σύστημα or συνέδριον of the πρεσβύτεροι or γερουσία that administered the gymnasium at Pergamon in the time of Hadrian.⁴⁶ A privilege of membership was a reduced entrance fee for their sons.⁴⁷ The entrance fee is called an εἰσηλύσιον which implies a *tessera* or ψῆφος issued for the fee.

In an inscription relating to the imperial mysteries at Pergamon, we find that the conductor of the choir is to charge an entry fee for the imperial sacrifices and mystery play.⁴⁸ Further corroboration of an εἰσηλύσιον in connection with Dionysiac mysteries at Smyrna, at the temple of Dionysus Brisaeus, is to be found in *CIG* 3173 (= *IGRR* 4, 1393), dated A.D. 80 in Domitian's reign. In line 15 a list of persons are introduced as: οἱ πεπληρωκότες τὰ ἰσηλύσια. Amongst the names listed are Artemidorus and Apollonius both of whom are called πατρομύστης. On side b of the column we find a letter of Marcus Aurelius written (A.D. 158): συνόδῳ τῶν περὶ τὸν Βρεισεῖα Διόνυσον χαίρειν.⁴⁹ In *IGRR* 4, 1400 (= *CIG* 3176 b) line 9–10 we have a letter of Antoninus Pius συνόδῳ τῶν ἐν Σμύρνῃ τεχνειτῶν καὶ μυστῶν χαίρειν. Thus the εἰσηλύσιον specifically in connection with entry into the liturgy of a mystery celebration also implies a *tessera* or ψῆφος.

⁴⁶ H. Hepding, Die Arbeiten zu Pergamon, 1904–1905, in *Ath. Mitt.* 32 (1907), pp. 2934–296, no. 18. See also M.N. Tod, Notes on some inscriptions from Asia Minor, in *CR* 29,1 (1915), pp. 1–2.

⁴⁷ ὁμοίως δὲ εἰσέρχεσθαι τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν μετεχόντων, δοκιμασθέντας μὲν καὶ αὐτούς, διδόντας δὲ εἰσηλύσιον.

⁴⁸ *IGRR* 4, 353 d line 14: Ἰσηλυσίου παρέξει ὁ κατασταθεὶς ὑμνωδὸς εἰς θυσίας τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ καὶ τῆς Ῥώμης . . .

⁴⁹ *IGRR* 4, 1399 (= *CIG* 3176 a) line 5–6.

But how are we to explain why on this entry ticket is not a price but a ὄνομα καινόν understood only by its bearer? We possess a number of inscriptions in which ψῆφος means ἀριθμός and is used in a magical or mystery context involving secret wisdom. There is clearly an association between a counter as the physical representation of a number, and a ticket bearing an entrance price. But magical inscriptions show us how it is possible that a ψῆφος on which a number is written can be regarded as a cryptogram for a person's name. One graffito from Pompei commemorates a loved one known to the writer alone but in which the deceased is simply represented by a number.⁵⁰ In another graffito "Amerimnos (Ἀμέριμνος) has remembered Harmonia (ἐμνήσθη Ἀρμονίας) his own (dear) lady (τῆς εἰδίας κυρίας), for her benefit (ἐπ' ἀγαθῶ), the number of whose beautiful name is 45 (ἦς ὁ ἀριθμὸς με' τοῦ καλοῦ ὀνόματος)."⁵¹ Clearly "Obtainable (Ἀμέριμνος)" and "Compliance (Ἀρμονία)" are real names the allegorical character of which the graffitist seeks to veil in numerical mystery.

That however such graffiti are more than lovers' games is shown by the evidence of two epitaphs, where the name of the deceased is given as a numerical cryptogram. One epitaph is from Pherae in Thessaly in the second or third century. In *IG* 5,1 1368 we read: "If you seek my number (Ζητῶν μου τὴν ψῆφον), ο wayfarer (παροδεῖτα), you will know who I am who lies here (γνώση τὸν κείμενον ἐνθάδε με), I lie here (κεῖμαι δ') in the earth which nourished me (ἐν γαίῃ τῇ με ἀναθρεψαμένη), (number) 1354 (ATNA)." Here knowledge is clearly associated with solution to a mystery. Finally we have a second-century, epitaph from Bithynia on a plinth in the form of an altar supporting a sarcophagus. To unravel the name requires the wayfarer to be a companion of the Muses and a partaker of wisdom (γνωστός ἔση Μούσαις καὶ σοφίης μέτοχος).⁵²

We thus have evidence for payments (ἰσηλύσια) for entrance into mystery rites associated both with Dionysus and with sacrifices for

⁵⁰ *CIL* 4 suppl. II (1909) no. 4861 (Pompei): φιλῶ ἦς ἀριθμὸς φμε'. ("I am in love with her whose number is 545"). See also 432 (1982) 1142; L. Robert, *Bulletin Epigraphique* 5 (1964) no. 618; 9 (1979) no. 556; F. Dornseiff, *Das Alphabet in Mystik und Magie*, in *ΣΤΟΙΧΕΙΑ VII* (Leipzig and Berlin: Teubner 1922), p. 112.

⁵¹ *CIL* 4 suppl. II no. 4839. See also G. Manganaro, *Graffiti e iscrizioni funerarie della Sicilia Orientale*, in *Helikon* 2 (1962), pp. 485–501.

⁵² W. Peek, *Griechische Vers-Inschriften*, Bd. 1: *Grab-Epigramme*, (Berlin: Akademie Verlag 1955) no. 1324.

the Imperial Cult. We have evidence for numbers as cryptograms for names associated with the search for σοφία in magical rites. We can therefore reasonably hypothesise that the *Apoc.* 2,17: ἐπὶ τὴν ψῆφον ὄνομα καινὸν γεγραμμένον ὃ οὐδεὶς οἶδεν εἰ μὴ ὁ λαμβάνων is a reference by analogy to admission to mysteries at Pergamon requiring an entrance ψῆφος for payment of an εἰσηλύσιον on which the bearer's name was in the form of a numerical cryptogram. *IGRR* 4,353 d line 14, as we have seen, records an εἰσηλύσιον specifically related to the Imperial Mysteries.⁵³ We have an inscription from Hadrian's time in which a meal of bread and wine accompanied with incense and the wearing of garlands (στέφανοι) are associated with the emperor as their saviour and founder. We shall consider this inscription in further detail in connection with the Seer's general vision in the rest of the *Apocalypse* (5B 3.2–2).

The selection of such a cultic interpretation of ψῆφος seems to link this term to admission to Imperial Cultic meals implied by the references to φαγεῖν εἰδωλόθυτα and the θρόνος τοῦ Σατανᾶ. Just as the contra-cultural counterpart to the former is the eschatological μάννα κεκρυμμένον whose foretaste is the Eucharist, so too the ψῆφος λευκή is the *tessera* of admission to the Christian cultic meal, namely baptism. It is not without relevance to our interpretation here that Tertullian was later to use *contesseratio hospitalitatis* between apostolic churches in this sense.⁵⁴ Nor should we rule out a significance for the Church of the author's present in these words on the grounds that their promise is eschatological. We shall argue later that the eschatological order of the heavenly Church is a reflection of the Order of the writer's own community with its liturgical imagery projected into the realm of the heavenly now entering the earthly in eschatological fulfilment.

Thus the cultic parallelism is also determined by the promise to the overcomers of "a new name (ὄνομα καινὸν) written upon the pebble (ἐπὶ τὴν ψῆφον. . . γεγραμμένον) which no-one knows except he who receives it (ὃ οὐδεὶς οἶδεν εἰ μὴ ὁ λαμβάνων)." Imagery of Church membership and sacraments is clearly being refashioned in the direction of a pagan cultic fellowship with its mysteries and secret initiation rites. Thus it is such pagan rites that remain primary within

⁵³ See footnote 48.

⁵⁴ Tertullian, *De Praesc. Haer.* 20, 7–9 cf. Brent (1995), pp. 505–507 ff.

the nevertheless Christian contra-cultural iconography developed by means of such contrary reflections. The cultic character of those contrary reflections thus determine the pagan cultic interpretation of the original primary data against other possible alternatives.⁵⁵

5B 1.4. Apoc. 2,20,26–28: Jezebel and the ἀστήρ πρωϊνός
The figure of “Jezebel” at Thyateira is clearly an Old Testament cryptogram that conceals the original and contemporary person whose original identity is thereby lost. But her teaching is clearly a variant of what was also being taught in Pergamon. Φαγεῖν εἰδωλόθυτα (Apoc. 2,14 cf. 2,20) is once more the actual expression of spiritual fornication (πορνεῦσαι). Hence the spirit of Old Testament idolatry is seen to find expression in teachers in both cities advocating participation in meals of pagan mystery cults, with which, as we shall shortly see, the Imperial Cult was to achieve a new association (5B 2.2).

The reference to the morning star (ἀστήρ πρωϊνός) is to the planet Venus, seen as a symbol of authority from Babylonian times. But there is, I believe, also a reference to the claims of Augustus’ to be *filius deorum* due to the mythical initiation of the *gens Julia* by Venus. Furthermore, we have Augustan coins, restored by Titus, in which over the head of Augustus radiate there is depicted a star (Plates 16 and 18).⁵⁶ In view of the clear emergence of pagan and imperial iconography both in the letters, and, as I will show, in the remainder of the *Apocalypse* itself, I cannot follow Hemer’s hesitancy in this regard.⁵⁷ We have already shown that the allusion to *Ps.* 2,7–9 (Apoc. 2,26–27) and *Num.* 24,17 (Apoc. 2,28) do not invalidate their interpretation in a pagan cultic context. The Old Testament imagery is used to reconstruct the pagan cults so as to produce a system of Christian counter-images.

5B 1.5. Apoc. 3,4–5 ἱμάτια λευκά and ἡ βίβλος τῆς ζωῆς
Sardis under Augustus had been amongst the first cities of Asia Minor to be granted a cult and temple. The city was to dedicate a statue on the coming of age of Gaius Caesar in that temple.⁵⁸ It is here, moreover, that we have allusions to the Domitianic changes

⁵⁵ Hemer (1986), pp. 96–104 discusses also gladiatorial and magical associations.

⁵⁶ *BMC* 2, pp. 282–283 nos. 266, 267, and 271 and plate 54,3.

⁵⁷ Hemer (1986), pp. 125–126.

⁵⁸ Price (1984), p. 66.

in the *fiscus judaicus* (3C 2.3.3.3). If Christians were unprepared to put their names on synagogue rolls and thus join what in Smyrna was described as the “synagogue of Satan,” (*Apoc.* 2,9) or if rather they were excommunicated in terms of the *Biracoth ha Minim*, then their names could be said to be “blotted out” of the register that gave them protection. The suspicions aroused by non-participation in the Imperial Cult without the exemption thus afforded would lead to the accusation that they were involved in Dionysiac rites that threatened both the social and metaphysical *pax*.

It is precisely this situation that is reflected in the reversed image of the returning Christ who promises to the overcomer in Sardis that: “I will not blot out (οὐ μὴ ἐξάλειψω) his name (τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ) from the book of life (ἐκ τῆς βίβλου τῆς ζωῆς).” (*Apoc.* 3,5) The clear pattern that is therefore emerging from an analysis of the social context of the letters is the clash with the Imperial Cult. We should clearly read in such a context the immediately preceding promise to the overcomer that: “he will be clothed (περιβαλεῖται) in white garments (ἐν ἱματίοις λευκοῖς),” thus reflecting the wearing of white that was traditional for participants in all pagan processions.

We have already drawn attention to the evidence of the *Lex Narbonensis* according to which the participants wore festal white following the *supplicatio* with myrtle wreathes on their heads and myrtle branches in their hands.⁵⁹ We have moreover several Eastern examples of this practice. We have a description of an *adventus* ceremony in connection with the cult of Attalus III (138–133 B.C.) at Pergamon (*OGIS* 332). The *stephanophoroi* of the twelve deities, as they meet him on his arrival, are to wear their garlands ([στε]φανοφορησαι; *l.* 27–29). The priests are to offer incense (ἐπιθυμόντας λιβανωτὸν; *l.* 29) as Attalus is met in procession by the people “garlanded and in white raiment (ἐν ἐσθ[ῆ]σιν λαμπραῖς ἐστεφανωμένους . . .); *l.* 37–38).⁶⁰

As a *contra* image of the Imperial Cult, the overcomers here are described as clothed in white in an association that gives them the status of participant in the Christian cultus denied to them in their isolation and alienation within their present culture.

⁵⁹ *CIL* 12,6038, see also 2B 4 and 3C 2.3.3.3.

⁶⁰ See also *Syll*³³ 695,35; 1157,35; Herodian II,2,9 (of Pertinax in): οἱ στρατιῶται . . . Σεβαστὸν προσεῖπον . . . ὁμόσαντες καὶ θύσαντες, δαφνηφοροῦντες . . .

5B 1.6. *Apoc. 3,12*: τὸ ὄνομα . . . τῆς πόλεως τοῦ θεοῦ μου
 Strabo XII, 8,18 described Philadelphia as full of earthquakes (σεισμῶν πλήρης), and Hemer claims in consequence that the earthquake of A.D. 17 affected the collective psychology of the inhabitants of that city. Certainly Philadelphia appears amongst the cities of Asia which expressed their gratitude to Tiberius for the aid that he gave following this disaster.⁶¹ Such gratitude took the form of assuming the imperial *cognomen* and honouring Germanicus with a posthumous cult. Coins of Philadelphia show the name of the city changed to Neocaesarea, with a magistrate and priest of the Imperial Cult venerating Germanicus.⁶² After Claudius, the city reverted to its original name, but under Vespasian it used the epithet *Flavia* to honour the imperial house.⁶³

Domitian's edict (A.D. 92) required acreage for vineyards to be reduced, arguably to alleviate famine by encouraging more corn to be grown. Hemer perceptively associates this edict with the situation in Philadelphia.⁶⁴ We have already argued the relationship between this edict and *Apoc. 6,6* as establishing a Domitianic date for the *Apocalypse* (5A 1). To a city such as Philadelphia, whose principal deity was Dionysius, god of the vintage festival, such an edict was arguably an affront. Thus Hemer is able to see in the promise to the overcomers a reflection of the disillusionment of a loyal city whose faithfulness has been mocked by a cynical emperor.

Those who have not denied Christ's name (*v. 8*) will "hold fast (κράτει) to what you have (ὃ ἔχετε)." They will be shaken neither by physical nor by moral earthquake neither such as that afforded by Domitian's decree nor his new claims for his own cult, but will be made "a pillar (στῦλον) in the temple of my God (ἐν τῷ ναῷ)." (*v. 12*) The "new name (τὸ ὄνομά μου τὸ καινόν)" will not be "Neocaesarea" but "the name of my God (τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ μου) and of the city of my God (καὶ τῆς πόλεως τοῦ θεοῦ μου), of the new Jerusalem (τῆς καινῆς Ἱερουσαλήμ)." (*v. 12*) Once again, therefore, we see a parallelism between the religio-political structures of the present and

⁶¹ *CIL* 10, 1624: Hierocaesarea cf. Tacitus, *Annal.*, II, 47,3-4 and Hemer (1986), p. 156.

⁶² *Catalogue of Coins in the British Museum, Lydia*, Philadelphia no. 55 (Caligula), no. 56 (Claudius) and Hemer (1986), p. 157.

⁶³ *Ibid.* nos. 51-52 (Caligula).

⁶⁴ Hemer (1986), pp. 158-160.

the images of the persecuted community in hope of eschatological vindication.

5B 1.7. Apoc. 3,21: καθίσαι μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐν τῷ θρόνῳ μου

Particular references here to our concerns with the Imperial Cult are sparse, even though Hemer detected and reinforced early discussions of the relationship between what is recorded by ancient writers and inscriptions regarding Laodicea and this letter.⁶⁵ The wealth and self-sufficiency of the city meant that it was in a position to decline to ask for imperial aid following the earthquake already mentioned (5A 3.1.6). However, the promise here to the overcomers is "to sit with me on my throne (καθίσαι μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐν τῷ θρόνῳ μου) even as I have been victorious (ὡς κἀγὼ ἐνίκησα) and sit with my father on his throne (καὶ ἐκάθισα μετὰ τοῦ πατρός μου ἐν τῷ θρόνῳ μου; v. 21)."

There was however an imperial temple erected in honour of Domitian at Laodicea in commemoration of his often fictitious, military, victories. The depiction of the temple on coins represents Domitian in armour with a spear and with the inscription: ἐπινείκιος.⁶⁶ Furthermore, as Hemer notes, Ramsay restored an inscription from Laodicea in which a freedman of the emperor, Tiberius Claudius Tryphon, dedicates a triple gate and towers: "to Jupiter (Δ[ι]ὸ) the greatest Saviour (μεγίσ[τ]ω Σ[ω]τήρι) and emperor Domitian (καὶ Αὐτοκράτορι [Δομιτιανῶ]), Caesar Augustus (Καίσαρι Σεβαστῶ), *pontifex maximus* (ἀρχιερεὶ μεγίστῳ)."⁶⁷ We have shown the clear emphasis in the other letters on a contra-cultural representation of Christian eschatology in terms of the Imperial Cult. It is interesting to ask, therefore, whether the address of the Lord Christ ("Behold I stand at the door and knock" v. 20), however allusory, is not a parallel with the gate bearing the emperor's name and by whose will people come in and come out. The supper is clearly eschatological (Apoc. 3,20 cf. 19,9 and 17) but a foretaste is the Eucharist of the present which has already in previous letters been paralleled with the cultic festivities of the guilds at Pergamon (5B 1.3) and Thyateira (5B 1.4).

Let us now examine how the images of contra-cultural parallelism

⁶⁵ Hemer (1986) chap. 9.

⁶⁶ BMC *Phrygia* p. 307 nos. 181–182, 185; p. 308 no. 188; Price (1984), p. 183 and p. 264 Cat. 87.

⁶⁷ *CIG* 3949 = *IGRR* 4,847 = *MAMA* 6,2 = *EpAnat* 26 (1996), pp. 31–40 cf. Hemer (1986), p. 195.

continue outside the seven letters and into the main body of the text of the *Apocalypse* itself.

5B 2. *Contra images of Imperial Cult in Apoc. 4–19*

In the last section (5A 3.1) we showed how the general hopes of the community were expressed in terms that reveal the construction of a contra-culture. However, what we have so far established refers to the theological perspective of the community and not to the particular kind of Church Order that also developed. There are vexed questions regarding what kind of Church Order is presupposed both by the letters and the main body of the text, whether the angels of the churches were fully heavenly beings or indeed their earthly bishops, whether the twenty-four elders refer to a presbyterate that presided over these churches etc. Such questions will be better left until we consider such issues in connection with the Church Order that was to pertain in Asia Minor some ten years later, and in many of the same cities addressed by the *Apocalypse*, when we consider the letters of Ignatius of Antioch (6A 1).

For the moment we shall confine our attention to the way in which, in the text of the *Apocalypse*, as it now unravels from chapter 4 onwards, the action of the church in heaven becoming and enlisting the church on earth, is characterised by images of the Imperial Cult transformed through the construction of a contra-cultural reality. The imagery of the Seer's vision is undoubtedly composite, with images derived from a number of sources both Jewish, early Christian, and pagan. Those images have doubtlessly been refashioned, in fantastic proportions, into a bizarre vision which has been very successful in concealing its true historical and cultural roots. Nevertheless we shall argue that, despite the bewildering composition of variegated imagery, the contours of the Imperial Cult and its transformation into the cult of the Church militant and triumphant have left their unmistakable impress.

The concept of the Imperial Cult embraced the total iconography of the Augustan revolution, both architectural, religious and social. Zanker has described graphically the way in which Augustus' public architectural projects that so transformed the physical appearance of Rome represented a movement of Hellenistic art and culture from the private villa of the Republican aristocrat to the public space of the forum and city where that culture could experience a

distinctive Romanization.⁶⁸ Price has described how, in the soil of Asia Minor already well fertilised for the growth of the Imperial Cult from an existing tradition of ruler cults, civic space was invaded by architectural expressions of the new, religio-political ideology. Pergamon well exemplifies the inclusion of gymnasia in the organised procession of the cult where we find imperial rooms with bases for cult statues of the deified emperors which stood side by side with the gods Hermes and Heracles now associated with their cult.⁶⁹

The cultic celebration, taking place on fixed days such as imperial birthdays annually or in four-yearly festivals, incorporated games and theatrical performances. Sometimes, however, a special event such as the arrival of the emperor would create a sacred day.⁷⁰ But the Imperial Cult was extended so as to assimilate traditional festivals by means of the iconographic association of imperial statues with local gods. "Hρα at Samos, for example, became "Hρα Σεβαστή.⁷¹

Theatres were included in the cult by the location there of imperial statues, and visited in the course of its processional route, as at Gytheum where the statues of Augustus, Livia and Tiberius faced an incense burner where the ritual for commencing competitions took place.⁷² The community took part also: private householders erected their own small altars on which they sacrificed as the procession passed. We have already drawn attention to how exposed the Christian community would be even though there was as yet no general policy of enforced emperor worship (3C 2.3.3.3). The procession of the cult, however, whilst including and embracing these local shrines, gymnasia and theatres, had a central point of reference in major civic centres such as the council house at Ephesus which contained an imperial altar.⁷³

Sanctuaries such as the temple of Asclepius at Pergamon housed the local festival of the Saviour *Sebastoi*, and were also embraced by a visit of the procession.

In the procession itself, and the associated ritual, images of the

⁶⁸ P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. A. Shapiro, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 1990), chapters 1 and 3; cf. Price (1984) chapter 6.

⁶⁹ Price (1984) p. 144.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* p. 105.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* p. 103.

⁷² *Ibid.* 109 and p. 188.

⁷³ *Ibid.* p. 112 footnote 74.

imperial household played a pivotal role. Images of the imperial family were included with busts of Artemis for carrying from the latter's temple from where they were kept to the theatre. They had special bases there on which they could be set up. There sacrifices took place at meetings of the assembly and festivals such as the *Sebasta*, the *Soteria*, and the four-yearly Great *Ephesia*.⁷⁴

At Athens it was the council of elders which was responsible for making these special images quite distinct from the permanently standing statues. Old and damaged images were the responsibility of the council of elders at Ephesus.⁷⁵ Furthermore youths at Athens and Tanagra served as officials called *sebastophoroi*.⁷⁶ Furthermore, imperial mysteries were celebrated with a special official, the *σεβαστοφάντης*.⁷⁷

It was Stauffer who, with considerable insight, posited the connection between such features of the Imperial Cult and the scenes of the *Apocalypse*.⁷⁸ The scene which follows the seven letters, filled themselves with allusions to the Imperial Cult as we have shown following Hemer and Ramsay, is a scene resplendent with imagery from the games, the choral festivities, the horse races, the imperial mysteries associated with the carrying of the *εἰκόνες*, the presbyters of the cities organising and funding the Imperial Cult many of whom had cultic functions through the offices they held in the sacred colleges superintending the imperial mysteries, etc. The contra-culture will of course reverse the images of the host culture, in process of taking on its values and refashioning them.

Let us now see in detail how the themes of *εἰκόνες* in the imperial mysteries, the burning of incense, the pouring of libations, the festival that combined hymnody with gymnasia, games and theatre, are reflected in the vision of the *Apocalypse*.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* p. 104.

⁷⁵ *I. Eph.* II, 23.

⁷⁶ Price (1984), p. 189.

⁷⁷ H.W. Pleket, An aspect of the imperial cult: imperial mysteries, in *HThR* 58,4 (1965), p. 337 mentions the Bithynian inscription (*Ath. Mitt.* 24 (1899)) in which τῶν μυστηρίων ἱεροφάντης and σεβαστοφάντης are used as equivalents. Another Asian example, from Dorylaeum in Phrygia (*JGRR* 4,522 (= *OGIS* 479)), would be an Hadrianic inscription erected by Asklepiades son of Stratonikos θεοῖς Σεβαστοῖς καὶ θεαῖς Σεβασταῖς καὶ Ὀμονοίᾳ Σεβαστῇ καὶ θεᾷ Ῥώμῃ. His title is σεβαστοφάντης διὰ βίου καὶ ἱερέυς.

⁷⁸ See footnote 5.

5B 2.1. *The angels and φιάλαι: Apoc. 16: festival*

To the festive crowd at Ephesus the appearance of the high priest opening a new series of games by throwing down a mappa or purple signal-cloth, or emptying a sacrificial bowl, was a festive scene of rejoicing.⁷⁹ But to the Seer it is an angel who poured out his "libation bowl of the wrath of God (φιάλην τοῦ θυμοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ) . . . upon those who have the mark of the beast (ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τοὺς ἔχοντας τὸ χάραγμα τοῦ θηρίου) and who worship his image (καὶ τοὺς προσκυνοῦντας τῇ εἰκόνι αὐτοῦ)." (*Apoc.* 16,2) Thus the seven angels with their seven φιάλαι commence the games that are the final contest (ἀγών) between Babylon and the Church, and it is in that arena that Armageddon and the tribulation woes of traditional apocalyptic are to take place (16, 3–21).

If incense as well as the sacrifice of a bull was characteristic of the Imperial Cult, so to was the symbolism of the emperor, veiled as a priest for sacrifice, pouring a drink offering from a *patera* (φιάλη). The temple at Smyrna showed Tiberius with his head veiled.⁸⁰ Furthermore this should not be seen as suggesting a distinction between a human-priest emperor and full worship of the gods since, as Price points out, gods are often depicted as priests of their own eponymous cults.⁸¹ The vision of the angels with their φιάλαι may well also have been informed by such pagan and imperial imagery, such as that of the priestess at Pompeii with *stole* and *patera* (Plate 14). Instead of the emperor bringing blessing and salvation by means of his libation, these angels bring the wrath and judgement of God upon those who worship his εἰκόν in the cult.

5B 2.2. *πρεσβύτεροι and εἰκόνες: theatre and mysteries*

We have already drawn attention to the significance of mystery *collegia* in connection with the letter to Pergamon (5B 1.3). It is now time for us to assess in greater detail the links between epigraphic evidence for such *collegia* and the role of the πρεσβύτεροι, their choirs and their στέφανοι, around the heavenly sacrificial altar of the Lamb.

⁷⁹ Stauffer (1955), p. 186.

⁸⁰ *BMC Ionia* p. 268 nos. 266–268 and Price cat. 45 and Plate 1b miscited as 3b in Price (1984), p. 185.

⁸¹ Price (1984), p. 185: "But the gods often held their own eponymous priesthoods and are often shown making sacrificial offerings . . ." cites (footnotes 76 and 77.) L. Robert, *Sur des inscriptions d'Éphèse*, 6. *Lettres impériales à Éphèse*, *RPhil* 41,3 (1967), pp. 44–64; also *RPhil* (1959), pp. 200–204; cf. Dio 59, 28,5 on Gaius.

IGRR 4, 353 is a large stone altar taken from the temple of Roma and Augustus in Pergamon and inscribed on four sides. At the front is a dedication (lines a. 4–5a) to Hadrian “saviour and founder (σωτήρι καὶ [κτί]στη).” But those who make the dedication are an existing choir of the Imperial Cult, the “hymn-singers (ὑμνωδοί) of divine Augustus (θεοῦ Σεβαστοῦ) and of the goddess Roma (καὶ θεᾶς Ῥώμης).” (a. l. 5b) Thirty five names stood there originally though two have been erased (a. l. 17–18). It was certain of the high-ranking members of this select group, of the family of A. Castricius Paulus, who dedicated the altar from their private means (a. l. 30–31: ἀν[αθέντων] τ[ὸ]ν βωμὸν ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων Καστρικίων).

One of his family whose name survives in the mutilated lines 31–32 is Capito whose office is that of θεολόγος. This was a title that Christian tradition was to award to the Seer of the *Apocalypse*.⁸² But originally it was the title of a functionary in the Imperial Cult and associated with the imperial μυστήρια in which he pronounced the eulogy upon the emperor and perhaps took part in choreography in which he played the emperor’s role in the drama of the cult.⁸³ The Seer nevertheless acted in a fashion reminiscent of such a cult when he described the eulogistic hymns of the presbyters to God and to the Lamb, as we shall shortly see (5B 3).

Provision is now made for the celebration of the dead Augustus’ birthday on the first day of the month that bears his name (b. l. 5: μηνὸς Καίσαρος Σεβαστή, γενεσίῳ Σεβαστοῦ). But the context for the celebration is the imperial mysteries to which allusion is now made

⁸² *SEG* 4,517 = *I. Eph.* Ia, 45 A, 1–8, translated in P.R. Coleman-Norton, *Roman State and Christian Church*, (London: S.P.C.K. 1966), III, no. 577; J. Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte des griechischen Apokalypse-Textes*, 1. *Der Apokalypse-Kommentar des Andreas von Kaisareia*, in *Münchener Theologische Studien*, (München: Karl Zink 1955), p. 7; *I. Eph.* VII,2 4133,9; *I. Eph.* VII,2 4311(a): Graffito on the farthest west of the two pillars the Church of St. John in Ephesus: (φόβῳ προσέλθε πύλην τοῦ θεολόγου); VII,2 4314: Another pillar on the North row has a petition in prayer (θεολόγε) VII,2 4318 (a): Running well in North Corridor of the nave of St. John of Ephesus, graffito on marble cladding (κύριε κύριε ἄγχε θεολόγε, βοήθησον τοῦ δούλου σου Γεώργη); *Eph.* IV, 1279: Byzantian prayer inscribed on wall tile in white marble (Κύριε Ἡσοῦ Χριστέ καὶ Ἰωάννη(ς)) ὁ θεολόγος [ρύσατε ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ ψ-].

⁸³ Pleket (1965), pp. 337–338; see also *I. Eph.* Ia, 22, 1–8; *I. Eph.* Ia, 27,292–297; *I. Eph.* III 645,3–7: [τ]ὸ προσφιλέ[στ]ατον τ[ῆ] ἀγιωτάτῃ [θ]εῷ Ἄρτέμιδι συνέδριον [τ]ῶν ὑμνωδῶν [κ]αὶ θεολόγων [κ]αὶ θεσμοφδῶν. See also *I. Eph.* Ia 47,73 (M. Κοιλ(ι)ος Ἡλιόδωρος θεολόγος); IV,1023,4 (A.D. 104) Titus Flavius Dionysius Sabinus θεολόγος; VII,1 3074 (θεολόγος); *I. Eph.* VII,1 3015,2.

in the inscription on the right hand side of the altar. Indeed the birthday is but one of five festivals that are to be commemorated. The second is the festival of new year presents (*dies strenarum* = 1st January), the third is the *Rosalia* (ῥοδισμός) (24th May) for the commemoration of the departed and the fourth is for the mysteries of the 25th June (μηνὸς Λφου γ' μυστηρίοις), and the fifth for Livia's birthday (21st September; b. l. 3–11). Associated with each festival is the annual provision (ὅσα τῷ ἐνιαυτῷ παρέχει τῆς ἀρχῆς) by the choir's president or "conductor (ὁ εὐκοσμος)." (b. l. 2)

The conductor is to provide (παρέξει δὲ ὁ εὐκοσμος) both for Augustus' birthday (τῆ τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ ἐνμήνῳ γενεσίῳ) and for the rest of the birthdays of the dead and deified emperors (καὶ ταῖς λοιπαῖς γενεσίοις τῶν αὐτοκρατόρων) and they shall crown with garlands the hymn-singers and the mysteries (στεφάνους τοῖς ὕμνοδοῖς καὶ τοῖς μυστηρίοις στεφάνωσι) in the choir hall (ἐν τῷ ὕμνωδαίῳ) . . .

b. l. 12–19

The conductor is furthermore to provide bread and wine for these mysteries, along with "sacrificial cake (πόπανον), incense (λίβανον) and lamps (καὶ λύχνους) for Augustus (τῷ Σεβαστῷ)." When we turn to the inscriptions on the back of the altar we find the context of these articles τῷ Σεβαστῷ. Here the priest (ὁ ἱερεὺς) appointed for the year has, in addition to bread and wine, to provide a covering (στρώσιν) for the images of the *Augusti* (εἰς εἰκόνας τῶν Σεβαστῶν)." (c. l. 4–7) The cantor is to make similar provision of wine and a covering. We then learn that "those who are co-opted as hymn-singers from other cities shall give 50 denaria (c. l. 10–11: δώσουσιν δὲ οἱ καθιστάμενοι ἐξωτικοὶ ὕμνοδοὶ . . . δηνάρια' ν') for the images of the *Augusti* (εἰς εἰκόνας τῶν Σεβαστῶν)." (c. l. 10–11)

Clearly the λύχνοι, the στρώσις, the οἶνος, the ἄρτος, the λίβανος and the πόπανον together with the ὕμνοι of the ὕμνοδοὶ all have reference to mystery-rites involving the εἰκόνες of the dead and deified emperors (τῶν Σεβαστῶν). The inscription on the left side of the altar, whilst specifying the financial contributions towards these articles necessary for the performance of the rite for guild officials such as the secretary (ὁ γραμματεὺς), also mentions (d. l. 10) that these are for the mysteries (μυστηρίοις) on the 23rd June which was the first day of the month of Καίσαρ (μηνὸς Λφου Σεβαστῆ). Furthermore, as the inscription on the right side has already reminded us, the souls of departed members are also included in the incense rite, and the

archon is to provide the cost for a dead member which he can recoup from the person who replaces him.⁸⁴

We can now begin to draw a number of parallels with the text of the *Apocalypse* itself.

5B 2.2.1. Apoc. 13–14: εἰκὼν τοῦ θηρίου

IGRR 4,353 c. l. 10–11 and c. l. 4–7 mentioned the imperial mysteries with εἰκόνες and λύχνοι, as we have seen, in the context of the imperial mysteries, with a θεολόγος to both compose and interpret the ritual of the mystery play. The figure that the Seer observes “in the midst of the lamps (ἐν μέσῳ τῶν λυχνιῶν)” has, like the image of Augustus, a human form (ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου).” (*Apoc.* 1,12–13) The lamps that celebrate and illuminate in their cult are the seven churches (*Apoc.* 1,20). The writer behaves like the σεβαστοφάντης who uncovers the εἰκὼν, or like the θεολόγος who unravels the imperial mysteries: he is to write τὸ μυστήριον τῶν ἑπτὰ ἀστέρων and of the ἑπτὰ λυχνίας (1,20). Christ is not called the εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ as in other early Christian literature (*Col.* 1,15) since the horror of the εἰκὼν τοῦ θηρίου proved too resistant to contra-cultural transformation. The division between believers and non-believers remains characterised in this respect in negative terms. The latter are those who worship the beast and his image (*Apoc.* 14,9,15–16, 19–20), and the former those who do not (*Apoc.* 13,15; 20,4). But the description of the churches who through their cultus illuminate the Son of Man and their situation is swathed in the enigmatic language of the mysteries, as we saw particularly to be in point with regard to Pergamon (5B 1.3).

In this light Price is surely correct to interpret the scene of the image of the beast coming to life (*Apoc.* 13,14–15) in the context of the ritual associated with the imperial εἰκόνες.⁸⁵ Here in the animated drama of the ritual is the description of the priestly magician of whom it could be said: “and there was granted to him (καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ) to give a spirit (δοῦναι πνεῦμα) to the image of the beast (τῇ εἰκόνι τοῦ θηρίου) in order that the image of the beast could speak (ἵνα καὶ λαλήσῃ ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ θηρίου) and should cause to be slain all those who would not worship the image (καὶ ποίησῃ ἵνα ὅσοι ἐὰν μὴ

⁸⁴ b. l. 20: τοῖς δὲ ἀναπαυομένοις εἰς λίβανον προχρήσει ὁ ἄρχων δηνάρια ἑ', ἀπολήψεται παρὰ τοῦ εἰς τὸν τόπον αὐτοῦ εἰσιόντος.

⁸⁵ Price (1984), pp. 156–158.

προσκυνήσωσιν τῇ εἰκόνι τοῦ θηρίου ἀποκτανθῶσιν).” (*Apoc.* 13,15) This would have arguably been very much how the panegyrics of the cult arranged by the θεολόγος, and the drama performed by its σεβαστοφάντης, would have appeared to the Seer.

The souls of the departed were represented in the Imperial Cult along with those of the dead and deified emperors, and this feature of those mysteries is represented in the *Apocalypse* too.

5B 2.2.2. *Apoc.* 6 and 8: τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν ἐσφαγμένων

As we noted in connection with the mysteries (μυστηρίοις) for the first of the month of Loos, namely 23rd June (μηνὸς Λφου Σεβαστῆ), incense was offered both to the departed members of the guild (b. l. 20: τοῖς δὲ ἀναπαυομένοις εἰς λίβανον) as well as for the dead and deified emperors.

In the *Apocalypse*, likewise, incense is associated with the heavenly altar, and for the souls which lie under it. In 6,9 and 11, at the opening of the fifth seal, we find:

... under the altar (ὑποκάτω τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου) the souls of those who have been slain (τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν ἐσφαγμένων) for the Word of God (διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ) ... to each of whom was given (ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς ἐκάστω) a white robe (στολὴ λευκῆ), and they were told (καὶ ἐρρέθη αὐτοῖς) to repose for a short time (ἵνα ἀναπαύσονται ἔτι χρόνον μικρὸν) until their fellow servants should find their fulfilment (ἕως πληρωθῶσιν καὶ οἱ σύνδουλοι αὐτῶν) along with their brethren (καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτῶν) who were about to be slaughtered like themselves (οἱ μέλλοντες ἀποκτεννεσθαι ὡς καὶ αὐτοί).

The theme of the souls of the faithful departed is of course familiar from the Wisdom literature (*Wis.* 3,1–9). But the direct association with their cultus in their association with an altar is not made. Although Charles was committed to deriving the vision almost wholly from Jewish sources, his quotation from 1 *Enoch* 6,11 will not support such a claim here since there is no reference to the repose of their souls. In *Apoc.* 6,11, to the contrary, the identical term for the repose of departed members of the college of the imperial choir is used for Christian martyrs (*Apoc.* 6,11 ἀναπαύσονται cf. *IGRR* 353 b. l. 20: ἀναπαυομένοις εἰς λίβανον). Incense (λίβανος) too follows the opening of the seals in 8,3–4 where “the angel stood at the altar (ἐστάθη ἐπὶ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου) with a golden incense-charger (ἔχων λιβανωτὸν χρυσοῦν)” and where he proceeds to offer the incense (θυμιάματα), not in propitiation to the divinized souls of the departed,

but as prayers of the whole people of God which includes them (καὶ ἀνέβη ὁ καπνὸς τῶν θυμιαμάτων ταῖς προσευχαῖς τῶν ἁγίων).

The contra-cultural imagination may choose the Jewish terms *θυσιαστήριον* and *θυμίαμα* for the heavenly cult, since a cult in that location could not conceivably be described in pagan terms of *βωμός* (*IGRR* 4,353 a. l. 31: ἀν[αθέντων] τ[ὸ]ν βωμὸν) or *λιβανωτός*. But the concern for souls of departed members in terms of the *ἀναπαυομένοι* reveals that the contra-image of the Imperial Cult is responsible for the redescription of the heavenly scene in such sanitised Jewish terms.

Furthermore, departed members of the college of the Christian cult are described as *τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν ἐσφαγμένων διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ*. We have pointed out already that one of the offices of the Pergamon imperial college was that of *θεολόγος* (*IGRR* 4,353 a. l. 31: [Καπί]τωνος θεολόγου). Furthermore, although the author of the *Apocalypse* does not use this term of himself, *θεολόγος* became the classic description of his office as it was clearly perceived by his near contemporaries. We have already mentioned the role of the office of the *θεολόγος* in writing the discourse or *λόγος* of the cultic drama in which the imperial *εἰκόνες* were involved. The *λόγος* of the Christian cult, for which the martyrs were slaughtered, is arguably here juxtaposed with that of the Imperial Cult. Certainly, as we have already indicated, the letters to the churches have the quality of the utterance of a mystagogue surrounded by the *λυχνία* and revealing the mysteries of the figure *ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου* in their midst in terms of such veiled imagery as white stones and hidden manna (5B 1.3).

IGRR 4,353 also mentioned a 35 member choir of the Imperial Cult, the “hymn-singers (*ὕμνωδοί*) of divine Augustus (*θεοῦ Σεβαστοῦ*) and of the goddess Roma (καὶ θεᾶς Ῥώμης).” (a. l. 5b). We turn now to parallels with such *ὕμνωδοί* in the songs of the *πρεσβύτεροι* around the heavenly altar in the *Apocalypse*.

5B 2.2.3. Apoc. 4,4; 7,14: *angels, ὕμνωδοί and πρεσβύτεροι*

We shall discuss further the question of any correspondence between the *πρεσβύτεροι* around the heavenly altar in the *Apocalypse* and Church Order of the Seer’s community when we deal with the Ignatian correspondence (6A 1.1.1). But for the moment we shall consider the scenes around the heavenly altar as reflections of the Imperial Cult, and the prayers said by the presbyters, the angels, the “great crowd” or the hymn sung and the 144,000 as reflections of what was said by *πρέσβεις* or *πρεσβύτεροι* or sung by *ὕμνωδοί* at

imperial celebrations, whether in connection or not with imperial mysteries.

Pleket concluded that, as part of the mysteries at Pergamon, a σεβαστοφάντης exposing "the imperial image under glaring lamp-light,"⁸⁶ would have been accompanied at least on occasions by ὑμνωδοί and θεολόγοι singing the divine emperors' praises. Though there is no reference to a σεβαστοφάντης in *IGRR* 4,353, we find allusions to such a cultic role elsewhere (*IGRR* 4,522 (= *OGIS* 479); 643).⁸⁷ There are also other allusions to ὑμνωδοί of the Imperial Cult at Pergamon, for example Asia (Hypaera).⁸⁸

It is to be emphasised that the ὑμνωδός is appointed for a sacrificial function (ὁ κατασταθείς ὑμνωδὸς εἰς θυσίας τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ) and that his hymn (παραβωμίον) is connected with an altar.⁸⁹ The hymn in the *Apocalypse* to which we can draw a parallel with the Imperial Cult, sung by the 144,000 (14,2-3), alludes to such imperial mystery rites in a musical context:

... the voice which I heard (ἡ φωνὴ ἦν ἤκουσα) was as of harpists playing on their harps (ὡς κιθαρῳδῶν κιθαριζόντων ἐν ταῖς κιθάραις αὐτῶν), and they sang a new song (καὶ ᾄδουσιν ὡς ᾠδὴν καινὴν) before the throne and before the four animals and elders (ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου καὶ ἐνώπιον τῶν τεσσάρων ζῳων καὶ τῶν πρεσβύτερων) and no-one was able to learn the song (καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο μαθεῖν τὴν ᾠδὴν) except the 144,000.

Prior to this hymn, we have three prayers said (λέγοντας):

- (i) The first is by the twenty four elders πρεσβύτεροι, the precise number of which indicates their collegial character (4,10),
- (ii) the second (7,9) by "a great crowd (ὄχλος πολὺς) . . . from every nation and tribes (ἐκ παντὸς ἔθνους καὶ φυλῶν) . . . standing before the throne and before the Lamb (ἐστῶτες ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου καὶ ἐνώπιον τοῦ ἁρνίου)," and
- (iii) the third (7,11) by angels who "stood in the circle of the throne and of the elders and of the four living animals (εἰστήκεισαν κύκλῳ

⁸⁶ Pleket (1965), pp. 345-346.

⁸⁷ See also footnote 90.

⁸⁸ *IGRR* 4,1608 (Claudius): a. l. 10: οἱ ὑμνωδοὶ ἀνέθηκαν κατὰ τὸ γενόμε[νον] ψήφισμα ἐν Περγάμῳ ὑπὸ τῆς ἱερᾶς [συνό]δου ἐγγράψαντες ὅσα δίκαια [καὶ [φιλάν]θρωπά ἐστιν αὐτοῖς δεδομέ[να ὑπ' αὐτοῦ] and b. l. 5 . . . [τῆ ἱερ]ᾶ ὑμνωδῶν [συνόδῳ χαίρειν] . . .

⁸⁹ *IGRR* 4,353 d. l. 14-15 cf. c. l. 10; Tacitus *Hist.* 2,55: "At Romae . . . populus cum lauru et floribus Galbae imagines circa templa tulit." See also Pleket (1965), p. 341; Alföldi (1970), pp. 71-72 ff.

τοῦ θρόνου καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ τῶν τεσσάρων ζώων).” The first three prayers however do not appear to allude to the imperial mysteries as such, since they are open, cultic prayers. But undoubtedly the prayers of the presbyters, the great crowd, and the angels enjoy the same cultic context as the hymn of the 144,000.

As Alföldi pointed out, from Republican times acclamations for great men from the crowds often took a rhythmic form. According to Suetonius, the crowds “greeted Augustus returning from the province not only with every prayer for his blessing (*faustis omnibus*) but with rhythmic songs (*modulatis carminibus*).⁹⁰ At the games accompanying the Imperial Cult we have descriptions of the crowds chanting as “so many thousands of men (τοσαῦται μυριάδες ἀνθρώπων) . . . even as some choir accurately taught (ὡσπερ τις ἀκριβῶς χορὸς δεδιδαγμένος).”⁹¹ These are the concrete events reflected in the rhythmic chants of the elders and the angels, or the sung hymn of the 144,000.

The scenic background both of the prayers and of this hymn to which we have made reference is therefore undoubtedly cultic. The θρόνος before which the presbyters pray in adoration is the same as that of the lamb before whom the great standing crowd say their prayer (ἐστῶτες ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου καὶ ἐνώπιον τοῦ ἀρνίου). In *Apoc.* 8,3 it is clear that the golden altar stands before this throne (τὸ θυσιαστήριον τὸ χρυσοῦν τὸ ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρονοῦ). The Lamb is not found on the altar but on the throne, yet nevertheless he stands as once slain but now alive and therefore standing and later sharing God’s throne.⁹² The blood of the Lamb still decorates those for whom he died and who in turn have laid down their lives (6,14).

Furthermore, in the dress of the ὄχλος πολὺς, and what they carry, we find a very close parallel with the Imperial Cult. In 7,9 we find them “clothed in white robes (περιβεβλημένους στολὰς λευκάς) and palm branches in their hands (καὶ φοίνικες ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτῶν).” We read in the decree of Tiberius’ reign from Gytheion (Laconia) that “there was to be a procession (πομπὴν στελλέτω ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ καὶ τῆς Ὑγείας) with the *ephebes* and the young and the other citizens processing (πομπευόντων τῶν τε ἐφήβων καὶ νέων καὶ τῶν

⁹⁰ Suetonius, *Aug.* 57,2: “Revertentem ex provincia non solum faustis omnibus sed et modulatis carminibus prosequabantur.”

⁹¹ Dio 78,20,1 cf. Alföldi (1970), pp. 79–88.

⁹² *Apoc.* 5,6: ἀρνίον ἐστηκὸς ὡς ἐσφαγμένον cf. 7,9: ἐστῶτες ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου καὶ ἐνώπιον τοῦ ἀρνίου; 22,1 and 3.

ἄλλων πολεϊτῶν), wreathed with crowns of laurel (ἐστεμμένων δάφνης στεφάνοις), and clothed in white (καὶ λευκὰ ἀμπεχομένων).⁹³ Furthermore, Herodian (VIII, 7,2) informs us that, on the accession of Maximus in A.D. 235, the Italian cities “sent embassies (πρεσβείας ἔπεμπον)” whose members “were clothed in white (λευχειμονοῦντες) carrying laurel branches (δάφνηφόροι)” with “images (ἀγάλματα)” and “golden crowns (στέφανοι χρυσοῦ).” Moreover the army joined the procession “in peaceful appearance (ἐν εἰρηνικῷ σχήματι), carrying laurel branches (δάφνηφόρος).”⁹⁴

At the temple of the emperors (Καισάριον) the scene is of the unbloody sacrifice of *ture et vinum* and of a bull sacrificed by the Ephors “for the salvation of our rulers and gods (ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν ἡγεμόνων καὶ θεῶν σωτηρίας) and the eternal continuance of their rule (καὶ αἰδίου τῆς ἡγεμονίας αὐτῶν διαμονῆς).”⁹⁵ In *Apoc.* 7,14 the sacrifice at the heavenly altar is of the Lamb in whose blood the ὄχλος πολὺς have “washed their robes (ἔπλυναν τὰς στολὰς) and whitened them (καὶ ἐλεύκαναν αὐτὰς ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ ἀρνίου).” Furthermore, immediately previously (7,10), their hymn is also of ἡ σωτηρία but directed “to our God (τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν) who sits on the throne (τῷ καθημένῳ ἐπὶ τῷ θρόνῳ) and to the Lamb (καὶ τῷ ἀρνίῳ).”

The first prayer (4,11) is said by the twenty four presbyters who wear στέφανοι upon their heads and who are also clothed in white garments (4,4). Both officials called πρεσβύτεροι and the wearing of garlands (στέφανοι) in seats of honour (προεδρία) were features of the Imperial Cult in many of the city states of Asia Minor. We shall now see the significance of these features from the pagan cultic background in Asia minor.

5B. 2.2.4. Apoc. 4,4 πρεσβύτεροι καθημένοι and προεδρία

The πρεσβύτεροι καθημένοι have their counterpart in the Imperial Cult. There is no distinct office of πρεσβύτεροι clearly distinguishable in the Imperial Cult. The πρεσβύτεροι of the Seer's vision clearly are Jewish or Christian Elders playing their part in the liturgy of the synagogue or church. But, as we have argued, such Jewish-Christian

⁹³ *SEG* 11, 922, l. 25 ff. = Ehrenberg and Jones 102 a.

⁹⁴ Fishwick (1987) 2,1 p. 478; Weinstock (1971), p. 207 and 397. Cf. Dio Cassius 63,4,2.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* l. 28–29: ὅταν δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ Καισάρηον ἡ πομπὴ παραγένηται, θέτωσαν οἱ ἔφοροι ταῦρον ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν ἡγεμόνων καὶ θεῶν σωτηρίας καὶ αἰδίου τῆς ἡγεμονίας αὐτῶν διαμονῆς . . .

concepts, as in the case of the Jewish terms *θυσιαστηρίον* and *θυμίαμα*, in place of the pagan *βωμός* and *λιβανωτός*, are there because they are intentionally placed there by the contra-cultural imagination. Corresponding to the Jewish or Christian *πρεσβύτεροι* were those officials who occupied seats of honour in the cult. A *προεδρία* was a front seat, given as a privilege to office holders such as priests and ambassadors (*πρέσβεις*), who occupied such seats. M. Gavius Squilla, the “lifelong priest of *Victoria Augusta* (*ιερεά διὰ βίου Σεβαστῆς Νείκης*),” was “honoured . . . with first seats (*τετειμημένον . . . προεδρίαϊς*)” by the city-states of Pamphylia, Lycia and Asia (*IGRR* 4,778 *l.* 1 and 15 (Attalea)). At Narbo, the *προεδρία* (*subsellio primo spectandi*) was specifically given to the priest (*flamen*) of the Imperial Cult.⁹⁶

We shall pursue further these lexical connections when we consider the Ignatian correspondence, and where the themes of *προκαθημένος* are ecclesiastically further developed from *καθημένος* etc. and the concomitant imagery that we are finding here. For the moment, let us note that, when the Council at Attalea recorded its honour paid to Dionysius son of Glykon, one of his existing honours was that he “enjoyed the office also of first seat (*μετεχόντα καὶ τῆς προεδρίας*; *IGRR* 4,1167 *l.* 4).” *Teos* specifically awarded to certain ambassadors to Rome both a *προεδρία* and a *χρυσοῦς στέφανος*.⁹⁷ We turn now to the character of the *στεφάνοι* of *Αποκ.* 4,4.

5B 2.2.5. *στεφάνοι χρυσοί, πρεσβύτεροι and στεφανηφόροι*

Στέφανοι were awarded to athletes and others as a mark of high honour, and so would prefigure in the games associated with imperial processions and birthdays. Priests of the Imperial Cult, past or present, would also wear such crowns, as indeed Domitian did when presiding over the Capitoline games (5A 2.2.2). Thus the title *στεφανηφόρος* is associated with the Imperial Cult.

The Sacred Gerousia (*ιερά γερουσία*) at Ephesus enjoyed sacerdotal functions in relation to the cult of Artemis implicit in the adjective *ιερά*. In consequence, it became closely associated with the Imperial Cult when the latter became assimilated with the former.

⁹⁶ *Lex Narbonensis*, *CIL* 12,6038: [de honoribus eius qui flamen erit] restored line 5: [inter decuriones s]enatoresve subsellio primo spectan[di ludos publicos eius provinciae ius esto].

⁹⁷ *IGRR* 4,1558 *l.* 27–30 (*Teos*) = *OGIS* 2,567: . . . ἔδοξεν τῇ βουλῇ . . . ἐπαιν[έσαι το]ὺς προγεγραμμένους ἄνδρας καὶ καλεῖσθαι εἰς προ[εδρίαν κατ'] ἐνιαυτὸν Διονυσίῳ τῷ ἀγ[ῶνι] ἕως α]ν ζῶσιν, καὶ [στεφανοῦσ]θαι χρυσῷ στεφάνῳ . . .

As Oliver said, "The word *πρεσβύτεροι* is all over Asia synonymous with *γερουσία*."⁹⁸ Furthermore the *γερουσία* is described as *φιλοσέβαστος*, and at Hyettus the local institution described itself as *ἡ ἱερὰ γερουσία τοῦ Σωτήρος Ἀσκληπιοῦ*.⁹⁹

Here indeed, unusually and exceptionally, the title of a functionary called a *πρεσβύτερος* did appear in conjunction with the Imperial Cult. Amongst such *πρεσβύτεροι* would have been those honoured with a *στέφανος* and in consequence described as *στεφανηφόροι*.¹⁰⁰ We have an Asian inscription (Lampsacus) in honour of Augustus' wife Livia, in which the Gerousia order the erection of her statue with steps dedicated to "Julia Sebasta Hestia (Ἰουλίαν Σεβαστὴν Ἑστίαν), the new Demeter (νέαν Δήμητρα)." Part of the expense is "for the honouring with wreaths (ὑπὲρ τῆς εἰς τοὺς στεφάνους εὐσεβείας) of the priest of the *Sebastoi* (τοῦ ἱερέως τῶν Σεβαστῶν)."¹⁰¹ In an inscription from Cyzicus (c. A.D. 37) the citizen body is instructed, when welcoming certain royal visitors, to greet them *μετὰ τῶν ἀρχόντων καὶ τῶν στεφανηφόρων*, in the context of the Imperial Cult.¹⁰²

There is also in *IGRR* 4, 353 *b. l.* 15–16, as we saw (5B 2.2), the conductor (*ὁ κατασταθεὶς ὑμνωδός*) who provided on imperial birth-

⁹⁸ J.H. Oliver, *The Sacred Gerusia, in American Excavations in the Athenian Agora, Hesp. Suppl.* 6 (1941), pp. 26 and 41, contrary to Tod (1915), pp. 2–3, who said: "Examples from Asia Minor are rare, partly perhaps because of the use of the term *πρεσβύτερος* in connection with the gymnasia and with many of the guilds and societies of the Graeco-Roman world, and above all in the terminology of the Christian Church made it less suitable for the purpose of distinguishing a father from his son who bore the name." Nevertheless he cites two inscriptions from Adada in Pisidia referring to *Βιάνωρ Ἀντιόχου πρεσβύτερος* who is also *ἀρχιερεὺς τῶν Σεβαστῶν* (p. 3).

⁹⁹ Oliver (1941), p. 39.

¹⁰⁰ *I.G.* 12,2,58 = *OGIS* 456 = *IGRR* 4,39 (Mitylene 11 B.C.) a. *l.* 10: *τοῦ ἀρχιερέως καὶ τοῦ στεφανηφόρου*.

¹⁰¹ *CIG* 3642 = *IGRR* 4,180.

¹⁰² *IGRR* 4,145 refers to the civic reception for kings restored by Caligula after their deposition by Tiberius. The decree is however (*τὸ δὲ ψήφισμα εἶναι*) about religious devotion to the Emperor (*περὶ τ' εὐσεβείας τῆς εἰς τὸν Σεβαστὸν*) and the honour for the kings (*καὶ τῆς εἰς τοὺς βασιλέας τεμῆς*; *l.* 25). The monarchs were to be welcomed in a procession around the temples. "... at their arrival (*ὑπὸ δὲ τὴν εἴσοδον αὐτῶν*) the priests and priestesses (*τοὺς μὲν ἱερεῖς καὶ τὰς ἱερείας*), having opened the shrines (*ἀνοίξαντας τὰ τεμένη*) and adorned the images (*καὶ προσκοσμήσαντας τὰ ξόανα τῶν θεῶν*), are to pray for the eternal continuance of Gaius Caesar (*εὐξασθαι μὲν ὑπὲρ τῆς Γαίου Καίσαρος αἰωνίου διαμονῆς*) and for their safety (*καὶ τῆς τούτων σωτηρίας*). All the Cyzicenes are to show their good-feeling for them (*Κυζικηνοὺς δὲ πάντας ἐνδεικνυμένους τὴν εἰς αὐτοὺς εὐνοίαν*), and to meet and greet them with the archons and *stephanephori* . . . (*ὑπαντήσαντας μετὰ τῶν ἀρχόντων καὶ τῶν στεφανηφόρων ἀσπάσασθαι* . . .). (*l.* 19–24).

days crowns for the ὑμνωδοί (στεφάνους τοῖς ὑμνωδοῖς καὶ τοῖς μυστηρίοις στεφάνωσιν). Whether the πρεσβύτεροι of *Apoc.* 4,4–11 are to be viewed as singing as opposed to πρέσβεις making prayerful panegyric is a mute point, and perhaps the Seer did not always carefully distinguish the images of various figures of the Imperial Cult transformed contra-culturally into the heavenly scene. The πρεσβύτεροι as ὑμνωδοί would clearly have worn such crowns. But that the crowns are golden implies further and perhaps other images than that of the choir.

The πρεσβύτεροι in *Apoc.* 4 are moreover crowned with golden crowns (στεφάνους χρυσοῦς). The fact that their garlands are of gold is significant because the general gathering of white-robed citizens wore ordinary garlands. From the decree of Gytheum we see that the general population “were wreathed with crowns of laurel (ἐστεμμένων δάφνης στεφάνοις).”¹⁰³ The crowns worn by the στεφανηφόροι were therefore special crowns. Benefactors were awarded them such as Perigenes of Alexandria, son of Leontiskus who “for his piety (εὐσέβειαν)” towards Ptolemy IV and Arsinoe, was “to be garlanded with a golden crown (στεφανῶσαι χρυσῶ στεφάνῳ).”¹⁰⁴ As we saw in the last paragraph, sometimes a στεφανηφόρος could be a priest, though whilst sacrificing the priest specifically of the Imperial Cult would wear the *corona aurea* with its effigies (see also 5A 2.2.2). Polycleides was a *stephanephorus* (στεφανηφοροῦντος Πολυκλείδου) “on account of his erecting an image of Artemis Leucophryene (ὑπὲρ τῆς καθιδρύσεως τοῦ ξοάνου τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος τῆς Λευκοφρυνῆς).” He in consequence joins the priestesses and other στεφανηφόροι in both processing and sacrificing.¹⁰⁵

In the first prayer (*Apoc.* 4,11), the πρεσβύτεροι “cast their crowns (βαλοῦσιν τοὺς στεφάνους αὐτῶν) before the throne (ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρονοῦ).” This directly parallels the Imperial Cult in that it was a customary practice to present the divine ruler with a gold crown, and to worship before his empty chair. In Dio Cassius 59,24, 3–4 the senators in a body did obeisance in the Capitol to the chair of Gaius.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Ehrenberg and Jones (1955) 102,25 = SEG 11,922–923.

¹⁰⁴ *OGIS* 2,730.

¹⁰⁵ *Syll*³ 695 l. 33–34: τὰς δὲ γινομένας ἱερείας τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος, μετὰ στεφανηφόρον Πολυκλείδην καὶ τοὺς στεφανηφόρους ἐν τῷ καθ’ ἑαυτοὺς ἐνιαυτῷ θυσίαν καὶ πομπὴν συντελεῖν. See also *IGRR* 4,1304 l. 5; 1349 l. 16; 1558 l. 27–31.

¹⁰⁶ D.G. Aune, The Influence of the Roman Imperial Court Ceremonial on the Apocalypse of John, in *Papers of the Chicago Society for Biblical Research*, 28 (1983), pp. 13–14 cites also Dio Cassius 45,6,5; 53,30,61. Cf. L. Ross Taylor, *The Divinity*

Maximinus in A.D. 235 is met by delegations (πρεσβείας) of prominent citizens dressed in white and wearing laurel wreaths, who brought with them statues of their gods and golden crowns (Herodian VIII,7,2).¹⁰⁷ The latter practice too is supported from epigraphic evidence. From Mytilene (c. 27 B.C.) a golden crown was to be sent to Augustus and Octavia and presented by the ambassadors (πρέσβεις).¹⁰⁸

In *Apoc.* 4,10 the πρεσβύτεροι pray prayers which are almost identical in content with those of the great crowd and the angels. Let us look at the content of these prayers in comparison with the worshipful panegyrics, particularly of the πρέσβεις, in connection with the Imperial Cult. We are as ignorant of the words of the hymns of the ὑμνοδοί and θεολόγοι, whether in the mysteries or in open cultic celebration as we are of the words of the song of the 144,000. As Aune pointed out, this would also be true of the spoken prayers of the officials of the Imperial Cult.¹⁰⁹

But the words of such official prayers would no doubt be reflected in what was set to music. Whether the prayers of the πρεσβύτεροι were spoken or sung, we find in them reflections of the language of the Imperial Cult. This language may indicate that we have here in the prayers of the Christian πρεσβύτεροι models of what was originally sung by the pagan choirs. We now turn to the contents of these prayers that we believe we can associate more directly and exactly with the language of the Imperial Cult than the attempted reconstructions of Aune.¹¹⁰

5B 3. *Imperial ideology in Apoc. 4,10 and 7,10*

Each of the three prayers is addressed before the throne (ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου), like those of the Senators at the Capitol in the reign of Gaius, to his vacant chair, whether by presbyters, angels, or the great crowd.¹¹¹ There are common concepts repeated. These are: δόξα, εὐχαριστία, τιμή, and δύναμις, (4,11) to which the angels and “every

of the Roman Emperor, in *American Philological Association, Philological Monographs*, 1 (1931), (Connecticut 1931), p. 87 note 15 and D.J. Weinstock, *Divus Julius*, (Oxford: Clarendon 1971), p. 283.

¹⁰⁷ Aune (1983) p. 12.

¹⁰⁸ *IGRR* 4,39 b. l. 30–31: πεμφθῆναι δὲ καὶ στέφανον ἀπὸ χρυσῶν δισχιλίων ὄν καὶ ἀναδοθῆναι ὑπὸ τῶν πρεσβέων.

¹⁰⁹ Aune (1983), pp. 15–20.

¹¹⁰ Aune (1983), pp. 17 ff.

¹¹¹ See footnotes 98 and 99.

creature” adds εὐλογία, κράτος and πλοῦτος (5,13), to which 7,10–12 adds ἰσχύς, σοφία and σωτηρία. We can now trace most of these concepts, with the exception of σοφία, in the inscriptions.

5B 3.1. δόξα, εὐχαριστία, κράτος

In the Mytilenian decree (c. 27 B.C.), to which reference has already been made, thanksgiving (εὐχαριστία) is given for the benefits bestowed by the imperial family in the mutilated beginning (b. l. 6: . . . εὐεργεσιῶν νομισ[. . . εὐχα]ριστίαν). The inscription continues:

[Such benefits] are to be concluded from a natural generosity because it is never possible for the more humbling experiences in fate or in nature to be applied to those who have achieved heaven’s glory (δόξα) and the superiority of the gods and their strength (κράτος).¹¹²

In l. 24 and 34 we read that the ambassadors (πρέσβεις) who, as we have seen, are to present the στέφανος χρυσοῦς, are “to praise (εὐχαριστήσαι)” the imperial family.

Similarly, in *IGRR* 4,145 l. 5 (Cyzicus), honouring Caligula for the restoration of certain kings in Asia, the decree is for him “for the praise of such a god (εἰς εὐχαριστίαν τηλικούτου θεοῦ).”

We find the theme of κράτος too in the Ephesian *graffito*: “Rome, queen of all, (Ῥώμα ἡ παμβασιλεία) your strength will never perish (τὸ σὸν κράτος οὐποτ’ ὀλεῖται).”¹¹³

5B 3.2. σωτηρία

It is at first sight quite incongruous that a prayer should be offered (*Apoc.* 7,10) to the Judaeo-Christian God offering him salvation or safety (σωτηρία). Yet in the context of the god-Emperor such a paradox is appropriate. From Adraae in Arabia we have two inscriptions in A.D. 262–3 commemorating walls and gates “on behalf of the salvation and victory of our Lord (ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας κὲ νίκης τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν)” the former of which preserves the words “Emperor Gallienus Sebastos (αὐτοκράτορος Γαλλιηνοῦ Σεβ.)”¹¹⁴

¹¹² *IGRR* 4,39 (Mytilene) b. l. 6–11: ἐπιλογίσασθαι δὲ τῆ[ς] οικείας μεγαλοφροσύνης ὅτ[ι] τοῖς οὐρανοῦ τετε[υ]χόσι δό[ξης] καὶ θεῶν ὑπεροχῆν καὶ κράτος ἔχουσιν οὐδέποτε δύνανται συνεξισωθῆναι τὰ καὶ τῆ τύχῃ ταπεινότερα καὶ τῆ [φύσει].

¹¹³ *I. Eph.* II, 599.

¹¹⁴ *IGRR* 3,1287 l. 4 and 1288 l. 5.

5B 3.3. δύναμις and ἰσχύς

There is not a great deal of evidence for δύναμις in the inscriptions for the Imperial Cult, and none that I can find for ἰσχύς perhaps because, at all events, it is synonymous with κράτος.

If we go for an earlier description of the Hellenistic ruler-cult before Augustus, there is the decree from Priene in honour of Lysimachus in 306 B.C. (*OGIS* 12). Here there are all the trappings of the later Imperial Cult that we have observed. The people are to erect a bronze statue (στήσει δὲ ὁ δῆμος τοῦ βασιλέως ἄγαλμα χαλκοῦν; *l.* 15). The πρεσβεύται are to crown him with a golden crown (στεφανώσουσιν αὐτὸν στεφάνῳ χρυσοῦ; *l.* 14). They are furthermore to rejoice together with the king (συνησθήσονται τῷ βασιλεῖ) that he himself is strong (ὅτι αὐτός τε ἔρρωται) and his power (καὶ ἡ δύναμις) . . . (*l.* 10).

For the time of the Imperial Cult itself, we have an Egyptian inscription in which Tiberius Julius Alexander is the author of a decree addressing various complaints and petitions to Galba in 68 A.D. (*OGIS* 669). He writes of necessity (προέγραψα ἀναγκαίως) "concerning each particular thing sought (περὶ ἐκάστου τῶν ἐπιζητουμένων), many of which I can judge and do (ὅσα ἔξεστί μοι κρείνειν καὶ ποιεῖν) but others which are too great and require the power of the emperor (τὰ δε μείζονα καὶ δεόμενα τῆς τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος δυνάμεως. . . (*l.* 8–9))."

5B 3.4. πλοῦτος

Neither πλοῦτος nor εὐλογία are directly attested in the inscriptions with particular reference to the Imperial Cult. However, cognate terms are found on coinage associated with the iconography of the Imperial Cult. *Fortuna* is found as the deified personification along with *Abundantia*, *Annona*, *Felicitas*, or *Moneta* expressing the wealth (πλοῦτος) associated with the imperial divinities.

Regarding πλοῦτος, we have a number of coins from Domitian's tenth consulate (A.D. 84) bearing the radiate head of the emperor with *Annona* on the reverse, seated and holding corn ears, in one case with a small figure and a ship in the distance, inscribed ANNONA AVG[VSTA].¹¹⁵ As we noted with the cult of virtues (2B 3), here a deified abstraction is being associated with the collective personality

¹¹⁵ *BMC* 2, p. 360 no. *, see also p. 365 no. 304 plate 71,5, and p. 373 no. 347 plate 73,6.

of the Emperor by means of the qualifying and appropriating addition of *augusta*. Likewise with *Moneta*, the goddess personifying the Mint, Domitian's coins show her draped and holding scales and a *cornucopia* with inscription MONETA AVGVST[A].¹¹⁶

Similarly in coins from Titus's reign (A.D. 81–82) *Felicitas* is inscribed as FELICIT[AS] AVGVST[A], depicted holding *cornucopiae*.¹¹⁷ There are also examples of inscriptions of the form: FELICITAS PVBLICA S.C., in which *Felicitas* holds *cadeus* and *cornucopiae* and thus is a symbol of $\pi\lambda\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma$.¹¹⁸

PART C. IN CONCLUSION: APOCALYPSE AND THE IMPERIAL CULT

We have thus surveyed the imagery and background of the *Apocalypse*, and located this firmly in the context of the Imperial Cult in Asia Minor in Domitian's reign. We have argued in terms of contra-cultural theory that the imagery of the *Apocalypse* is to be understood as a Judaeo-Christian reconstruction of the values of pagan culture in which the impress of that culture is re-expressed in a reversed form. The picture of Christ and the Son of Man in the midst of the lamp stands of the seven churches, the language of the $\theta\epsilon\omicron\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ of the mysteries there used, the golden laureate presbyters around the heavenly throne of incense, the white robed throng of martyrs, the language of the hymns sung or prayers said around the heavenly altar, the imagery of mother and child, of angels with vials etc all reflected the imagery of that cult.

Furthermore the reflection was a reverse reflection. The contra-culture takes on the values of the host culture in a reversed transformation. It creates its own frame of reference that is a kind of mirror image of the host culture, with which those who inhabit its reconstruction of social reality find the status and self-esteem that the host culture denies them. The $\phi\iota\acute{\alpha}\lambda\alpha\iota$ of plenty represented on the imperial coinage as disposed by *Abundantia*, *Annona*, *Felicitas*, *Fortuna*, or by Domitia as the mother of a divine child have become transformed in the vision of the Seer into the $\phi\iota\acute{\alpha}\lambda\alpha\iota$ of God's wrath. The sacrifices on the altar become, not the bulls, but the martyrs who

¹¹⁶ BMC 2, p. 367 no. 314 (A.D. 85), p. 375, and p. 378 no. 365 plate 74,8.

¹¹⁷ BMC 2, p. 255 no. 156, see also p. 280.

¹¹⁸ BMC 2, p. 212 no. 856 plate 41,9.

have washed their festal robes white in the blood of the Lamb. Domitia and her child become Mary and Jesus, pursued by Satan. The feasts and banquets of the imperial festival, and of the imperial mysteries, become the marriage supper of the Lamb.

But given that the church in heaven is reflected in the church on earth, what if anything does the picture of the former in the *Apocalypse* tell us about the state of Church Order at this time? Can we see in the presbyters of the *Apocalypse* or the angels of the Churches any reflection of a contemporary Church Order? I am going now to suggest that there is a resolution to this ancient problem in the letters of Ignatius of Antioch that reflect in various and discrete ways the imagery of the *Apocalypse* which reappear in what is unquestionably a description of how he regards the iconography of the Church gathered for worship on earth. It is to the Ignatian developments that we now turn.

CHAPTER SIX

IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH AND THE MARTYR'S PROCESSION

Imperial ambassadors, representation, and confrontation

There are, contrary to Koester, sufficient connections between the Ignatian correspondence and the *Apocalypse* to suggest a relationship between the particular churches of Asia addressed in both works.¹ It would therefore be wrong to suppose that within those cities there were separate charismatic groups to which the latter were addressed, and separate episcopal groups to which the former were addressed, with no relation to each other. The churches in Ephesus, Pergamon, and Philadelphia, addressed by the Seer, were the same groups some fifteen to twenty years later addressed by Ignatius, and not rival groups within the same city with no connection with each other.

In consequence, it will be possible for me to argue in the first half of this chapter (6A) that we can use the Ignatian correspondence to understand how the heavenly angels and presbyters of the *Apocalypse* became Ignatius' real-live bishops and presbyters some fifteen years later, if indeed these officers were not yet present in the churches addressed by the Seer. These heavenly beings reflected features of the Imperial Cult and its ritual. Subsequently, when they become grounded in an earthly institution at the Ignatian, further stage of development some fifteen years latter, they will also reflect some features of the pagan institutions of which they are the contra-cultural models. We shall show moreover a typology of representation in Ignatius' description of the threefold Order which reflects the theology of representation implied in Domitian's changes, as high priest of the Capitoline games in the iconography of the *coronae*. Such a typology we shall see to both include and to go beyond the episcopal representation of angelic corporate personalities of communities in the *Apocalypse*.

¹ H. Koester, ΓΝΩΜΑΙ ΔΙΑΦΟΡΟΙ: The Origin and Nature of Diversification in the History of Early Christianity, in J.M. Robinson and H. Koester, *Trajectories through Early Christianity*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1971), pp. 114-157.

Furthermore, we shall show (6B) that Ignatius' understanding of his martyrdom is in the context of an imperial cultic procession, with the roles of the Christian clerics who accompany him described by ambassadorial titles. These titles will be shown to have equivalents in inscriptions of the provisions made by the city states of Asia Minor to appoint various officers for the proclamation and celebration of the Imperial Cult.²

PART A. IGNATIAN TYPOLOGY AND DOMITIAN'S ICONOGRAPHY

The classical, threefold Order of later Christendom appears for the first time unambiguously in the letters of Ignatius of Antioch, who writes in the reign of Trajan around A.D. 109.³ The question of the relationship between Ignatius and the *Apocalypse* is an interesting one. Several of the destinations of Ignatius' letters (Ephesus, Smyrna, Philadelphia) are identical with the destination of the letters addressed to them by the Seer in A.D. 95. If that relationship can be established, it is an interesting question what kind of Church Order existed in these churches at the time of the Seer, and how it developed by the time of Ignatius.

Koester argued that different Christian groups may be addressed even within the same cities by Ignatius and the Seer.⁴ But alternatively there may have been communities which had achieved, commendably in Ignatius' opinion, the threefold Order, and others which lacked this Order (Thyateira, Laodicea, Pergamon, and Sardis) and therefore did not warrant an episcopal letter. The absence of letters to these important centres, let alone to Tarsus or Antioch in Pisidia, does not therefore necessarily support the claims of the opponents

² For an earlier version, see A. Brent, Ignatius of Antioch and the Imperial Cult, in *VCh* 52,1 (1998), pp. 30–58.

³ The Lightfoot-Zahn consensus on the genuineness of the Middle Recension has recently been assailed by, amongst others, R. Joly, *Le Dossier d'Ignace d'Antioche*, (Université Libre de Bruxelles: Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres: LXIX 1978); J. Rius-Camps, *The Four Letters of Ignatius the Martyr*, (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum 1980). Their grounds are unsatisfactory see, e.g. W. Schoedel, Are the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch Authentic? in *RelStRev* 6 (1980), pp. 261–297; C.P. Hammond Bammel, in *JThS* 33 (1982), pp. 62–97; A. Brent, The Ignatian Epistles and the Threefold Ecclesiastical Order, in *JRH* 17,1 (1992), pp. 18–32; *Idem*. The Relations between Ignatius of Antioch and the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, in *SecCent* 8,3 (1991), pp. 129–156. For fuller bibliography see also Brent (1991).

⁴ See footnote 1 above.

of the Middle Recension. That none of these were apparently sufficiently interested in the martyr's highway on which Ignatius travelled to Rome to send clerical visitors, if indeed they had clerics to send, is fully consistent with the lack of a universal threefold Order at this time. Bishop Ignatius did not recognise such centres as containing truly Christian groups.

Despite the apparent difference between the charismatic cultural ambience of the *Apocalypse* and the ecclesiastical Order of Ignatius, there are nevertheless some intriguing links between the two works. These links will suggest that the three churches to which both the Seer and Ignatius address letters (Pergamon, Ephesus and Philadelphia) were the same communities, historically continuous and not separated from each other. Brown and Meier claimed that the charismatic groups in Antioch in Syria, identified in *St. Matthew* by their redaction criticism of that gospel, were part of the history of Ignatius' own community, and from which his episcopal Church Order had developed (3A 2).⁵

Trevett certainly saw a supersession of charismatic persons in the silence of the bishop of Philadelphia (*Philad.* 1,1).⁶ I myself, furthermore, argued that charisma was not necessarily antithetical to episcopal Order, as is often assumed from twentieth century charismatic experience.⁷ If charisma and episcopal Order do not necessarily require different communities for their operation in the case of Antioch in Syria, then the same can be equally true for Ephesus, Philadelphia, and Smyrna. John the Seer does not necessarily therefore address different groups in the same cities to those later to be addressed by Ignatius.

Let us therefore examine the links in imagery used by the Seer and Ignatius in order to establish the historical continuity between at least some churches addressed by the Seer and by Ignatius of Antioch.

⁵ R.E. Brown and J.-P. Meier, *Antioch and Rome: New Testament Cradles of Catholic Christianity*, (New York: Paulist Press 1983), chapters 3-4.

⁶ C. Trevett, Prophecy and Anti-Episcopal Activity: A Third Error Combated by Ignatius? in *JEH* 34 (1983), pp. 165-171, cf. H. Chadwick, The Silence of Bishops in Ignatius, in *HTHR* 43 (1950), pp. 169-72 and L.F. Pizzolato, Silenzio del vescovo e parola degli eretici in Ignazio d'Antiocheia, in *Aevum* 44 (1970), pp. 205-218.

⁷ A. Brent, Pseudonymity and Charisma in the Ministry of the Early Church, in *Aug* 27,3 (1987), pp. 347-376.

6A 1. *Common Imagery in Ignatius and the Apocalypse*

A community such as that at Ephesus (Ignatius, *Eph.* 9,1) can be described as “temple stones (λίθοι ναοῦ) made ready in anticipation for God the Father’s building (προητοιμασμένοι εἰς οἰκοδομὴν θεοῦ πατρὸς).” In *Apoc.* 21,14 and 19 the New Jerusalem has walls with foundations bearing the names of the twelve apostles, and which are “adorned with every precious stone (οἱ θεμέλιοι τοῦ τείχους τῆς πόλεως παντὶ λίθῳ τιμίῳ κεκοσμημένοι).”

The cross is represented as a tree bearing the fruit of immortality in both works. In *Trallians* 11,1–2 the heretics are not “the planting of the Father (φυτεία πατρὸς); for if they were, they would have appeared as branches of the cross (κλάδοι τοῦ σταυροῦ) and their fruit immortal (ὁ καρπὸς αὐτῶν ἀφθαρτος).” In *Apoc.* 22,2 we read of the “tree of life (ξύλον ζωῆς) producing twelve fruits . . . and the leaves of the tree (τὰ φύλλα τοῦ ξύλου) are for the healing of the nations (εἰς θεραπείαν τῶν ἐθνῶν).” ξύλον generally in early Christian literature means the Cross, and to the overcomer it is granted “to eat of the tree/cross of life (φαγεῖν ἐκ τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς) which is in the garden of God (ὃ ἐστὶν ἐν παραδείσῳ τοῦ θεοῦ).” (*Apoc.* 2,7)

But there are two further kinds of link that connect the *Apocalypse* with Ignatius in a far more comprehensive and fundamental way. These links furthermore connect Ignatius not only with the *Apocalypse* but with what we have seen the latter work to reflect of the liturgy and theology of the Imperial Cult (5B 1.1).

6A 1.1. *Heavenly Church and corresponding earthly typology*

The first set of links can be seen in the tendency of both works to see reflections of a transcendent and heavenly Church Order entering the world of the present Church. The second set shows a similarity between the way in which angelic beings represent the corporate personalities of distinct churches in the *Apocalypse*, and the way in which, in Ignatius, the same corporate personality of the individual community is represented mystically by the bishop, and other clerical personages that are part of the threefold hierarchy.

6A 1.1.1. *Ignatius and Apocalypse: The heavenly liturgy*

There is a general acceptance of some reflection, albeit general and ill-formed, of early Christian worship in the description of the heavenly worship of the *Apocalypse*. The presbyteral circle, in which the four living creatures participate around the throne of God and the

Lamb, is evocative of scenes in the liturgy of the *Apostolic Tradition* in which the bishop who presides sits surrounded by a circle of seated presbyters with standing deacons giving liturgical instructions to the people, and receiving the latter's gifts of bread and wine for consecration and eventual communion.⁸ To disentangle the imagery of the contemporary Church reflected in the heavenly Church is difficult, given the way in which we have seen that the imagery of the pagan Imperial Cultus with its altar, vials, incense, and white robed worshippers is blended with any such putative ecclesiastical imagery. However, we have some control over a correct reading of the *Apocalypse* in the context of the kind of social environment in which it was written, given the identity of communities addressed by both writers (6A 1). We have already argued a similarity of general imagery that reveals far more in common than simply in some cases an identity of cities of Asia Minor in the Church that is addressed.

Prigent argued that the twenty four elders of *Apoc.* 4–5, seated crowned and upon thrones around the throne of God and the Lamb, represented Old Testament Elders and their liturgical refrain was originally part of a Jewish liturgy.⁹ But granted this original *locus* of the imagery of these passages, the natural transition into Christian usage was hardly directly into the literature of the *Apocalypse*. The most natural, immediate *locus* before appearance in the vision of the Seer would have been *via* a Christian liturgy shaped by what we have argued to be its pagan, cultic background.¹⁰ Such a liturgy, conceptualized originally in Jewish terms, would, we have argued, been refashioned in process of contra-cultural reformulation, in its Christian context, as a specific response to the Imperial Cult.

Within a generation after the vision of the Seer, Ignatius was to bear witness to the presence of an Order of presbyters in the churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, and Philadelphia. He therefore claims that those churches possessed an Order, however nascent and controverted, similar to that of his own Antioch in Syria. Contemporary redaction criticism of the gospel of that Church, *Matthew*, reveals presbyters within that community living in tension with more charismatic, prophetic groups.¹¹ Furthermore, Hermas bears witness in mid-second

⁸ Pseudo Hippolytus, *Ap. Trad.* 4; *Didasc. Apost.* II, 57, 4–5.

⁹ P. Prigent, *Apocalypse et Liturgie*, in *CTh* 52 (1964), pp. 48–55, p. 68.

¹⁰ Such was the argument of J.P. Audet, *La Didaché: Instructions des Apôtres*, (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre 1958), p. 377 cf. Prigent (1964), p. 50.

¹¹ Brown and J.P. Meier (1982) chapters 3 and 4.

century Rome to a prophetic Seer addressing a church that clearly acknowledged his charisma whilst acknowledging presbyters whose office was that of *πρωτοκαθεδρίται* occupying *πρωτοκαθεδρία*.¹² It would be a mistake, therefore, to agree with Satake that the Church Order of the *Apocalypse* had no office holders apart from prophets, as if this work could stand apart from its place in known, late first-century contexts. Trevett has moreover emphasised charismatic and prophetic elements subsumed under Ignatius' episcopal behaviour, which reveals different elements in tension rather than the presence of a prophetic order precluding a presbyteral one.¹³

Satake concludes that the presbyters in the *Apocalypse* can only be heavenly beings on account of their crowns and their heavenly glorification.¹⁴ But it is by no means incongruous that a description of a heavenly reflection in an earthly liturgy should crown and glorify those who preside at that liturgy. Furthermore Satake's treatment ignores the variety of earthly images synthesised by the Seer into the heavenly scenes.

The seated presbyters are associated with the slain lamb who sits in the midst of them at an altar of sacrifice. It would have been priests who presided at a sacrifice and not presbyters had the *O.T.* symbolism been preserved here in an uncontaminated form. Instead that symbolism has undergone radical reformulation. In the case of the living creatures, as in that of the slain lamb, pagan elements join the synthesis. The images here are taken from the *bucranium* of Augustan art, and the living creatures that often adorn sacrificial scenes in Augustan cultic frescoes.¹⁵ The elders (*Apoc.* 5,8) each possess a harp (*ἔχοντες ἕκαστος κιθάραν*) and incense bowls (*καὶ φιάλας χρυσᾶς γεμούσας θυμιαμάτων*). Though incense was used by priests and not by elders in the Temple, here the accompanying *κιθάρα* and an actual sacrificial victim places the scene outside an

¹² *Hermas Vis.* III, 9,7: *νῦν οὖν ὑμῖν λέγω τοῖς προηγουμένοις τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ τοῖς πρωτοκαθεδρίταις . . . cf. Vis.* II, 4,3: *. . . μετὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τῶν προϊσταμένων.* See also *Man.* 11,12 where it is a *ψευδοπροφήτης* who is *ὁ καθημένος ἐπὶ τὴν καθέδραν*. See also Brent (1995), pp. 431–454 ff.

¹³ See footnotes 6 and 7.

¹⁴ A. Satake, *Die Gemeindeordnung in der Johannesapokalypse*, in *WMANT* 21 (1966), pp. 147–150 ff.: “Auch die dritte Deutung, dass sich im Handeln der 24 Ältesten das des irdischen Presbyteriums widerspiegelt, ist meiner Ansicht nach unhaltbar, und zwar vor allem deswegen, weil die vier Wesen, die neben ihnen auftreten, auf keinen Fall in der irdischen Gemeinde eine Entsprechung haben.”

¹⁵ See also Zanker (1990), p. 115 fig. 93 and p. 117 fig. 95.

uncontaminated Jewish context of the “hour of incense.” (3B 2) The presbyters “fall before the Lamb (ἔπεσαν ἐνώπιον τοῦ ἀρνίου).” Furthermore, we argued that the very character of the hymns of praise associated with the presbyters clearly reflect the cult of Virtues now an integral part of the ideology of the Imperial Cult (2B 3). They represent Christian, ministerial office holders proclaiming a reversal of pagan cultic expressions in the direction of the Christian and not the imperial God.

Certainly Ignatius’ descriptions of the liturgical scene in the churches to whom he writes bear many idealised and visionary features reminiscent of the heavenly scenes in the *Apocalypse*. There we met with angels and presbyters praying with incense around the heavenly altar and singing their hymns. He says to the Ephesians:

Therefore it is right for you to run together with the mind of the bishop, which indeed you do; for your worthily esteemed presbytery, worthy of God, is attuned to the bishop (οὕτως συνήρμοσται τῷ ἐπίσκοπῳ), like strings to a harp (ὡς χορδαὶ κιθάρα); therefore in your concord and harmonious love (διὰ τοῦτο ἐν τῇ ὁμονοίᾳ ὑμῶν καὶ συμφώνῳ ἀγάπῃ) Jesus Christ is sung (Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ᾄδεται). And each of you should become part of that choir (οἱ κατ’ ἄνδρα δὲ χορὸς γίνεσθε), that being in harmonious concord (ἵνα σύμφωνοι ὄντες ἐν ὁμονοίᾳ), receiving God’s variation in unity (χρῶμα θεοῦ λαβόντες, ἐν ἐνότι), you may sing with one voice through Jesus Christ to the father (ἄδητε ἐν φωνῇ μιᾷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῷ πατρὶ) . . .

Ephesians 4, 1–2

The χορός, like that at the imperial festivals reflected in the *Apocalypse* (5B 3) extols that divinized quality of imperial unity that is ὁμόνοια, and which we saw was a feature of the doxology of Clement *Cor.* 60–61 (4B 1.2.2). An altar (θυσιαστήριον) moreover prefigures in such liturgical scenes (*Ephes.* 5,2; *Mag.* 7,2; *Philad.* 4).

But how, more specifically, do both Ignatius and the *Apocalypse* reflect what we know of the actual arrangement of early Christian worship?

Pseudo-Hippolytus’ *Apostolic Tradition*, if that indeed was originally the title of the *Egyptian Church Order*, was a community product involving more than one individual and more than one confluent corporate tradition.¹⁶ *Ap. Trad.* 4 makes it clear that the presbyterate concele-

¹⁶ A. Brent, Hippolytus and the Roman Church in the Third Century: Communities in Tension before the Emergence of a Monarch-Bishop, in *Suppl. VCh.* 31 (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1995), pp. 192–197; pp. 458–462 ff.

brate with the bishop in so far as when a presbyter “places his hands over the offering (*imponens manuum tuam super oblationem* (προσφορά))” he is joined in words and presumably act by the presbyters (*cum praesbyteris dicat gratias agens*). The actual liturgical position of the presbyterate only becomes clearer in subsequent developments of this Church Order where the position in the liturgy of the presbyterate is spelled out as the half-circle of seats forming a horse-shoe on each side of the centrally seated bishop (*Apost. Const.* (= *Didasc. Apost.*) II, 57, 4–5).

That such a seating arrangement was current well before the turn of the third century is made clear by Ignatius in his letters. Ignatius envisages the Magnesians (13,1), whose Church he had never visited, as being in union with both the “teachings of the Lord and of the apostles (δόγμασιν τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ τῶν ἀποστόλων)” and with the life of the triune God (ἐν νῆϊ καὶ πατρὶ καὶ ἐν πνεύματι). As the sign of that unity, Ignatius can address them as gathering, “with your bishop, worthy of honour, (μετὰ τοῦ ἀξιοπρεπεστάτου ἐπισκόπου ὑμῶν), with the gloriously woven, spiritual crown of your presbyterate (καὶ ἀξιοπλόκου πνευματικῶν στεφάνου τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου ὑμῶν), and with the deacons according to God (καὶ τῶν κατὰ θεὸν διακόνων).” Here the ἀξιοπλοκος πνευματικὸς στέφανος clearly refers to the liturgical presbyteral horseshoe around the seated bishop. Indeed, I have argued elsewhere that προκαθημένος is to be understood in its primary sense of “sitting prominently” in the liturgical assembly which is the primary focus of the presidency of the threefold Order in unity rather than of the bishop alone.¹⁷ But we have also seen that the seated πρεσβύτεροι of the *Apocalypse* have also στέφανοι, and that this imagery of their authority was connected with that of the Imperial Cult (5B 2.2.5).

We ask, therefore, in conclusion, whether the counterpart to the scene around the altar in heaven is not the church on earth, presided over by a circle of presbyters surrounding a throne occupied by a presiding bishop? The heavenly throne is described as “the throne of God and of the Lamb (θρόνος τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀρνίου).” (*Apoc.* 22,1 and 3). “The Lamb” is described as “in the midst of the throne (ἀρνίον τὸ ἀνά μέσον τοῦ θρόνου).” (7,17) At first sight this appears a very odd image. Does the royal figure hold the Lamb on his lap or does the latter sit by his side? I have asked previously whether, in

¹⁷ Brent (1989), pp. 311–316; *Idem*, Cultural Episcopacy and Ecumenism, in *Studies in Christian Mission* 6, (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1992), pp. 84–85 and footnotes.

the light of what we read in Ignatius, the reference is not to a presiding bishop or presbyter in the Seer's own church offering the "pure sacrifice of the gentiles."¹⁸

Certainly, according to Ignatius, the bishop is "pre-eminent (προκαθημένοσ)"¹⁹ as a type of (εἰς τύπον πατρὸς), or according to some textual readings, in the place (εἰς τόπον) of God the Father.²⁰ Here the throne in the midst of the presbyters is actually occupied by an ecclesiastical minister on earth. But whether or not there is, in the Seer's time, an actual bishop on an actual episcopal throne amid actual presbyters, his heavenly vision has certainly influenced and effected the earthly form of Ignatian episcopacy.²¹

At this point we may turn to Ignatius' theology of representation and its earlier reflection in the *Apocalypse*.

6A 1.1.2. *Typology of representation*

Ignatius' description of the liturgical assembly (ἐκκλησία) is highly idealised and visionary. As I have argued in greater detail elsewhere, as a transit prisoner Ignatius had little contact with, or knowledge of, the actual churches to whom he wrote.²² In place of any such empirical experience, he gives rather a mystical vision prompted by the persons of the clerical visitors in whom he sees mystically the corporate qualities of their communities. Thus idealised, personal qualities of an almost Christian perfection are praised as he imagines the members of the communities gathered with their clerics in an idealised Eucharist. Expressions such as ἐν ἀκινήτῳ πίστει, ἐν ὁμοιοῖα θεοῦ etc. abound.²³

Thus both the *Apocalypse* and Ignatius are united in a view of the community as having a corporate personality. Clearly the angels of the Churches are the corporate personalities of their various communities. They can in consequence be addressed by the Seer in the

¹⁸ Brent (1987), p. 361. For early images of the Eucharist in such terms see *Did.*, 14,3 and Justin Martyr, *Dial.* 41. See also G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, (London: Dacre 1947), p. 28 and p. 134.

¹⁹ For my defence of this translation, see Brent, *Cultural Episcopacy* (1992), pp. 84–85.

²⁰ *Magnes.* 6,1; *Tral.* 3,1.

²¹ For my view of Ignatius as influenced by a vision of the heavenly Church similar to the Seer's, and imposing that vision on the nascent Order of the Churches that he had never visited but describes in an idealized, visionary form, see Brent (1992), *Ignatian Epistles*, pp. 18–32.

²² Brent (1992), *Ignatian Epistles*, pp. 19–27.

²³ *Tral.* 11,1; *Magnes.* 6,1; *Smyr.* 1,1; 7,2; *Ephes.* 1,3; 2,1, see Brent (1992) *Ignatian Epistles*, p. 20.

singular and described as having the distinctive features of those communities.²⁴ Likewise Ignatius claims that, in the clerical representatives of the churches from whom he receives visitors, he is beholding the corporate character of their communities.

In Polybius, the bishop of Tralles, Ignatius claims to see, not the latter's individual personality, but the community's. With bishop Onesimus he has such "converse of mind (συνήθεια)" that he was able to see their corporate personality, their πολυπλήθεια (*Ephes.* 1,3 and 5,1), in him as also in the case of bishop Polybius of Tralles. Ignatius claims that their bishop has revealed to him "your unwavering and blameless mind (ἄμωμον διάνοιαν καὶ ἀδιάκριτον) . . . so that I saw your whole gathered multitude in him (ὥστε με τὸ πᾶν πλῆθος ἐν αὐτῷ θεωρῆσαι)." (*Tral.* 1,1) Thus Polybius becomes "an example of your love (ἐξεμπλάριον τῆς ἀγάπης ὑμῶν)." (3,2) In Damas, bishop of Magnesia, likewise he claims to have seen "your whole multitude (τὸ πᾶν πλῆθος; *Magnes.* 6,1)." In the case of Onesimus, bishop of Ephesus, he claims to have seen their πολυπλήθεια.²⁵ Πλῆθος is the usual word for the gathered church in Ignatius.²⁶

The fact that angels such as Michael, in *Dan.* 10, 10–21 and 12,1, are mystical representatives of nations is often held to refute the notion that the angels of the churches in *Apoc.* 2–3 are in fact human figures and stand for church officials. Ignatius makes it quite clear that human bishops can nevertheless, like angels, stand for the corporate personalities of the communities which they oversee.²⁷ Whether the angels of the churches should be equated with human officials such as bishops, or left as mysterious heavenly beings personifying earthly communities, is a question that I will here leave open.²⁸ The

²⁴ *Apoc.* 2,1; 2,8; 2,12; 2,18; 3,1; 3,7; 3,14.

²⁵ *Ephes.* 1,3; Brent (1990), pp. 268–269; Brent (1991), pp. 151–153; Brent (1992), *Cultural Episcopacy*, pp. 85–87.

²⁶ *Smyr.* 8,2; *Tral.* 8,2 (ἔνθεον πλῆθος) cf. W. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1985), p. 112.

²⁷ Too little attention has been given in the discussion to this point made originally by J. Colson, *L'Évêque dans les Communautés Primitives*, (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf 1951), p. 97: "Et il écrit aux Tralliens à propos de Polybe, leur évêque: "C'est votre Église tout entière que je contemple en sa personne." Tel est, selon saint Ignace et dans la ligne de l'Apocalypse, le rôle de l'évêque, sa place dans l'Église."

²⁸ I follow Colson (1952) in Brent (1987), pp. 356–361 against Hemer (1986), pp. 32–34. For the case in favour of angel-bishops see A. Lemaire, *Les Ministères aux origines de l'Église: Naissance de la triple hiérarchie: évêques, presbyters, diacres*, (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf 1971), pp. 118–122 and M. Thurian, *L'Organisation du ministère dans l'Église Primitive selon Saint Ignace d'Antioche*, in *VC* 21 (1967), pp. 165–71.

point that I have made is that there is a theological continuity between what the Seer says about the character of cultic representation around A.D. 91 and what Ignatius says around A.D. 112. This point will hold even if a purely heavenly construction in the case of the former comes only to be grounded in the Church Order in space and time in the case of the latter.

But Ignatius has injected a new theological concept when he begins to speak of the images of the seated presbyters, found in the *Apocalypse* as contra cultural expressions of the officials of the Imperial Cult, such as the πρέσβεις with their panegyrics, as προκαθημένοι εἰς τύπον. Let us now trace this new concept in Ignatius of Antioch, which we shall argue to be further related to the Imperial Cult and to have grown out of the pagan symbolism of the cultural background that he also shared with the Seer, but beyond whom he now goes.

6A 2. *Ignatian typology and the Imperial Cult*

In claiming that the antitypes of Father, Son, and Spirit-filled apostolic council are represented by the τύποι of bishop, deacons, and presbyters, Ignatius appears at first sight to run contrary to the representative imagery that he shared with the *Apocalypse* and which we discussed in the last section (6A 1.1.2). If the threefold typology represents these divine persons in the Eucharistic assembly, how at the same time can they be regarded as embodying the collective personalities of their communities, as did the angels of the Churches in the *Apocalypse*, or Polybius, bishop of Ephesus or Damas, bishop of Tralles in the Ignatian correspondence?

I have argued that Ignatius does resolve this dichotomy and with considerable sophistication.²⁹ The clerical icons do not as it were incarnate the heavenly Church directly from the transcendent world beyond space and time, but rather from the saving acts that began in history but continue in the Christian community. The clerical icons represent a community in process of redemption, and the saving acts of Father, Son, and Spirit at work in such a community. Such saving acts, experienced by the community and embodied in the Eucharistic liturgy and in the clerical roles played, display Christ's

For the case against, see E. Dassmann, Zur Entstehung des Monepiskopats, in *JbAC* 17 (1974), pp. 75–76 and Satake (1966), pp. 150–155 ff.

²⁹ A. Brent, History and Eschatological Mysticism in Ignatius of Antioch, in *EThL* 64,4 (1989), pp. 309–329; Brent (1992), *Cultural Episcopacy*, pp. 80–81, 87–88.

victory to the demonic powers who are thereby shaken: "For whenever you assemble frequently (ὅταν γὰρ πυκνῶς ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ γίνεσθε), the powers of Satan are destroyed (καθαίρονται αἱ δυνάμεις τοῦ Σατανᾶ), and his destruction is dissolved (καὶ λύεται ὁ ὄλεθρος αὐτοῦ) by the harmony of your faith (ἐν τῇ ὁμονοίᾳ ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως)."³⁰

Ignatius therefore expresses the view that the threefold Order is to be understood as representing, in a sacramental sense, the heavenly Church, which is incarnated in the present community and represented by the clerical icons of that community. The typology of *Magnes.* 13,1 is followed by a command to obedience "to the bishop and to each other (ὑποτάγητε τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ καὶ ἀλλήλοις), as Jesus Christ to the Father (ὡς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς τῷ πατρὶ), and the apostles to Christ and to the Father (καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι τῷ Χριστῷ καὶ τῷ πατρὶ), in order that there may be both a physical and a spiritual union (ἵνα ἔνωσις ᾗ σαρκικὴ τε καὶ πνευματικὴ)." (13,2)

Thus to speak of the incarnation of a heavenly Church Order in the present is well warranted by the expression ἔνωσις ᾗ σαρκικὴ τε καὶ πνευματικὴ, even though I have argued elsewhere the qualifying thesis that what was now timeless began in time in the Upper Room and at the Resurrection. The commingling of flesh and spirit did not simply begin or begin afresh at every Eucharist, but was continuous with the commingling (κραθέντες τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ τῷ αἵματι) that took place when the risen Christ "came to those around Peter" and "he said to them: take, handle me . . . and immediately they touched him . . ."³¹ There is therefore an historical continuity between the past and the present in so far as the timeless, entering time in the present moment, has continuously done so at every Eucharist from the Church's historical beginning.

Each τύπος in the threefold Order makes concrete or incarnates in the Eucharistic action what it represents, namely the Father (bishop), the Son (deacons) and the spirit-filled apostolic council (the presbyters).³² In *Mag.* 13,1: "The bishop stands out (προκαθημένου τοῦ ἐπισκόπου)" in this drama "as a type of God (εἰς τύπον θεοῦ) and the presbyters (καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων) as a type of the apostolic council (εἰς τύπον συνεδρίου τῶν ἀποστόλων) and the deacons (καὶ τῶν διακόνων). . . . as

³⁰ *Ephes.* 13,1 cf. *Smyr.* 6,1.

³¹ *Smyr.* 3,2 cf. Brent (1989), pp. 316–320.

³² Brent (1989), pp. 309–329; *Idem.* (1990), pp. 262–266, *Idem.* (1991), pp. 139–143, and *Idem.* (1992), *Cultural Episcopacy*, pp. 80–92.

entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ (πεπιστευμένων διακονίαν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).” But these realities are not static but dynamic.

The three Orders each portray in their particular acts the particular role that is played in their Eucharistic re-enactment of the drama of redemption. In the Upper Room, according to *Jn.* 20,19–22, there is the Spirit-filled council of the apostles, and so too these are found represented by the presbyterate. As the seated Father sends the Son, so too the bishop sends the deacons to communicate the people or to receive from them their offering for the bishop to consecrate, or to give them liturgical directions.

There is a liturgical procession or *χώρησις* between the three Orders like the procession within the godhead. *Magnes.* 7,1–2 goes on to connect the ecclesiastical typology with that of the godhead. The deacons and presbyters proceed from the bishop and return to him just like the diaconal Son proceeds from the Father (προελθόντα) and returns to him (χωρήσαντα). Furthermore the presbyterate represents the συνέδριον τῶν ἀποστόλων (*Magnes.* 6,1), who in the Johannine Tradition (*Jn.* 20,22), receive the inbreathing of the Spirit and who reveal the Son who came forth from and returned to the Father. The focus therefore in Ignatius of the theology of iconographical representation (τύποι) is in the clerical functions in the Eucharistic liturgy.

It should be noted that *Tral.* 3,1–3 and related passages (*Ephes.* 5,1 and *Magnes.* 13,1) require an understanding of typology in the sense of clerical persons standing εἰς τύπον, without the related passages using the term τύπος as such. It is for this reason that I would reject the amendment τόπος for τύπος in *Magnes.* 6,1–2, and accept the latter as the original reading following Syriac, Arabic and Armenian texts. Certainly *Tral.* 3,1 has this reading uncontestedly in *ms.* supported by *Ap. Const.* 2,26. I have demonstrated elsewhere the failure of the *Didaschalia Apostolorum*, the predecessor of the latter text, to understand Ignatian typology.³³ This lack of understanding itself would, I submit, explain corrupted readings, often leading to an omission of the term, in some Greek *mss.*³⁴ At all events, a reading for *Mag.* 6,1–2 in terms of a bishop being described as προκαθημένος εἰς τύπον τοῦ θεοῦ would appear bizarre as it would seem to imply

³³ Brent (1991), pp. 134–145.

³⁴ Lightfoot (1885), pp. 156–157 and pp. 118–120, cf. Schoedel (1985), pp. 112–115 and pp. 141–142.

a physical "place" for God in the architecture of the Eucharistic Assembly.

Thus Ignatius may be regarded as having, with considerable theological sophistication, synthesised the fundamental contradiction between representation by clerical icons of the corporate personality of the community, and representation by the same icons of the divine acts of persons of the godhead. But his ability to synthesise should not conceal from us the fact that his use of human persons to be τύποι of divine beings constitutes a radical development of the typology of Order from that which he has inherited from the kind of cultural background represented by the Seer. We will now suggest that the origin of this concept was not Jewish, but pagan, and associated with what we have established to be the ideology of the Imperial Cult. The use by Ignatius of this new, non-Johannine imagery will therefore represent a new influx of imperial cultic imagery in addition to that used already by the Seer against his pagan backcloth.

Let us therefore now turn in greater detail to the specific epigraphical evidence for the meaning both of τύπος and προκαθημένος in Ignatius' pagan religious background, in order that we may establish conclusive evidential links between these terms and what we will understand as the human, episcopal εικόνες and μμήματα of his Christian ἀγών μυστικός (6B 2).

6A 2.1. τύπος as statue, and as εικόν

It must be emphasized that the word τύπος usually means a "small statue" or a "relief." At Ephesus we have this word used of the upright figure (τύπον ὄρθιον) of Antoninus set into the recess of a wall.³⁵ We have also the statue at Rome of Marcian, proconsul of Achaia, described in the inscription that it bears as a τύπος.³⁶ We have further epigraphic evidence which reveals some interesting cognate terms. Whereas regularly τύπος is used to describe, in the sixth century, statues commemorating charioteers in the Hippodrome,³⁷ the term

³⁵ *I. Eph.* II, 286 (= *CIG* 2967): τοῦτον ὄν εισοράας, τύπον ὄρθιον Ἀντωνίνου Δωρόθεος Πτελέη θήκατο κρυπτόμενον. . . .

³⁶ (Moretti) *IGUR* 1,67 (= *SEG* 31, 1703). Μαρκιανοῦ στίλβει τύπος Ἑλλάδος ἀνθυπάτοιο.

³⁷ R. Aubreton and F. Buffière, *Anthologie Grecque: Deuxième Partie: Anthologie de Planude*, Tom. XIII, (CUFr: Association Guillaume Budé: Paris 1980) nos 350: 8: σὸν δὲ τύπον τέχνη ἔξεσε, Πορφύριε. ("and, Porphyry, an artist's skill has polished your

εικόν is also used as its synonym in the case of one Constantine.³⁸ We see therefore that there is a clear, linguistic connection between the ideas of τύπος and εικόν, which bear comparison with the sense in which Ignatius uses both terms.

In the Judaeo-Christian tradition at this time, unlike the later development of picture-icons in the Eastern Church that hailed Ignatius as one of the founding fathers of its tradition, actual inanimate and physical images were prohibited. It was therefore human figures in the liturgy that were called upon to be the counterparts (τύποι) of divine beings, as the parallels in the Christian cult of the εικόνες τῶν Σεβαστῶν in *IGRR* 4, 353 c. l. 4–7. As we will see later (6B 2.2) from Apuleius, priests in the pagan cultus “carried before them” or “displayed” (*proferebant*) the divine images (*deum insignes exuvias*; *Metam.* 11,10). Their counterparts in Ignatius’ mystery play had no physical objects that they could hold in front of them in this way. As purely spiritual iconic representatives, they could nevertheless be described as “seated forward as an effigy of” or “prominent as an effigy of,” as the phrase προκαθημένος εἰς τύπον implies here.

Let us now consider the epigraphical use of προκαθημένος that is thus clearly associated with τύπος in Ignatius, and its connection with divine beings.

6A 2.2. Θεοὶ Σεβαστοὶ προκαθημένοι, *as* ἐπίσκοποι *and* μάρτυρες

I find the tendency to translate προκαθημένος as “preside” mistaken, partly on the grounds that a τύπος is displayed and does not preside, whereas it is the person who bears the τύπος that presides.³⁹ But the translation of this terms as “preside” is plainly wrong, I believe, because it makes προκαθίζω (προκάθημαι) and its variants the equiv-

statue.”); 361, 1–2: οὗτος, ἐγερισθέητρε, τεὸς τύπος, ὃν τοι ἐγείρει ἐσμός, Καλλιόπα, στεφάνων. (“You who exited the spectators, this is your statue, which your host of distinguished crowns raised, O Kalliopeas.”)

³⁸ *Ibid.* 367,5: εἰσέτι μὲν ζῶντι πόλις ποτὲ Κωνσταντίνῳ

εἰκόνα χαλκείην βαιὸν ἔκρινε γέρας·

ὡς δὲ θάνεν, ποθέουσα φίλον τύπον ἄνθετο τόνδε,

ὄφρα καὶ ἐσσομένοις μνήσθῃν ἔχοι καμάτων.

(“Whilst Constantine was yet living, the city once judged Constantine worthy of the mean honour of a bronze statue . . . But when he died, she dedicated this effigy in her grief for her dear one, in order that future generations might possess a memorial of his labours.”) See also 351, 5–6.

³⁹ For a more detailed analysis with further primary textual exemplifications see Brent (1991), p. 151 and note 40, and Brent (1992), *Cultural Episcopacy*, pp. 84–85 and note 31.

alent of *προϊστήμι* and its variants. The latter is the normal term for “preside” found in the inscriptions.⁴⁰ The rarity of *προκαθημένος* can be illustrated by the one sole entry in *SEG*, where this term is used of cities rather than individuals. Here *προκαθεζομένος* can either refer to the presidency of a *city* such as Tarsus over—or, as I would prefer, its pre-eminence in—Cilicia.⁴¹ Indeed Ignatius reveals his knowledge of the normal use of this term in connection with a city when he too uses it of the Church of Rome “who is pre-eminent (ἦτις καὶ προκαθῆται) in the place of the district of the Romans (ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου Ῥωμαίων) . . . pre-eminent in Christian charity (προκαθημένη τῆς ἀγάπης).” (*Rom. insc.*)

But the other subject of *προκαθημένος* is not a city but a god or goddess, who can be called *ἐπίσκοπος*.

We have an inscription from Pergamon in A.D. 129 (*Syll.*³ 695, l. 50–54) which refers to “presenting the best sacrifice (*παραστα[θῆ]ναι δὲ καὶ θυσίαν ὡ[ς καλ]λίστην*) to Demeter and Kore (τῇ τε [Δῆ]μητρι καὶ τῇ Κόρ[ῆ]), the goddesses who are pre-eminent over our city (ταῖς *π*ροκαθημέναις [θε]αῖς τῆς πόλεως ἡμ[ῶν]), as well as to Roma and to all the other gods and goddesses (ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τῇ [Ῥώμ]ῃ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοι[ς θεοῖ]ς πᾶσι καὶ πάσαις).” In such a pagan context, I would suggest that the description of Ignatius the *ἐπίσκοπος*, as one who is described as *προκαθημένος εἰς τύπον θεοῦ*, can be identified as a quite precise and intended parallel. The bishop “presides over” or rather “is pre-eminent in” the Church, just as the statues of Roma and the other gods and goddesses did in the city-states of Asia, but not as a god himself but rather as the Christian version of a *τύπος θεοῦ*.

In this connection too it is not without relevance that we have an

⁴⁰ See e.g. *SEG* 35, 826,9–10 which is a dedication to a priestess (*γενόμενα τε τὰς Δάματρος καὶ Κόρρας ἱέρεια τῶν τε ἱερῶν κα [λῶς καὶ] ὀσίως προέστα*); likewise 113,4 (*π*ροϊστιάτωσαν) describes those who preside over the Eleusinian rites of Demeter and Kore. This therefore is the usual term for presidency over the rites of a cult, Pagan or Christian (see Justin Martyr, *Apol.* 1, 98 (*προεστῶς*); cf. Brent (1991), pp. 129–156). *προκαθημένος* is used in a somewhat different sense, as cited in footnote 41. For general uses of *προϊστήμι* and its derivatives see e.g. *SEG* 27, 758,3; 33, 694,4; and 34, 94; cf. Brent (1991), pp. 129–156.

⁴¹ *SEG* 29, 1527 (Severus Alexander) (= *OGIS* 578): *Τάρσος. . . ἡ πρώτη κ[αὶ] μεγίστη καὶ καλλίστη μ[ητρο]πολις τῶν γ' ἐπαρχείων προκαθεζομένη Κιλικίας*. From Pergamon from an inscription in honour of Septimius Severus we have (= (Moretti) *IGUR* 1, 33): *Καισάρια ἡ μ[ητρο]πολις Κ[ιλικίας] Ἰσαυρί[ας] Λυκα[ο]νίας π[ρο]καθεζομένη. . .* Cf. (Moretti) *IGUR* 1,78 and 80. Note furthermore that the normal word for “preside” is used when this sense is required as in *SEG* 35, 1106: . . . ἡ *π*ροεστῶσα τῆς πόλεως ἡμῶν θεὸς Ἄρτεμις . . .

inscription from Acmonia in Domitian's reign (A.D. 85). It reads as the will of Titus Praxias providing honours for his memory. Here he makes "overseers and witnesses (ἐπι[σ]κό[που]ς και μάρτυρας) [of his intentions] the divine *Augusti* (θεοὺς Σ[εβ]αστούς) and the ancestral gods (καὶ θε[οὺς πατρίου[ς]; *IGRR* 4,661 l. 22–23). Ignatius is an overseer (ἐπίσκοπος) who is not himself divine but a τύπος of the Father who is moreover a witness (μάρτυς), in the Christian sense of one who is to lay down his life, as a μιμητής of divine suffering.

The three Orders are τύποι or εἰκόνες that represent a community in process of redemption, and the saving acts of Father, Son, and Spirit at work in such a community. We shall now examine how their function in Ignatius' Christian cult explicitly mirrors both Domitian's reform of the Imperial Cult in ritual, and its religious objective in securing the *pax deorum*.

6A 2.3. Domitian's corona aurea and Ignatian τύποι

We have argued previously (5A 2.2.2) that Suetonius' account of how Domitian refashioned the iconography of the the *coronae aureae*, worn by priests and himself as high priest presiding over the Capitoline games, implied a pagan theology of representation. Domitian introduced a new, pagan iconographic theology into the general wearing of sacerdotal crowns inscribed with divine images. He wore a specially designed *corona aurea* in connection with his alterations in the ritual of the cult of Jupiter Capitolinus which had implications for the ideology of emperor worship, in which he claimed to be both *dominus et deus*. The *corona aurea* that he wore at the institution of quinquennial contests for this cult was impressed with "an image of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva (*coronam auream cum effigie Iovis ac Iunonis Minervaeque*)." However, the priest of Jupiter and the college of *Flaviales* assisting him in the ceremonial also wore (*pari habitu*) crowns with images of these three deities, but included, in addition, Domitian's own image (*nisi quod illorum coronis inerat et ipsius imago*).⁴²

We see in the *corona aurea* with its *effigies* or *imago* a sacramental representation of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva on the part of the *Pontifex Maximus*. These deities are made sacramentally present by the cultic acts of Domitian as *Pontifex Maximus*, just as the Father, Son, and spirit-filled, apostolic circle or crown (πνευματικός στέφανος) are made sacra-

⁴² Suetonius, *Domit.* 4.

mentally present by the τύποι (*imago, effigies*) of bishops, presbyters, and deacons (*Magn.* 13,1). The bishop represents God the Father, with whom the spirit-filled apostles are united in the presbyters and the Son in the deacons. Likewise Domitian, *dominus et deus*, is made sacramentally present in all the priests who wear his image on their crowns, and unite their individual acts into his one cultic act.

We have already referred to the μυστικός ἄγών at the temples of Roma and Augustus at Pergamon in which the σεβαστοφάντης displayed the image of the Emperor as the climax of the mystery play (5B 2.2). Here the εἰκὼν as a statue or τύπος (*effigies*) on a crown can be said to make the imperial genius or τύχη sacramentally present. Likewise in Ignatius' picture of the Eucharistic assembly, the saving figures of Father, Spirit filled Apostles, and Son are made sacramentally present by the liturgical drama enacted by bishop, presbyters and deacons, of which they are the τύποι. We have moreover in Herodian V, 5,6-7 an account of the acclamation of the Senate and their act of sacrifice before Elagabalus (A.D. 218), in which the emperor's εἰκὼν is associated with the τύπος τοῦ ἐπιχωρίου θεοῦ:

Wishing the Senate and the Roman People to become used to the sight of his appearance (βουλόμενος ἐν ἔθει γενέσθαι τῆς τοῦ σχήματος ὄψεως), and a test be made whilst he was absent (ἀπόντος τε αὐτοῦ πείραν δοθῆναι) as to how they would accept the sight of his appearance (πῶς φέρουσι τὴν ὄψιν τοῦ σχήματος), having had painted a great, full-sized representation of himself (εἰκόνα μεγίστην γράψας παντὸς ἑαυτοῦ), in which he appeared reaching forward and performing sacrifice (οἷος προΐων τε καὶ ἱεουργῶν ἐφαίνετο), and having placed in the picture the form of the god of the country (παραστήσας τε ἐν τῇ γραφῇ τὸν τύπον τοῦ ἐπιχωρίου θεοῦ) with whom of course he was depicted as obtaining good omens (ὃ δὴ καλλιερῶν ἐγγράπτο), and having sent it to Rome, he ordered the image to be hung up in the exact centre of the senate house and in the highest spot (ἐκέλευσεν ἐν τῷ μεσαιτάτῳ τῆς συγκλήτου τόπῳ ὑψηλοτάτῳ τε τὴν εἰκόνα ἀνατεθῆναι), over the head of the statue of Victory (ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς τοῦ ἀγάλματος τῆς Νίκης), so that when they assembled in council (ὡς συνιόντες ἐς τὸ βουλευτήριον) they each would burn incense (λιβανωτῶν τε θυμιῶσιν ἕκαστος) and pour libations of wine (καὶ οἶνους σπένδουσι).

Here clearly the εἰκὼν of the emperor is associated with the τύπος of the θεὸς ἐπιχωρίος which it mediates from the centre of the Senate gathered for its business as the centre of its unity, just as Ignatius' bishop stands at the centre of the Eucharistic assembly as the τύπος πατρός.

At this point the iconography of ecclesial Order merges into both the iconography of martyrdom and of a cultic procession. Let us now examine the particular character of Ignatius' martyr procession as a cultic procession by analogy with the Imperial Cult. We shall examine too, in association with the latter, the ambassadorial titles given to various clerics who accompany Ignatius' procession in order to establish their equivalents with those officials appointed by the city states of Asia in order to secure inauguration and celebration of a new Imperial Cult.

PART B. THE MARTYR PROCESSION AND CULTIC AMBASSADORS

Schoedel described clearly the "staged" character of the journey of Ignatius from his native Antioch in Syria to prospective martyrdom at Rome. The martyrdom is proclaimed beforehand to the Roman Christians by Crocus the deacon and others from Ephesus, "who preceded me from Syria to Rome to the glory of God (*Rom.* 10,1-2)." Furthermore, Ignatius collects individuals who join his procession as representatives of the churches of the various cities (Ephesus, Magnesia, and Tralles), who come to him in Smyrna since the route selected by his guards has allowed him previously only to visit Philadelphia.

Not only did some of these representatives stay with his entourage and precede him to Rome (*Rom.* 10,2), but some were elected to congratulate the Church of Antioch on its peace (*Philad.* 10,1; *Smyr.* 11,2-3; *Pol.* 8,1). The representative character of those who come from their Churches to join his procession is emphasised in *Tral.* 12,1 where he can say: "I greet you from Smyrna, together with the Churches of God who are present with me (ἅμα ταῖς συμπαρούσαις μοι ἐκκλησίαις τοῦ θεοῦ)." Thus their Churches are considered very much to be present in those sent to accompany him. Through their representatives,⁴³ Churches "which did not lie on my way (αἱ μὴ

⁴³ Ignatius claims to see the corporate personality of the Churches which he has never visited as mysteriously represented in clerical persons. With bishop Onesimus he has "converse of mind (συνήθεια)" so that he was able to see their corporate personality, their πολυπλήθεια (*Ephes.* 1,3 and 5,1) as also in the case of bishop Polybius (*Tral.* 1,1) or bishop Damas (*Mag.* 6,1: ὥστε με τὸ πᾶν πλήθος ἐν αὐτῶ θεωρῆσαι). See further A. Brent, *The Relations between Ignatius of Antioch and the Didascalia Apostolorum*, in *SecCent* 8,3 (1991), pp. 151-153; Brent (1992), *Cultural Episcopacy*, pp. 85-88.

προσῆκουσαί μοι) according to the flesh (τῆ ὁδῷ τῇ κατὰ σάρκα) lead the way before me city by city (κατὰ πόλιν με προῆγον; *Rom.* 9,3; *Philad.* 10,2)."

But how did both Ignatius himself, and the Churches which cooperated in this "stage management" of the martyr's procession, view the purpose of the journey? In what social context are we to place the "theatre" thus staged? We need to go beyond Schoedel's individualistic and psychologistic interpretation expressed in such words as "gaining recognition and support," and "to bring to expression their deepest hopes and fears and to channel them effectively."⁴⁴

Ignatius describes his appearance in Rome in language that clearly implies that his act confronts Roman power with a superior, spiritual alternative. Ignatius claims (*Rom.* 2,2) that: "God judged the bishop of Syria to be found at the sun's setting (εἰς δύσιν) having sent him from the (sun's) rising (ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς)." Schoedel comments that: "there is a sense of movement in the bishop's mental geography strikingly different from the defenders of Roman power who speak simply of Rome ruling from the rising to the setting sun."⁴⁵ Certainly *Rom.* 6, 1 represents a self-conscious reversal of imperial values on the part of a bishop who is contrasting his individual purpose with that of the Roman Emperor.⁴⁶ But Schoedel resists any interpretation of Ignatius' act as part of a contrived martyrological cult. The self-sacrificing bishop from the east is apparently simply a heroic figure proclaiming the triumph of Christian grace over the Emperor's natural power.

In what follows I will argue that Ignatius' procession to martyrdom reflects the Christian counterpart in the arena to the imperial procession that ends with sacrifice on a pagan, imperial altar. His Christian entourage are the counterparts of the pagan officials and priests. I will interpret the images with which he expresses his understanding of what is taking place in the light of the social and religious context in the city states of Asia Minor, in particular their adherence to and development of the Imperial Cult. We do well to

⁴⁴ Schoedel (1985), p. 12.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 170-171.

⁴⁶ *Rom.* 6,1: "The furthest ends of the world profit me nothing (οὐδὲν με ὠφελήσει τὰ πέρατα τοῦ κόσμου) nor do the kingdoms of this age (οὐδὲ αἱ βασιλείαι τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου): it is better for me to die (καλὸν μοι ἀποθανεῖν) for the sake of Jesus Christ (διὰ Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν) than to reign over earth's furthest ends (ἢ βασιλεύειν τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς)."

ask whether Ignatius and his martyrdom are not set over against that cult, in the way in which he regards his journey to Rome as a procession securing those deified qualities of *Victoria* and *Pax*.⁴⁷ I will argue:

1. Ignatius sees his personal sacrifice (his ἀντίψυχον on the θυσιαστήριον ἔτοιμον) at Rome as centred in a cultic procession, and the comparison between his highway to victory and that of Rome's power is a cultic comparison with the developing Imperial Cult.

2. The cult is a mystery cult that parallels the imperial mysteries, in which those who participate in the martyrological drama are μμηταί and συμμύσται. His picture of the χόρος gathered for the Eucharist, and his language about its members and their actions (χριστοφόροι, ναοφόροι, ἄγιοφόροι), mirrors what epigraphical evidence will inform us regarding the mysteries associated with the Imperial Cult (ιεραφόροι, βωμοφόροι).

3. Ignatius' particular title, "Theophorus (θεοφόρος)" and therefore "bearer of God" is to be understood in comparison with the bearer of the imperial image (εἰκόν) in the ritual of the Imperial Cult (σεβαστοφόρος, θεολόγος (σεβαστολόγος) θεοφάντης (σεβαστοφάντης)). Certainly τύπος is used equivalently to εἰκόν as a "statue" or as a "relief" in several inscriptions, as we have seen (6A 2.1). Also related with this title was the use of τύπος in the description of the bishop's office as προκαθημένος εἰς τύπον πατρός (6A 2). This description also mirrored the theology implied by Domitian's changes in the iconography on the priestly *coronae* worn as part of the ritual associated with the Capitoline games (6A 2.3). We shall now be able to locate the particular focus of this set of images specifically in the procession associated with the Imperial Cult and in some instances involving imperial mysteries.

⁴⁷ Certainly Schoedel (1985) Introduction pp. 11–12, and p. 213 saw Ignatius' view of his martyrdom in such terms ("All this makes sense if we recall how carefully planned Ignatius' whole journey appears to have been for calling out support from the churches on his route and how intimately such support figures in the bishop's reflections on the significance of his mission as a man set on unity"). Schoedel however left ill-defined the particular social and religious context which would give meaning to Ignatius' conceptualization of the various roles of those involved in his procession.

6B 1. *The ἀντίψυχον at the θυσιαστήριον ἑτοιμον*

As they greet Ignatius in chains at Smyrna through Onesimus their bishop and representative who meets him there, the Ephesians are described as "being imitators of God, inflamed by the blood of God (*Ephes.* 1,1)." But these words cannot in this context be interpreted simply as an indication of their general piety.⁴⁸ He claims that their piety is focused upon his coming martyrdom. They are "inflamed by the blood of God (ἀναζωπυρήσαντες ἐν αἵματι θεοῦ)" because they were praying that he should attain his goal of fighting with the wild beasts.

The spectacle of "the blood of God" reflected in the μίμησις of the martyr-bishop is thus the cause of their anxious haste to come to see him (ἱστορηῆσαι ἐσπουδάσατε). It is therefore the martyr bishop, becoming the εἰκὼν or τύπος of the suffering God, to which they are drawn in a cult in which they will re-enact or "imitate (μιμηταὶ ὄντες τοῦ θεοῦ)" the saving event.⁴⁹

It is to be emphasised therefore that such μίμησις is clearly cultic. In the arrival of the bishop from the East at the arena of the emperor of the West we have the climax of the cultic procession which began in Antioch and gathered its members from the churches of Asia Minor to whom Ignatius wrote. As Perler pointed out, Ignatius used the rare word ἀντίψυχον as equivalent to the Pauline ἱλαστήριον or atoning sacrifice.⁵⁰ Such was his sacrificial role in the cultic procession in which he invited members of the Ephesian Church to join. "I am your atoning sacrifice (ἀντίψυχον ὑμῶν ἐγώ), and of those whom you sent to Smyrna for the honour of God (καὶ ὧν ἐπέμψατε εἰς Θεοῦ τιμὴν εἰς Σμύρναν)." (*Ephes.* 21,1 cf. *Smyr.* 10,2; *Pol.* 2,3)

In this way Ignatius' sufferings become a kind of extension of his action as bishop in the Eucharist, as his words "I am God's wheat"

⁴⁸ Cf. Schoedel (1985), pp. 41-42.

⁴⁹ This point was established at length by H.W. Bartsch, *Gnostisches Gut und Gemeindetradition bei Ignatius von Antiochien*, in *Sammlung wissenschaftlicher Monographien*, 2,44 (Gütersloh: Evangelischer Verlag 1940), pp. 78-98, and only partially modified in K. Bommes, *Weizen Gottes, Untersuchungen zur Theologie des Martyriums bei Ignatius von Antiochien*, in *Theoph* 27 (Köln und Bonn: Hanstein 1976), pp. 92-107. See also W.M. Swartley, *The Imitatio Christi in the Ignatian Letters*, in *VCh* 27 (1973), pp. 81-103 and Th. Preiss, *La mystique de l'imitation de Christ et de l'unité chez Ignace d'Antioch*, in *RHPPhR* 18 (1938), pp. 197-241.

⁵⁰ O. Perler, *Das vierte Makkabäerbuch, Ignatius von Antiochien, und die ältesten Martyrerberichte*, in *RivAC* 9 (1949), pp. 47 ff. cf. W.H.C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church*, (Oxford: Blackwell 1965), pp. 199 ff.

(*Rom.* 4,1) indicate.⁵¹ The *θυσιαστήριον* of the arena is an extension of the *θυσιαστήριον* that prefigures in Ignatius' liturgical scenes (*Ephes.* 5,2; *Magnes.* 7,2; *Philad.* 4). Indeed, Ignatius anticipates his experience in the arena as a kind of Eucharist in which instead of the pagan crowds there will be the Roman Christians as participants in a cult in which he himself is sacrificed on an altar that is ready (*θυσιαστήριον ἔτοιμον*). (*Rom.* 2,2) His words are "to be poured out as a libation to God (τοῦ σπονδισθῆναι θεῷ)," which may reflect Paul's words in *Eph.* 5,1-2.⁵² But Ignatius is not simply commenting on Scripture in a social vacuum. The *θυσιαστήριον ἔτοιμον* has clear associations with the Imperial Cult and its offerings of *thus et vinum*, as a sacrificial term for which *σπονδισθῆναι* is also appropriate.⁵³

In place of the church gathered for the Eucharist, as *μία σάρξ* . . . ἔν ποτήριον εἰς ἔνωσιν τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ· ἐν θυσιαστήριον . . . (*Philad.* 4), there is therefore the martyr pouring out his blood and giving his body, which he prays may be found pure bread, as God's wheat (*Rom.* 2,2; 4,1). In *Rom.* 8,3 he asks the Roman Christians to behave like the pagan spectators who express to the arena officials their wish for death rather than life for a person for whom the moment to be selected or otherwise has come. "If I should suffer (ἐὰν πάθω), you had expressed your wish [for it] (ἠθελήσατε), if I should be rejected (ἐὰν ἀποδοκιμασθῶ), you had expressed your hatred (ἐμισήσατε)."⁵⁴

The church's prayer in the arena is not therefore that bread and wine become Christ's body and blood, but that in Ignatius' body

⁵¹ For a discussion on the relationship between Eucharist and martyrdom see, G.P. Wetter, *Altchristliche Liturgien: Das christliche Mysterium: Studien zur Geschichte des Abendmahles*, in *FRLANT* 13 (1921), pp. 117-119, 136-137; Bartsch (1940), pp. 102-106 ff., cf. Bommes (1976), pp. 61-63, 89-93. See also H. Schlier, *Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu den Ignatiusbriefen*, in *BZfNW* 8 (1929), pp. 152-169.

⁵² Cf. Schoedel (1985), pp. 29-31 and p. 42.

⁵³ For the use of incense on Trajan's altar at Pergamon, see *SEG* 11, 922-933 (Gytheum); V. Ehrenberg and A.H.M. Jones, *Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Augustus and Tiberius*, (Oxford: Clarendon 1955) no. 102 (a); *IGRR* 4, 353 b 20. See also S.R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power. The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor*, (Cambridge: U.P. 1984), p. 208. In the Hellenistic ruler cult in Ptolemaic Egypt the burning of incense and libations as opposed to animal sacrifices was already common before its adaptation to emperor worship, see D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West: Studies in the Ruler Cult of the Western Province of the Roman Empire*, in *EPRO* 108 (1991), 2,1, p. 513.

⁵⁴ The force of the two aorists (ἠθελήσατε, ἐμισήσατε) is best brought out as a once for all expression (by the crowds in the arena) of the action of the verb and translated accordingly.

those realities may be displayed. He exhorts them regarding the wild beasts in the arena: "Intercede to the Lord for me (λιτανεύσατε τὸν κύριον ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ) that through these instruments (ἵνα διὰ τῶν ὀργάνων τούτων) I might be found God's sacrifice (θεοῦ θυσία εὑρεθῶ)." (*Rom.* 4,2) His vision of the Roman community has no bishop, priest, or deacon at this point, as had his visions of the communities to which he addresses his other letters,⁵⁵ but only the Roman officials and their functions in the amphitheatre. What the Roman Christians can do is to "coax" the wild beasts to devour him quickly and not try to keep them away (*Rom.* 4,2).

Given therefore that the victorious journey of the bishop of Syria from the East confronting the emperor of the West is a confrontation between rival cults, can we now in the light of the inscriptions of the Imperial Cult delineate further the character of Ignatius reverse images? What, according to Ignatius, are the features of the Christian liturgical community that mirror those of pagan emperor worship?

6B 2. *The χορός and the ἀγὼν μυστικός*

The Roman community is regarded as a χορός gathered around a pagan θυσιαστήριον ἔτοιμον. The mystery-drama in which the bishop is a τύπος is now an arena scene in which he is a μιμητής of the suffering god (τοῦ πάθους τοῦ θεοῦ μου). (*Rom.* 6,3) Ignatius invites the Roman Christians, gathered in his imagination in the arena, that:

... in love becoming a choir (ἵνα ἐν ἀγάπῃ χορὸς γενόμενοι), you may sing to the Father in Jesus Christ (ἔσητε τῷ πατρὶ ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ) that God has deemed the bishop of Syria worthy to be found at the sun's setting, having despatched him from the sun's rising.

Rom. 2,2

They are to sing as a choir at the sacrifice (χορὸς γενόμενοι), as he envisaged the Ephesians (4,1–2) formed like a choir at Eucharist (6A 1.1.1), or as the Seer described the "great multitude" (*Apoc.* 7,9) or the 144,000 (14,2–3).

Ignatius thus also saw his communities gathered for the Sunday Eucharist or his own martyrological Eucharist as singing the victory in martyrdom of the Christian bishop rising from the East and triumphing

⁵⁵ For the visionary character of his description of communities that he has not visited at their Eucharistic worship see A. Brent, *The Ignatian Epistles and the Threefold Ecclesiastical Order*, in *JRH* 17,1 (1992), pp. 18–32.

in the arena over the Emperor. In this respect they paralleled the way in which the choir at Pergamon sung the emperor's praises. Just as we saw was the case (5B 2.2–2.2.3) with the imperial θεολόγοι or ὕμνωδοί of Pergamon or of Ἡραερα (καθυμνούντες τὸν Σεβαστὸν οἶκον) in the Imperial Cult (*IGRR* 4, 353, b. l. 12–19), there is the χορός of the Christian cult. That χορός extols that divinized quality of imperial unity that is ὁμόνοια (*Ephes.* 4,2), and which was also a feature of the doxology of Clement *Cor.* 60–61. Ignatius' martyrological cult was also to celebrate the peace experienced by the Church of Antioch in Syria. Thus ὁμόνοια, like the *pax deorum*, was a particular objective of the Imperial Cult which was achieved by Ignatius' Christian Cult. The hymn singers were moreover garlanded (*IGRR* 4, 353, b. l. 18–19: στεφάνους τοῖς ὕμνωδοῖς καὶ τοῖς μυστηρίοις στεφάνωσιν) just as Ignatius' presbyterate are described as a "spiritual crown (*Magnes.* 13,1: ἀξιοπλόκου πνευματικοῦ στεφάνου)."

Moreover, we followed (5B 2.2.3) Pleket's account of the role of the σεβαστοφάντης in exposing the εἰκόνες.⁵⁶ There were also other allusions to ὕμνωδοί of the Imperial Cult at Pergamon, for example Asia (Ἡραερα).⁵⁷ In order to locate further the function of these εἰκόνες in the ritual of the cult, we need to refer to *SEG* 6,59 (= *IGRR* 3, 209), which is the "decree of the international association of the craftsmen of Dionysus (ψήφισμα τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκουμένης περὶ τὸν Διόνυσον τεχνεῖτων)" (l. 1–5) from Ankyra. The occasion is the incorporation of the cult of the emperor Hadrian into that of Dionysus and Hadrian's name is added to the association's title as the "new Dionysus" (καὶ Αὐτοκράτορα Τραϊανὸν Ἀδριανὸν Σεβαστὸν Καίσαρα νέον Διόνυσον). Here we find that it is the honoured benefaction of Ulpius Aelius Pompeianus to "exhibit the mystery-spectacle (ἀγωνοθεῖσθαι τὸν ἀγῶνα τὸν μυστικόν)."

Pompeianus summoned (τοὺς ἀγωνιστὰς ἀνεκαλέσατο) the contestants "already on their highway with anxious speed (τῷ τε τάχει τῆς σπουδῆς ὁδεύοντας)," and "he provided (ἐπήρκεσεν) for every part in the mystery (παντὶ μέρει τοῦ μυστηρίου)." Ignatius too found the Ephesians anxious for the spectacle of his martyrdom (1,5: ἱστορῆσαι ἐσπουδάσατε), just as he regards all of them through their representatives as

⁵⁶ Pleket (1965) pp. 345–346, where he compares *IGRR* 4, 353, c. l. 4–7 with *IGRR* 4, 522 = *OGIS* 479; 643. See also my discussion in 5B 2.2.

⁵⁷ *IGRR* 4, 1608 (Claudius): a. l. 10: οἱ ὕμνωδοὶ ἀνέθηκαν κατὰ τὸ γενόμε[νον] ψήφισμα ἐν Περγάμῳ ὑπὸ τῆς ἱερᾶς [συνό]δου ἐγγράψαντες ὅσα δίκαια [καὶ φιλάν]θρωπά ἐστιν αὐτοῖς δεδομέ[να ὑπ' αὐτοῦ]. and b. l. 5 . . . [τῇ ἱερ]ῆ ὕμνωδῶν [συνόδῳ χαίρειν] . . .

“companions on the way (σύνοδοι πάντες).” His martyr-cult, in which he shares with Paul, is a mystery cult in which the Ephesians participate as fellow initiates (συμμύσται) who are on an highway (πάροδος). (*Ephes.* 12,2) Let us now explore further the general background of μίμησις in parallel with Ignatius’ use of the term.

6B 2.1. μίμησις in the Isis mysteries and imperial extensions

The word μιμητής in Ignatius *Rom.* 6,3 has a parallel in the mystery cults of Isis⁵⁸ which were assimilated to those of Dionysus which were, as Hadrian’s example shows, assimilated in turn to the Imperial Cult. Here μιμητής is used, with its cognates, μιμούμενος τὰ ἱερά and μίμηματα τῶν τότε παθημάτων, in the sense of actor in that participants acting out their role in the divine drama become mystically identified and absorbed into the realities which they act.⁵⁹

Certainly Ignatius sees his role as bishop at one point as a mystagogue. In *Tral.* 5,2 he claims: “I am able to know (δύναμαι νοεῖν) the heavenly things (τὰ ἐπουράνια), both the angelic locations (καὶ τὰς τοποθεσίας τὰς ἀγγελικὰς) and the ranks of the archons (καὶ τὰς συστάσεις ἀρχοντικὰς).” In *Ephes.* 19,1 he speaks of Mary’s virginity, and Christ’s conception and passion as τρία μυστήρια. In *Philad.* 7,2 he speaks of the Spirit that moves him as: “he exposes hidden things (τὰ κρυπτὰ ἐλέγχει).” Like the high-priest of the Imperial Cult, he is “entrusted (πεπιστευμένος) with the holy of holies (τὰ ἅγια τῶν ἁγίων) . . . with the secrets of God (τὰ κρυπτὰ τοῦ θεοῦ; *Philad.* 9,1).”

We can now ask what was the character of the ritual performed by those to whom were assigned the various parts in the ἄγων μυστικός, and how they were paralleled in Ignatius’ description of the martyr-cult.

⁵⁸ Plutarch, *De Is. et Osir.* 361 D, 27 where Isis is described as “having intermixed with the most holy rites (ταῖς ἁγιωτάταις ἀναμίξασα τελεταῖς), images and suggestions and representations of her sufferings at that time (εἰκόνας καὶ ὑπονοίας καὶ μίμηματα τῶν τότε παθημάτων) . . .” Cf. the mysteries of Attis in Lucian, *De Dea Syria* 15: ‘Ρέη δὲ τέμνονται καὶ Ἄττεα μιμέονται, and Eleusinian Mysteries, *El. Lysias c. Andoc.* 30: The Hierophant says: ἐδὺς τὴν στολὴν μιμούμενος τὰ ἱερά ἐπιδείκνυε τοῖς ἀμύητοις καὶ εἶπε τῇ φωνῇ τὰ ἀπόρρητα (cf. Hippolytus *El.* V, 8,39). For the equation of Isis with Dionysiac mysteries, see Plutarch, *De Is. et Osir.* 364 E, 35: ὅτι μὲν οὖν ὁ αὐτός ἐστι Διονύσιον τίνα μάλλον ἢ σὲ γιγνώσκεις, ὦ Κλέα.

⁵⁹ For the Platonic justification for this see S. Calderone, Teologia, Politica, Successione Dinastica e Consecratio in Età Constantina, in *Culte des Souverains, dans l’Empire Romain*, in *Entretiens* 19 (1972), pp. 236–237 and footnotes; A. Heitmann, Imitatio Dei. Die ethische Nachahmung Gottes nach der Väterlehre der zwei ersten Jahrhunderten, in *StAns* 10 (1940). See also Wetter (1921), pp. 66–67, pp. 124–125; Schlier (1929), pp. 135–136, 163–164 ff.; S. Angus, *The Mystery Religions: A Study in the Religious Background of Early Christianity*, (New York: Dover 1975), pp. 109–112, pp. 132–133, pp. 137–138, pp. 307–308.

6B 2.2. *Image bearers in the Imperial Mysteries*

We have already noted the use of εἰκόνες of the emperor and their exposure in the drama by the θεοφάντης of Dionysus. The latter became the σεβαστοφάντης when the two cults began to be assimilated as we saw taking place under Hadrian. But other symbolic objects were deployed in the ritual and persons assigned to carry them. The general term ἱεροφόρος is used of those who carry sacred objects in a pagan cultus,⁶⁰ but we find this term particularly applied in the context of the mystery play. Regarding the Isis mysteries, Plutarch informs us that: "Isis . . . is wise . . . , and discloses the divine mysteries (δεικνύουσαν τὰ θεῖα) to those who truly and justly have the name of 'bearers of the sacred vessels' and 'wearers of the sacred robes' (τοῖς ἀληθῶς καὶ δικαίως ἱεραφόροις καὶ ἱεροστόλοις προσαγορευομένοις; *De Iside et Osiride* 352 B, 3)."

But there were also more particular roles assigned in the ritual of the mysteries, some of which Robert lists as βωμοφόρος, κισταφόρος, πυρφόρος, λικναφόρος, κανηφόρος, θαλλοφόρος, φαλλοφόρος, and θεοφόρος.⁶¹ We find the latter term becoming σεβαστοφόρος when for example the Dionysiac mysteries are assimilated with Hadrian's Imperial Cult.⁶² Κισταφόρος occurs in *Syll.*³ 736 (Andania 92 B.C.) where the law for celebrating the mysteries is inscribed. Here "the sacred virgins (αἱ παρθένοι αἱ ἱεραί) as they are selected (καθὼς ἂν λάχωνται) draw the chariots (ἄγουσαι τὰ ἄρματα) laden with chests containing the objects for the sacred mysteries (ἐπικείμενα[ς] κίστας ἐχούσας ἱερὰ μυστικά; VI, 1, 30–31)."

Among the objects carried in the ritual of the sacred mysteries, in addition to the εἰκόν of the emperor exposed by the σεβαστοφάντης, were small models or pictures of an altar. Apollonius son of Apollonius is given the title βωμοφόρος in Pergamon.⁶³ We find an explanation of this title in Apuleius' description of the Isis mysteries:

The foremost high priests (*antistites sacrorum proceres*) . . . carried before them the distinctive attributes of the most powerful gods (*potentissimo-*

⁶⁰ *IG* 12, 5, 291.

⁶¹ L. Robert, *Recherches Épigraphiques*, VI Inscriptions d'Athènes, in *Opera Min. Sel.* 2 (1969), p. 839 note 6 (= *REA* 62 (1960), p. 323 note 6). See also *Idem*. *Le Serpent Glycon d'Abônouteichos à Athènes et Artémis d'Éphèse à Rome*, in *Opera Min. Sel.* 5 (1989), pp. 747–769 (= *CRAI* (1981), pp. 519–535).

⁶² L. Robert, *Hellenica*, II, Inscription Éphébique, in *Opera Min. Sel.* 2 (1969), pp. 1277–1278 (= *RPhil* 13 (1939), pp. 124–125).

⁶³ M.P. Nilsson, *Zwei Altäre aus Pergamon*, in *Erano*s 54 (1956), p. 172; *I. Perg.* 336.

rum deum proferebant insignes exuvias) . . . the second . . . (*secundus*) carried with both hands an altar (*manibus ambabus gerebat altaria*), that is, "a source of help," (*id est auxilia*) whose special name was derived from the helping providence of the supreme goddess (*quibus nomen dedit proprium deae summatis auxiliariis providentia*).

Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 11,10

As Apuleius makes clear, the foremost priests take precedence who carry *insignes exuviae* of the gods themselves. Furthermore, what these priests carry are not merely the portable accompaniments of ritual. They carry the clothing or attributes (*exuviae*) of the gods themselves. They are thus to be distinguished from the second group who carry the *altaria*. Thus though the second group in the Isis mystery procession may be describable as ἱεραφόροι,⁶⁴ the first group may be described as θεοφόροι. Indeed the term occurs generally in the mystery cults.

In the inscription of Agrippinilla found in Torre Nova south of Rome, we have a list of functionaries of the Dionysiac cult c. 150 A.D. Agrippinilla heads the list as priestess and head of the association, but two of the functionaries, Gallicanus and Dionysius, are called θεοφόροι.⁶⁵ The θεοφόρος inevitably, following the assimilation of such mysteries with the Imperial Cult, comes to be renamed σεβαστοφόρος, as in the Ephebic inscription from Athens.⁶⁶ These carried the imperial images in the mystery rite. Those divine images were cared for by the sacristan or ζάκορος τῶν θείων εικόνων,⁶⁷ provisions for which we have already seen to have been made in our discussion of *IGRR* 4,353 c. l. 10–11 (5B 2.2). We met there with a special official, the σεβαστοφάντης, by whom imperial mysteries were celebrated.

We thus see how in Ignatius' Martyr Cult, in direct parallel with the imperial mysteries, those who join the procession either in person or through clerical representatives are assigned roles analogous to the ἱεραφόροι, and the bishop at the centre of the cult is described as the θεοφόρος who bears a spiritual image, the τύπος of their Father God.

⁶⁴ Robert *Opera Min. Sel.* 2 (1969), pp. 1277–1278 (= *RPhil* 13 (1939), pp. 124–125).

⁶⁵ M.P. Nilsson, *The Dionysiac Mysteries of the Hellenistic and Roman Age*, in *Acta Instituti Atheniensis Regni Sueciae*, 8,5 (Lund: Gleerup 1957), pp. 46 and 56–57.

⁶⁶ *Ath. Mitt.* 59 (1935), pp. 77–88; Robert (1939), pp. 123–125. See also Price (1984), p. 189.

⁶⁷ Pleket (1965), p. 345; cf. Robert *Opera Min. Sel.* 2 (1969), pp. 832–835 (= *REA* 62 (1960), pp. 316–319).

As their fellow-citizens in the city states of Asia Minor, in particular centres of the Imperial Cult such as Ephesus, Smyrna, or Tralles, responded to the *supplicatio* by joining the sacrificial procession, so figuratively the Christian Ephesians join Ignatius' martyr-procession. As Ignatius says:

You are all therefore (ἐστέ οὖν) companions on the way (σύνοδοι πάντες), God-bearers (θεοφόροι) and temple-bearers (καὶ ναοφόροι), Christ bearers (χριστοφόροι), bearers of holy things (ἅγιοφόροι), in every way adorned with the commandments of Jesus Christ (κατὰ πάντα κεκοσμημένοι ἐν ἐντολαῖς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).

Ephesians 9,2

Those who come at the summons of the martyr-bishop to join his procession carry not the εἰκὼν of the emperor but, in their conducting of Ignatius, the τύπος or μιμητής of the suffering Father-God. They are analogously the equivalents of the θεοφόροι, ιεραφόροι (ἅγιοφόροι), and βωμοφόροι (ναοφόροι) of the traditional cults paralleled by the imperial Sacristan of the divine images (ζακάρος τῶν θείων εικόνων). Instead of being clothed ἐν λαμπραῖς ἐσθῆσιν for the martyr's sacrifice,⁶⁸ they instead are κατὰ πάντα κεκοσμημένοι ἐν ἐντολαῖς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. The letter to the Church of Smyrna moreover is also addressed: ἐκκλησίᾳ θεοῦ . . . ἁγιοφόρω (*Smyrn.* inscr.).

But what of the office of the martyr-bishop at the centre of the cult at whose representation of the suffering God the Ephesians are so "inflamed?" (*Ephes.* 1,1) Ignatius continually emphasises his other name or title (ὁ καὶ θεοφόρος) at the beginning of each of the seven letters. Just as there is in his thought a continuity between the liturgy of the Eucharist each Sunday, and the prospective scene in the arena where he is destined to be the θυσιαστήριον ἔτοιμον (*Rom.* 2,2), so too I would suggest there is a continuity between Ignatius as θεοφόρος of the suffering God and the bishop as τύπος τοῦ πατρός (6A 2).

6B 2.3. θεοφόρος and τύπος in pagan cultic imagery

We saw that the bishop and presbytery, and, by implication or assimilation, the deacons, are described in the Ignatian letters as προκαθημένοι εἰς τύπον (6A 2). We saw that this new concept in Ignatius of Antioch grew out of the pagan symbolism of Syria and Asia Minor

⁶⁸ We have from Smyrna a marble tablet from the Museum and Library for the ruler cult of Attalus III in *OGIS* 332, 38: ἐν ἐσθ[ῆ]σιν λαμπραῖς ἐστεφανωμένους . . .].

(6A 2.2), which was, as we can now see from the example of Hadrian as νέος Διόνυσος, in process of integration with that of the Imperial cult.⁶⁹

We can now see that each of the three Orders are indeed as τύποι the counterparts to those in the imperial mysteries who carry (σεβαστοφόρος) and display (σεβαστοφάντης) imperial divine images as part of the ἄγών μυστικός. Indeed in the Isis mysteries that Plutarch found indistinguishable from those of Dionysus (in which Hadrian appeared as νέος Διόνυσος), the εἰκόνες and μιμήματα were provided by the goddess as “teaching for piety (εὐσεβείας ὁμοῦ δίδαγμα) and consolation (καὶ παραμύθιον) for men and women afflicted by the same sufferings (ἀνδράσι καὶ γυναίξιν ὑπὸ συμφορῶν ἐχομένοις ὁμοίων).”⁷⁰ In the same way in *Magnes.* 6,1 we read Ignatius’ command: “be in union with the bishop (ἐνώθητε τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ) and those who are pre-eminent (καὶ τοῖς προκαθημένοις) as the type and teaching of incorruption (εἰς τύπον καὶ διδαχὴν ἀφθαρσίας).”

Thus Ignatius’ Christian ἄγών μυστικός can proceed, including as we have seen that it does the three Orders, each re-enacting the drama of redemption, as in *Jn.* 20,19–22, or the liturgical procession or χώρησις between the three Orders like the procession within the godhead (*Magnes.* 6,1; 7, 1–2 = *Jn.* 20, 22). In the Christian ἄγών, human figures were called upon to act as counterparts in the liturgy to the τύποι or εἰκόνες in imperial cultic processions. The individual persons in the three Orders are human icons that represent a community in process of redemption, and the saving acts of Father, Son, and Spirit at work in such a community. Such saving acts, experienced by the community and embodied in the Eucharistic liturgy and in the clerical roles played, display Christ’s victory to the demonic powers who are thereby shaken. “For whenever you assemble frequently (ὅταν γὰρ πυκνῶς ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ γίνεσθε), the powers of Satan are destroyed (καθαίρονται αἱ δυνάμεις τοῦ Σατανᾶ), and his destruction is dissolved (καὶ λύεται ὁ ὄλεθρος αὐτοῦ) by the harmony of your faith (ἐν τῇ ὁμονοίᾳ ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως).”⁷¹

We shall now see how such concepts of a restored ὁμόνοια effected through the representation of divine forces are paralleled in the Imperial Cult.

⁶⁹ Brent (1989), pp. 309–329; *Idem.* (1992), *Cultural Episcopacy*, pp. 80–81, 87–88.

⁷⁰ Plutarch, *De Is et Osir.* 361 D, 27, see also footnote 18.

⁷¹ *Ephes.* 13,1 cf. *Smyr.* 6,1.

6B 2.4. *Ignatius' procession and ὁμόνοια and the pax deorum*

As we have seen, Augustus' cult had, according to the Decree of the Koinon of Asia initiating the Imperial Cult there in 9 B.C., set right a fallen social and political order if not a disturbed natural order (2B 4). Certainly what Lucan described in his de-mythologised Stoic account of the Civil War as *discors natura* (διαπείπτον καὶ εἰς ἀτυχῆς μεταβεβηκὸς σχῆμα) needed an act of augury to be set right (ἀνώρθωσεν) (2A 4.2.1–2). We have stressed throughout the origins of the Imperial Cult in an extra-ordinary act of augury which had secured the millennial *pax* of the *saeculum aureum* (2A 5). How, in the imperial mysteries, was the supernatural and millennial *pax*, once achieved by Augustus, to be continued sacramentally?

In the *pax Augusti*, we may say in parody of Ignatius' "destruction is dissolved (λύεται ὁ ὄλεθρος) . . . in concord (ἐν ὁμονοίᾳ)."⁷² 'Ὁμόνοια (*Concordia*) was one of the idealized personified Virtues celebrated in a distinctive cultus, but associated early with Augustus' own divinity as *Concordia Augusta*.⁷³ Imperial society with the collective memory of several generations of destructive civil war, in greeting *pax et princeps*, would have concurred that "nothing is better than peace (οὐδὲν ἔστιν ἄμεινον εἰρήνης), in which all war of earthly and heavenly things is abolished (ἐν ἧ πᾶς πόλεμος καταργεῖται ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων)." (*Ephes.* 13) As we have seen, civil discord of "earthly things (ἐπιγείων)" went hand in hand with a *discors natura* supernaturally understood (ἐπουρανίων). Furthermore, we found the themes of ὁμόνοια sung by the cultic χορός in *Ephes.* 4,1–2 (6A 1.1.1).

Thus in Ignatius the Christian cult, through its cultic act, brings to an end the ὄλεθρος of the cosmic powers and their destruction. That cultic act exhibited Christ's victory and peace to the daemonic powers through its human icons or τύποι, and through the ἀγιοφόροι who attended them. Such was the cosmic effect of their frequently assembling as an ἐκκλησία (*Ephes.* 13,1: ὅταν γὰρ πυκνῶς ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ γίνεσθε). Thus the Christian Cult parallels in its acts and purpose that of Augustus, whose augural act secured the *pax deorum*.

⁷² *Ephes.* 13,2 cf. 4, 1–2; *Magnes.* 15: ἔρρωσθε ἐν ὁμονοίᾳ θεοῦ, κεκτημένοι ἀδιάκριτον πνεῦμα, ὅς ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός. In *Magnes.* 6,2 ὁμοίθειαν θεοῦ is achieved by being united with the bishop in the threefold Order (ἐνώθητε τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ καὶ τοῖς προκαθημένοις . . .). See also *Tral.* 12,2; *Philad.* inscr. and 11.

⁷³ J.R. Fears, *The Cult of Virtues and Roman Imperial Ideology*, in *ANRW* 2,17,2 (1981), p. 886: "The cult epithet *Augusta*, attached to Pax, Justitia, Concordia, and Providentia, expressed the quintessence of the personalization of the cult of Virtues at Rome." See also *idem.* pp. 889–892.

Ignatius' use of human persons to be τύποι of divine beings thus constitutes a radical development of the typology of Church Order, but it is nevertheless a kind of reverse reflection of the typology of the Imperial Cult. But ambassadors are mentioned in connection with the Imperial Cult and the *pax* and *concordia* thus achieved, and to these and their Ignatian parallels we now turn.

6B 3. *The role of the πρεσβεία in the martyr-procession*

It is important for us to begin by noting the connection between the carrying of sacred τύποι and embassies from various cities to Rome. Ignatius' role as the martyr bishop is linked in his consciousness, as we have shown (6B 2.3), with the pagan concept of a θεοφόρος in a pagan mystery rite. Likewise his role as προκαθημένος εἰς τύπον πατρός is linked with the prominent or pre-eminent statuary of pagan τύποι of the gods in their cities (6A 2.2). But such τύποι played a role, not only in pagan mysteries examples of which came to be associated with the Imperial Cult, but also in ambassadorial processions.

Robert points to the way in which small statues (ιερώματα or ἀγαλμάτια) were carried by individuals and groups such as merchants in their clothing.⁷⁴ Furthermore, he notes that these small idols were described in Josephus as τύποι, with reference to Rachel's idols in *Gen.* 31, 31–35.⁷⁵ Furthermore, the purpose of such ornaments was not simply general individual devotion or ἀποτροπή. There were “éléments d'un lairare portatif” in groups that carried images of their common, protecting gods. The Alexandrine *Acts of the Pagan Martyrs* describe two embassies, Alexandrian and Jewish, the former of which has as their spokesman Hermaiscus, who argued their respective cases before the tribunal of Trajan.⁷⁶ Regarding the Alexandrians, it is recorded that they were: ἕκαστοι βαστάζοντες τοὺς ἰδίους θεοῦς (*l.* 17–18). Furthermore βαστάζειν is a technical term meaning “to carry in a procession.” “The bust of Sarapis (Σαράπιδος προτομή) which the ambassadors were carrying (ἦν ἐβάσταζον οἱ πρέσβεις)

⁷⁴ Robert *Opera Min. Sel.* 5 (1989), pp. 751–755 (= *CRAI* (1981), pp. 517–521).

⁷⁵ Josephus, *Antiquit.*, I,9,10 (= 322): ‘Ραχήλα πυνθανομένη κατατίθησι τοὺς τύπους εἰς τὴν σάγγην τῆς φερούσης αὐτὴν καμήλου.

⁷⁶ Robert, *Opera Min. Sel.* 5 (1989), pp. 764–765 (= *CRAI* (1981), pp. 530–531); H.A. Musurillo, *The Acts of the Pagan Martyrs, Acta Alexandrinorum*, (New York: Arno Press 1979), 8, pp. 44–48.

suddenly began sweating (αἰφνίδιον ἴδρωσεν),” and the miracle caused consternation (*l.* 51–55).

We have furthermore the epigraphical remains of a letter of Caracalla to Ephesus (A.D. 200–205). In one part of the inscription separate from the main body of the letter we have Caracalla’s comments on the members of the embassy who have presented their city’s congratulations to the emperor on his victory over the Parthians. When he says: [ἃ δὲ π]ροεπρέσβευεν ἡ πάτριος ὑμῶν θεὸς Ἄρτεμις, he means that “your ancestral goddess Artemis heads the embassy” because her image is literally carried at the embassy’s head. To parallel Ignatian usage, we may say that, in the ambassadorial procession, the τύπος τῆς ὑμῶν θεοῦ Ἀρτέμιδος is “pre-eminent (προκαθημένος),” just as in Ignatius’ martyr procession, as in his Christian cult, the bishop is προκαθημένος εἰς τύπον θεοῦ ὑμῶν. Just as in the *Acts of the Pagan Martyrs* the τύπος of Serapis caused wonder at Rome by the miracle that it produced, so too Ignatius, who bears the τύπος of the suffering God, will in the arena confront Rome’s power as the bishop from the East confronts the Emperor from the West.⁷⁷

But the concept of πρεσβεία is related to Ignatius’ imperial background in other and more general ways than the bearing of images alone. The election of deacons as ambassadors in *Philadelphians* and *Smyrnaeans* was related to the situation in Ignatius’ Church of Antioch in Syria. Undoubtedly, and at very least, such elections of delegations from the leaders of communities was a general feature of the formal relations between the city states in Asia Minor, and can be understood by analogy with such civic relations.⁷⁸ But what was the purpose of this embassy and what sense can be made of it against such a contemporary background?

I believe Schoedel to be correct in identifying a divided Christian community at Antioch which has found peace, rather than a Church persecuted externally.⁷⁹ We may note from the example of *Clement Cor.* that such an external threat may follow, not in terms of a general persecution, but from the civil consequences of internal divisions for a community divided by internal strife and the need for the authorities to intervene. But there is still a problem regarding the purpose and meaning of the election and sending of these clerical

⁷⁷ See also footnotes 46–49.

⁷⁸ Thus Schoedel (1985), p. 213.

⁷⁹ Schoedel (1985), pp. 10–12, 248–251.

ambassadors even on the view that strife had given way to peace within a divided Christian community.

Why should Ignatius have considered it necessary to send representatives whose office he conceived in terms of ambassadors in order to rejoice with them in the gathered Eucharistic assembly? Ambassadors were usually sent to confer some benefit or mark of regard, in particular upon the emperor in connection with his cult. Ignatius considers the imperial virtues of *ὁμόνοια* and *εἰρήνη* as essential features of any Christian community that by its very nature will be marked by the threefold hierarchy.⁸⁰ These were also the divine qualities associated with Augustus' act of augury and continued sacramentally in his cult, as we have shown.

I propose, therefore, that we should understand references to a clerical *πρεσβεία* in the Ignatian letters in the light of the *πρέσβεις* associated with the inscriptions of the Imperial Cult.

We have the decree of the People (*δῆμος*) and Council (*γερουσία*) of Sardis honouring Menogenes son of Isidore. He was to become priest of Roma and Augustus shortly after his selection as an ambassador on an embassy to Augustus, to seek approval for the consecration of a day commemorating his grandson Gaius' assumption of the *toga praetextata*. Here the usual provisions for an imperial cultic celebration are prescribed.

... all in resplendent clothes shall wear crowns (*ἐν λαμπραῖς ἐσθήσιν στεφανηφορεῖν ἅπαντας*), and the *strategoī* each year shall present sacrifices to the gods (*Θ[υ]σίας τε παριστάναι τοῖς θεοῖς τοὺς κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν στρατηγούς*) and make prayers through the sacred heralds for his safety (*καὶ κατευχὰς ποιεῖσθαι διὰ τῶν ἱεροκηρύκων ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτοῦ*), and they shall set up and consecrate his statue in the shrine of his father (*συνκαθιερωσαί τε ἄγαλμα αὐτοῦ τῷ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐνιδρύνοντας ναῶ*)... and an embassy be sent on these matters to go to Rome (*πρεσβήαν τε ὑπὲρ τούτων στείλαι τὴν ἀφιξομένην εἰς Ῥώμην*) and to congratulate him and Augustus (*καὶ συναγαρησομένην αὐτῷ τε καὶ τῷ Σε [β]αστῷ*)... and there were chosen as ambassadors (*καὶ ἡρέθησαν πρέσβεις*) Iollas son of Metrodorus and Menogenes son of Isidore...

IGRR 4, 1756 I, l. 10–23

Following the cultic provisions, *πρέσβεις* are therefore duly appointed, whose function is to take the provisions for the extension of the

⁸⁰ *εὐταξία* for the possession of which Onesimus, bishop of Ephesus, praises his congregation (*Ephes.* 6,2); cf. Clement *Cor.* 37,2; 40,1.

Imperial Cult to Rome for the approval of those whom the cult honours. "Emperor Caesar son of God, Augustus, high priest . . ." replies in approval (*IGRR* 4,1756 II).⁸¹

The πρέσβεις function therefore as proclaimers of the cult, who convey its benefits to their fellow-citizens. A similar idea surrounds Ignatius' cultic procession which proclaims as a counter-culture arising from the East the reverse image of the Imperial Cult of the West as it arrives at the latter's arena of sacrifice. This is why he will also change the names of civic officials to give them a Christian meaning, as when he calls a πρεσβύτης a θεοπρεσβύτης, or a ἡμεροδρόμος a θεοδρόμος.

Furthermore there is epigraphical evidence of πρέσβεις who accompanied the emperor. These θεοπρεσβύται should therefore return and accompany the martyr-bishop from the East, as the counterpart to the emperor and his cult in the West. Πρεσβευταί clearly accompany Julius Caesar as general (*Syll.*³ 761 A, l. 2-5), where Callistus of Knidos (48/47 B.C.) is described as "coming to Greece (γενόμενος ἐπὶ τῆς Ἑλλάδος) in the company of the imperator (μ[ετὰ τοῦ αὐτοκρ]άτορος) and in the company of his ambassadors (καὶ μετὰ τῶν ἐκείνου πρεσβευτῶν).

We can see how the communities who support Ignatius' procession enlarge it by sending their own πρεσβεῖα to join it. To the Philadelphians he says:

. . . since according to your prayer (ἐπειδὴ κατὰ τὴν προσευχὴν ὑμῶν) . . . it has been announced (ἀπηγγέλη μοι) to me that the Church in Antioch in Syria is at peace (εἰρηνεύειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τὴν ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ τῆς Συρίας), it is fitting for you (πρέπον ἐστὶν ὑμῖν) as a church of God (ὡς ἐκκλησία Θεοῦ) to elect a deacon to conduct God's embassy there (χειροτονῆσαι διάκονον εἰς τὸ πρεσβεῦσαι ἐκεῖ Θεοῦ πρεσβεῖαν), in order to rejoice with them when assembled (εἰς τὸ συγχαρῆναι αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ γενομενοῖς) and to glorify the name (καὶ δοξάσαι τὸ ὄνομα) . . .

Philad. 10,1

Though Ignatius mentions that it is a deacon who acts as a πρεσβύτης (πρεσβεῦσαι) here, he goes on to assert that such an office can be also exercised by bishops and presbyters.⁸²

⁸¹ Ehrenberg and Jones (1954) no. 99 (= *IGRR* 4, 1756 = I. *Sardis* 7,1,8, l. 12-14); Price (1984), p. 66 and p. 259 cat. no. 56.

⁸² *Philad.* 10, 2: ὡς καὶ αἱ ἔγγιστα ἐκκλησῖαι ἔπεμψαν ἐπισκόπους, αἱ δὲ πρεσβυτέρους καὶ διακόνους.

Thus the ἐκκλησία θεοῦ in Philadelphia sent an elected deacon as an ambassador and no doubt welcomed him on his return and received his report (ἀποπρεσβεία). Like the embassy (πρεσβείαν) of Menogenes, that would travel to Rome and greet Gaius and Augustus (τὴν ἀφιξομένην εἰς Ῥώμην καὶ συγχαρησομένην αὐτῷ τε καὶ τῷ Σεβαστῷ), so too this deacon as ambassador is to greet the gathered Church in Antioch (εἰς τὸ συγχαρῆναι αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ γενομενοῖς). This deacon however will not proclaim the cult of Augustus and sacrifices for Gaius' birthday, but rather the progress of the martyr's procession. They are "to glorify the name (καὶ δοξάσαι τὸ ὄνομα)" of Christ which is associated with both Ignatius' martyrdom and the peace of Christ's sacrifice of which that martyrdom is an image or τύπος.

Ignatius informs those who are "inflamed by the blood of God (ἀναξωπυρήσαντες ἐν αἵματι θεοῦ)," that it is "for the common name (ὑπὸ τοῦ κοινοῦ ὀνόματος)" that he goes bound (δεδεμένον) to the arena (θηριομαχήσαι). "To suffer reproach for the name (ὄνειδίζεσθαι)" is a common martyrological sentiment (1 *Pet.* 4,14). But here it is qualified by the adjective κοινός and indicates that what he does is shared in common with all those churches through which his procession passes and which respond to his *apellatio*.

Κοινόν was, after all, the name of the "Commonwealth of Asia" (Κοινὸν τῆς Ἀσίας) that organised a provincial Imperial Cult and elected an *archiereus*/asiarch. Menogenes is approved because he "acted also as an ambassador (πρεσβεύσας τε καὶ) to Caesar Augustus (πρὸς τὸν Σεβαστὸν Καίσαρα) on behalf of the Koinon of Asia (ὑπὲρ τε τοῦ κοινοῦ τῶν Ἑλλήνων)."⁸³ Just as the object of that cult was the *pax deorum*, so too Ignatius' cultic procession is involved with securing the *pax Christi*, and its ambassadors are concerned with that end. What "has been announced (ἀπηγγέλη μοι) to me," just as the glad tidings were announced (εὐαγγελίσθη) at Sardis of Gaius' celebration,⁸⁴ was that the Church in Antioch in Syria is at peace (εἰρηνεύειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τὴν ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ τῆς Συρίας). Furthermore, that peace was in accordance with the congregation's prayer (κατὰ τὴν προσευχὴν ὑμῶν), just as the prayers (κατευχάς) through the sacred heralds (διὰ τῶν ἱεροκηρῶν) at Sardis were for Gaius' safety (ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτοῦ).

⁸³ *IGRR* 4, 1756, X l. 104.

⁸⁴ See footnote 84.

Smyr. 11,2 contains similar sentiments regarding the appointment of an ambassador to *Philad.* 10,1. The person that “your church is to appoint for the honour of God (εἰς τιμὴν θεοῦ χειροτονῆσαι τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ὑμῶν)” is here called “God’s ambassador (θεοπρεσβύτην),” a combined expression indicative of some office in view. “To rejoice with (συγχαρῆναι)” the church of Antioch at peace (ὄτι εἰρηνεύουσιν) is also the purpose of the Smyrnaean θεοπρεσβύτης as it had been of the Philadelphian diaconal πρεσβεία. But this passage adds two features important for our discussion.

The first is that the character of that peace is defined. It is clearly a peace between members of a body politic. “Being at peace (εἰρηνεύουσιν)” means that “they have recovered their proper size (ἀπέλαβον τὸ ἴδιον μέγεθος), and their proper corporateness (τὸ ἴδιον σωματεῖον) has been restored (ἀπεκατεστάθη αὐτοῖς).” These lines emphasize once again how important to the community is what brings peace.

The second is that it is his martyr’s bonds that produce the prayer of the Christian cult that achieves this restoration of corporateness. It is the martyr in chains (δεσμά) whose ἀντίψυχον (*Smyr.* 10,2; *Pol.* 2; 6) is being prepared for the ready altar at Rome, and who is the victim occupying the central place in the procession that mediates through their prayer the peace of the Antiochene community. The prayer realising that end is to be accompanied by the appointment of a godly ambassador to complete it by an embassy that will go there to proclaim it:

Your prayer went out (ἡ προσευχὴ ὑμῶν ἀπῆλθεν) to the church of Antioch in Syria (ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τὴν ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ τῆς Συρίας), from whence bound with divinely glorious chains I salute all (ὅθεν δεδεμένος θεοπρεπεστάτοις δεσμοῖς πάντας ἀσπάζομαι) . . . so then, that your work may be completed both on earth and in heaven (ἵνα οὖν τέλειον ὑμῶν γένηται τὸ ἔργον καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς καὶ ἐν οὐρανῶ) . . . appoint a godly ambassador . . . etc.

The reference here to ἐπὶ γῆς καὶ ἐν οὐρανῶ reinforces the cosmic and cultic context of Ignatius’ martyr-procession.

In his letter to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, Ignatius requests the election (χειροτονῆσαι) “of someone (τινα) . . . who can be called ‘God’s runner’ (ὅς δυνήσεται θεοδρόμος καλεῖσθαι).” In order to appoint a θεοδρόμος, Polycarp is instructed “to summon a god-pleasing council (συμβούλιον ἀγαγεῖν θεοπρεπέστατον).”⁸⁵ (*Pol.* 7,2) It seems that

⁸⁵ In *IGRR* 4, 1756 II l. 32-33 Menogenes “completed (ἐτέλεσε) his embassy in

Ignatius here is providing in the function of θεοδρόμος, a Christian version of the ἡμεροδρόμος.⁸⁶ This term refers to a very fast runner or courier, who because of imperial business was allowed to use the *cursus publicus* (δρόμος δημόσιος).⁸⁷ Ignatius' companions were allowed to use the *cursus publicus* in his case as they were accompanying an official party with a prisoner in chains. It is therefore a further corroboration of Ignatius' triumphalism that he reassigns those who accompany him in the role of a condemned criminal's friends to the category of the official entourage of the bishop from the East rising, like the sun, against the Emperor from the West.

In *Philad.* 2,2 this term appears again, with reference to false teachers who have tried to take the θεοδρόμοι captives (τοὺς θεοδρόμους· αἰχμαλωτίζουσιν), no doubt in a figurative sense, and so impede the progress of the martyr-procession.⁸⁸ They are "many plausible wolves (πολλοὶ γὰρ λύκοι ἀξιόπιστοι)," guided "by evil pleasure (ἡδονῇ κακῇ)." Clearly "these will have no place in your unity (ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ ἐνότητι

a most well pleasing way (τὴν πρεσβῆαν εὐπρεπέστατα) worthily of the city (ἀξίως τῆς πόλεως)."

⁸⁶ Zahn's view (*Ignatius* p. 286 note 3), contradicted in Schoedel (1985), p. 278, would seem to be correct in view of the civic background in the city-states of Asia Minor that I have sketched here for both Ignatius and the *Apocalypse*. I cannot see why the use of θεοδρόμοι in *Philad.* 2,2 should deny that view since here the term is not used, as Schoedel says, "to Christians in general," but to members of the Ignatian cultic procession which the particular churches to which he writes have undertaken both in spirit and through representatives to join.

⁸⁷ For ἡμεροδρόμος see *SEG* 42, 1745 = *Syll.*³ 303 and Pausanius VI, 16,5 (Menacles of Elis. . . ἡμεροδρόμος of Alexander son of Philip). See also Livy 31,24: hemerodromos vocant Graeci ingens die uno cursu emetientes spatium. For their connection with the *cursus publicus* in imperial times, see H. Stephan, Das Verkehrsleben im Alterthum, in *Historisches Taschenbuch* (Ed. F. von Raumer) 9,4 (Leipzig: Brockhaus 1868), p. 93: "Der cursus publicus war nicht für jedermann benutzbar; es bestand kein regelmässiger, fortlaufender Postengang mit vorher festgesetzten Abgangs-, Ankunfts- und Beförderungszeiten; vielmehr fand die Beförderung nur statt, wenn gerade Depeschen oder Reisenden vorkamen . . ." See also H.G. Pflaum, Essai sur Le Cursus Publicus sous le haut-empire Romain, in *Extrait des mémoires présentés par divers savants à L'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 14, (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale 1940), pp. 22-61.

⁸⁸ Cf. Cicero's complaint against Piso's administration of Macedonia as governor and his accusations the the latter had allowed *obsessio militaris viae*, (*In Pison.* 40): See also Pflaum (1940), p. 32: "La militaris via . . . dont il s'agit est La Via Egnatia, qui traverse de bout en bout la province de Pison. Cette route n'est pas seulement infestée par les invasions ennemies, elle est marquée par des camps thraces . . ."

⁸⁹ Note the use of the *ager publicus* by fraudulent persons mentioned in Justinian (Modestinus), *Dig.*, XLVIII, 10,27,2: "Qui se pro milite gessit vel illicitis insignibus usus est vel falso diplomate vias commeavit, pro admissi qualitate gravissime puniendus est." See also Pflaum (1940), p. 125.

ὁμῶν οὐχ ἕξουσιν τόπον),” that is the unity of nascent episcopal Order being reinforced by the procession of the martyr-bishop of Antioch and effecting peace in his home Church. Indeed they are like highway robbers attacking the bishop whose legitimacy is vindicated in his martyr sacrifice as τύπος of the suffering God.

PART C. ORDER IN CLEMENT, IGNATIUS AND THE *APOCALYPSE*

In this and our last two chapters (4-6) we have examined three early Christian writers: Clement of Rome, the Seer of the *Apocalypse*, and Ignatius. Having established their background in Domitian’s reign, we have compared their developing views of ecclesiastical Order over against the developments in the Imperial Cult in his reign. Clement’s Christian background in Rome was clearly unrelated to that of Ignatius and the *Apocalypse* in Asia Minor. The Church Order of Clement, *Corinthians* was clearly not that of Ignatius’ Syria, when the former envisaged a church governed by a plurality of ἐπίσκοποι-πρεσβύτεροι as successors of the apostles, whereas the latter by a single bishop as a representation of God the Father. We saw, however, that, despite great dissimilarities, there were clear connections between the *Apocalypse* and Ignatius. We explained those dissimilarities in terms of a rapid historical development that separated the communities of Asia Minor in A.D. 85–95 from those which emerged in 107–118.

Despite the lack of connection between Clement on the one hand, and Ignatius and the *Apocalypse* on the other, we detected the Imperial Cult as background to all three writers. In Clement we found reflections of the ideology of that Cult, and to our picture we were able to add the iconography of the *Apocalypse*, and theology of Ignatius. In Clement’s doxology the values of imperial unity found expression, and the ends desired through that unity (εἰρήνη, ὁμόνοια, ὑγεία) were requested from the Christian God (4B 1.2.2).

Clement’s view of the στάσις of his community as ἀνόσιος revealed the fears, deep seated in his Imperial Culture, of an upsetting of cultic order that would lead to κίνδυνος for the social and political order (4B 3). As such he was reflecting the perspective of the late Republic and early Empire both exemplified by and formed in the program of the *Res Gestae*. The perceived extraordinary and portentous collapse of both the natural and metaphysical order required by an extraordinary act of augury, the *augurium salutis* celebrated by

Augustus when he initiated his reformed, Imperial Cult (2A 5–6). Clement assured both himself and his circle that the Christian cultus, with its Order in terms of Apostolic Succession (4B 1.1–4B 1.2), could banish more truly and therefore effectively than the Imperial Cult both the political and metaphysical disorder that every good Roman citizen, whether in Italy or in Asia Minor, feared (4B 2.2 and 4B 3).

We saw regarding the *Apocalypse* that general relations between the Letters to the Churches and the Imperial Cult had been well established by Ramsay and Hemer (5B 1). We then documented further links between the Letters and the main text of the *Apocalypse* (5B 2). Inscriptional and numismatic evidence illuminated the cultic scene around the heavenly altar in which clear reflections of the Imperial Cult were revealed. Specific examples of such reflections were the ὑμνωδοί and πρεσβύτεροι, the εἰκόνες and the imperial mysteries, the προεδρίαί as places of honour for notable spectators and the concomitants of sacrifice such as φιάλαι and white robed worshippers, στεφανηφόροι and στέφανοι χρυσοί, etc. (5B 2.1–2.2.5). We saw in the praises of the prayers and the hymns of the *Apocalypse* typical themes (δόξα, εὐχαριστία, κράτος, σωτηρία, δύναμις, ἰσχύς, πλοῦτος and εὐλογία) of ambassadorial panegyrics in connection with the Imperial Cult (5B 3.1–3.3).

Having established the general background to the *Apocalypse* in the experience of the Imperial Cult in Asia Minor, we then returned to our specific thesis of the relationship between Church Order and the Imperial Cult as a contra-cultural relationship. We argued that there was a historical relationship between the communities of Asia Minor addressed by the Seer, and those to whom Ignatius of Antioch was to write some 10–15 years later (6A 1). In the light of that relationship we were able to use Ignatius' claims about Church Order in his contemporary situation to illuminate the historical situation as witnessed by the *Apocalypse* out of which those claims had developed. We saw that one typology of representation found in Ignatius was also shared by him with the Seer. The angels of the churches embodied the corporate personalities of the communities that they represented as did the Ignatian clerics (6A 1.1.2). We saw also that the heavenly liturgy of the *Apocalypse* was replicated in both the Hippolytan horseshoe of the presbyterate seated liturgically around the bishop's throne, and in Ignatius' description of the presbyteral πνευματικὸς στέφανος at the Eucharist (6A 1.1).

In so far as those cultic scenes, whether of a heavenly or earthly Church Order, were reflections of the Imperial Cult, they were contra-cultural reflections (6A 1.1.2). In another kind of Ignatian typology of Order, that of the threefold, clerical τύποι, we gave epigraphic and literary evidence from the iconography of the cult that established here also a contra-cultural relationship (6A 2.1–2.2). We established Ignatius' conception of his martyrdom in terms of an imperial cultic procession (6B) in which as bishop he served as τύπος, as the bearer of the divine image and expositor of the Christian mysteries (σεβαστοφάντης/θεοφόρος) in which diaconal πρέσβεις played a parallel role to that of their pagan counterpart in the inscriptions of the Imperial Cult (6B 2.2). In this parallel the imperial games played the role of the cult of those gathered for the Eucharist at Rome around the θυσιαστήριον ἔτοιμον (6B 1).

Thus we have established a relationship between the development of Order both at Rome with Clement, or in Asia Minor with the Seer and Ignatius, which supports our contra-cultural thesis. The Christian group in each case, marginalised and denied status by the wider culture in view of its non-conformity with the state religion, constructs a counter culture which constitutes a system of reversed values and status, thus awarding its members significance and esteem denied to them by the wider culture. The construction of a Christian contra-culture, with its Order and Ministry, was a creative act providing a solution to a social predicament.

We shall now see how the process continues in the literature of the Church Order and Apostolic Succession in the late second and early third century as witnessed in Hegesippus and Irenaeus, and in Pseudo Hippolytus and the Clementines. We shall trace as the governing principle a Neo-Platonic metaphysics of social order that severely modified if not replaced the earlier Stoic conception, and the negation by that metaphysics of anarchic, Gnostic individualism.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN MONARCHIANISM

Severan Universalism, the Imperial Cult, and Christian Apologists

The close of the second century and the beginning of the third was to see the final development of an ideology of imperial unity based upon a religious syncretism and expressed in the iconography applied to the emperor's person. The *Constitutio Antoniniana*, drawn up by Caracalla, gave citizenship generally throughout the Empire to all inhabitants of towns and villages beyond the cities.¹ The motive for the policy cannot simply have been the extension of taxation² or an attack upon the senatorial aristocracy.³ One inscription makes it clear that the primary motivation was religious, and that it was an extension of the Imperial Cult.⁴ The emperor and his consort were to possess the religious function of effecting sacramentally the unity of the empire for which the extension of citizenship contained the hope. Caracalla appears on coins as the Lord of the world and the reflection of the divine light of the sun, permeating all things and creating universal order.⁵

In this respect we shall see, in Chapter 8, that what Elagabalus

¹ Justinian Ulpian, *Dig.* I,5,17: "Idem (sc. Ulpianus) libro vicensimo secundo ad edictum. In orbe Romano qui sunt ex constitutione imperatoris Antonini cives Romani effecti sunt." Cf. S.N. Miller, Caracalla, in *CAH* xii, pp. 45–47.

² F. Millar, The date of the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, in *JEGArch* 48 (1962), pp. 124–131.

³ Cf. M. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, (Oxford: Clarendon 1957), pp. 418–428.

⁴ A.H.M. Jones, Another Interpretation of the *Constitutio Antoniana*, in *JRomS*, 26,2 (1936), pp. 223–225; J. Stroux, Die *Constitutio Antoniana*, in *Phil* 88 (42) (1933), pp. 272–295, inscription cited p. 294: τοιγαροῦν νομίζω οὕτω με [γαλοπρεπῶς καὶ θεοσεβ]ῶς δύνασθαι τῇ μεγαλειότητι αὐτῶν τὸ ἱκανὸν ποιεῖν εἰ τοσάκις μυρίους ὀσάκις ἐὰν ὑπεισέλθωσιν εἰς τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἀνθρώπους [συνθύοντα] εἰς τὰ ἱερὰ τῶν θεῶν συνεισενέγκομι, cited also in W.C.H. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church*, (Oxford: Blackwell 1965), p. 338. See also F. Ghedini, Giulia Domna tra Oriente ed Occidente: Le fonti archeologiche, in *La Fenice, Collana di Scienze dell' Antichità* 5, (Roma: «L'Erma» di Bretschneider 1984), pp. 57–90, 122–160.

⁵ See also A. Brent, Hippolytus and the Roman Church in the Third Century: Communities in Tension before the Emergence of a Monarch-Bishop, in *Suppl. VCh* 31 (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1995), pp. 84–85.

attempted with such disastrous effects was an overtly dogmatic variant on a general theme rather than a radical variation. The Sun God of Emesa was to be finally integrated into the iconography of the Imperial Cult, as the later development of the cult of *Sol Invictus* under Aurelian (270–275) was continued too by his successor Probus (276–282), whose coins exult his person as *solī invicto comiti*.⁶ But previously, from Marcus Aurelius onwards, we shall find a general assimilation of certain oriental cults with the imperial iconography in order to service an ideology of imperial unity. The Severan policy of incorporating all cultures within the one empire found religious expression in the Imperial Cult, and the syncretistic association with it of such universalistic cults as Isis and Sarapis, of Mithras, and of the Unconquered Sun.

In support of the imperial ideal was an important religious philosophy of a Platonism that was to develop into the Neo-Platonism of Plotinus, that stressed against Gnostic individualism the unity of Man, the Cosmos, and society, and the derived being of each from an ultimate principle of unity that was the highest good. The identification of such deities with the Sun was reinforced by a Neoplatonic understanding of the ultimate principle of reality in the One reflected in diverse appearances. The corresponding political expression of that cosmic unity was in the emperor's person and that of his consort. Thus the iconography of power and authority was duly assimilated to a religious iconography evocative of such underlying philosophical assumptions. It is with the development of such syncretistic themes in the practice of the Imperial Cult that we shall be concerned in Part A, which will lead us, in Part B, to consider the underlying pagan, philosophical ontology.

We shall trace the correspondence between the political sense of *μοναρχία* and the ontological significance of this term. Gnosticism was refuted by later Neo-Platonism by means of an ontology which reduced the cosmic chaos of Gnosticism to an order generated by an ultimate and final good first principle. There was a counterpart to this ontological refutation in political ideology according to which the chaos of individual kingdoms was reduced to a single united empire.

In the context of a sociology of knowledge, we shall argue that

⁶ *RIC* 5,2, p. 108 no. 829 and W.C.H. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd 1984), p. 440.

there was a relationship between the cultural perspective in which the philosophy of Plotinus was to flourish, and the imperial ideal that found expression in the Severan dynasty. Here we will identify a religious syncretism that was able to associate universalizable cults of the empire with the Imperial Cult. Thus Egypt and Syria with Asia Minor of the East, and Rome of the West, were united in the expression of a common imperial unity of all cultures and religions. We shall pursue a parallelism between such pagan social developments and the development of Christian orthodoxy and Order in Part C.

The writers and writings that we have discussed (*Luke, Apocalypse, Clement, and Ignatius*) between the late first and early second century and the age of Cyprian exhibited two sets of changes in both the conceptions of Church Order and Imperial Order that clearly ran parallel with each other. Those changes were to develop further between the end of the second century and the first fifty years of the third. In the case of Church Order, we will find the development of ontological ideas about the triune Godhead, paralleling political ideas of apostolic succession and episcopal Order, as guaranteeing the validity and ultimate unity of the Church. In the case of Imperial Order, *μοναρχία*, or the ontological idea that all power within the universe is derived from a single ultimate source or origin, will be essential to the political *μοναρχία* of the imperial ideal. Both sets of ideas are related, we shall argue, in the context of the sociology of knowledge.⁷ The development of a sociology of knowledge by such writers as Berger and Luckmann⁸ have strengthened and confirmed, in a variety of areas, the insights of Peterson, which we will seek to develop.⁹ Within a sociology of knowledge paradigm, the essential philosophical principle of the *monarchia* or ultimate single first principle from which all reality must be derived is, despite the objections of

⁷ I would not deny in employing a sociology of knowledge any ultimate claims to truth that theological discourse might additionally make. This was a distinction well made by P. Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion*, (London: Penguin 1973), Appendix 2. I would therefore support E. Osborn, *The Beginning of Christian Philosophy*, (Cambridge: U.P. 1981), chapter 2 in seeing a tension between Neo-Platonism and Christian revelation which both used and redefined this philosophy.

⁸ P. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, (London: Penguin 1967), and Berger (1973).

⁹ E. Peterson, *Der Monotheismus als politisches Problem. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der politischen Theologie im Imperium Romanum*, (Leipzig: 1935) = *Theologische Traktate*, (München 1951).

Schindler and others, related to the political claims of monarchical, imperial rule.¹⁰

We shall argue that both pseudo-Hippolytus and the *Clementines* are influenced also by a metaphysics of unity that regards what is real and true as derived from some ultimate historical origin. Neoplatonism represented such a metaphysics to which Ammonius Saccas and Plotinus gave expression, and was quite distinct from the Stoic monism that preceded it. It was this metaphysic that also increasingly underlay such expressions of imperial unity that are found in the Severan iconography and the writers of the circle of Julia Domna. Here we find once again a reflection of imperial order in ecclesiastical order such as we witnessed in Ignatius, and in the Stoicism of Clement *Corinthians*. We shall consider the correspondence between pagan political ideology and the development of Church Order.

In C we shall consider the developing Monarchianism of the Apologists regarding the Godhead, and their denial of the concept of *μοναρχία* to paganism, and hence to the political monarchy that such an ontological concept was intended to legitimate.

The final focus of this development will be the controversy between Callistus and the author of the *Elenchos*, which will be my next and final chapter (Chapter 8). There I will draw upon the valuable insights of Dal Covolo.¹¹ The events of A.D. 217 were to witness the accusation against Callistus both of Monarchianism in the Trinity and the transgression of ecclesiastical boundaries in his attempt to construct a monarchical episcopacy. The development in ontology was indeed parallel with developments in political ideology and reflected them. Thus the contra-culture that is developing Christian Order continues as it began to reflect the images of the pagan culture on which it is parasitic.

Let us begin, therefore, by considering how, in the course of the second century, Egypt and Syria were to make their contribution to the iconography and the theology of the Imperial Cult, as Asia Minor and the Greek city states had made theirs in the first century.

¹⁰ A. Schindler (Ed.), *Monotheismus als politisches Problem? Eric Peterson und die Kritik der politischen Theologie*, (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn 1978).

¹¹ E. Dal Covolo, I Severi e il cristianesimo: Ricerche sull'ambiente storico-istituzionale delle origini cristiane tra il secondo e il terzo secolo, in *Biblioteca di Scienze Religiose*, 87 (Libreria Atheno Salesiano: Rome 1989).

PART A. ANTECEDENTS OF THE SEVERAN REFORMATION

Eastern ideas of monarchy were to prevail in consequence of the gradual development of the imperial ideology throughout the second century. Their formal adoption in the West under Diocletian replaced the continuing sham republican forms and imagery that until his reign masked a military despotism. But what was to triumph with Aurelian, Diocletian, and Constantine, the latter of whom at one point found the cult of *Sol Invictus* attractive,¹² had a long gestation in the developing syncretism of the second century. The development of those political ideas was accompanied by the kind of philosophical picture of a monarchical cosmos that also had a long gestation before Plotinus, as we shall see in Part B.

The development in the second century of an iconography of adopted Eastern deities such as Isis and *Sol Invictus* expressed the syncretism that was justified by such a new version of Aristotle's philosophy read through Platonist eyes. But we can go further. It was not simply a general, personal interest in such Eastern religions, as we might infer from Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, or Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*. Such developments were organised in terms of the iconography of the Imperial Cult that incorporated the products of such syncretism, and its philosophic justification, into its own structure and rationale.

Let us now look at the epigraphical evidence for the appropriation by the Emperor and his family of such developing themes both in religious practice and the philosophy of religion that gave them rational justification.

7A 1. *The recognition of Eastern cults before the Severans*

The ontological unity, transmitted through hierarchical gradation, to which Plotinus was to give expression, was paralleled by those cults such as Isis, Mithras, or *Dea Caelestis* that united the pantheon around a single divinity increasingly identified with *Sol Invictus*. The analogy of the sun, so useful to Plotinus in expounding the communication of reality from the One to the many, proved also useful theologically in pointing to that with which the supreme deity was to be

¹² A.H.M. Jones, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin 1972), pp. 96-99.

identified and from which the subordinate relations of other deities introduced into the pantheon could be duly drawn.

Let us now examine how, before the radical development that was the Severan Reformation, these universalistic Eastern cults came to commend themselves to the iconography of the Imperial Cult.

7A 1.1. *Isis and Sarapis*

Isis was originally an Egyptian deity, but, like the Syrian Dea Caelestis, Cybele, or the Persian Mithras was, as Takács points out, integrated into an existing Graeco-Roman model derived from the basic structure of the Eleusinian and Dionysiac mysteries. They were to receive an *interpretatio Romana*, and Plutarch at least was to show how a developing Neoplatonism provided the framework of that *interpretatio*.¹³ But let us see first of all how an Isis theology established the parallelism that we are to claim with Neoplatonic ontology and the political ideology of imperial unity.

The claims made by her worshippers for Isis within the pantheon of divinities are truly imperial. In her hymn, inscribed in the Iseum in Cyrene (103 B.C.) on a marble tablet, she reveals herself as “Isis only ruler of the age (τύραννος Εἷσις αἰῶνος μόνη) . . . who holds the sceptre (σκήπτρ’ ἔχουσα).” She continues: “All call me Goddess most High (καλοῦσι δὴ με πάντες ὑψίστην θεόν), the greatest of all gods who are in heaven (πάντων μεγίστην τῶν ἐν οὐρανῶ θεῶν).”¹⁴ In a first century hymn from Egypt she is addressed as “Queen of the Gods, endowed with wealth (πλουτοδοτί βασιλεία θεῶν), Lady Thermouthis (Ἐρμοῦθι ἄνασσα), Mistress of the world (παντοκράτρια), Good Fortune (Τύχη Ἀγαθή), Isis of great name (μεγαλῶννυμε Ἴσι), Most High goddess (Δηοῖ ὑψίστη), discoverer of all life (ζωῆς εὐρέτρια πάσης).”¹⁵ The inscription continues:

All kinds of works were your care (παντοίων ἔργων ἐμέλησέ σοι), so that you grant to men life and good order (ὄφρ’ ἀναδοίης ἀνθρώποισι βίον τε καὶ εὐνομίην τε ἅπασι), and have discovered and made known the laws (καὶ θεσμούς κατέδειξας) in order that righteousness might endure (ἵν’ εὐδική τις ὑπάρχη) . . . For your sake (σοῦ τε χάριν) the celestial sphere and the whole earth are brought together (συνέστηχ’ ὁ πόλος καὶ γαῖα ἅπασα), and the rushing winds and the sun with its sweet rays (καὶ

¹³ S.A. Takács, *Isis and Sarapis in the Roman world*, in *EPRO* 124 (1995), p. 2.

¹⁴ *SEG* 9,1, 192 l. 4–8.

¹⁵ *SEG* 8,1, 548 l. 1–4.

πνοιαὶ ἀνέμων καὶ ἥλιος ὁ γλυκυφεγγής), by your power (σῆ δυνάμει) all the rivers of the Nile run full (Νείλου ποταμοὶ πληροῦνται ἅπαντες) . . .¹⁶

Isis now embraces other deities whose names are recorded as equivalent to her own. Both Plutarch and Pseudo-Hippolytus were to claim that Plato learned his philosophy from Egyptian priests, so that the true origin of that philosophy was Egyptian, even though, as we shall see, both Diogenes Laertius and Philostratus, within the circle of Julia Domna, were to claim a different origin or ἀρχή. We see in this and other inscriptions the claim that all religion has its ultimately real historical origin in Egypt and Isis worship, of which all other religions are but less perfect reflections or even corruptions. The name of Isis is “greatly honoured by all (πολυτίμητον παρὰ πᾶσι),” whether by Greek or by Barbarians, but each use their own expressions (φωναῖσι ἰδίαις). The Syrians call her Astarte or Artemis, the Greeks Hera, Aphrodite, Hestia, Rhea and Demeter. The Egyptians call her Thermouthis.¹⁷ “Great Isis (Ἰσι μεγίστη)” clearly merits her title “many named (πολυώνυμε).”¹⁸

Her powers, indeed the powers of the individual goddesses that she unites in her person, are not simply over the natural but also over the social order. “Great Isis” also is “she who delivers from war both cities and citizens (ἐκ πολέμου ῥυμένη τε πόλεις πάντα τε πολίτας), themselves and their wives and possessions and dear children (αὐτοὺς καὶ ἀλόχους καὶ κτήματα καὶ φίλα τέκνα).”¹⁹ Similarly we have from the Augustan age an aretologia of Isis from Cumae, inscribed on a stele, which lists the universality of Isis, and her rule over nature, society, and individual life, in some fifty six ἐγὼ or ἐγὼ εἰμι claims, beginning Εἷσις ἐγὼ εἰμι ἢ τύραννος πάσης χώρας, and which include the giving of laws²⁰ and her presence in the rays of the sun.²¹

We must therefore now look at how such a cult came first to be viewed with suspicion at Rome, and then to be accepted into the pantheon.

¹⁶ *SEG* 8,1, 548 l. 4–10.

¹⁷ *SEG* 8,1, 548 l. 14–24.

¹⁸ *SEG* 8,1, 548 l. 26 cf. also 549 l. 1.

¹⁹ *SEG* 8,1, 548 l. 27–28.

²⁰ *I.G.* 12 *suppl.* p. 98: 14A = *EG* 4 p. 138: 4 ἐγὼ νόμους ἀνθρώποις ἐθέμην καὶ ἐνομοθέτησα ἃ οὐθεὶς δύναται μεταθεῖναι and p. 139: 52 ἐγὼ εἰμι ἢ θεσμοφόρος καλουμένη.

²¹ *I.G.* 12 *suppl.* p. 98: 14A = *EG* 4 p. 139: 44 ἐγὼ ἐν ταῖς τοῦ ἡλίου ἀυγαῖς εἰμι. 45 ἐγὼ παρεδρεύω τῇ τοῦ ἡλίου πορείᾳ.

7A 1.1.1. *The reception of Isis as political iconography*

In late Republican times, Isiac religious symbols began to penetrate into the private space of the villas of the wealthy senatorial aristocracy. From the time of the Social War, during the 80s B.C., various coins were minted showing Isiac symbols.²² But in 58, 53 and 48 B.C. senatorial action was taken against the cult.²³ Tiberius' reign marked the repression of the cult of Isis.²⁴ But nevertheless we find an inscription from Egypt (A.D. 23) in which Julia Sebaste is described as *νέα Ἴσις* (*IGRR* 1, 1150). Here clearly the Greek East that originally petitioned Augustus to be allowed to offer him a divine cult continues a policy which the Emperor himself as yet only partially accepts. But from Caligula's time the policy of aversion towards the cult of Isis had been considerably softened. Caligula appears to have either refurbished an existing Temple or commenced the building of a new one.

The Vespasian myth recorded the healing of a blind and lame man sent by Osiris to Vespasian as the incarnation of Horus, to whom Isis had given birth.²⁵ Here we are observing a slow assimilation of the eastern cult of Isis and Osiris into the imperial ideology, in which to be *divi filius* does not involve identification with the progeny of Venus alone. The devotees of Isis, into whose mysteries neither Caligula nor Vespasian were ever formally admitted, could readily assure the Emperor that Isis was *πολύωνυμος* and that identification with the son of one goddess did not preclude identification with the son of another.

Furthermore, such an assimilation could also be justified within the perspective of the Imperial Cult and its fundamental assumptions.

7A 1.1.2. *The reception of Isis and the pax deorum*

On the one hand one can regard Isiac rites as a *prava religio*, not conducted *more Romano*, and *non patrio sed externo ritu*. As such those rites bear the marks of a *superstitio* such as Tacitus held Christianity to be (3C 2.3). Thus one could regard the worship of Isis and Osiris as a threat to the *pax deorum* that the Principate was to claim, through

²² Takács (1995), pp. 33–40.

²³ For a thorough discussion of these actions and their precise historical location, with an analysis of the sources, see Takács (1995), pp. 56–70.

²⁴ Josephus, *Antiqu.*, 18, 66–80; Takács (1995), pp. 82–86.

²⁵ Tacitus, *Hist.* 4,81; Suetonius *Titus* 5,3 and Takács (1995), pp. 96–98.

its reform of republican religion, to have secured. This had been previously the position of the Senate regarding Isis in 58, 53 and 48 B.C., as was to be the position of Tiberius. But on the other hand, and within the same set of assumptions, it can equally be argued that the suppression of less extreme religious groups such as Isiacs will itself upset the *pax deorum*. The extension of the *pax Romana* to Egypt and Syria through imperial rule requires also the extension of the *pax deorum* to the gods who rule such places.

The incorporation of kings into the empire as subjects and clients thus requires as its counterpart the incorporation of such deities as Isis into the Roman pantheon. The process was both gradual and dynamic, and no doubt assisted by such an emperor as Vespasian who considered that the peace that he personally had secured out of the revolutionary chaos was a peace in which Isis had played a critical and supportive role. As Takács, to whose perceptive account I am here indebted, put it:

... the Roman ability and readiness to accept and integrate foreign ideas and cults was linked with the all-encompassing notion of the *pax deorum*. Roman control of geographical areas entailed acceptance of the area's deities. Since inclusiveness marked Roman paganism, the Roman pantheon contained indigenous as well as foreign deities. They could co-exist or fuse. The belief in the *pax deorum* and the resulting *pax hominum* encouraged this inclusiveness or openness.²⁶

Domitian rebuilt Caligula's temple on the Campus Martius.²⁷ In commemoration of this restoration, Domitian had erected an Obelisk, which stands today in the Piazza Navona, with a picture of himself being crowned by Isis. As Takács points out, the iconography was significant in that it reversed the tradition that Augustus had followed. According to that tradition, the ruler, whether Pharaoh or Emperor, stood before Osiris and Isis and gave them gifts.²⁸ Here therefore we have an adoption by Domitian of the Isiac iconography, and its significance for the worship of the ruler cult, for reasons that arise from the logic and developing legitimation of Roman imperial power.

²⁶ Takács (1995), p. 107.

²⁷ R.M. Krill, Roman Paganism under the Antonines and Severans, in *ANRW* 2,16,1, (1978), p. 33 following Suetonius, *Domit.*, 1,2: "... Isiaci celatus habitu interque sacrificulos variae superstitionis . . .," mentions that Domitian dressed as an Isiac. Takács (1995), pp. 99–100 disputes Suetonius account as "nothing more than a clever fiction."

²⁸ Takács (1995), p. 100.

Previously, in the example of Vespasian, the adoption of these Egyptian rites had been for personal reasons alone, namely personal gratitude for Isis' deliverance. Now they had become for Domitian part of the general logic of the cult for securing the general *pax deorum* in political matters.

It was with Hadrian that the acceptance originally refused by Tiberius was finally given to Sarapis and Isis.

7A 1.1.3. *Isis and the official iconography of imperial divinity*

The implications were accepted with their associated political ideology that Tiberius, in his anxiety to preserve the appearances of Republican forms, had originally denied. It was not simply that Hadrian also honoured Sarapis, consort of Isis, with a Sarapeum in his Villa. Coin types now appear towards the end of Hadrian's reign (A.D. 132–134) with Isis imposed on the star Sothis.²⁹ We have "Adventus" types from Alexandria in which Sarapis appears with *modius* on his head, and Isis with lotus on her head standing on the right. On the left stand Hadrian and Sabina facing them. Sarapis and Hadrian clasp their right hands over an altar, whilst Isis holds up a *sistrum* in her right hand, with Sabina holding an uncertain object.³⁰ The Imperial Cult was thus appropriating the iconography of a universal religion, of Isis *πολύνομος*, with a direct relevance to an ideology that saw divine power directly incarnated in the person of earthly rulers. Hadrian and Sabina were *τύποι* of Sarapis and Isis just as the emperor Elagabalus in his *εἰκόν* (A.D. 218) was to be associated with the *τύπος τοῦ ἐπιχωρίου θεοῦ* (Herodian V, 5,6–7), and Ignatius' bishop had been *τύπος πατρός*.

This typology of a universal imperialism expressed in terms of a universal cult was to be continued in the next reign. We have a coin from the mint of Rome late in the reign of Antoninus Pius, inscribed DIVA FAUSTINA, on the reverse side of which Isis is seated on a dog holding a *sistrum*.³¹ Likewise with Marcus Aurelius, we find two coins of his empress Faustina II where on the reverse of coins depicting her bust duly draped and inscribed FAUSTINA AUGUSTA, we find Isis with a lotus on her head, holding a *sistrum* with peacock and lion at her feet, or alternatively with a veil floating

²⁹ *RIC* 2, p. 444 no. 826 and Takács (1995), p. 106.

³⁰ *BMC* 3, pp. 339 and 489, cf. p. 485 for Isis alone.

³¹ *BMC* 4, p. 255.

above her head and with a ship with mast and sail spread.³² Furthermore coins whose reverse space show both Faustina and Isis together make the identification of Faustina II with Isis more secure. There is no evidence that Antoninus and Marcus and their consorts accepted initiation into the Isis mysteries as Hadrian had into the Dionysiac. We have here rather an example of an *interpretatio Romana* applied to the iconography of the Imperial Cult.³³

The appropriation of this iconography was suggested by the general cultural background, and not initiated by an intentional policy of universal imperialism backed by a supporting philosophical ontology. Commodus did not continue his predecessors' iconography on his coinage as such, but rather reverted to such legends as SERAPIDI CONSERVATORI.³⁴ There is clearly no identification here with the deity whose general protection is invoked. A similar account can also be given of the introduction of the cult of Cybele, at first experiencing initial hostility, but destined finally to be incorporated into the Roman pantheon. Cybele too was identified with the emperor through his consort well before the age of the Severans when Dea Caelestis and Artagatis became finally part of the imperial pantheon. To the pre-Severan period we can also assign recognition of Mithras by the Imperial Cult under the title of *Sol Invictus*.

7A 1.2. *Cybele and Magna Mater*

As early as 204 B.C. the rites of Cybele and Attis had been introduced into Rome with the foundation of the temple on the Palatine to *Magna Mater*. But the cult was confined to this temple alone, since at that time orgiastic rites were not considered part of normative Roman religion. However, even at that time there was an ambiguity about such a religious policy. The bringing of a copy of Cybele's image (ἀφίδρυμα) in response to a Sibylline oracle was part of an ideological strategy marking and legitimising the extension of Roman power and influence in the Greek East.³⁵

³² *BMC* 4, p. 545 n. 1006 (= H. Cohen, *Description Historique des Monnaies*, (Paris: Rollin and Feuardent 1884), nos C. 298, C. 299 and C. 304).

³³ Takács (1995), p. 112.

³⁴ *Ibid.* (1995), p. 113.

³⁵ Strabo 12, 567 (= *EPRO* 50 (1987) I,55): ἐπιφανὲς δ' ἐποίησαν Ῥωμαῖοι τὸ ἱερόν, ἀφίδρυμα ἐνθένδε τῆς θεοῦ μεταπεμψάμενοι κατὰ τοὺς τῆς Σιβύλλης χρησμούς, καθάπερ καὶ τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ τοῦ ἐν Ἐπιδαύρῳ. See also E.S. Gruen, *Studies in Greek Culture and Roman Policy*, in *Cincinnati Classical Studies*, VII (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1990),

From the beginning, therefore, we witness Eastern deities being accepted but within the ideological framework of an *interpretatio romana*. As with Isis, there was an imagery in Cybele's cult that well-suited *Magna Mater* in the role of a universal goddess from which all deity and thus all power and order could be derived, and, as it were, waiting for the emergence of an age that required such a systematic legitimation of its imperialism. Diodorus Siculus (3,57,3) describes her as Queen (βασιλεία) and eldest daughter of Uranus who becomes μεγάλη μήτηρ and μήτηρ θεῶν (3,59,8).

Certainly these titles can be seen extensively in inscriptions, as the indices to Vermaseren *EPRO* 50 I–IV (1978–1987) will show. To take some examples, we find, dating from the Roman period at Pergamon, a dedication to Phila, daughter of Menander, who is “priestess (τὴν ἰέρειαν) of the Mother the Queen (τῆς Μητρὸς τῆς βασιλείας).”³⁶ In Pessinus in Galatia, in the second half of the second century, we have a reference to Cybele as μήτηρ θεῶν.³⁷ More relevantly for our purpose we find mention of someone who is “lifelong priest (διὰ βίου ἱερέα) of the Mother of the Gods (Μητρὸς θεῶν) in an inscription to be dated either A.D. 70 or in the second half of the second century. The priest mentioned is also “six times high-priest of the *Augusti* in the Koinon of the Galatian *Sebastenoi* (τῶν τε Σεβαστῶν ἑξάκις ἀρχιερέα τοῦ κοινοῦ Σεβαστηνῶν Γαλατῶν),”³⁸ and σεβαστοφάντης of the imperial temple (τοῦ ναοῦ). The same is true for Tiberius Claudius Attius who, at the end of the first century A.D., is addressed as δις ἀρχιερέα τῶν Σεβαστῶν τοῦ κοινοῦ τῶν Γαλατῶν καὶ σεβαστοφάντην.³⁹

p. 10 who argues that the sending for the image of *Magna Mater* is a direct parallel with the obtaining of the Sibylline Books from the Delphic Oracle and their translation into Latin by Q. Fabius Pictor in 216 after the defeat of Hannibal at Cannae. “This sequence of adoptions and adaptations of Greek rituals, divinities, and oracular authority supplies the proper setting for the acquisition of the *Magna Mater*. It is not incidental that both the Sibylline Books and Pythian Apollo at Delphi play a role in empowering Roman officials to fetch her from Asia and institute her cult at home. The event had its precedents and its parallels. It belongs to a growing series of thrusts by the Roman political and religious elite to expand and exploit connections with the cultural world of the Greek East.”

³⁶ *EPRO* 50 (1987) I, 352; cf. also 353–355. See also *EPRO* (1977) III, 244 (= *CIL* 6, 512) (A.D. 390 Rome): “Matri deum magnae Idaeae et Attidi menotyranno dis magnis.” III, 476 (A.D. 241 Formiae): “sacerdos Matris Magnae Idaeae taurobolium.”

³⁷ *EPRO* 50 (1987) I, 57, l. 6.

³⁸ *EPRO* 50 (1987) I, 59, l. 5–9.

³⁹ *EPRO* 50 (1987) I, 60 l. 4–7.

The last named person bears the *gentilicium* of the emperor Claudius who had placed the cult under the control of the *quindecimviri* and officially sanctioned admissions of more Roman citizens into the ranks of its priests.⁴⁰ Clearly being a priest of the Imperial Cult did not exclude one being a priest of Cybele as well.

But in the reign of Hadrian, Cybele assumes a sure place in the iconography of divine imperial power.

7A 1.2.1. *Imperial adoption of Cybele's iconography*

We find for the first time six examples on the coinage itself of Cybele towered and seated (sometimes on a throne), holding a *patera* and resting her arm on a drum with a lion at her feet (Plate 28). The first five have HADRIANVS AVGVSTVS in the legend but the sixth has SABINA AVGVSTA under her image that has a double diadem. (Plate 26).⁴¹ In the following reign, we find an almost parallel process with that of Isis. Faustina I, addressed in the legend on her coins as AVGVSTA, also has on the obverse Cybele towered and draped, seated on a throne with two lions at her side (Plate 29). The legend reads MATRI DEVM SALVTARI SC.⁴² For Faustina II, we have on the obverse of a coin her own portrait, draped with her hair elaborately waved and knotted, with the legend FAVSTINA AVGVSTA (Plate 30). On the reverse we find Cybele towered and draped, with a lion at her right side and with the legend MATRI MAGNAE (Plate 31).⁴³ Lucius Verus, adopted brother of Marcus Aurelius, has a coin bearing his head on the obverse, with the reverse showing Cybele with the legend MATRI [MAGNAE] SC.⁴⁴ His wife Lucilla also has similar coins.⁴⁵ Finally Commodus has coins that, as in the case of Isis, seem to retreat from final identification of the goddess with the imperial person and reverts to MATRI DEV CONSERV AVG. or MATRI DEVM CONSERV AVG (Plate 32).⁴⁶

We see, therefore, that, in the case of two universalistic cults, that

⁴⁰ Krill (1978), p. 31.

⁴¹ *BMC* 3, p. 382 no. †; p. 385 no. 1059; p. 386 no. 1060 (Plate 72,6), p. 396 no. 1095 (Plate 75,7).

⁴² *BMC* 4, pp. 232–233 nos 1436–1440 (Plate 34,4).

⁴³ *BMC* 4, p. 515 no. 836. See also p. 402 no. 132 and p. 403 no. 134; p. 534 nos 932–934 (Plate 73,11); p. 542 no. 989 (Plate 74,9). For *puellae* of Faustina I see p. 245 §.

⁴⁴ *BMC* 4, p. 610 no. *.

⁴⁵ *BMC* 4, p. 571 no. *; p. 577 no. *.

⁴⁶ *BMC* 4, p. 755 no. 354 and p. 834 no. 680 (Plate 109,15).

of Isis and Sarapis, and of Cybele, the syncretism of both with one another is effected through the association of both with the *divi Augusti*. But neither Isis nor Cybele were destined to achieve their universal hegemony in their own name within which others might then be included. Neither Isis nor Cybele were to prove the force that effected the final syncretism into a pagan universal religion. It was a third force in the form of the cult of *Sol Invictus* that was to be finally victorious.

7A 1.3. *The cult of Sol Invictus*

The third syncretising force was the worship of *Sol Invictus*, which was eventually to succeed in producing, under Aurelian, the syncretism that the Severans, as we shall see, were to search for so intentionally and systematically. We witness the gradual appearance of this god which Halsberghe has identified, from the time of Hadrian, specifically with *Sol Invictus Elagab* which Elagabalus was to endeavour to impose upon the empire in A.D. 218.⁴⁷ Whether at the earlier stages of its appearance it should be regarded as arising out of Mithraism, or whether it was identified with the Syrian Elagab from its first appearance, is not our concern here. Suffice it to say that it was this ingredient in a dynamic, syncretistic process that was to prevail, incorporating the aspects of Isis and Cybele along with the other deities of the Graeco-Roman pantheon with which they had been identified. But unlike Isis, Sarapis, and Cybele, no attempt before the Severans was made to express iconographically universal divine political power in terms of *Sol Invictus*. Rather Hadrian, from A.D. 129 onwards, after his victories in the East, "ceased to have himself portrayed with an aureole, which he now assigned exclusively to the sun god."⁴⁸ Halsberghe hypothesises that it was Hadrian's deference to the new cult from Syria that led to his attribution to it of the iconography of the ancient Roman cult of *Sol*. It was this deference that led to his dissociation of numismatic iconography from his own person. P. Aelius Amandus (A.D. 158) presents us with the earliest evidence when he dedicates his small marble altar *Soli Invicto Deo*.⁴⁹ But in this, as in a number of other inscriptions until the reign of Commodus, *Sol Invictus* was not associated with the

⁴⁷ G. Halsberghe, *The Cult of Sol Invictus*, in *EPRO* (1972).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* (1972), p. 46.

⁴⁹ *CIL* 6, 715.

emperor's person or with that of his consort, as Sarapis, Isis, and Cybele had been.⁵⁰ It is only Commodus, before Septimius Severus, who makes *invictus* a component of the imperial title, and who had the sun god portrayed upon his coins.⁵¹

With the Severans, we witness a major shift in perspective in the construction of a syncretic universalism, intentionally propagated as an ideology of imperial power and supported by a philosophical ontology.

7A 2. *The Severan Reformation*

We can mark such a conceptual shift by references to an anachronistic interpretation in the second century, represented by Dio Cassius who interpreted the Isiac rites in a way that would have appeared alien in the past period of time that he attempts to describe. His anachronistic error gives us a positive indication that a conceptual shift has taken place in his own time. Dio can only interpret past events in terms of a present that clearly is quite different from the past that he seeks but fails accurately to describe.

Dio Cassius claimed that ill-omens followed the decree of the Senate in 53 B.C. that caused the destruction of privately built temples of Isis and Sarapis. No doubt the Senate at the time had seen such omens as indicative of *natura discors* reflected in the social disorder, and that the *pax deorum* required the removal of these foreign gods from within the *pomerium*. Similarly such portents occurred in 48 B.C. following the murder of Pompey in Egypt. But, as Takács points out, "for Dio these actions were dreadful portents; in his world Isis and Sarapis had not only a place in the Roman pantheon but were closely linked with the imperial couple."⁵² Dio began his career with his nomination by Pertinax for the praetorship (A.D. 193). He was finally to take up this appointment under Septimius Severus in whose reign his literary activity commenced. He thus marks a conceptual shift that we can associate with the imperial ideology as it developed within that reign. Similarly Suetonius, earlier than Dio (A.D. 119), holding office under Hadrian, makes Domitian into an

⁵⁰ For a full list and discussion of the epigraphic evidence, see Halsberghe (1972), pp. 45-49.

⁵¹ Halsberghe (1972), p. 49 and footnote 2.

⁵² Dio Cassius 40,47 and 42,26 and Takács (1995), p. 67.

initiate into the Isiac cult whereas, as we have noted, he simply made use of Egyptian iconography.⁵³ He is not as positive about that cult as is Dio, but clearly can regard imperial association with it as possible, as was the case with the numismatic evidence that we gave regarding the iconographic identification of Hadrian with Sarapis and Sabina with Isis.

But given the conceptual shift, how is this to be characterised? I will argue that the integrative force of the cult of *Sol Invictus*, in producing a universal solar monotheism embracing all other deities, enabled also divine power to be focused on the emperor's person in which a multicultural empire was to find its unity.

7A 2.1. *Unity in diversity as a comprehensive imperial ideal*

The attempt of Elagabalus to focus too exclusively on the rites and cultus of his own, Syrian sun god was a fundamentalist aberration from a general Severan policy that remained intact and was to gradually develop into its final triumph under Aurelian.

Severus Alexander, successor to Elagabalus, may have demolished the latter's attempt to found a universal monotheism in a specifically Syrian cultural form. The fire of Vesta and the great stone of Magna Mater (Cybele) were returned from the temple of the Sun to their original locations, as was also his image (τύπος) to Emesa. But nevertheless, as the legend if not fact of the *lararium* makes clear:

there soon emerged under Alexander a renewed attempt towards tolerance of all cults combined under different aspects of a universal religion. Under the strong influence of Neo-Pythagorean and Neo-Platonic concepts, individual cults came to be regarded as expressions of a truth proper to all religions. Each was but a different version of a single Supreme God.⁵⁴

But though Krill is undoubtedly correct in this assertion, I shall argue that he was quite wrong to see the development of *Sol Invictus* as an alternative to the Imperial Cult as the centre and focus of imperial unity.⁵⁵ The numismatic iconography, *inter alia*, will make clear that the Imperial Cult was as capable of absorbing *Sol Invictus* into its

⁵³ Suetonius, *Domit.* 1,4 and Takács (1995), p. 99.

⁵⁴ Krill (1978), p. 41. See also J. Ferguson, *The Religions of the Roman Empire*, (London: Thames and Hudson 1970), pp. 47–56, pp. 211–233.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* p. 44: "In the third century, the attempts to identify a single Sun god divinity amid the circle of so many other gods is seen as a new unifying imperial goal which emperor deification could no longer achieve."

iconography and ideology as it had been in the case of Isis, Sarapis, and Cybele.

Let us therefore first of all examine the evidence for a distinctive Severan reformation in the iconography and political theology of the Imperial Cult. Then, secondly, we shall be in a position to consider the underlying philosophical perspective that had also developed and that legitimated the reformation.

7A 2.1.1. *The recasting of icons by the Severans*

Images of Septimius Severus previously had appeared with those of Julia Domna his wife and aunt of Julia Mamaea on the arch at Leptis Magna (erected 203), where they represent Sarapis and Isis. The portrait types follow artistic depictions of the cult statue of Sarapis at the Alexandrian Sarapeum. McCann has pointed out that there is here a "single, powerful image of the syncretistic Jupiter-Sarapis" in which the claim to deification "had never before been so comprehensively and boldly stated . . . Jupiter, the ruler of the upper world, and Sarapis the god of the lower world . . . are fused in the image of the cosmocrator which appears on his coinage."⁵⁶

But although the Isis iconography is applied to Julia Domna, as we saw above, there is no application of the Sarapis iconography in isolation to Septimius Severus or his successors on the coinage itself. Rather the imagery of Sarapis as the sun god as counterpart to Isis his consort as moon goddess has been absorbed by a new developmental stage in the syncretism. The themes of *κοσμοκράτωρ* combined with *Sol Invictus* now incorporate into a universal monotheism other deities who are but aspects of the One. *Sol Invictus* can have no consort as Sarapis had done, since *Sol Invictus* syncretises both Isis and Sarapis, Zeus and Hera, and the rest of the pantheon into the new solar monotheism. We find a cult legend that clearly equates Zeus both with Sarapis and with Sol, and which recounts Διὸς Ἡλίου μεγάλου Σαράπιδος ἀρετή.⁵⁷ Certainly Julia Domna was the daughter of Bassianus, who was *sacerdos amplissimus Dei Soli Invicti Elagabali*.⁵⁸

The cult of *Sol Invictus*, as Halsberghe pointed out in his seminal study, had a prior history in the developing syncretism of the early

⁵⁶ A.M. McCann, The Serapis-Severus Portrait Type IX, in *The Portraits of Septimius Severus*, in *MAAR* 30 (1968), pp. 155-168, quoted in Takács (1995), pp. 115-116.

⁵⁷ M. Totti, *Ausgewählte Texte der Isis- und Sarapis-Religion*, (Zürich: Olms 1985), 13,22.

⁵⁸ Halsberghe (1972), pp. 49-51.

third century. A coin of Commodus portrayed the sun god with radiant crown in a scene that includes part of the signs of the Zodiac (Sagittarius, Capricorn, and two others).⁵⁹ The presence of these signs is indicative that we have here, not simply a continuity of solar themes found in earlier coinage,⁶⁰ associated with the older Roman sun god, but with *Sol Invictus Elagabal*. Geta was portrayed on coins as the Sun and as son of Caesar as Sun.

We have from Rome (A.D. 200–202) a coin of Geta, the reverse of which describes his relation with his father in the words *Severi invicti Aug(usti), p̄i fil(ii)* (“the dutiful son of the unconquered Augustus”). The bust of Geta himself is not simply normally radiate but shows the crown of the sun.⁶¹ As Alföldi pointed out, this image was more than mere repetition of that of Commodus. Geta is not depicted with the normal luminous crown of an emperor, which is fastened to the neck by means of a net. Rather he wears the circle of rays of the sun-god and raises his right hand in blessing, not as *Sol* but as offspring of *Sol*.⁶² Thus the divine power, both political and ontological, flows from Septimius as *Sol*, to his son whom he crowns and through whom his blessing can flow. We are thus seeing a fundamental shift of perspective towards an oriental theory both of divinity and of its associated monarchy.

Caracalla is portrayed as Sarapis⁶³ on coins in which he is associated with *Sol Invictus* and which indicate that he is to be regarded as *κοσμοκράτωρ*.⁶⁴ Furthermore, he has left a statue that portrays him

⁵⁹ H. Cohen, *Description Historique des Monnaies*, (Paris: Rollin and Feuardent 1884), Vol. III, p. 236 no. 70 and Halsberghe (1972), p. 49.

⁶⁰ *RIC* 2 p. 267 no. 326 (Trajan, A.D. 114–117), bust of sol radiate; p. 360 nos 166 and 167 (Hadrian, A.D. 125), showing sol radiate in a quadriga.

⁶¹ *RIC* 4,1 p. 317 no. 21 [Plate XIV,5] (Obv.): P. SEPT. GETA CAES. PONT. (Bust, draped cuirassed, head bear, r., (Rev.): SEVER. INVICTI AVG. PII. FIL. (Bust with sun-crown, left, half-length, draped, cuirassed, with aegis, right hand raised).

⁶² A. Alföldi, *Die Monarchische Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreiche*, (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1970), pp. 225–226: “Geta ist der erste, der auf einer staatlichen Münzprägung als Sol ausgestattet abgebildet wurde: nicht mit der normalen kaiserlichen Strahlenkrone, die durch eine Masche am Nacken befestigt ist, sondern mit dem Strahlenreif des Sonnengottes . . . ist er gekrönt und hebt seine rechte Hand segnend empor, eigentlich nicht als Sol, sondern als Sprössling des Sonnenkönigs.”

⁶³ For Serapis see *RIC* 4,1 p. 256 no. 290 (Caracalla, A.D. 217) Serapis standing front, head left, raising right hand and holding sceptre, and also p. 256 no. 291 (a)–(c) . For sol alone, p. 256 no. 293 (a)–(f); no. 294 (a)–(c) Sol radiate mounting quadriga, left [see Plate XII,20].

⁶⁴ F. Cumont and L. Canet, *Mithra ou Serapis ΚΟΣΜΟΚΡΑΤΩΡ*, in *CRAIBL*,

as a Pharaoh.⁶⁵ In his visit to Alexandria in A.D. 215 he both sacrificed to Sarapis and paid tribute to Alexander the Great. But the syncretistic context in which these two events took place is indicated by:

- (i) the Sarapeum which he also built on the Quirinal with dimensions and location that indicated a parallelism with the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus,⁶⁶ and,
- (ii) the association of Sarapis on coins both with Helios and with Graeco-Roman divinities such as Zeus, Asclepius, Poseidon, and Dionysus.⁶⁷

We have a coin from the reign of Domitian with the legend ΗΛΙΟΣ ΚΑΡΑΠΙΣ and other examples inscribed on stone and on amulets. We find dedications to Ζεὺς Ἥλιος μέγας Σάραπις.⁶⁸ But it is with Caracalla, as Abd el Mohsen el Khachab correctly points out, that a quite new identification with the Imperial Cult takes place as part of the iconography of imperial unity. Certainly κοσμοκράτωρ occurs first in this reign. The origin of the term was undoubtedly in Mithraism, but here the reference was to a plural of κοσμοκράτορες, seven in number who controlled the seven planets. In consequence Ἥλιος became the κοσμοκράτωρ *par excellence* and supreme. But the inscription discovered in the baths of Caracalla and published in 1912, reads in its restored form: εἷς Ζεὺς Σάραπις Ἥλιος κοσμοκράτωρ ἀνείκητος.⁶⁹ Thus we have a witness to a syncretism that has absorbed not only Mithraism, but both Zeus and Sarapis into the universalism of *Sol Invictus* that embraces all divinities. Moreover the identification of this divinity with Caracalla is of uttermost importance for the development of the iconography of imperial power begun by Septimius Severus and realised by Caracalla.

We find moreover, as with his father, no attempt to invoke Isis specifically as the consort of Sarapis and to identify king and queen

(1919), pp. 313–328 cited in Frend (1965), p. 327 and p. 344; Abd el Mohsen el Khachab, ὁ Καράκαλλος κοσμοκράτωρ, in *JJ EgArch*, 47 (1961), pp. 119–133; SHA *Caracalla*, 9,10; *BMC* 5, cxxxiii and *CAH* xii 356–357; See also J. Réville, *La religion à Rome sous les Sévères*, (Paris: Leroux 1886), pp. 30–35, 210–283.

⁶⁵ Abd el Mohsen el Khachab (1961), p. 125.

⁶⁶ Takács (1995), p. 117.

⁶⁷ Abd el Mohsen el Khachab (1961), p. 127.

⁶⁸ Cumont and Canet (1919), pp. 316–317.

⁶⁹ Cumont (1919), pp. 313–316.

as the incarnation of these deities specifically. Rather Julia Domna, Caracalla's mother, derives her significance from Caracalla as *κοσμοκράτωρ*: she thus becomes identifiable with Ἥλιος ἀνείκητος, and therefore with Sarapis. We have in the Alexandrian Museum an inscription that links the title of Julia Domna as *mater castrorum* with Caracalla's newly combined titles. Julia is ἡ μήτηρ τῶν ἀν[ικῆτων] στρατοπέδων.⁷⁰

The iconographic shift with its implied theology was to find support in contemporary philosophy of religion. The origins of that philosophy, which was to develop into fully fledged Neoplatonism with Plotinus, were undoubtedly within the imperial establishment itself. Julia Domna was to prove to be the major influence in providing for the construction of a philosophy of nature and of history that would legitimate the ideology of the divine emperor in its specifically Severan form.

7A 2.1.2. *A philosophy justifying the religious synthesis*

What also characterised the conceptual shift that it would be no exaggeration to describe as the Severan Reformation was a self-conscious quest for a philosophy of religion that would legitimate that revolution. Several denarii depict Julia Domna, wife of Septimius Severus, as ἡ φιλόσοφος. She appears draped with hair raised and coiled at the back, and with the legend IVLIA AVGVSTA. Isis prefigures on the obverse, with Horus at her breast and with the legend SAECVLI FELICITAS S.C. (Plate 33).⁷¹

In the literary sources Julia emerges as concerned with a philosophical circle that she gathered around her, whilst she herself remained actively engaged in the affairs of state. Dio records that, when Plautianus became hostile, "she began to study philosophy on account of this (ἡ μὲν αὐτὴ φιλοσοφεῖν διὰ ταῦτ' ἤρξατο) and to consort with sophists (καὶ σοφισταῖς συνημέρευεν)."⁷² She was in charge of Septimius' correspondence and this led to her holding receptions

⁷⁰ H. Gauthier, *Le Livre des Rois d'Égypte*, (Paris: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale 1917), V p. 204 no. 26: . . . τὸν κοσμοκράτορα Μ(άρκον) Αὐ(ήλιον) Σεουήρον Ἀνωτίνων Παρθικὸν Μέγιστον Βρετανικὸν Μέγιστον Γερμανικὸν Μέγιστον Εὐτυχῆ Εὐσεβῆ Σεβαστὸν τὸν φιλοσάραπιν καὶ Ἰουλίαν Δόμναν Σεβαστὴν τὴν μητέρα τῶν ἀν[ικῆτων] στρατοπέδων καὶ θεὸν Σεου[ῆρον] ἡ πόλις.

⁷¹ *RIC* 4,1 p. 170 no. 577 (Plate 9,9); p. 178 no. 645 (Plate 9,18); p. 209 no. 865. See also Takács (1995), p. 116. See also *BMC* 5, pp. 166–167, nos 75, 76, 77 (Plate 28,18), nos 78–82.

⁷² Dio Cassius 76,7.

for prominent men, "but she still rather conducted philosophical discussion with them (ἀλλ' ἡ μὲν καὶ μετὰ τούτων ἔτι μᾶλλον ἐφιλοσόφει)."⁷³ Certainly her role in these discussions was not a passive one. Philostratus describes how he is instructed, as a member of the circle around her (μετέχοντι δέ μοι τοῦ περὶ αὐτὴν κύκλου), to correct (μεταγράψαι) the documents of memoirs (τὰς δέλτους τῶν ὑπομνημάτων) of the life of Apollonius of Tyanna.⁷⁴ It is with an evaluation of the cultural and philosophical life of the Severan age, in which Julia Domna and indeed her niece Julia Mamaea after her had such interest, and its contribution to the imperial ideology, with which we must now be concerned.

PART B. PAGAN ONTOLOGIES: GNOSTICISM AND NEOPLATONISM

We must now retrace our steps from the early second century until the third in order to unravel the revolution in philosophical speculation that paralleled the Severan revolution in the iconography and theology of the emperor's divinity. We saw in Chapter 2 the relationship between Stoic ontology and political order as reflected in the Imperial Cult. Stoicism legitimated augury (2A 2), and Augustus' augural act had produced the *pax deorum* which older, Republican religion had failed to secure (2A 3). Imperial order, as Lucan had expressed it, was but the restoration of ὀρθὸς λόγος from a *natura discors* (2A 4). Gnosticism developed some of its central themes in opposition to Stoicism, and some of those themes were negated by Neoplatonism. It is to the analysis of these developments that we now turn.

7B 1. *Stoic monism, Platonic dualism, and Gnosticism*

A sociology of knowledge of any system of ideas examines how such systems shape, reflect and maintain social order. We need not here enter into the complex philosophical discussion of whether all reality is socially constructed in a way that precludes any transcendental (in the sense of cross cultural) logic governing claims to truth. At very least, we can maintain that social order *reflects* epistemological

⁷³ *Ibid.* 78,3.

⁷⁴ Philostratus, *Vita Apollon.*, 3.

order without also maintaining that social order *totally conditions* epistemological order.

The social construction of reality that was created and maintained by a Stoic world view ordered the ideology of imperial society in the first and second centuries. Nature and society were one in a Stoic monism in which the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος permeated all things which it bound together into a rational and harmonious whole. Ultimate reality was not to be found beyond nature or society in some form of Platonic dualism. Ultimate reality, giving purpose and design to the universe, was to be found indissolubly bound up with matter in the Stoic pantheism. Thus the metaphysical counterpart of the imperial ideal found expression in Stoic monism. A cosmopolitan empire embraced all lesser societies in a rational imperial order that gave them unity and purpose. The individual had no free destiny of his own, but *Fata* could determine all things according to the *providentia*, εἰμαρμένη, or πρόνοια of the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος. Thus the freedom of the individual was denied by the rational purpose of the whole, and individual purpose dissolved into the purpose of the universe as a whole. The consuls or the emperor, performing their political functions on the one hand, would reduce to order a turbulent populace, and performing their religious ones on the other would through the *auspicia* set right a disturbed nature by securing through the state's religious rites the *pax deorum*.

Such a collectivist view of human significance and destiny had however been challenged from Augustus' time onwards, as we shall now see, by an intense interest in personal immortality. Such an interest itself represented the resistance of the individual against being assigned an identity that only had meaning as part of a collectivist whole. There is a possible sociological explanation of this interest in the Principate itself. In a post-Republican age in which all political alternatives to military autocracy had been ruled out by the perceived necessity of Tacitus' *pax et princeps*, the minds of individuals sought refuge in the inner life. The quest for human significance was in the form of the quest for personal salvation. We turn therefore firstly to a consideration of some representative expressions of the quest for personal salvation that initially challenged the collectivist imperial idea but which in Plotinus were finally to be reconciled with it.

7B 1.1. *Individual immortality and the Gnostic quest*

The belief in personal and individual immortality is perhaps the most unambiguous social indicator of the existence of a belief in individual freedom, and, indeed, the ultimate significance of the individual against the social group. The individual soul, according to both Cleanthes and Chrysippus, survived death, but it would not survive the ἐκπύρωσις or universal conflagration.⁷⁵ All matter, which is, according to the Stoic monism, simply a modification of the refined pneumatic substance of the ultimate divine being, would return to its divine source and therefore cease to exist even in limited independence.⁷⁶ Personal immortality was therefore relative.

It is interesting to note that Stoicism's subordination of personal immortality to the unity of the cosmic whole reflected what we can deduce about faith in personal immortality at the time of the late republic and early empire from epigraphic and other evidence. We can see in the iconography of the Vatican Mausolea expressions of a religious response to the denial of religious individualism.

7B 1.2. *Individual immortality: the art of the Vatican Mausolea*

As Toynbee and Perkins pointed out in their monumental study of the iconography of the excavated Vatican mausolea, the traditional funerary inscription, *Dis Manibus*, reflected an earlier view, shared also by the early Greek mystery religions, that the soul shed at death its personal characteristics to become reabsorbed into the half-divine (*Di*), half human, amorphous shades (*Manes*).⁷⁷

But from about the middle of the first century B.C. we find clear definition given to the individual soul after death, as in Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, where Africanus, dwelling amongst the blessed dead in the Milky Way, "revealed himself to me (*se ostendit mihi*) in that shape (*ea forma*) better known to me from his portrait than from his person (*ex imagine eius quam ex ipso erat notior*)."⁷⁸ Along with Vergil's description of the underworld in *Aeneid* 6, this unconditioned view of personal immortality replaced that expressed in *CIL* 6, 4, 29609 (*cinis sum, cinis terra est, terra dea est, ergo mortua non sum*), which was

⁷⁵ Diogenes Laertius, *Succ.* 7, 1156–157.

⁷⁶ Plutarch, *De Comm. Notit.* 36,5.

⁷⁷ J. Toynbee, and J. Ward Perkins, *The Shrine of St. Peter and the Vatican Excavations*, (London: Longmans Green 1956), pp. 109–117.

⁷⁸ Cicero, *De Rep.* 6,10 quoted Toynbee and Ward Perkins (1956), p. 110.

far closer to amorphous survival with no clearly defined personhood amongst the *Di Manes*.

Toynbee and Ward Perkins were then able to interpret such images from the myths of Dionysius or of Neptune, represented in the decorations on sarcophagi or in frescoes on tombs themselves, as expressions of the hope of unqualified personal immortality. The depiction of Marcus Hermes or Marcia Felicitas is of the essential self that survives death. The presence of Hermes on the Persephone Mosaic shows that the myth has become allegorised as the soul's journey to the underworld and its rebirth to eternal life.⁷⁹ Hermes is depicted holding the wand that reveals him to be *psychopomos*: he raises souls in Hades from their slumber.

The development of Gnostic mythology also reflects this process of the individualisation of the amorphous world soul, to which individual souls do not simply return in order to obliterate their individuality, but rather to realize it more fully.

7B 1.3. *Gnosticism as a rejection of political collectivism*

In Gnosticism the universal world soul of Stoicism is fragmented and becomes embodied and imprisoned in individuals. Furthermore, the process by which this comes about is not one of the divine order of a created world in which ὁρθὸς λόγος finds its embodiment. Creation is a disaster. It is Sophia cast out of the Pleroma who creates Ialdabaoth or the Demiurge, and who holds the souls of the *pneumatikoi* in bondage to the irrational and prevents their ascension to the unity of the Pleroma.⁸⁰

Interpreted within a sociology of knowledge perspective, Gnostic metaphysics denies the goodness or rationality of the imperial ideal and opposes the subordination of the individual to the imperial whole. Souls are impregnated into matter by Sophia where they are imprisoned by the Demiurge whose belief that he is the sole creator of a rational and good order is illusion and therefore error. Metaphysical stance was translated into social organisation in that the *pneumatikoi* experienced ecstasy so that at least some Gnostic assemblies were charismatic and prophetic.⁸¹ It was as we argued against an early

⁷⁹ Toynbee and Ward Perkins (1956), pp. 114–117.

⁸⁰ See e.g. Hypostasis of the Archons, II, 95–97, in *Nag Hammadi Library in English*, (Ed.) J.M. Robinson, (Leiden: Brill 1988), p. 168.

⁸¹ G. Filoramo, *A History of Gnosticism*. (Oxford: Blackwell 1990), chapter 11.

charismatic group that Clement of Rome addressed his contra-cultural construction of Church Order as a Christianised version of imperial Order (4B 3).

We shall now see how the late second century developments in Hellenistic philosophy represent changes in the understanding of the political structure of the pagan empire. We shall then be in a position, in Part C, to trace how such changes in understanding were not without effect in shaping the continuing development of Church Order, as the latter interacted in terms of contra-cultural response to the changes in the surrounding pagan cultural ambience.

7B 2. *Plotinus, the One: imperial unity as Sol Invictus*

The need for Roman society to address this alternative construction of social reality that threatened to nihilate its conception of the goodness and rationality of the imperial ideal, clearly predated the rise of Neoplatonism, at least in its final development by Plotinus (A.D. 204–270). Indeed both Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus' teacher,⁸² Clement of Alexandria, Irenaeus, and Pseudo-Hippolytus all reflected a common intellectual strategy of reducing the chaos of aeonic conflict and strife by means of a metaphysical order that was the counterpart to the social order that they supported whether in Church or in State.⁸³ Plotinus was to represent the final nihilation of a plurality of originators (ἄρχοντες) as the creator of the material world when he insists on only three origins (ἀρχαί) or first principles, namely the One, Mind, and Soul:

It is unnecessary to go in search for different origins (ἐφ' ἑτέρας ἀρχὰς ἰέναι) but rather to have established this One, and then after the One (τὸ Ἔν), Thought (Νοῦν), which the One conceived first by thinking (μετ' αὐτὸ καὶ τὸ νοοῦν πρῶτως), then after Thought, Soul (εἶτα Ψυχὴν μετὰ Νοῦν), for this is the order of Nature (αὕτη γὰρ τάξις κατὰ φύσιν). No more than these nor fewer are to be found in the intelligible world (ἐν τῷ νοητῷ).

Enneads II, 9,1,13–16

⁸² Porphyry, *Vit. Plotin.*, 3,13–16.

⁸³ A. Brent, Hippolytus and the Roman Church in the Third Century: Communities in Tension before the Emergence of a Monarch-Bishop, in *Suppl. VCh.* 31 (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1995), pp. 492–501; *Idem.* The Circle of Julia Domna and Christian Heresiology, *StEphAug* 50 (1995), pp. 237–248.

But these ἀρχαί are linked in an unbroken chain of being. Their divergence is due only to the secondary character of Νοῦς and Ψυχή as part of a chain of being, derivative from the ultimate One as its first beginning. Their “generation” does not result in their possessing different natures.

We may thus regard the rise of Plotinian Neo-Platonism as a symptom rather than a cause of a fundamental shift in intellectual perspective in terms of which society as well as the cosmos was now to be understood. That perspective was influenced by Gnosticism in the sense of a reactive influence. Gnosticism had fed off the rise of individualism that fragmented the world-soul of Stoicism and thus deprived that philosophy of its ability to create a social reality that legitimated the political unity of the imperial ideal. The quest for personal immortality itself could be read as the individual seeking refuge in the inner life and its hopes and possibilities when all social and political alternatives were closed by a seemingly “inevitable” military autocracy to which there were no real constitutional alternatives. Neoplatonism, in its emphasis on an inner experience that lead the individual to unity with the origin or ἀρχή of all Order, political or cosmic, thus sought to restore a reconstructed imperial ideal.

We have seen that the iconographical expression of the political ideology of *divi Augusti* developed under the Severans into a syncretistic religious universalism expressed in terms of *Sol Invictus* that embraced Isis and Sarapis and their legitimations of political power through their incarnation in Egyptian kings and queens. Caracalla as κοσμοκράτωρ was a representation of *Sol Invictus* to whom Jupiter-Sarapis had given the globe of the world as a symbol of *Aeternitas*.⁸⁴ There were good Platonic reasons, which Neoplatonism was to develop, for using the Sun as an icon of the ultimate principle of reality. As a symbol of universalism the worship of the Sun could incorporate into a single syncretistic pantheon the attributes and virtues of the major deities of the Empire both East and West, just as the sun’s light unites the disparate objects of the phenomenal world into an intelligible whole. Plotinus developed the Aristotelian theme of the first unmoved mover that is the highest Good:

The sun too is a model (καὶ παράδειγμα ὁ ἥλιος) since it is like a centre in relation to the light (ὡσπερ καὶ κέντρον ὧν πρὸς τὸ φῶς) it comes

⁸⁴ Abd el Mohsen el Khachab (1961), pp. 128–129.

from and it depends on it (ἀνηρημένον πρὸς αὐτόν); for the light is everywhere with it and is not cut off from it (πανταχοῦ γοῦν μετ' αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἀποτέμνεται); even if you want to cut it off on one side (κἂν ἀποτεμῆν ἐθελήσης ἐπὶ θάτερα), the light remains with the sun (πρὸς τὸν ἥλιόν ἐστι τὸ φῶς). And how is everything else directed towards it (τὰ δὲ ἄλλα πάντα πρὸς αὐτὸ πῶς);? Soulless things are directed towards soul (ἢ τὰ μὲν ἄψυχα πρὸς ψυχὴν) and soul to the Good through the intellect (ψυχὴ δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸ διὰ νοῦ).

Enneads I,7,1,25-2,1-3.⁸⁵

We find the social reality of the imperial ideal here reflected in ontology, in which the imperial centre moves the whole which depends on it for its unity and purpose. The development of concepts of political order, philosophical theology, and religious syncretism are thus proceeding *pari-passu*. But Plotinus was not without his second and early third century antecedents, some of whom we will now examine.

7B 3. *Plotinus' predecessors: Apuleius and Plutarch*

Plotinus was the product of a cultural *milieu* obsessed with the construction of order in any sphere, history, nature, society or philosophy, in terms of reality and goodness granted by a process of derivation from an ultimate origin. We shall examine specifically the Platonising of Aristotle's first unmoved Mover in Apuleius' *De Mundo*, written around A.D. 140, and Plutarch's Platonic justification for the Isis myth (*circ.* A.D. 104). In the former we shall note specifically an assimilation of ontological structure with political structure. Here was not simply the seed-bed from which the Neoplatonism of Plotinus was to grow, but also the justification for the religious syncretism united into a solar monotheism of which imperial power was the political expression.

7B 3.1. *Plotinus' predecessors: μοναρχία and the De Mundo*

Peterson followed Jaeger in stressing the origins of the term *μοναρχία* in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* 14. Clearly *ἀρχή* means both "rule" and "first principle," and thus unites political philosophy with ontology. Peterson's further example of the relationship between ontology and political ideology came from the pseudepigraphic Aristotelian text *De Mundo*.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ See also II,3,18: ἕως ἄν ἦ ἥλιος, πάντα τὰ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ φῶτα.

⁸⁶ Peterson (1935), pp. 16-17.

This text is of great significance for understanding the intellectual background in which, as in Plotinus, Aristotle's unmoved mover has been synthesised with the Neoplatonic One. Indeed, this pseudepigraphic work has arguably Apuleius as its true author, and thus its date would be about A.D. 140, Apuleius having been born around A.D. 125.⁸⁷ In chapter 6 the author asks how God as the unmoved first principle can move the world. He begins with the good Platonic principle that the individual nature of anything is not self-sufficient (οὐδεμία δὲ φύσις αὐτὴ καθ' ἑαυτὴν ἐστὶν αὐτάρκης) and is deprived of the means of its own preservation (ἐρημωθεῖσα τῆς ἐκ τούτου σωτηρίας). God is therefore "the Preserver of all things that really exist (Σωτὴρ μὲν γὰρ ὄντως ἀπάντων ἐστὶ) and the Begetter of all things throughout the world in whatever way they are composed (καὶ γενέτωρ τῶν ὀπωσδήποτε κατὰ τόνδε τὸν κόσμον συντελουμένων ὁ θεός; *De Mundo* 6,20–22)."

But how is God to be understood as moving the world if matter is eternal? God, as Aristotle had argued, could not act upon the world as an efficient cause. The author therefore assures us that God "does not endure weariness like a living thing that works by its own labour and toil (οὐ μὴν αὐτουργοῦ καὶ ἐπιπόνου ζῴου κάματος ὑπομένων)." God rather "uses an unfailing potency (ἀλλὰ δυνάμει χρώμενος ἀτρίτῳ) through which he becomes master of even those things which seem far from him (δι' ἧς καὶ τῶν πόρρω δοκούντων εἶναι περιγίνεται; 6, 397b 23–24)."

But how is the operation of such a power or potency to be understood? Apuleius has already begun to answer such a question by means of a political analogy as his mind conceives the operation in terms of mastery (τῶν πόρρω δοκούντων εἶναι περιγίνεται). God occupies "the highest and first seat (τὴν μὲν οὖν ἀνωτάτω καὶ πρώτην ἔδραν αὐτὸς ἔλαχεν) and, as Most High, is enthroned on the highest summit of all heaven (ὑστατός τε . . . ἀκροτάτη κορυφῇ τοῦ σύμπαντος ἐγκαθιδρυμένος οὐρανοῦ)." According to Plato, the inability of matter to reflect or participate in the Forms led to its ambiguity and to its inability to be known. But Apuleius will now liken the distance between objects and God as the cause of a weakness and incom-

⁸⁷ For a discussion and full bibliography, see A. Marchetta, *L'Autenticità Apuleiana del De Mundo*, (Rome: Japadre Editore L'Aquila 1991) cf. G. Reale and A.P. Bos, *Il trattato sul Cosmo per Alessandro attribuito ad Aristotele*, in *Temi metafisici e problemi del pensiero*, in *Set* 42 (1995), pp. 29–57.

prehensibility that is accompanied by confusion, which also has the sense of political disorder. He continues:

Therefore the earth and the things on earth seem (διὸ γῆ καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς ἔοικεν), in their great distance from the sustaining help that comes from God (ἐν ἀποστάσει πλείστη τῆς ἐκ θεοῦ ὄντα ὠφελείας), to be weak and incoherent (ἀσθενῆ καὶ ἀκατάλληλα εἶναι) and filled with great disturbance (καὶ πολλῆς μεστὰ ταραχῆς). Nevertheless (οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ), to the extent that the divine by its nature penetrates the whole (καθ' ὅσον ἐπὶ πᾶν διικνεῖσθαι πέφυκε τὸ θεῖον), it happens in consequence that the spaces we ourselves occupy and those above us (καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ἡμᾶς ὁμοίως συμβαίνει τὰ τε ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς) to a greater or lesser extent participate in his sustaining help to the degree that are nearer or farther from God (κατὰ τὸ ἔγγιον τε καὶ πορρώτερον θεοῦ μᾶλλον τε καὶ ἥττον ὠφελείας μεταλαμβάνοντα).

De Mundo 6, 397b 30–35

Apuleius, for Plato's reasons, cannot allow that God can work directly (αὐτουργεῖν) on earthly things when these are "neither beautiful (καλόν) nor well-formed (εὖσχημον)." God's power "is seated in heaven (ἢ ἐν οὐρανῷ δύναμις ἰδρυμένη), and is even to those things that are in greatest separation from it (καὶ τοῖς πλείστον ἀφεστηκόσιν) . . . the cause of the preservation of them all (σύμπασιν αἴτιος γίνεται σωτηρίας; 6, 398a 1–4)."

But clearly Apuleius now has a problem. If God's power cannot "penetrate and flow through (διήκουσα καὶ φοιτῶσα)" what is neither καλόν nor εὖσχημον, how can the μία ἀρχή preserve the whole? It is here, as Peterson pointed out, that the metaphysical problem becomes identical with a political problem. How does, for example, the Great King of Persia govern an empire? His rules and commands are unseen and unheard directly, and he himself is concealed within his lofty palace. It is through a hierarchy of officials that his unseen will penetrates. Peterson contrasted this picture with that of Aristotle for whom, in *Metaphysics* 12, the question whether there are many or one first principle is still a real one, just as for him the political question as to whether the political world should be one of a collection of autonomous ἀρχαί in the form of autonomous city states, or whether these belonged in the one Empire of Philip and Alexander.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Peterson (1935), p. 19: "Für Aristoteles ist der kosmische Monarch der im Konflikt der Gewalten (ἀρχαί) als der Eine trotzig und plastisch Hervortretende, bei dem Autor der Schrift von der Welt tritt der Monarch dagegen grade nicht hervor, sondern er bleibt verborgen in den Gemächern seines Palastes, er bleibt

The sharpest analogy used by Apuleius is of the sentinels with light-signals:

So great is the order, (τοσοῦτος δὲ ἦν ὁ κόσμος) and most of all of the signal lights (καὶ μάλιστα τῶν φρυκτωριῶν) which are set alight in succession (κατὰ διαδοχὰς πυρσευόντων) by each other (ἀλλήλοις) from the borders of the empire (ἐκ περάτων τῆς ἀρχῆς) to Susa and Ecbatana, (μέχρι Σούσων καὶ Ἐκβατάνων) so that the Great King gets to know the same day every new occurrence in Asia (ὥστε τὸν βασιλέα γινώσκειν αὐθημερόν πάντα τὰ ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ καινουρογούμενα).

De Mundo 6, 398a 31–35

God does not have need of others and so in this respect Apuleius admits that his analogy breaks down. But like a Monarch causing his commands to be obeyed, his power executed his will because the being who is pure act can realise the potency of all things in accordance with his design:

It is of greater awe and more fitting in dignity (σεμνότερον δὲ καὶ πρεπωδέστερον αὐτὸν μὲν) that God should have his throne in the highest place (ἐπὶ τῆς ἀνωτάτω χώρας ἰδρῦσθαι), but that his power, penetrating throughout the whole universe (τὴν δὲ δύναμιν διὰ τοῦ σύμπαντος κόσμου διήκουσαν), should move the sun and moon (ἥλιον τε κινεῖν καὶ σελήνην) and rotate the whole heaven (καὶ τὸν πάντα οὐρανὸν περιάγειν), and become the cause of preservation for the things on earth (αἰτίον τε γίνεσθαι τοῖς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς σωτηρίας). God has no need of intervention and aid which comes from others (οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐπιτεχνήσεως δεῖ καὶ ὑπηρεσίας τῆς παρ' ἑτέρων) as with those who rule us require many hands (ὥσπερ τοῖς παρ' ἡμῖν ἄρχουσι τῆς πολυχειρίας) because of their weakness (διὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν), but this is the most divine property (ἀλλὰ τοῦτο ἦν τὸ θειότατον), to realise all kinds of Forms with ease and with simple movement (τὸ μετὰ ῥαστώνης καὶ ἀπλῆς κινήσεως παντοδαπὰς ἀποτελεῖν ιδέας) . . .

De Mundo 6, 398b 6–14

We see, therefore, in the mid-second century, a clear reflection in Apuleius' *De Mundo* of an Aristotelian cosmology that produces a theology that is highly anthropomorphic. The result of the anthropomorphism is to make Aristotle service a political philosophy that

ungesehen und verhüllt wie der Spieler des Marionettentheaters. Sichtbar ist nur die Macht (δύναμις), die in der Welt wirksam ist, doch die Gewalt, die dahintersteht, ist unsichtbar. Diese eben angedeuteten Verschiedenheiten sind nicht nur darum lehrreich, weil sie Ausdruck einer anderen Zeit und einer anderen politischen Situation sind, sondern weil sie zugleich zeigen, dass die letzte Formulierung der Einheit eines metaphysischen Weltbildes von der Entscheidung für eine der politischen Einheits-Möglichkeiten immer mit- und vorbestimmt ist."

celebrates an eastern imperial ideal. That ideal involves μοναρχία justified in terms of an ultimate principle in nature that gives coherence, movement, and finally, when suitably Platonised, reality to the Whole. Apuleius finds himself making such Platonising comments when he envisages, as a result of the signal given by the unseen Ruler and Progenitor, all nature “revealing one thousand Forms (μυρίας ιδέας ἀναφαίνουσά) and again concealing them (τε καὶ πάλιν ἀποκρύπτουσα) from the one first principle (ἐκ μιᾶς ἀρχῆς).”⁸⁹ Such a Platonising we find in Plotinus where Plato’s ultimately real One in which the Forms are found has become identified with Aristotle’s first principle. Clearly the cultural background in which Plotinus and Neo-Platonism flourished was one that looked for an epistemological justification of imperial unity.

We shall take Plutarch’s treatment of the Isis myth as our second example of Hellenistic philosophy legitimating religious universalism.

7B 3.2. *Plutarch’s Platonism in De Iside et Osiride*

There are no analogies between a Platonic ontology in the cosmos and divine rulers on earth in this treatise. Indeed Plutarch was a great sceptic regarding ruler-worship in his *Life of Demetrius*.⁹⁰ Most significantly, in his *Romulus*, he denied the literal truth of Romulus’ assumption into heaven. However, he was prepared to conceive that virtue could make the emperor divine so that the good ruler, as the Living Logos (ἔμψυχος λόγος), would incarnate νόμος on earth. As he says:

For God punishes (νεμεσᾶ γὰρ ὁ θεός) those who imitate (τοῖς ἀπομιμουμένοις) thunders (βροντὰς) and lightning bolts (καὶ κεραυνούς) and rays of the sun (καὶ ἀκτινοβολίας), but he is pleased with those who are zealous for his virtue and make themselves like the good and humane (τοὺς δὲ τὴν ἀρετὴν ζηλοῦντας αὐτοῦ καὶ πρὸς το καλὸν καὶ φιλόανθρωπον ἀφομοιοῦντας ἑαυτοῦς ἡδόμενος).

Ad principem ineruditum 781 A, 3

“The ruler is the image of God who orders the world (ἄρχων δ’ εἰκὼν θεοῦ τοῦ πάντα κοσμοῦντος),” but only because “law is the function of

⁸⁹ *De Mundo*, 6, 399a 30–35: ὅταν οὖν ὁ πάντων ἡγεμών τε καὶ γενέτωρ, ἀόρατος ὢν ἄλλω πλὴν λογισμῶ, σημήνην πάση φύσει μεταξὺ οὐρανοῦ τε καὶ γῆς φερομένη, κινεῖται πᾶσα ἐνδελεχῶς ἐν κύκλοις καὶ πέρασιν ἰδίους, ποτὲ μὲν ἀφανιζομένη, ποτὲ δὲ φαινόμενη, μυρίας ιδέας ἀναφαίνουσά τε καὶ πάλιν ἀποκρύπτουσα ἐκ μιᾶς ἀρχῆς.

⁹⁰ Plutarch, *Demetrius*, 10,2–4; 11,1; 12,1; and 13,1–2 cf. G. Chesnut, *The Ruler and the Logos*, in *ANRW* II,16,2, pp. 1321–1324.

the ruler (νόμος δ' ἄρχοντος ἔργον),” and in turn “justice is the end of law (δίκη . . . νόμου τέλος ἐστί).”⁹¹ But in giving a cosmic significance to Isis and Osiris in terms of a Platonic ontology he was unwittingly participating in the movement that, some ninety years later, was to lead to the place of Isis and Osiris in Severan universalism. His modification of the theology of ruler-worship was not to be successful.

Plutarch identifies Osiris with Sarapis as the consort of Isis. He reads their names “both as belonging to one God and to one power (ἄμφω δ' ἐνὸς θεοῦ καὶ μιᾶς δυνάμεως).”⁹² Plutarch however firmly held that both Osiris and Isis had been originally purely mortal rulers, albeit heroic ones, whom legend had exalted after their deaths. Yet he will attribute significance to the Isis myth and cult as an allegory of Platonist philosophical truth.

The end of the religion of Isis is “the knowledge of the first and sovereign and intelligible god (ἡ τοῦ πρώτου καὶ κυρίου καὶ νοητοῦ γνῶσις) which the goddess (Isis) beseeches us to seek since he exists beside her and associates with her (ὄν ἡ θεὸς παρακαλεῖ ζητεῖν παρ' αὐτῇ καὶ μετ' αὐτῆς ὄντα καὶ συνόντα).” Her shrine, the Iseion, by its very name, “promises both knowledge and understanding of what exists (ἐπαγγέλλεται καὶ γνῶσιν καὶ εἶδησιν τοῦ ὄντος)” since it is the shrine of “those who know the real (εἰσομένων τὸ ὄν).”⁹³

The creation and constitution of the world for Plutarch is a mixture of opposing forces (μεμειγμένη γὰρ ἡ τοῦδε τοῦ κόσμου γένεσις καὶ σύστασις ἐξ ἐναντιῶν). For proper Platonic reasons however, all powers are not equal, but final control is with the better (οὐ μὴν ἰσοσθενῶν δυνάμεων, ἀλλὰ τῆς βελτίονος τὸ κράτος ἐστί). The bad (τὴν φαύλην δυνάμιν) “is always fighting against the better (καὶ πρὸς τὴν βελτίονα ἀεὶ δυσμαχοῦσαν).” There is however a principle of order, both in the soul and in Nature when in harmony, and this is Intelligence (νοῦς) and Reason (λόγος) as the Ruler (ἡγεμών) and Sovereign (κύριος) of all that is Good (τῶν ἀρίστων πάντων). That principle of universal Order Plutarch identifies with Osiris as the soul of the world. The order of the world is therefore “the efflux of Osiris (ἀπορροή) and his reflected image (καὶ εἰκῶν).”⁹⁴

⁹¹ *Ad princip. inerudit.* 780 E, 3.

⁹² *De Is. et Osir.* 376 A, 61.

⁹³ *Ibid.* 352 A, 2.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 371 A, 49: ἐν μὲν οὖν τῇ ψυχῇ νοῦς καὶ λόγος ὁ τῶν ἀρίστων πάντων ἡγεμών καὶ κύριος Ὁσίρις ἐστί, ἐν δὲ γῆ καὶ πνεύματι καὶ ὕδατι καὶ οὐρανῷ καὶ ἄστροις τὸ τεταγμένον καὶ καθεστηκὸς καὶ ὑγιαῖνον ὥραις καὶ κράσεσι καὶ περιόδοις Ὁσίριδος ἀπορροή καὶ εἰκῶν ἐμφαινομένη.

If Osiris is νοῦς in ψυχή, from where has the body of the world come? Following the myth, we could say that it comes from Horus who is the offspring of Osiris and Isis, although often Plutarch speaks as if this could be Osiris himself.⁹⁵ Typhon frequently dismembers the body of Osiris, though his soul, and therefore the soul of the world, remains indestructible. It is Isis who puts the dismembered body back together again. Plutarch allegorises as follows:

Isis is in fact the female power of nature (ἡ γὰρ Ἴσις ἐστὶ μὲν τὸ τῆς φύσεως θῆλυ) and is receptive of every form of generation (καὶ δεκτικὸν ἀπάσης γενέσεως), in accord with what she is called by Plato the gentle nurse and the all-receptive (καθὸ τιθήνη καὶ πανδεχῆς ὑπὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος), and by most people she has been called countless names (ὑπὸ δὲ τῶν πολλῶν μυριάωνμος κέκληται), since, because of the force of Reason, she turns herself into this thing or that and is receptive of all manner of shapes and forms (διὰ τὸ πάσας ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου τρεπομένη μορφὰς δέχεσθαι καὶ ιδέας).

De Iside et Osiride 372 E, 53

The world here, seen under the aspect of Isis, receives the Forms from νοῦς or λόγος that is Lord Osiris.

At another point, in a method that proceeds by a variety of analogies and not by a hermeneutic that is systematic theology, Isis is seen as the means by which the νοῦς or λόγος is restored to a world that has become dismembered and chaotic. It is Horus, their mutual offspring, on whom she impressed the eternal forms of things as he represents in the allegory matter that cannot maintain its eternity. As Plutarch says in explanation of Isis wandering to collect and reassemble the dismembered body of Osiris:

... for that which really is and is perceptible and good (τὸ γὰρ ὄν καὶ νοητὸν καὶ ἀγαθόν) is far stronger than destruction and change (φθορᾶς καὶ μεταβολῆς κρείττον ἐστὶν). The images from it with which the sensible and corporeal is impressed (ὡς δ' ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τὸ αἰσθητὴν καὶ σωματικὸν εἰκόνας ἐκμάττεται), and the relations, forms and likenesses which this

⁹⁵ In 373 A, 54 we are informed that the world or Horus οὐκ αἰδιος οὐδ' ἀπαθῆς οὐδ' ἀφθαρτος, ἀλλ' αἰγενης ὢν but also that, in 374 E, 57, μυθολογοῦσι τὴν Ὀσίριδος ψυχὴν αἰδιον εἶναι καὶ ἀφθαρτον, τὸ δὲ σῶμα πολλάκις διασπᾶν καὶ ἀφανίζειν τὸν Τυφῶνα... Horus would therefore be from a Platonic point of view, a far better representative of the world of matter bearing the Forms but dismembered by Typhon. But Plutarch could not change too arbitrarily the myth in favour of his philosophical theology, and was exploring analogies rather than engaging in systematic theology. See also C. Panagopoulos, *Vocabulaire et mentalité dans les Moralia de Plutarque*, in *Dialogues d'histoire ancienne* 3 (= *Annales Littéraires de l'Université de Besançon*, 1977), pp. 197–235.

takes upon itself (καὶ λόγους καὶ εἶδη καὶ ὁμοιότητας ἀναλαμβάνει), like impressions of seals in wax (καθάπερ ἐν κηρῷ σφραγίδες), are not permanent and lasting (οὐκ αἰεὶ διαμένουσιν), but disorder and disturbance overtakes them (ἀλλὰ καταλαμβάνει δὲ ἄτακτον αὐτὰς καὶ ταραχῶδες), being driven hither from the upper reaches (ἐνταῦθα τῆς ἄνω χώρας ἀπεληλαμένον) and fighting against Horus (καὶ μαχόμενον πρὸς τὸν Ὡρον), whom Isis brings forth as the image, perceived by the senses, of the perceptible world (ὄν^ς Ἰσις εἰκόνα τοῦ νοητοῦ κόσμου αἰσθητὸν ὄντα γεννᾷ).

De Iside et Osiride 373 A–B, 54

The details of the mythology whose imagery Plutarch wishes to follow does not exactly license the philosophical account that he wishes to derive from it by means of allegory. Perhaps we might follow Plutarch's Platonic logic to its proper conclusion, as we shall argue Neoplatonism did, with some modification to the mythology. Horus, whom Isis brings forth from their union, is the image not so much of the perceptible world, but rather the εἰκὼν αἰσθητός of which she, as the mother of Horus, is the εἰκὼν νοητός. Isis now becomes truly an εἰκὼν of Osiris-Sarapis, "of the sovereign and intelligible first principle (τοῦ πρώτου καὶ κυρίου καὶ νοητοῦ)."

Clearly Plutarch was developing an ontology that reflected a view of social order to which his resistance to the absolutism of a divine emperor was otherwise opposed. But the quest for a social order controlled and legitimated by a first principle from which all power, goodness, and order were ultimately derived, and represented by Osiris, is clearly reflected in his speculation. Resistance to that order was of a power, personified as Typhon, which was "the bad that is always fighting against the better (τὴν φαύλην . . . πρὸς τὴν βελτίονα αἰεὶ δυσμαχοῦσαν)."

Certainly Isis behaves, in the preceding quotation, like the nature that we saw in Apuleius' *De Mundo*,⁹⁶ "revealing one thousand Forms (μυρίας ιδέας ἀναφαίνουσα) and again concealing them (τε καὶ πάλιν ἀποκρύπτουσα)." Osiris clearly represents the Ruler and Progenitor of All (ὁ πάντων ἡγεμών τε καὶ γενέτωρ) who actualises in nature the variety of potential Forms from the one first principle (ἐκ μιᾶς ἀρχῆς). Half-real matter for a Platonist is always intractable in terms of the Forms, but Plutarch's language has a far closer fit than Plato's to the social world of Roman imperialism. Osiris as first principle and Isis as the εἰκὼν νοητικός are far more active and directive in maintain-

⁹⁶ Apuleius *De Mundo* 6, 399 a 30–35 (7B 3.1).

ing order, like Aristotle's first principle, than Plato originally conceived his transcendent world to be. Thus Plutarch's reflections interconnect with a religious and philosophical culture out of which Neoplatonism was to develop, and which was to represent also the philosophical basis for the Severan iconography of divine imperial order.

But how was the development of both Church Order, and the Christian theology that was likewise to reflect social order now to proceed? We shall see that the counter-culture developed here too as the reversed image of the pagan culture that it confronted.

PART C. SOCIAL ORDER AND THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

Plutarch had claimed the wise men or σοφοί of the history of Greek philosophy as witnesses to the religion of Isis, and its justifying ontology. "The most wise men of the Greeks bear witness (μαρτυροῦσιν δὲ καὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων οἱ σοφώτατοι), Solon, Thales, Plato, Eudoxus, Pythagoras (Σόλων Θαλῆς Πλάτων Εὐδοξος Πυθαγόρας) . . . who came to Egypt and consorted with their priests (εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἀφικόμενοι καὶ συγγενόμενοι τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν)."⁹⁷ There was more to this claim than simply an appeal to the authority of the past in order to substantiate a religious claim.

The world of the late second century, of Irenaeus and the Hippolytan school no less than Hellenistic historiographers such as Diogenes Laertius or Philostratus in his *Vita Apollonii*, was concerned even before Plotinus came to Rome (c. 244 A.D.) with the quest for a single historical ἀρχή for the true philosophy or the true religion. Plotinus and even Ammonius Saccas can thus be seen as products of the quest for a single ἀρχή ordering not only the cosmos, but human history and human society. The most valid philosophy or religion will not simply be the most ancient, but the one from which all other philosophies or religions are derived whether as logical developments or as logical corruptions.

Both Diogenes Laertius and Philostratus were to deny Plutarch's claim for Egypt as providing in Isis worship, or rather in the ontology of which it was an allegory, the ultimate historical ἀρχή of philosophy as the criterion of its truth. For Diogenes philosophy had

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 354 E 10.

to be a wholly Greek phenomenon and the σοφοί quite independent of such non-Greek influence. For Apollonius the Egyptians were to be quite unworthy and the true ἀρχή was to be found in the Indian gymnosophists. We shall show a similar concern for the ἀρχή of the Christian community and its theology in expressions of the theory of the apostolic succession that characterised the later second and early third century (7C 1).

We shall seek (7C 2) to place the theological development of the Trinity, as finally derived from a μοναρχία or first principle, in the contra-cultural context of the growth of a pagan, Neoplatonic ontology that restored cosmic order in the face of the chaos of a Gnostic world view. The growth of Christian theology, we shall argue, no less reflected the social order of the Christian community as had the growth of a theological justification of imperial order.

7C 1. Irenaeus and *Pseudo-Hippolytus*: διαδοχαί ἀποστόλων

Irenaeus produced his episcopal succession list for Rome, and argued, from this one example, that all valid churches had valid doctrine that ultimately was derived from the apostle or apostles that initiated the succession. All heresy was derived from the doctrine of Simon Magus and his successors.⁹⁸ These had διαδοχαί or *successiones* in teaching office that, despite apparent variety and conflict, made them dependent upon and derived from this common origin. It was insufficient to simply attribute their origin to distinct Hellenistic philosophical schools, though this was more historically accurate. A single origin that was not apostolic was essential for the intellectual credibility of an argument in the context of a culture obsessed with social, cultural, political and ontological unity.

Pseudo-Hippolytus and his group within that collection of groups that formed the Roman ἐκκλησία of the late second and early third century pursued an argument formally similar to that of Irenaeus.⁹⁹ But Pseudo-Hippolytus perfected the more embryonic Neo-Platonic

⁹⁸ Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, I,23, 1–2; II, *Praef.* 1: “. . . et progenitoris ipsorum doctrinam, Simonis Magi Samaritani, et omnium eorum, qui successerunt ei, manifestavimus . . . omnes a Simone haeretici initia sumentes . . . et differentias ipsorum et doctrinas et successiones adnotavimus . . .” III, *Praef.*: “Agressi sumus autem nos, arguentes eos a Simone, patre omnium haeticorum, et doctrinas et successiones manifestare . . .”

⁹⁹ Brent (1995), *Hippolytus*, chapters 6–7.

argument of the latter that justified or refuted ideas in terms of tracing their ultimate historical origin. Contrary to Irenaeus, the heretical schools do not go back to Greek philosophy, as Simon Magus applied it to Christianity, but to the Greek philosophers themselves, whose ultimate origin is in the snake worship of the Naasenes.

Plato erred when, according to *Timaeus* 22 b 4, he derived Solon's teaching from an Egyptian priest. He did not inquire further for the true ἀρχή which he would have found to be the serpent-worship characterising all pagan religion. Furthermore the Hippolytan school, in its chronographic concerns shared by Julius Africanus and destined to be continued by Eusebius, reflected the quest for an ultimate origin by means of which the teaching of Moses and Abraham could be shown to be older than either Greek philosophy or pagan religion and thus more real. This was the conclusion that the parallel lists of Olympiads, Roman Consuls, Patriarchs etc. were intended to establish.¹⁰⁰

As such, the concerns of Christian writers such as Irenaeus and those of the Hippolytan school reflected a historiography that they held in common with such imperial writers as Philostratus or even Diogenes Laertius, who formed part of the circle of Julia Domna, to whom the former dedicated the *Vita Apollonii* shortly after her death (A.D. 217). Philostratus is determined to show that the ultimate origin of philosophy is not in Egyptian religion but in the Indian gymnosophists. Laertius will deny such an extraneous origin, and will argue instead that philosophy was a purely Greek phenomenon whose origin was in the golden age when the twelve wise men lived.¹⁰¹

7C 1.1. *Diogenes Laertius and philosophical origins*

Laertius uses the concept of διαδοχή to demonstrate the cultural purity of Hellenistic philosophy, as does Pseudo-Hippolytus regarding purity of orthodox doctrine handed down by those who share in the teaching and hierocratic διαδοχή of bishops. In order to demonstrate the validity of conflicting schools of Greek philosophy, Laertius has to come to terms with the existence of basically four διαδοχαί,

¹⁰⁰ A. Brent, Diogenes Laertius and the Apostolic Succession, in *JEH* 44,3 (1993), pp. 367–371; *idem.* (1995), *Historiography*, p. 343; *idem.* (1995), *Hippolytus*, pp. 262–265; 493–495.

¹⁰¹ Brent (1995), *Historiography*, pp. 238–240.

Platonism, Stoicism, Aristotelianism, and Epicureanism. No Latin exponent of these writers such as Seneca, Cicero, or Lucretius are mentioned or summarised. The four *διαδοχαί* effectively come to an end in the mid-second century B.C. Hellenistic philosophy from that time until Diogenes' own is treated by him as a finished product that can be taught and admired in all its uncontaminated Hellenic purity. But in the intellectual culture that was to nurture a nascent Neo-Platonism, such diversity as four *διαδοχαί*, with no account of their essential unity from which they could be historically or logically derived, was highly unsatisfactory. And so Laertius was to make an already highly artificial and schematised account even more so.¹⁰²

He reduced the four *διαδοχαί* to two *ἀρχαί* that began them, and these two were respectively the work of Thales and Pherekydes. But then he uses the literary device of epistolary pseudonymity to unify the various seven, eleven or twelve wise men, inhabiting the *Urzeit* of Greek civilisation and representing the combined wisdom of the σοφοί of which the φιλόσοφοι are clearly the φιλοί. Thales writes to Pherekydes and *vice versa*.¹⁰³ Pherekydes on his death-bed writes to Thales that he is sending his writing for the latter to publish it "provided that you together with the other wise men approve of it (σὺ δὲ ἦν δοκιμώσης σὺν τοῖς ἄλλοις σοφοῖς) and not otherwise (*Succ.* 1,122)." There is thus suggested a common agreement between Thales and Pherekydes about their work to which all the σοφοί consent as an expression of the one true philosophy. Thus the pseudonymous literary device suggests that the two *ἀρχαί* are in agreement, and that agreement has its ultimate historical origin in the unity established by the exchange of letters between all the σοφοί in the *Urzeit* of Hellenistic civilisation.¹⁰⁴

We thus see amongst the immediate precursors to Plotinus the development of a firm ontological presupposition that amongst the diversity of phenomena reality must be, contrary to Stoicism, not an immanent but a transcendental One. This general assumption, whilst not articulated in terms of the precise metaphysics of Neo-Platonism before Plotinus, was nevertheless reflected in the historiography of ideas at the end of the second century.

¹⁰² Brent (1993), pp. 372–375; Brent (1995), *Historiography*, pp. 240–243.

¹⁰³ *Succ.* 1, 43–44 and 122.

¹⁰⁴ Brent (1993), pp. 240–243; Brent (1995), *Historiography*, pp. 372–376.

7C 1.2. *Historiography within the circle of Julia Domna*

We saw (7A 2.3) that Julia Domna, as ἡ φιλόσοφος, founded a philosophic circle that produced an ideology that justified the Severan Reformation. Such an ideology was propagated by the iconography of *Sol Invictus* and κοσμοκράτωρ, in which a universal religious syncretism could justify the goal of imperial unity embracing the diverse cultures of the empire.

We now see that her school was interested not simply in a cosmic μοναρχία but a historical μοναρχία too. Diogenes Laertius and Philostratus, on the pagan side, the former a member of the circle of Julia Domna almost as certainly as the latter, produce different answers to their common quest for the true philosophy as the historically original philosophy from which all others are derivative reflections. Their differences are not about the method of determining what is of ultimate value but simply and substantively what is the particular origin of ultimate philosophy undiluted by diminishing reflection and derivation.¹⁰⁵

Diogenes answered that philosophy derives from the σοφοί of the golden age of Hellenistic culture, whose testimony was of one phenomenon vouchsafed by their epistolary exchanges and agreements. Philostratus has, also from within in the circle of Julia Domna, replied that the true philosophy was from the Indian gymnosophists and not from the Egyptian priest to whom Plato attributes his philosophy in the *Timaeus*. Pseudo-Hippolytus, who addressed one work on the Resurrection to Julia Mamaea and another to a certain Severina, may also have been, like the Christian writer and architect of the Pantheon, Julius Africanus, a Christian member of that circle.¹⁰⁶

Pseudo-Hippolytus too is aware that Plato in *Timaeus* derives his philosophy from an Egyptian priest which in turn he has now derived from the universal pagan religion, reflected in every pagan cult, the snake worship of the Naasenes.¹⁰⁷ The true test for validity of doctrine is its ultimate derivation from the apostles through an uncorrupted succession of teachers. In this respect Pseudo-Hippolytus is closer to Diogenes Laertius than to Philostratus. Both agree on a golden age of uncontaminated truth by twelve σοφοί or twelve apostles, before

¹⁰⁵ Brent (1995), *Historiography*, pp. 237–248.

¹⁰⁶ M. Sordi, *Il Cristianesimo e Roma*, in *Storia di Roma XIX*, Istituto di Studi Romani, (Bologna: Cappelli 1965), p. 240.

¹⁰⁷ Plato, *Timaeus*, 19 E 8–22 B 4 and Brent (1995) *Hippolytus*, pp. 262–265.

extraneous and foreign accretions had set up their counter claims in the form of either Hellenistic religion (for Laertius) or heresy (for Pseudo-Hippolytus). Such a quest to locate the true faith in an ultimate historical origin also, I have argued elsewhere, lay behind the epistle of Peter to Clement and Clement to James in the Clementine *Homilies*. The purpose of their exchange of letters is formally similar to that of Thales and Pherekydes in Diogenes Laertius. The Petrine and Jacobean traditions are shown by this use of the device of pseudonymity to constitute a common origin or ἀρχή.¹⁰⁸

A Monarchian historiography as well as a Monarchian ontology were both present in the cultural soil from which Neoplatonism was to grow and flourish. Historiography and ontology both contributed fundamentally to the legitimation of a process of religious syncretism that was seeking to order the chaos of cultural diversity by means of the religious cult of a divine emperor. A coherent syncretism could be achieved by charting the origin of the diversity of cultures in an ultimate source or ἀρχή from which that diversity was derived. This was the historical Monarchianism justifying Severan universalism. Here we have found a direct relationship between the political iconography of the emperor's person and the later Neoplatonist ontology.

But on the Christian side, the doctrine of the Trinity, and the quest for an expression of the unity of the Godhead in terms of μοναρχία against Gnosticism, accompanied the development of Church Order that was to result in a monarch-bishop. To the details of this case we must now turn.

7C 2. *Monarchian theology, Gnosticism and Imperial Order*

We emphasised the growth of Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism as a response to the dismemberment of Stoic holistic hylomorphism by Gnostic dualism. Just as the former was the ontological reflection of imperial unity, so the latter, in its emphasis on the disorder of creation and the individual character of redemption, was, in its portrayal of cosmic chaos, the ontological reflection of the denial of the imperialist social construction of reality.

The growth of the threefold Order, originally with Ignatius a typology but, in the second and early third century to develop into a hierarchy with a monarch bishop at its apex, likewise was a denial

¹⁰⁸ Brent (1993) pp. 377–380; Brent (1995), *Hippolytus*, pp. 492–500.

of Gnostic individualism. It is not without significance that the example of a Gnostic liturgy that we have is indeed a charismatic liturgy.¹⁰⁹ We have argued that Clement directed his view of Church Order against such a charismatic community (4B 3).

Furthermore, the claimed orthodoxy that created against Gnosticism a system ruled by monarch bishops was itself Monarchian in theology. Although Ignatius did not believe in monarch bishops as such, his nascent Trinitarianism does exhibit tendencies suggestive of the later Monarchians. We have, furthermore, argued that his view of the significance of the procession of the martyr bishop does show ecclesiastical order as a reversed, contra-cultural reflection of imperial order in the Imperial Cult (6A 2). The admittedly fourth century *Apostolic Constitutions*, celebrating the bishop as sole ruler, also claimed a subordinationism in the Godhead that required one source and origin for its first principle, in other words a dynamic form of *μοναρχία*.¹¹⁰ Between the claims of Ignatius and the *Apostolic Constitutions* we have Callistus' revolution in ecclesiastical order that we shall argue mirrors that of the contemporary Severan emperor, Elagabalus in imperial order (Chapter 8).

Let us for the moment begin by examining Irenaeus' attack on the plurality of creators, and its implication for a universe of order that is essentially good. Here we shall find a parallel development to the pagan precursors of Plotinus, in which a plurality of powers, whether in nature or in society, is seen for the sake of order to be reducible to the one. Plotinus, as we have already seen, was to argue this case against the fundamental Gnostic ontology in *Enneads* II, 9,1,13–16 (7B 2).

7C 2.1. *Irenaeus and the κοσμοκράτορες*

It was, as we saw, the image of Caracalla as *κοσμοκράτωρ*, through whom shone the divinity of *Sol Invictus*, which, in philosophical terms, was now identified as *νοῦς* or *λόγος*, the ultimate and first principle of order which was the One and the Good. But in asserting the

¹⁰⁹ K. Koschorke, Die Polemik der Gnostiker gegen das kirchliche Christentum, in *Nag Hammadi Studies* XII, (Brill: Leiden 1978), pp. 67–71; *idem.*, Eine neugefundene gnostische Gemeindeordnung, in *ZThK* 76 (1979), pp. 30–60.

¹¹⁰ F.X. Funk, *Die Apostolischen Konstitutionen: Eine literarhistorische Untersuchung*, (Minerva GmbH., Frankfurt/Main 1970) (Rottenberg 1891); G. Strecker, Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudoclementinen, in *TU* 70 (1958 and 1981), cf. Brent (1995), *Hippolytus*, pp. 461–462 ff.

image of the παντοκράτωρ in these terms, the imperial ideology was negating Gnosticism in which, as Irenaeus in his Christian response makes plain, there were a plurality of παντοκράτορες responsible for the created order of evil darkness, chaos, and enslavement.

The author of the pseudo Pauline letter to the Ephesians had referred to such a Gnostic mythology when he spoke about the Christian struggle “against dominions (πρὸς γὰρ ἀρχάς), against authorities (πρὸς τὰς ἐξουσίας), against the cosmic rulers of this darkness (πρὸς τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκότους τούτου).”¹¹¹ Clement of Alexandria attributed such a sentiment also to Plato when he said: Πλάτων ἐν τῷ ἐβδόμῳ τῆς Πολιτείας τὴν ἐνταῦθα ἡμέραν νυκτερινὴν κέκληκεν διὰ τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας οἶμαι τοῦ σκότους τούτου.¹¹² Irenaeus witnesses the Valentinian conception of the Demiurge as one such κοσμοκράτωρ who believes that he alone is the creator: “I am God and beside me there is no other (Ἐγὼ Θεός, πλὴν ἐμοῦ οὐδεὶς)” as in *Isaiah* 45,5 and 46,9. The Demiurge creates the Παντοκράτωρ (... λέγουσι τὸν δὲ Κοσμοκράτορα κτίσμα τοῦ Δημιουργοῦ).

One may note that the Valentinians made the κοσμοκράτορες into a single power, as did the iconography of Caracalla. But the Valentinian κοσμοκράτωρ has his origin as one of the spirits of evil (τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας) from the sorrow (ἐκ τῆς λύπης) that causes the cosmic catastrophe that is the creation of the world. His substance is the same “spiritual substance of evil (τὴν πνευματικὴν τῆς πονηρίας ὑπόστασιν)” as the daemons, and is identified by Irenaeus with the devil (τὸν διάβολον . . . ὃν καὶ Κοσμοκράτορα καλοῦσι).¹¹³ Furthermore, he is the inherent spirit of evil in the material world (τὸν δε Κοσμοκράτορα ἐν τῷ καθ’ ἡμᾶς κόσμῳ).¹¹⁴ Cerdo, likewise, in succession to Marcion, called the lesser god κοσμοκράτωρ.¹¹⁵ Caracalla’s iconography has cleansed the power of the κοσμοκράτωρ, flowing throughout the world as the Sun, from all associations of grief and evil, and of

¹¹¹ *Eph.* 6,12. I am indebted for many of these references and their discussion to Cumont and Canet (1919), pp. 234–235.

¹¹² *Strom.* 5,14.

¹¹³ Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* I,5,4 (= *Frag. graec.* 1, 536–543): Ἐγὼ Θεός, πλὴν ἐμοῦ οὐδεὶς, ἐκ δὲ τῆς λύπης τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας διδάσκουσι γεγονέναι· ὅθεν καὶ τὸν διάβολον τὴν γένεσιν ἐσχηκέναι, ὃν καὶ Κοσμοκράτορα καλοῦσι, καὶ τὰ δαιμόνια καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν πνευματικὴν τῆς πονηρίας ὑπόστασιν. . . . λέγουσι τὸν δὲ Κοσμοκράτορα κτίσμα τοῦ Δημιουργοῦ.

¹¹⁴ I,5,4 (= *Frag. graec.* 1,549).

¹¹⁵ I,27,2.

uncontrolled subordination. The power of the emperor as *Sol Invictus* is a benign and good ordering of the imperial whole.

Later Neoplatonism was to order the seven planets, called the *κοσμοκράτορες*, within the monarchy of *Sol Invictus* as Plotinus had, in *Enneads* II, 9,1,13–16, reduced all other powers to the status of derivative being of the One. Pursuing the same project with the same ontological purpose, Proclus will later admit the seven cosmocrators as the seven planets into his Neoplatonist scheme. “The planets are called ‘cosmocrators’ (οἱ γὰρ καλούμενοι πλάνητες κοσμοκράτορες)” but they are no longer rebellious aeons fragmenting the pleroma through their ignorance. Rather, “each of the cosmocrators (ἕκαστος τῶν κοσμοκρατόρων), being a monad (μονὰς ὄν), is arranged together as part of a common assembly (τῷ πλήθει συντεταγμένη).”¹¹⁶

The arrangement is the work of King Helios. As Proclus says:

The king of all visible things (ὁ μὲν γὰρ τῶν ὁρατῶν πάντων βασιλεὺς [ἥλιος]), imitating the creative powers through rays of the light (καὶ τὰς δημιουργικὰς δυνάμεις διὰ τῶν τοῦ φωτὸς ἀκτίνων ἀπομιμούμενος), is accompanied as his bodyguard by the cosmocrators (ὑπὸ πάντων δορυφορεῖται τῶν κοσμοκρατόρων).¹¹⁷

And behind King Helios stands the Demiurge from whom his powers in imitating noumenal order are derived and subordinate. It is quite clear that Helios is considered one of the cosmocrators, but the supreme one, since “for the sake of the genesis of this (phenomenal) world (ἔνεκα τῆς τούτου γενέσεως), he begat (ἀπογεννᾷ) both sun (καὶ ἥλιον) and the other *cosmocratores* (καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους κοσμοκράτορας).”¹¹⁸ Thus clearly the *κοσμοκράτορες* are assigned by the demiurge their subordinate role in the operation of the whole, through a due gradation. The Demiurge as King Helios is the noumenal Sun, and supreme cosmocrator. The phenomenal sun reflects the noumenal Sun through which the other cosmocrators mediate movement and being to the phenomenal world. The Demiurge is one (ὁ δημιουργὸς . . . ὢν εἷς) but he endows with assimilative power (τὴν ἀφομοιωτικὴν δύναμιν ἐντιθεῖς) the new creators with him (τοῖς μετ’ αὐτὸν νέοις δημιουργοῖς). These are therefore but the means of reflecting power

¹¹⁶ E. Diehl, (Ed.), *Procli Diadochi, In Platonis Timaeum Commentaria*, (Teubner: Leipzig 1903/Amsterdam: Hakkert 1965), III p. 58, 8 and 18.

¹¹⁷ W. Kroll, (Ed.), *Procli Diadochi, In Platonis Rem Publicam Commentarii I* (Teubner: Leipzig 1899/Amsterdam: Hakkert 1965), pp. 220, 25–28.

¹¹⁸ Proclus, *Comm. in Platonis Timaeum* III, pp. 95, 31–33.

derived from him. He commands them to imitate his own power (μμεῖσθαι τὴν ἑαυτοῦ δύναμιν) with regard to their own creative activity (περὶ τὴν αὐτῶν γένεσιν). "Hence (αὐτόθεν) he appoints the cosmocrators as guards (τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας φύλακας ὑφίστησι) over the intervals of time (τῶν ἀριθμῶν τοῦ χρόνου) and as the guard of night and day (καὶ τὴν φύλακα νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας)."¹¹⁹ The Demiurge being one, he injects the assimilative power similarly into those new demiurges with him, when he commands them to imitate his own power. Thus the cosmocrators (οἱ κοσμοκράτορες) are those who are moved (τρεπόμενοι) by the noumenal Demiurge who is "exceedingly King Helios (διαφερόντως ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἥλιος)."¹²⁰ As Proclus says:

... it is also clear (ὅτι καὶ δῆλον), that indeed time is not, since it has numerical property, the sole participant in movement (ὡς ἄρα ὁ χρόνος οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ μετεχόμενος μόνον καὶ ἀριθμὸς ὢν τῆς κινήσεως), even though the cosmocrators maintain the order appropriate to it (πρὸς αὐτὸν τάξιν οἱ κοσμοκράτορες), but the unseen God and eternal in essence (ἀλλὰ θεὸς ἀφανὴς καὶ κατ' οὐσίαν αἰώνιος) is the source of power (ἐνεργῶν) for all their movements (περὶ πάσας τὰς κινήσεις) and the entire rotation of the universe (καὶ τὴν ὅλην τοῦ κόσμου περίοδον), and he uses as his own individual means these gods themselves (ὄργανοις δὲ χρώμενος ὡς μερικωτέροις μέτροις ἑαυτοῦ τούτοις θεοῖς).¹²¹

Thus the disordered universe of both polytheism and Gnosticism is finally ordered, and its analogical monarchical political power legitimated.

Both Plotinus and his pagan predecessors can clearly be regarded as sharing a common cause with Irenaeus in reducing the disordered world of Gnosticism to a single first principle from which other divine entities could proceed by ordered emanation or procession. For Plotinus and his predecessors the process of emanation was one by which an essentially good ultimately reality shared its being with the cosmic order without thereby experiencing diminution. For Plotinus no more than the One (τὸ Ἐν), the thought (Νοῦς) that proceeds from the thinking One, and Soul (Ψυχή) are to be found in the intelligible world (ἐν τῷ νοητῷ). Among the three there was a direct gradation of being, a subordination of lower to higher until finally phenomenal nature could become the phenomenal παράδειγμα of the noumenal or νοητόν.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 2,10.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.* p. 227,28.

¹²¹ *Ibid.* p. 40,2.

For Irenaeus and some of his predecessors there was a Godhead made of two or three persons, who were joined together with the common title of Κύριος. Against the Gnostics he asserts at one point that Scripture knows only two divine beings assigned this name:

Neither the Lord (οὔτε οὖν ὁ Κύριος) nor the Holy Spirit (οὔτε πνεῦμα ἅγιον), nor apostles (οὔτε ἀπόστολοι) would have ever expressed with accurate theology that he was not God (τὸν οὐκ ὄντα θεὸν κυρίως ἐθεολόγησέν ποτε) unless he was not truly God (εἰ μὴ ἦν ἀληθῶς θεός), nor would they have used the term 'Lord' for someone (οὔτε ἐκυριολόγησάν τινα) on grounds of his own personal nature (ἐξ ἰδίου προσώπου) unless he was the God and Father of all that exercised sovereignty (ἀλλ' ἢ τὸν κυριεύοντα πάντων θεὸν πατέρα) and his Son who received the sovereignty from the Father of all creation (καὶ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν τὴν κυρείαν λαβόντα παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ πάσης τῆς κτίσεως) . . . Since therefore the Father is truly Lord (ἀληθῶς οὖν Κύριος ὄντος τοῦ πατρὸς), and the Son is truly Lord (καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ ἀληθῶς ὄντος Κυρίου), the Holy Spirit naturally indicated them by the title of 'Lord.' (εἰκότως τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τῇ τοῦ Κυρίου προσηγορίᾳ ἐσήμηνεν αὐτούς).

Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, 6,1.

Thus Irenaeus reduces the gnostic pleroma to a Godhead of two persons to which he will add elsewhere the Holy Spirit as a third.¹²² If it should be argued that a Godhead of two or three persons will replicate the chaos of gnostic creation, clearly here Irenaeus claims a unity of purpose in a divine plan, elsewhere described by him as οἰκονομία. But note how this unity is conceived in terms of a political analogy. Father and Son have created all that there is as a well-ordered and good creation, and not chaotic and evil as was the creation that was the outcome of the battle of the aeons over Sophia's expulsion. The Son is united in purpose with the Father. His sovereignty and therefore divine title (κύριος), shared with the Father (τὸν κυριεύοντα πάντων θεὸν πατέρα), is by delegation (τὴν κυρείαν λαβόντα παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς). Irenaeus' ontology, like that of Plotinus, is reflecting imperial order against Gnostic ἀταξία.

Elsewhere Irenaeus will follow *Jn.* 14, 10–11 and assert:

Through the Son who is in the Father (διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ οὖν τοῦ ὄντος ἐν τῷ πατρὶ), and who has in himself the Father (καὶ ἔχοντος ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὸν πατέρα), he who is God is manifested (ὁ ὢν ἐφανερώθη θεός), with the

¹²² *Adv. Haer.* III, 24,2; IV, 7,4, and 34,3 in which no clear distinction is drawn between the Christ as *Verbum* and *Sapientia*, and the Holy Spirit as *Sapientia*, cf. Brent (1995), *Hippolytus*, pp. 215–218.

Father witnessing to the Son (τοῦ πατρὸς μαρτυρήσαντος τῷ υἱῷ), and the Son proclaiming the Father (καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καταγγέιλαντος τὸν πατέρα).
Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, III, 6,2,48

But without the theology of persons in the Godhead (πρόσωπα) which Tertullian and Hippolytus were to develop,¹²³ such an account of the unity of the Godhead seems far closer to the Monarchianism that both of them opposed, as Simonetti points out.¹²⁴ In Ochagavía's telling phrase, for Irenaeus the *Filius was visibile patris*.¹²⁵

Let us therefore examine further the thesis that a Monarchian ontology was reflected in the order of the Christian community that accepted such a theology, with particular reference to some of Irenaeus' predecessors.

7C 2.2. Ignatius of Antioch: nascent Monarchianism

We have already argued a contra-cultural parallelism between Ignatius' conception of the bishop's office, and his confrontation with the imperial power focused upon the Imperial Cult itself (6A 2).¹²⁶ We shall now see that in Ignatian theology we possess a nascent Monarchianism in the Godhead that also flows over into his conception of Church Order. However, we do well to emphasise that the Monarchianism is a nascent one.

Dassmann, using the insights he had gained from what today would be described as Peterson's sociology of knowledge, originally connected Ignatius of Antioch's modalistic tendencies with his argument for an episcopal monarchy.¹²⁷ I have argued elsewhere against the view that Ignatius envisaged a monarch bishop as later emerged in Rome, and in the Syria of the *Didascalia*. Ignatius' concept of the threefold Order I have argued earlier to be far more influenced by typological analogies shared with pagan worship between divinities and their sacral representatives rather than on any direct relationship between a developed doctrine of the Trinity and subordination within ecclesial Order (6A 2).

¹²³ Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.*, 7 and 9 and Hippolytus, *C.N.* 14, 2-3. For my comments on these passages see Brent (1995), *Hippolytus*, pp. 252-258 and pp. 530-535.

¹²⁴ M. Simonetti, Il problema dell'unità di Dio da Giustino a Ireneo, in *RSLR* 22,2 (1986), pp. 229-237.

¹²⁵ J. Ochagavía, *Visibile Patris Filius*, A Study of Irenaeus' Teaching on Revelation and Tradition, in *OrChrA* 171 (1964), chapter 3.

¹²⁶ See also A. Brent, Ignatius of Antioch and the Imperial Cult, in *VCh* 52,1 (1997), pp. 30-58.

¹²⁷ E. Dassmann, Zur Entstehung des Monepiskopats, in *JbAC* 17 (1974), p. 74.

I have argued in detail elsewhere that Church Order for Ignatius is not monarchical, as a comparison with the *Didascalia Apostolorum* will show. His threefold Order is a three-fold typology rather than a three-fold hierarchy.¹²⁸ The Laity are instructed to submit, for the sake of reflecting the divine οἰκονομία or plan of salvation, to Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons. But neither the Presbyters nor Deacons receive instructions to submit to the Bishop, but are regarded as naturally doing so, in the symphonic chorus that they form together (6B 2). The Order of the Church is a result of the liturgical incarnation, in the life of the community, of the words and actions of all three Orders, and their re-enactment of the way in which the Father Bishop, sends the diaconal Son, in the context of the Presbyteral spirit-filled council of the Apostles.

Yet undoubtedly Ignatius has tendencies towards a Monarchian version of the Trinity that is not consistent with his more Trinitarian view of Order. It was the former that was both to develop and to prevail in the anti-Gnostic writers of the second century. Furthermore, I shall argue that when Trinitarian Monarchianism developed in its final form, it provided a contra-cultural reflection of divine imperial order, and its consistent reflection in the social construction of reality by the Christian contra-culture produced monarch-bishops, united by mutual inter-communion and recognition. The *episcopatus . . . una*, centred on the See of Rome, was thus to form the contra-cultural counterpart to the person of the emperor as source of imperial order.

Ignatius of Antioch had spoken of “Jesus Christ who proceeded from the one Father (τὸν ἅψ’ ἐνὸς πατρός προελθόντα) and who returned to him who was one (καὶ εἰς ἓνα ὄντα καὶ χωρήσαντα).”¹²⁹ It was clearly such themes that were to develop further in the cultural matrix of the second and early third century from which, as we have argued, Neoplatonism was to arise. Here there is clearly Order in terms of

¹²⁸ A. Brent, Cultural Episcopacy and Ecumenism, Representative Ministry in Church History from the Age of Ignatius of Antioch to the Reformation, with special reference to contemporary ecumenism, in *Studies in Christian Mission* 6, (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1992), pp. 67–73; *Idem*. History and Eschatological Mysticism in Ignatius of Antioch, in *ETHL* 65,4 (1989), pp. 316–320; *Idem*. The Relations between Ignatius of Antioch and the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, in *Second Century*, 8,3 (1991), pp. 130–134; *Idem*. Ecumenical Relations and Cultural Episcopates, in *ATHR* 72,3 (1990), pp. 266–269.

¹²⁹ Ignatius, *Magnes.*, 7,2. Cf. also *Magnes.* 1,2: . . . ἔνωσιν εὐχόμεαι . . . Ἰησοῦ καὶ πατρός.

derivation from an ultimate origin that we have witnessed also in the metaphysics and iconography of imperial order.

The Church in Ignatius is portrayed as deriving its ordered life from the order of the Godhead. The risen Christ was “united with the Father in Spirit (πνευματικῶς ἠνωμένος τῷ πατρὶ)” as he appeared to “those around Peter in the flesh (ὡς σαρκικός).” The group that founds historically the Church “immediately touched him (καὶ εὐθὺς αὐτοῦ ἤψαντο) and believed (καὶ ἐπίστευσαν), since they had become mingled (κραθέντες) with his flesh and spirit (τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ τῷ πνεύματι).”¹³⁰ Ignatius now describes a procession in the structure of the community that mirrors the ontology of the Godhead.

Ignatius’ language, in *Rom.* 6,1, as we have seen (6B), reflects the imperial ideal, and to the Imperial Cult his own martyrological procession represents his contra-cultural counterpart. Furthermore, as counter image of the imperial ideal we read:

For Jesus Christ (καὶ γὰρ Ἰησοῦς Χριστός), our indivisible life (τὸ ἀδιάκριτον ἡμῶν ζῆν), is the mind of the Father (τοῦ πατρὸς ἡ γνώμη), even as the bishops who are found at the earth’s ends (ὡς καὶ οἱ ἐπίσκοποι, οἱ κατὰ τὰ πέρατα ὀρισθέντες) are in the mind of Jesus Christ (ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ γνώμῃ εἰσίν).

Ignatius, *Ephes.*, 3,1.

Ecclesiastical authority thus comes from the indivisible life (τὸ ἀδιάκριτον ἡμῶν ζῆν) of the ultimate One Father from whom Christ Jesus came and to whom he returned. Such authority is therefore derived from divine, unifying power that gives them their authority in the community, just as Neoplatonist political theology was to claim for Caracalla the *κοσμοκράτωρ* and his successors.

Just as the Lord did nothing without the Father due to their union (ἠνωμένους ὄν), nor without the apostles who shared that union as we saw with “those around Peter,” so the community is to do nothing without the bishop who represents the Father, nor the presbyters who represent the apostles.¹³¹ The unity of the Godhead must be reflected in the unity of the community. Social structure reflects ontological structure. Thus:

¹³⁰ Ignatius, *Smyr.*, 2-3.

¹³¹ *Ibid. Magnes.* 7,1: ὡς περ οὖν ὁ κύριος ἄνευ τοῦ πατρὸς οὐδὲν ἐποίησεν, ἠνωμένους ὄν, οὔτε δι’ ἑαυτοῦ οὔτε διὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων· οὕτως μηδὲ ἡμεῖς ἄνευ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων μηδὲν πράσσετε.

Be subject to the bishop and each other (ὑποτάγητε τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ καὶ ἀλλήλοις), as Jesus Christ to the Father according to the flesh (ὡς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς τῷ πατρὶ κατὰ σάρκα), and the apostles to Jesus Christ, and to the Father and Spirit (καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι τῷ Χριστῷ καὶ τῷ πατρὶ καὶ πνεύματι), in order that there may be a unity of flesh and Spirit (ἵνα ἕνωσις ᾗ σαρκικῆ τε καὶ πνευματικῆ).

Magnes. 13,1

Ignatius sees in the person of the bishop an expression of divine order that is εὐταξία:

It is clear that it is necessary to look upon the bishop as the Lord himself (τὸν οὖν ἐπίσκοπον δῆλον ὅτι ὡς αὐτὸν τὸν κύριον δεῖ προσβλέπειν). Onesimus himself praises strongly your good order in God (αὐτὸς μὲν οὖν Ὀνήσιμος ὑπερεπαινεῖ ὑμῶν τὴν ἐν θεῷ εὐταξίαν).

Ephes. 6,2

The good order of society thus reflects the ontology of the Godhead.

Furthermore, the ontology that legitimates social order must, in order to justify its assumptions, reject the divided and chaotic view of creation propounded by Gnosticism, with an early version of which Ignatius clearly deals. The star of Bethlehem “was manifested to the aeons (ἐφανερώθη τοῖς αἰῶσιν)” and “all magic and every bond of evil disappeared (πᾶσα μαγεία καὶ πᾶς δεσμὸς ἠφανίζετο; *Ephes.* 19,3).” The escape from a world of war, division, and passion is union with the threefold typology that mediates the unity of the Godhead for “where there is division and wrath (οὗ δὲ μερισμὸς ἐστὶν καὶ ὀργή), God does not abide (θεὸς οὐ κατοικεῖ.). The Lord forgives all that repent (πᾶσιν οὖν μετανοοῦσιν ἀφίει ὁ κύριος) if they turn in repentance to the unity of God and the council of the bishop (ἐὰν μετανοήσωσιν εἰς ἐνότητα θεοῦ καὶ συνέδριον τοῦ ἐπισκόπου; *Philad.* 8,1).”

We have seen how, in *Ephesians* 13, the *pax deorum* that underlies the imperial peace is realised instead for Ignatius ἐν τῇ ὁμονοίᾳ ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως. “Nothing is better than peace (οὐδὲν ἐστὶν ἄμεινον εἰρήνης), in which all war of earthly and heavenly things is abolished (ἐν ᾗ πᾶς πόλεμος καταργεῖται ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων).” (6B 2.4) We now see how specifically that order is created for Ignatius through the procession of Son from the Father that continues in the threefold typology of Bishop, Presbyters and Deacons. We have noted, moreover, how that procession from the One Father that returns to the One Father (7C 2.2) is indicative of a general intellectual culture. The unity of nature, history, or society is derived from an ultimate reality in relation to which they are but modes or gradations of the

real, good, and One. It was a yearning that we have argued Plotinus was to satisfy in a finished ontological system that found its prior expression in pagan and imperial as well as Christian reflections on the structure of reality and its reflection in social order.

A consequence for Ignatian doctrine was that the unity of God needed to be emphasised, with gradations allowed through the persons of the Trinity that lead in turn to their legitimating expression in Church Order. Ignatius often speaks as though Father and Son were but graded manifestations of a single reality. Jesus Christ, the “one physician (εἷς ἰατρός)” is γεννητός and, *pace* the Nicene Creed, also ἀγέννητος.¹³² As we have considered in another context (6B 1), Ignatius speaks of the Ephesians as ἀναζωπυρήσαντες ἐν αἵματι θεοῦ (*Ephes.* 1,1). In *Rom.* 6 he wishes to be a μιμητής “of the suffering of my God (τοῦ πάθους τοῦ θεοῦ μου).”¹³³ The author of the Longer Recension, who may have been himself an Arian, corrected the former, though not the latter of these expressions in a subordinationist direction.¹³⁴

We see, therefore, a Monarchian tendency in Ignatius, not wholly reconcilable with his justification of ecclesiastical Order, but which many of his successors developed in such a direction. Let us now turn our attention to three other second century writers who tell us, before Callistus, nothing directly about Order but clearly participate in an intellectual culture that seeks an ultimate ontological origin in its metaphysical quest.

7C 2.3. *Monarchianism: Athenagoras, Justin and Tatian*

As Simonetti has pointed out, there was a strongly Monarchian strand in the Christian apologists of the second century.¹³⁵ Aeon speculation of Gnostics such as Valentinus and Basilides was strongly rejected. The emphasis on the unity of God is often attributed to the Judaic

¹³² *Ephes.* 7,1, cf. J.B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*. Part I S. Clement of Rome, 2, II: S. Ignatius. S. Polycarp, (London: MacMillan 1889), pp. 90–94.

¹³³ See also *Rom.* 3,3: ἀγάπην Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ μου cf. Simonetti (1986), pp. 202–203.

¹³⁴ Pseudo Ignatius, *Rom.* 6 retains the phrase, but in *Rom.* 3 it is omitted altogether. In *Ephes.* there are extensive alterations, see *Ephes.* 1: ἀναζωπυρήσαντες ἐν αἵματι Χριστοῦ and 7: ἰατρός δὲ ἡμῶν ἐστι ὁ μόνος ἀληθινὸς θεός, ὁ ἀγέννητος καὶ ἀπρόσιτος, ὁ τῶν ὅλων Κύριος, τοῦ δὲ μονογενοῦς πατὴρ καὶ γεννήτωρ. ἔχομεν ἰατρὸν καὶ τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν θεὸν Ἰησοῦν τὸν Χριστόν, τὸν πρὸ αἰώνων υἱὸν μονογενῆ καὶ λόγον.

¹³⁵ Simonetti (1986), pp. 446–447.

background of Monarchian groups. On the one hand, dynamic Monarchians considered Jesus a mere man endowed with extraordinary powers at his baptism, and were characterised later by Epiphanius as Ebionites. On the other, modalistic Monarchianism turned the persons of the Trinity into phases or modes of the divine.

However much the Judaic background may have emphasised the unity of God, that unity, even within Judaism, came to be expressed, in the works of Philo and others, in terms of Hellenistic philosophy.¹³⁶ By the middle of the second century the embryonic doctrine of the Trinity began to assume modalistic features in other writers in addition to Irenaeus.

7C 2.3.1. μοναρχία and the Godhead in Justin and Tatian

Tatian (A.D. 165), echoing Justin,¹³⁷ expresses the relation of the Logos to the first principle, which he calls in the following passage both ἀρχή and ὁ πρῶτος παντός:

By his mere will the Logos sprang forth (θελήματι δὲ τῆς ἀπλότητος αὐτοῦ προπηδᾷ Λόγος) and the Logos, not proceeding in vain (ὁ δὲ Λόγος οὐ κατὰ κενοῦ χωρήσας), he became the firstborn work of the Father (ἔργον πρωτότοκον τοῦ πατρὸς γίνεται). The latter we know as the first principle of the world (τοῦτον ἴσμεν τοῦ κόσμου τὴν ἀρχήν), and he came into being by partition (γένεον δὲ κατὰ μερισμόν) and not by section (οὐ κατ' ἀποκοπήν). For that which is cut off as a section (τὸ γὰρ ἀποτιμηθὲν) is separated from its origin (τοῦ πρώτου παντός κεχώρισται), but what is divided into parts (τὸ δὲ μερισθὲν), requiring distinction for the sake of a plan of arrangement (οἰκονομίας χάριν τὴν διαίρεσιν προσλαβόν), is not bereft of the origin from which it came (οὐκ ἐνδεᾶ τὸν ὄθεν εἴληπται πεποίηκεν).

Tatian, *Oratio ad Graecos*, 5,7–10.

In this passage, as I have argued elsewhere, Tatian is far closer to the Monarchianism of the later Callistus, to whom Hippolytus in the *Contra Noetum* was to make the conciliatory gesture of denying that the λόγος ἄσαρκος was τέλειος υἱός before he (it) became λόγος ἔνσαρκος through incarnation in the Virgin.¹³⁸ In Tatian the Λόγος is a creation (ἔργον πρωτότοκον), albeit inseparable from its creator (οὐ κατ'

¹³⁶ Philo, *De spec. legib* I, 13–31 and Peterson (1935), pp. 23–24 and pp. 107–108.

¹³⁷ Justin Martyr, *Dial.*, 61,2 where οὐ κατ' ἀποτιμήν ὡς ἐλαττωθῆναι τὸν ἐν ἡμῖν λόγον parallels closely this passage. See M. Marcovich (Ed.), *Tatiani, Oratio ad Graecos*, in *PTS* 43, (1995), p. 1.

¹³⁸ E.g. *C.N.* 4,8 and 15,7. For other references and a full discussion, see Brent (1995), *Hippolytus*, pp. 210–240.

ἀποκοπήν) like a burning torch that creates a second one by contact.

It is the image of the burning torch that Tatian, like Justin before him,¹³⁹ now employs:

For even as many fires are lighted from one torch (ὥσπερ γὰρ ἀπὸ μιᾶς δαδὸς ἀνάπτεται μὲν πυρὰ πολλὰ), but the light of the first torch is not diminished because it has been lit from many torches, (τῆς δὲ πρώτης δαδὸς διὰ τὴν ἔξασιν τῶν πολλῶν δαδῶν οὐκ ἐλαττοῦται τὸ φῶς), so also the Logos proceeding from the power of the Father (οὕτω καὶ ὁ Λόγος προελθὼν ἐκ τῆς τοῦ πατρὸς δυνάμεως), does not deprive the one who gave him birth of rational speech (οὐκ ἄλογον πεποιήκε τὸν γεγεννηκότα).

Tatian, *Oratio ad Graecos*, 5, 11–15.

Notwithstanding the parallel with Justin, we have seen that Apuleius also, in *De Mundo* 6, 398a 31–35, made use of the image of the transmission of light signals to explain the transmission of the divine power that directs the universe ἐκ μιᾶς ἀρχῆς. In the previous passage too there is a similar preoccupation with cosmic unity in terms of derivation from the one first principle. The Logos proceeds from the Father as τοῦ κόσμου τὴν ἀρχὴν without being cut off from τοῦ πρώτου παντός.

But Tatian shared a quest for a unified cosmos with the followers of Isis, and indeed with Marcus Aurelius who, as we have seen, identified Faustina with the religious iconography of a unified nature expressed in a unified imperial order (7A 1.1.3). The Isis hymn from Andros spoke of “the sign of your monarchy, O Queen (σάμα τεᾶς, δέσποινα, μοναρχείας),”¹⁴⁰ and Tatian sought such a unified order which he found in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. In the perplexity that led to his conversion, he read the Old Testament Scriptures, though they appeared “barbaric.” He claims:

I was persuaded by these (καὶ μοι πεισθῆναι ταύταις συνέβη) because of (διὰ τε) . . . the easily intelligible account of the creation of the world (τῆς τοῦ παντός ποιήσεως τὸ εὐκατάληπτον), the foreknowledge of the future (καὶ τῶν μελλόντων τὸ προγνωστικόν), . . . and the monarchical doctrine of the universe (καὶ τῶν ὅλων τὸ μοναρχικόν).

Tatian, *Oratio ad Graecos*, 29, 11–15.

¹³⁹ Justin Martyr, *Dialogus*, 61,2: καὶ ὅποιον ἐπὶ πυρὸς ὀρώμεν ἄλλο γινόμενον, οὐκ ἐλαττομένου ἐκείνου ἐξ οὗ ἡ ἀναψις γέγονεν.

¹⁴⁰ W. Peek, *Der Isishymnus von Andros und verwandte Texte*, (Berlin: Weidmann 1930), p. 15,6 (= Toti (1985) no. 2, 6), cf. Peterson (1935), p. 21 and p. 105.

Indeed, Tatian disregards the strong, pagan currents that were contributing to such a pagan doctrine both in the political ideology of imperial power, and in the developing, justifying metaphysic that Apuleius and Plutarch exhibit. Tatian proceeds to attack pagan culture for failing to exercise the principle of founding the religious order of the cosmos on a single first principle from which all is derived (μοναρχία). As he says:

You Greeks are the sort of people (τοιούτοί τινές ἐστε καὶ ὑμεῖς, ὧ Ἕλληνες) whose words are fluent, (ῥήμασι μὲν στωμύλοι) whose ideas are bizarre (γνώμην δ' ἔχοντες ἀλλόκοτον). You practice the rule of the many rather than of one (καὶ τὴν πολυκοιρανὴν μᾶλλον ἢ τὴν μοναρχίαν ἐξησκίσατε), and are used to following the daemons as if they were strong (καθάπερ ἰσχυροῖς νομίζοντες ἀσφαλές τοῖς δαίμοσι κατακολουθεῖν).
Tatian, *Oratio ad Graecos*, 14,1-3

In adopting a polytheistic framework he argues therefore that the Graeco-Roman world is, inconsistently with the imperial ideal, attacking the μοναρχία. His claim hardly did justice to the work of Apuleius and Plutarch, let alone those who constructed the iconography of the imperial coinage and presided over the development of the Imperial Cult.

7C 2.3.2. *Political structure and the Trinity in Athenagoras*

Tatian does not explore the relationship of ontological μοναρχία to political μοναρχία, as opposed being simply parasitic upon the broader culture in which the two concepts were intertwined. Athenagoras conversely does not use the word μοναρχία, but we find the concept of derived authority from a single ἀρχή clearly drawn in ontology by analogy with political structure.

Athenagoras begins by addressing the emperors Marcus Aurelius and Commodus (A.D. 176-180) as “philosophers.”¹⁴¹ But in the course of his address he attacks the worship of images (εἰκόνες) on the ground that the names of those who sculpted them and thus brought them into existence are known. “If they are gods (εἰ τοίνυν θεοί), why were they not so from the beginning (τί οὐκ ἦσαν ἐξ ἀρχῆς)? Why are they more recent than their makers (τί δέ εἰσιν νεώτεροι τῶν πεποιηκότων)?”¹⁴² He then uses an argument to Marcus Aurelius and

¹⁴¹ M. Marcovich (Ed.), *Athenagoras, Legatio pro Christianis*, in *PTS* 31, (1990), *inc.*

¹⁴² Athenagoras, *Legatio*, 17, 34-35. See also E. Osborn, *The Emergence of Christian Theology*, (Cambridge: U.P. 1995), pp. 125-129; pp. 174-178.

his son Commodus in which he uses an analogy between the grades of imperial power and relations between Father and Son:

May you find it possible to examine by your own efforts also the heavenly kingdom (ἔχοιτε δ' ἂν αὐτοὶ ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν καὶ τὴν ἐπουράνιον βασιλείαν ἐξετάζειν); for as all things have been subjected to you, a father and a son (ὡς γὰρ ὑμῖν πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ πάντα κεχείρωται), who have received your kingdom from above (ἄνωθεν τὴν βασιλείαν εἰληφόσιν), for "the king's life is in God's hands («βασιλέως γὰρ ψυχὴ ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ»)," as the prophetic spirit says (φησὶ τὸ προφητικὸν πνεῦμα), so all things are subordinated to the one God and the Word that issues from him whom we consider his inseparable Son (οὕτως ἐνὶ τῷ θεῷ καὶ τῷ παρ' αὐτοῦ λόγῳ, υἱῷ νοουμένῳ ἀμερίστῳ, πάντα ὑποτέτακται).

Legatio 18,10–14

Hence it is the inseparable Son proceeding from the true and ultimate ἀρχή that guarantees both cosmic and political order which paganism, with its variety of myths in chaotic disorder, cannot. He goes through a number of pagan myths¹⁴³ of which he gives a Platonic critique, and on the following principle:

Each of the beings endowed with divinity by them (ἕκαστον γὰρ τῶν θεολογημένων), must be perishable on the grounds that it has a beginning (ὡς τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔχον, καὶ φθαρτὸν δεόν εἶναι). For if they, not existing, have come into existence (εἰ γὰρ γεγόνασιν οὐκ ὄντες), as those who theologize about them say (ὡς οἱ περὶ αὐτῶν θεολογοῦντες λέγουσιν), they do not exist (οὐκ εἰσίν). For either something does not begin its existence (ἢ γὰρ ἀγένητόν τι), and is eternal (καὶ ἔστιν αἰδίων), or it come into existence (ἢ γενητόν), and is perishable (καὶ φθαρτόν ἐστιν).

Athenagoras, *Legatio*, 19,1.

Athenagoras therefore is able to present an apologetic *tour de force*. He can suggest that the true metaphysics of order, reflected in the derived power of Commodus from his father, Marcus Aurelius, cannot find support in the *theologoumena* of paganism. The divine unity of imperial society reflects rather the relationship between Father and Son in the Christian Godhead. It was a Platonising solution that Plotinus was later to find persuasive, though with a different and pagan account of the unity of the cosmos and its derivation from the One.

Our conclusion must be that iconographic expression of universal

¹⁴³ Chronos, Zeus, Hera, Rhea, Osiris, and Isis all come under his censure in chapters 20–23.

power from one universal source or origin, such as we have seen with Marcus Aurelius and Faustina II (7A 1.1.3) in connection with the Sarapis-Isis motif on their coins, has failed to impress Athenagoras. He clearly does not share the convictions of Plutarch or Apuleius on the *μοναρχία* of Isis, and the universality of the one goddess with many names. But the ontology of the Christian Godhead with which he replaces such a quest for a theology of imperial unity equally can service an imperialist political ideology. The spirit of the author of *Luke-Acts*, and his message to Theophilus and his circle clearly continues in the second century.

Certainly Athenagoras' language of derivation is to find echoes in later Neoplatonism. He does not distinguish a Trinity of persons, and in the following passage *πνεῦμα* is not distinguished from *λόγος*, *νοῦς*, or *σοφία*. Each is descriptive of the nature of the Son:

For as we say, God, the Son his Logos and Holy Spirit (*ὡς γὰρ θεὸν φαμεν, καὶ υἱὸν τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ, καὶ πνεῦμα ἅγιον*) are united in power (*ἐνούμενα μὲν κατὰ δύναμιν*) but distinguished in rank (*διαιρούμενα δὲ κατὰ τάξιν*) as the Father, the Son, and the Spirit (*εἰς τὸν πατέρα, τὸν υἱόν, τὸ πνεῦμα*) since the Son of the Father is mind, Logos, wisdom, and the Spirit is effluence of God, as light from fire (*ὅτι νοῦς, λόγος, σοφία ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ ἀπόρροια τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς φῶς ἀπὸ πυρός, τὸ πνεῦμα*).
Legatio 24,2.

Once again, the analogy of derivation, of light from the fire, is reminiscent of the political analogy of the Aristotelian order of the cosmos as Apuleius expressed this, in a Platonic form, in *De Mundo* 6, 398a 31–35, and indeed used also by Tatian (7C 2.3.1). It is significant however that not merely the concept of *τάξις* but also that of *ἀπόρροια*, both found in this passage, are used in a political context.¹⁴⁴

In the Hermetic fragment entitled *Κόρη Κόσμου*, Isis begins her sacred discourse. The earth entreats her that to maintain order and goodness amongst the elements it contains: “if not yourself (*κἂν οὐ σεαυτόν*) . . . a certain sacred effluence of yourself (*σαντοῦ τινα ἱερὰν ἀπόρροϊαν*).”¹⁴⁵ We learn then that Hermes is to come as “another

¹⁴⁴ For a useful summary of references to uses of *ἀπόρροια* and cognates, see J. Amann, *Die Zeusrede des Ailios Aristeides*, in *TBA* 12 (1931), p. 75 and Peterson (1935), pp. 23–25; 110–111.

¹⁴⁵ A.D. Nock and A.J. Festugière, *Corpus Hermeticum IV: Fragments extraits de Stobée, IV*, in *Collection des Universités de France, Association Guillaume Budé*, (Paris: Société d'Édition «Les Belles Lettres» 1954), *Fragment XXIII* (= Stobaeus, I, 41, 44), 62, 19–20.

effluence from my nature (έτέρα γὰρ ἐν ὑμῖν τις ἤδη τῆς ἐμῆς ἀπόρροια φύσεως) who shall also be the holy examiner of all that is done (ὃς δὴ καὶ ὅσιος ἔσται τῶν πραττομένων ἐπόπτης) . . .”¹⁴⁶

But the ἀπόρροια does not end with Hermes alone. When Horus asks his mother by whom the terrestrial sphere is to be ordered, Isis replies by “the one who becomes emperor from time to time (ὁ κατὰ καιρὸν γενόμενος βασιλεύς).” She continues:

For, my child, the gods give birth to emperors (γεννώσι γὰρ, ὧ τέκνον, βασιλείς) who are worthy of their earthly progeny (οἱ θεοὶ ἐπαξίους τῆς ἐπιγείου γονῆς). And rulers are emanations of the emperor (καὶ εἰσιν οἱ ἄρχοντες τοῦ βασιλέως ἀπόρροιαί), and the ruler amongst whom is nearest to him (ὧν ὁ μᾶλλον ἐκείνω πλησίον) is also more royal than the others (οὗτος καὶ τῶν ἄλλων βασιλικώτερος). For the sun, as it is nearer to God (ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἥλιος, καθὸ ἐγγιόν ἐστι τοῦ θεοῦ), is greater and more powerful than the moon (τῆς σελήνης ἐπιμείζων καὶ δυναμικώτερος) . . .
Corpus Hermeticum, Fragment 24,1-2

Thus we find the divine order of what is elsewhere described as Isis’ μοναρχία pervades through existence to divine monarchy in the earthly political sphere. The emperor here, like Caracalla as κοσμοκράτωρ, is the source from which all other divine political power emanates to the ἄρχοντες. A view of the world as orderly emanation derived from a Platonised Aristotelianism once again presupposes a refutation of a Gnosticism that made the aeonic ἄρχοντες τοῦ κοσμοῦ the source of cosmic disorder and imperfection.

Athenagoras finally describes the Holy Spirit, whom he identifies with the Son who is νοῦς, σοφία, and λόγος, as we have seen, in the following terms:

The same Holy Spirit that empowers (καίτοι καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ ἐνεργοῦν) those who proclaim prophetically (τοῖς ἐκφωνοῦσι προφητικῶς) we say is the effluence of God (ἄγιον πνεῦμα ἀπόρροϊαν εἶναι φαμεν τοῦ θεοῦ) which flows forth from him (ἀπορρέον) and returns (καὶ ἐπαναφερόμενον) like the rays of the sun (ὡς ἀκτίνα ἡλίου). Who then would not be amazed (τίς οὖν οὐκ ἂν ἀπορήσῃ) if he heard of men called atheists (ἀκούσας ἀθέους καλουμένους) who bring forward God the Father, God the Son and the Holy Spirit (τοὺς ἄγοντας θεὸν πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν θεὸν καὶ πνεῦμα ἄγιον), and who proclaim both their power in their unity (δεικνύντας αὐτῶν καὶ τὴν ἐν τῇ ἐνώσει δύναμιν) and their diversity in rank (καὶ τὴν τῇ τάξει διαίρεσιν).

Athenagoras, *Legatio* 10,4-5.

¹⁴⁶ *Corp. Herm.*, Frag. XXIII (= Stobaeus, I, 41, 44), 62, 19 21.

Certainly Athenagoras' language here can be paralleled in pagan Monarchianism as it sought to explain all divinity as derived from a single ἀρχή. Aelius Aristides, his pagan contemporary, speaks of Zeus as the ἀρχή and the divinity of the other gods as derivation (ἀπορροή).¹⁴⁷ Thus though Athenagoras does not use the term μοναρχία, he is nevertheless involved in the same conceptual world as Tatian and, as we shall see, Theophilus, who clearly did. Political power and derived authority is clearly seen by analogy with the rays of the sun, just as in the *Corpus Hermeticum* and in the coinage of Caracalla. Ἀπόρροια as a term for emanation or derivation in nature is applied to the pagan political structure in explication of the concept of an empire of unity in diversity.

Clearly therefore Athenagoras' analogy between the derivation of authority by emanation or effluence within the Godhead and the derivative relationship between his son Commodus and the emperor Marcus Aurelius was sustained by both the pagan religious background and the supportive Platonism that gave that background its intellectual credibility. There was also a pagan μοναρχία in accordance with which divine political power overflowed from the one Emperor and through the one Empire, just as in nature all was subordinate to the μία ἀρχή.

Let us finally look at the concept of μοναρχία as it frequently appears in Theophilus, who might well have been employing the concept of μοναρχία in an argument similar to that of Athenagoras who strongly implies the term even though he does not use it.

7C 2.3.3. *Theophilus and the pagan quest for the μοναρχία*

We have seen how Tatian used the term μοναρχία against pagans on the grounds that in their polytheism they were denying a concept, both ontological and imperial, to which they were otherwise committed. Theophilus will now challenge the ability of pagan religion to be able to use philosophy to produce its required ontological μοναρχία.

¹⁴⁷ Aelius Aristides, *Eis Dία*, 7,9: Ζεὺς . . . πρότερον αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ ἐποίησεν καὶ οὐδὲν προσεδεήθη ἑτέρου εἰς τὸ εἶναι, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ τούναντίον πάντα εἶναι ἀπ' ἐκείνου ἤρξατο. καὶ οὐκ ἔστι Χρόνον εἰπεῖν· οὐδὲ γὰρ χρόνος ἦν πω ποτε, ὅτι μηδὲ ἄλλο μηδέν· δημιουργοῦ γὰρ ἔργον οὐδὲν ἔστι πρεσβύτερον. οὕτω δὴ ἀρχὴ μὲν ἀπάντων Ζεὺς τε καὶ ἐκ Διὸς πάντα; 7,15: ὥστε καὶ θεῶν ὅσα φύλα ἀπορροῆν τῆς Διὸς τοῦ πάντων πατρὸς δυνάμεως ἕκαστα ἔχει. (= B. Keil, *Aelii Aristidis Smyrnaei, opera quae supersunt omnia*, (Berlin: Weidmann 1897), II, pp. 339–347).

Justin Martyr had claimed that the basic philosophical agenda in the second century consisted in inquiries (ζητήσεις) about the ultimate first principle (περὶ μοναρχίας) and about the divine foreknowledge (προνοίας).¹⁴⁸ Certainly Theophilus (A.D. 180) is concerned with the μοναρχία as such. But though he is committed to the basic quest for the μία ἀρχή, both religious and philosophical, which he shares with his pagan contemporaries, he nevertheless denies their particular solution to the quest, common in the late second century, to both Pagan and Christian.

It is in the light of his failure to fulfil the second century agenda of discovering an ultimate first principle that Plato, according to Theophilus, is to be judged. By denying the creation of matter that exists therefore eternally alongside an uncreated God, Plato presents an account that fails to demonstrate the μοναρχία:

But if God is uncreated (εἰ δὲ ὁ θεὸς ἀγέννητος) and matter is uncreated (καὶ ὕλη ἀγέννητος), then, according to the Platonists God is not the Maker of the Universe (οὐκ ἔτι ὁ θεὸς ποιητὴς τῶν ὅλων ἐστὶν κατὰ τοὺς Πλατωνικούς), and, as far as they are concerned, the unique sovereignty of God is not demonstrated (οὐδὲ μὴν μοναρχία θεοῦ δεικνύται, ὅσον τὸ κατ' αὐτούς).

Theophilus, *Ad Autolycom*, 2,4–6.

It was not however simply the secondary, philosophy of religion that had failed but the primary religious discourses themselves. He labours to demonstrate the contradictions of the poets, since “nevertheless they introduce a multitude of gods (πλὴν καὶ πληθὺν θεῶν εἰσήγαγον) or else spoke of one single ultimate origin (ἢ καὶ μοναρχίαν εἶπον).”¹⁴⁹

But why should the first cause of the universe be clear to pagan poets without divine revelation such as the prophets possessed as they were moved by the prophetic spirit? Theophilus' explanation is that sometimes the poets, shaking off the daemon possession that persuaded them otherwise, “made statements (εἶπον) in agreement with those of the prophets (ἀκόλουθα τοῖς προφήταις) in order to bear witness to themselves (ὡς εἰς μαρτύριον ἑαυτοῖς) and all men (τε καὶ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις) concerning the *monarchia* of God (περὶ τε θεοῦ μοναρχίας) . . .”¹⁵⁰

Theophilus does not bring out any explicit political analogies with

¹⁴⁸ Justin *Dial.* 1,3: τί γὰρ; οὐχ οἱ φιλόσοφοι περὶ θεὸν τὸν ἅπαντα ποιῶνται λόγον, ἐκείνος ἔλεγε, καὶ περὶ μοναρχίας αὐτοῖς καὶ προνοίας αὐτῆς ζητήσεις γίνονται ἐκάστοτε; ἢ οὐ τοῦτο ἔργον ἐστὶ φιλοσοφίας, ἐξετάζειν περὶ τοῦ θείου.

¹⁴⁹ Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolyc.*, 2,8,6.

¹⁵⁰ *Ad Autolyc.*, 2,8.

the ontology of *μοναρχία*. But we have seen that Tatian does so, whilst sharing the general perspective of the search for the one ultimate origin. That quest, we have emphasised, in the *Weltanschauung* of the second and early third century, was not simply to do with physical nature but with human society and history as well. Between Tatian and Theophilus, and clearly sharing their common ontological perspective, came Athenagoras, who whilst not using *μοναρχία* explicitly, is well aware of the political analogy drawn from the ontology of the ultimate cause or first principle.¹⁵¹ I have argued that their common apologetic project cannot be divorced from their syncretistic, pagan religious and philosophical backgrounds. The analogies of light, the sun's rays, of emanation and derivation, are exemplified both by general religious philosophy and by the specific iconography and claims of the Imperial Cult.

Neither Justin, nor Tatian, nor Athenagoras, nor Theophilus, describe in any detail the organisation of their communities. Theophilus, writing in the late second century, was one of the episcopal successors of Ignatius of Antioch. However, there is no discussion of Church Order and its relation to a wider theology of the Godhead, as was the case in Ignatius of Antioch. We have been able to study their views on the Christian Godhead and its monarchical order as a reflection both of pagan ontology and of imperial order. We have not however been able to examine how imperial order, and specifically imperial order expressed in the Imperial Cult, was also expressed in Church Order, as we were able to do in the case of Ignatius.

But concurrent with the Severan reformation, particularly in the form into which Elagabalus was to try unsuccessfully to press it, we witness also an attempted revolution in Church Order in which Callistus was involved as prime mover. We witness also a Monarchian theology in Church Order propounded by the advocate of a monarch-bishop over all the house-churches of the fractionalised Roman community. We are, come these events, in a better position to study the relationship between a Monarchian theology and a Monarchian Church Order, and its contra-cultural relationship with an imperial order that has developed in a formally similar way.

It is to a consideration of this relationship that we now turn for our final and concluding chapter.

¹⁵¹ J. Badewien, *Die Apologeten und Tertullian*, in Schindler (1978), pp. 32–33, fails to grasp the relation of all three Apologists to a conceptual backcloth that they clearly shared.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE EMERGENCE OF IMPERIAL AND CATHOLIC ORDER

Elagabalus and Callistus:

A Monarchian Episcopate for an Imperial Monarchy

In A.D. 218, following the assassination of Caracalla the year before, Varius Avitus Bassianus as emperor assumed the title of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. He took the additional title of Elagabalus, the name of his favoured deity, and attempted to introduce into Rome the cult of *Sol Invictus Elagabal*, that is to say the cult of *Sol Invictus* in its specifically Syrian form, as the universal religion of the Empire. That attempt, characterised by the imposition of the specific ritual and priestly dress of the form of a cult that was alien to Roman culture, failed for that reason. It is important however to emphasise that it was not a failure of the process of syncretism itself, however much this might be suggested by the *damnatio memoriae* of Elagabalus himself, but the failure of a kind of fundamentalism in its own way inimical to such a syncretism.

Parallel with these events, we have, described in Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Refutatio*, IX, 6–13,2, an attempted religious reformation of the Roman community by Callistus, in which we have a movement towards monarchical episcopate accompanied by an advocacy of *μοναρχία* in the godhead. Callistus appeared to Tertullian as behaving like a pagan *Pontifex Maximus* in trying to become *episcopus episcoporum*.¹ In doing so he, as putative bishop of Rome, was but making similar claims to those of the emperor Elagabalus, as *Pontifex Maximus* of a syncretism that found its final expression in the Baal of Emesa as *Sol Invictus*. As a Monarchian theologian, he was looking for the ultimate principle in the godhead from which all lesser beings or persons were derived, just as Elagabalus could find that principle in *Sol Invictus*. Both emperor and putative pope were reflecting, in their own way,

¹ A. Brent, Hippolytus and the Roman Church in the Third Century: Communities in Tension before the Emergence of a Monarch-Bishop, in *Suppl.VCh.* 31 (1995), pp. 511–512.

ideals of imperial unity in the societies over which they claimed to have the right to rule absolutely. We must now examine the relationship between these parallel events in the light of my thesis that the dynamic and parallel development of Imperial and Christian Order be understood dialectically and interactively in terms of a sociological theory of counter-culture.

Let us begin with Elagabalus and his place in the development of the Imperial Cult.

PART A. ELAGABALUS AND UNIVERSAL MONOTHEISM

We have seen in the case of Isis and Sarapis, and of the image of *Sol Invictus* with which that worship had been associated and whose iconography Septimius and Caracalla had also employed, a clear confluence and absorption of a polytheism into an ordered monotheism (7A 2.1–2.2). The worship of Cybele too had reflected similarly the divine imperial power (7A 1.2). Elagabalus, whose religious practices cannot be considered normative, did himself join the ranks of that priesthood, was castrated and infibulated, and placed the statue of *Magna Mater* in his own favoured sanctuary of the Baal of Emesa.² But Antoninus Pius before him had introduced the *taurobolium* into her cult that was performed expressly *pro salute imperatoris* as well as on occasions *pro salute totius domus divinae*.³ We have already witnessed, even before the Severans, examples of the assimilation of cults formerly sanitised into the immediate circle of cults offered on behalf of the emperor (7A 1.2–1.2.1).

We witnessed a syncretistic process on the part of the early Imperial Cult in which other hitherto independent deities were assimilated with the worship of the emperor and related to this in a new way. One example of that process was to describe the various deified Virtues by the addition of variants of *augustus*, so that the divine Virtues became part of the collective personality of the emperor (2B 3). Another example was the reception of an emperor such as Hadrian into the cult of Dionysus so that he becomes a νέος Διόνυσος (6B 2), but more than simply an ordinary initiate. But what is new

² Herodian, V, 5,1–VI, 1,3; Dio Cassius, 78, 31,2–79, 21,2; SHA, *Heliogab.*; cf. G.H. Halsberghe, The Cult of Sol Invictus, in *EPRO* 23 (1972), pp. 62–78.

³ *CIL* 8,8203.

in the second century is clearly both the adoption of universal eastern deities and their cults, and their association with the imperial image in order to express imperial unity more comprehensively.

In support of Elagabalus' reforms, there had been a recognition of the Syrian Artagatis, a goddess associated with a number of Syrian Baals such as Hadad. Furthermore there was also Mithraism, whose synthesis with the cult of *Sol Invictus* should not, as Halsberghe has argued, blind us to the separate existence of this cult with claims to one pedigree in traditional Roman religion.⁴ The ambiguity also continued when the emperor was both high priest and object of high-priestly action of cult offered by and to the same person. Thus the events of the reign of Elagabalus were to witness, not a defeat, but a setback to the development of the solar monotheism towards which the Imperial Cult was moving, in combination with other major religious movements with which it had associated itself.

Although a marriage to a Vestal Virgin lead to great outrage in a Roman cultural context in which there was clearly no comprehension of such Eastern and Syrian justifications, his third marriage did not. His marriage to Annia Faustina was marked by the translation of the image of the goddess *Dea Caelestis* from Carthage and North Africa in order to enter his *Elagabalium*, and become part of the cult of *Sol Invictus*. However, a temple to that cult had existed on the Palatine since 204 B.C., with some of the constraints connected with its worship having been removed by Claudius. Elagabalus clearly had tried too hard to expedite a process of syncretism that was already progressing, albeit without the accompaniment of child sacrifices and castrated priests.⁵

There was clearly a widespread use of syncretistic iconography to reinforce imperial ideology. Septimius and Caracalla had used a variety of images from various cults duly syncretised. Elagabalus' mistake had been paradoxically to deny that syncretism in practice through the imposition of the ritual of his one, favoured cult, and by subordinating other deities to his own rather than acknowledging that all were, as it were, consubstantial and co-eternal with each other. In this respect his mistake may have been theological as well as political. He simply had not realised that the Baal of Emesa was simply

⁴ Varro, *De Re Rustica*, I,1,5; Dionysios of Halicarnassus, *Antiqu. Rom.*, II,50,3; Tacitus, *Annal.* XV,41,1; 74,1 and Halsberghe (1972), chap. 2.

⁵ Halsberghe (1972), pp. 84-88.

one more image or aspect of the one light beyond them all, just as dead and deified emperors stood for the collective and not individual imperial virtues. The conspiracy that swept him away in A.D. 222, launched by Julia Mamaea his aunt and her son Severus Alexander, his cousin, was not to halt the syncretistic development that was to lead to a solar monotheism reflected in a universal monarchy.⁶

Our thesis has been that the authority structure of Christian communities that were to form the Great Church developed, as contra-cultures develop, in dialectical relationship to the authority structure of the wider culture in which they arise. We must now ask how the developments in the Imperial Cult witnessed in Elagabalus' pagan empire found their reflection in the Christian Roman Community of Callistus and his anonymous opponent, the author of the *Elenchos*.

PART B. CALLISTUS, MONARCH BISHOPS AND MONARCHIANISM

We have already emphasised how the process of theological reflection within early Christian communities at the end of the second century paralleled such pagan developments (7C). A similar, parallel process of syncretism reflected in Church Order was also proceeding. I have already mentioned the Clementine *Homilies*, in which Jacobean and Petrine traditions flow together into a unity expressed cryptographically in the pseudonymous letters with which this work begins (7C 1). But with the documents in which Callistus prefigures, we are in a position to evaluate specifically developments in the authority structure of the Christian community that directly parallel the Elagabalan reformation.

8B 1. *Callistus' revolution in Church Order*

Callistus, as I have argued in detail elsewhere, was not a Pope in the later sense but presided over a group of house churches with loose bonds of intercommunion between the presiding ἐπίσκοπος-πρεσβύτερος of each individual community.⁷ The presbyters, like their counterparts in the Jewish synagogue, did meet formally for discussions, a heated example of which is found in *El.* IX, 12,15–16.⁸

⁶ *Ibid.* Chapter 5.

⁷ Brent (1995), pp. 388–457.

⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 424–431.

They did have at their head a chairman-secretary, who, as Lampe also argued,⁹ supervised the distribution of letters from external Churches amongst the house-churches, and who was responsible for writing replies where necessary on behalf of all the groups. Clement of Rome had been such a figure, and, if not identical with him, also the Clement of Hermas *Vís. II*, 4,2-3, who had such a function entrusted to him (ἐπιτέτραπται) as his ministry.¹⁰

The purpose of Callistus' reformation was to reduce the semi-autonomous congregations to a monarchical whole with himself as monarch-bishop at the centre. His method in executing the revolution was to exercise a policy of leniency in matters of discipline. Callistus was prepared to admit to his house-church those who had been excommunicated for various sins from other house-churches in Rome. Those house-churches had always, as Ignatius' *Romans*, *in sc.* (τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ . . . ἥτις καὶ προκάθηται ἐν τοπῷ χωρίου Ῥωμαίων), or for that matter Paul's *Romans* 16, make clear, regarded themselves together not as separate churches but constituting the one church of Rome. A mark of this unity was intercommunion marked by the exchange of the *fermentum* between themselves.

A group such as the Quartodecimans had been excommunicated, and the means was presumably that the other congregations ceased to exchange the *fermentum* with them.¹¹ Marcion and Valentinus had left, with their followers, of their own accord.¹² It is against such a backcloth that we must understand Callistus' strategy. His offence, in the eyes of the author of the *Elenchos*, was not that Callistus was an anti-Pope erected against his own lawful papacy. This author never claims to possess himself what Callistus had only thought, according to him, that he now possessed as the object of his ambitions and the reforms which he initiated.¹³ Callistus had rather broken the disciplinary convention of not communicating with those whom another presiding presbyter of another house-church has excom-

⁹ P. Lampe, *Die stadtrömischen Christen in den ersten beiden Jahrhunderten*, in *WUNT* 2,18 (1989), cf. Brent (1995), pp. 388-412.

¹⁰ Hermas *Vís. II*, 4,2-3 and Lampe (1989), pp. 335-337 cf. A. Brent, *Pseudonymity and Charisma in the Ministry of the Early Church*, in *Aug* 27,3 (1987), pp. 347-376 which appeared at the same time as the first edition of his book. See also Brent (1995), pp. 410-434.

¹¹ Eusebius, *H.E.* V, 24,15 and Brent (1995), pp. 412-415.

¹² Brent (1995), pp. 418-421; Lampe (1989), pp. 331-332.

¹³ *El. IX*, 12,15: νομίζων τετυχηκέναι οὐ ἐθηράτο without here specifying τὸν τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς θρόνον as in *IX*, 11,1. See also Brent (1995), p. 419 and p. 427.

municated. It was this convention that clearly constituted the “customary boundary (ὄρος)” that Callistus was overstepping.¹⁴

8B 1.1. *The charges against Callistus*

The once or twice widowed clergy that Callistus allowed to remarry twice or three times had previously clearly communicated with the house-group of the author of *El*. Callistus clearly asserted they suffered no impediment such as that imposed by what was to become the New Testament demand that a bishop or deacon be “husband of one wife (μιᾷς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα).”¹⁵ Unions between patrician ladies and household slaves or freedmen were allowed by him. Somewhat casuistically, Pseudo-Hippolytus claims that this led to the committing of mortal sin after baptism.

The mortal sins of adultery and murder were, he claims, encouraged. “Adultery (μοιχεία)” he apparently claims is committed by a widowed clergyman when he remarries, or is indeed an apt description of “fornication (πορνεία)” when committed contrary to Roman law with a slave.¹⁶ Murder (φονεία) results from abortions which some patrician women sought in view of capital legal sanctions following the conception of a child from such a union.¹⁷ Callistus was also apparently to be held responsible for Elkasite second baptism in that he had created the climate in which mortal sins could be absolved after baptism, and thus even second baptism itself be justified.¹⁸

Callistus’ strategy of relaxing discipline proved a very successful one. It achieved his main objective of centralising ecclesiastical power on himself and his successors, such as his predecessors, including Clement, had never wielded in their secretary general’s office over other house-churches. It is of course paradoxical that the loosening of discipline should have had this end but, *vis à vis* the other ἐπίσκοποι-πρεσβύτεροι, it undoubtedly did. Callistus was making no threats. His were simply acts of forgiveness and reconciliation. Like Tertullian’s adversary, whom we believe was in fact Callistus himself, he could quote often *Romans* 14,14, and add that “the sons of

¹⁴ *El*. IX, 12,20–21 and 25, cf. Brent (1995), pp. 417–418; pp. 432–436.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 12,21–22 and 1 *Tim.* 3,2, cf. Brent (1995), p. 518.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 12,24–25 cf. Brent (1995), pp. 520–523.

¹⁷ Ulpian, *Dig.*, I, 9,8, cf. Brent (1995), p. 521, particularly references in footnote 101.

¹⁸ *El*. IX, 12,6 and 13, 1–4.

God ought to be compassionate and peacemakers, giving in return just as Christ has given to us, not judging that we be not judged.”¹⁹ Faced with a growing community composed of excommunicants from other house-churches who now flooded into the school of Callistus, what could the other ἐπίσκοποι-πρεσβύτεροι possibly do?

They could refuse to exchange the *fermentum* as an act of excommunication, thus placing themselves in the wrong and making themselves righteous minorities. Or they could simply acquiesce in the new situation. If they took the latter course however, their authority was considerably diminished since they were handing over to Callistus the right to determine the discipline of the community and the conditions of communion. If they took the former course, in an increasingly minority position, they would also suffer diminution of authority if Callistus’ group continued to grow. And if indeed he happened also to be, like Clement in *Hermas Vis.* II, 4,2–3, the particular ἐπίσκοπος-πρεσβύτερος with the entrusted ministry of writing to external churches in the name of the Roman Church as a whole, then his growing central authority would also be, by default, reinforced by this position as he would be, in the eyes of external churches, the best known clerical figure.

Such then were the events of the ecclesiastical reformation taking place contemporaneously with the reformation of the Imperial Cult by Elagabalus and its political repercussions. But there are two questions related to our overall concerns that we now need to ask.

1. What broader justification did Callistus give for his policy of reform, and how does this further illuminate how he saw the purpose of his reformation?
2. How did those reforms and their rationale reflect the reforms of Elagabalus and their purpose?

I shall now argue that the answers to both these questions are inter-related. We can only expose Callistus’ true purpose by reading this off against the broader cultural and political events of his time, particular those represented by Elagabalus, which gives his acts purpose and motive.

¹⁹ Tertullian, *De Pudic.*, 2,2 where, together with *Rom.* 14,14 (= *El.* IX, 12,22), are quoted *Mat.* 7,1 and *Lk.* 6,37; cf. Brent (1995), pp. 517–525.

8B 1.1.1. *Callistus' broader justification*

We are dependent primarily on Callistus' opponent, the author of the *Elenchos*, whom, as we have seen, uses extreme casuistry to produce a biased account of his claims. But we can also, I believe, use Tertullian who both in the *Adversus Praxeam*, and in his attack on the "edict" of the *episcopus episcoporum* and *pontifex maximus*, is in fact attacking Callistus. The main grounds against such an identification were always that an early third century pope could not issue universal edicts so that Tertullian's attack had to be upon a purely local bishop. But, as I have argued in detail elsewhere, my identification does not depend on Callistus having functioned as a pope in the later sense. A factionalised community at Rome in tension between its various house churches, and raising such questions as absolution for mortal sin after baptism and clerical remarriage, could not fail to draw itself to the attention of a similar church in North Africa divided by a Montanism that had not yet broken completely from the great Church.²⁰ Tertullian himself does mention the *contesseratio hospitalitatis* brought by a Christian travelling from one Christian community to another such as frequently occurred between Rome and North Africa. The conditions of absolution as of ordination would impact upon such signs of intercommunion present at this early period.²¹

Let us look therefore at what Callistus was claiming. He was claiming that the Church would be a mixed congregation such as the ark of Noah in which clean and unclean animals were combined together. Another proof-text for his policy was the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares.²² From the author of *El.*'s more puritanical position, Callistus can be made to say that the clean and unclean should exist both together in the Church. But no doubt Callistus would have had another reason. His was a policy of comprehending a wide diversity of views and positions within a common unity. In that respect he reflected the general Severan political policy that we have outlined,

²⁰ See D. Rankin, *Tertullian and the Church*, (Cambridge: U.P. 1995), pp. 35–36 ff. for a cogent restatement of the argument that in *De Anima*, 9,4 Tertullian is describing a Montanist prophetess having private visions during the normal, catholic Eucharist and only rehearsing these when the Montanist group within the catholic congregation meets afterwards by itself. Cf. U. Neymeyr, *Die christlichen Lehrer im zweiten Jahrhundert: Ihr Lehrtätigkeit, ihr Selbstverständnis, und ihre Geschichte*, in *Suppl. VCh* 4 (1989), pp. 129–131. See also Brent (1995), pp. 538–539.

²¹ Tertullian, *De Praesc. Haer.* 20,7–9 cf. Brent (1995), pp. 505–509.

²² *El.* IX, 12,22–23.

if not the more radical and forced imposition of that policy represented by his contemporary emperor Elagabalus.

8B 1.1.2. *Callistus and Elagabalus' reformation*

We have argued that contemporary imperial policy was reflected in an ontology of *μοναρχία*. Callistus defended a Christian form of Monarchianism that we have seen to be present in the apologists, and employed by them in conscious awareness of the relationship between politics and ontology. Consequently they could imply that, if a justification of ontological *μοναρχία* was incoherent, then so would be the principle of political *μοναρχία*. Callistus argued, according to his opponent:

Of that he says the Son himself is also the Father (ὅτι δὲ καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν υἱὸν εἶναι λέγει καὶ πατέρα), no one is ignorant (οὐδεὶς ἀγνοεῖ). For he speaks as follows (λέγει γὰρ οὕτως): when then the Father has not been born (ὅτε μὲν οὖν μὴ γεγένητο ὁ πατήρ), he is justly called "Father" (δικαίως πατήρ προσηγόρευτο). But when he is pleased to experience birth from the virgin (ὅτε δὲ ἠϋδόκησε γένεσιν ἐκ παρθένου ὑμομείναι), the Father, being begotten (γεννηθεὶς ὁ πατήρ), becomes himself Son of himself, and not of someone different (υἱὸς ἐγένετο αὐτὸς ἑαυτοῦ, οὐχ ἑτέρου). Thus he thinks (οὕτως γοῦν δοκεῖ) he has established the *monarchia* (*μοναρχίαν συνιστᾶν*), asserting that Father and Son subsist as one and the same being (ἓν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ φάσκων ὑπάρχειν πατέρα καὶ υἱόν), becoming not different the one from the other (γινόμενον οὐχ ἕτερον ἐξ ἑτέρου), but the same from himself (ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ).

Elenchos IX, 10, 10–11.

We see here what was no doubt Callistus' own expression of his aim, namely *μοναρχίαν συνιστᾶν*. It is impossible that such an expression could be or ought to be dissociated from the conceptual web that, by the end of the second century, formed the backcloth to the discussion of cosmic and social order, Pagan or Christian, imperial or apologist. Such a term came already value-laden, and we have seen how Tatian can accuse the Greeks of denying *μοναρχία* in an imperial and political sense because their polytheism cannot support their ontological case for a single origin (7C 2.3.1). We have seen how Athenagoras the earthly kingdom of father Marcus Aurelius and his son Commodus is a reflection of the heavenly kingdom of Father and Son (7C 2.3.2). In establishing the *μοναρχία* against the alleged ditheism of the author of *El.* and his group, Callistus was following the pattern set by writers such as Tatian against polytheism.²³

²³ *El.* IX, 12,15–16.

There are, however, several points to be made in demonstration of the more than accidental relationship between Callistus' reformation and that of Elagabalus. We see in the following examples clear reflections of the latter in the former.

8B 1.3.1. Pontifex Maximus *and* episcopus episcoporum

When Tertullian attacks Callistus in these terms, he is clearly comparing the latter's activity and claims with those of the reigning Roman Emperor. *Pontifex Maximus* is clearly a pagan title for the Emperor as High Priest of the Roman Pantheon in which the Imperial Cult was increasingly emerging as central. The bishop of Rome was not as yet given this title. Furthermore, Tertullian mentions an edict of this bishop which clearly the bishop of Rome would not be able to deliver in Carthage. It will not do, however, on this account to substitute a shadowy Agrippinus as local bishop of Carthage in order to fill this role. Tertullian wishes to represent at all costs the Roman bishop as behaving like the contemporary emperor, and so he uses highly metaphorical language in which Callistus is represented as if he were an emperor doing such things.²⁴

We emphasised in connection with the theology of Ignatius of Antioch the essentially pagan background of his regarding bishops, priests, and deacons as εἰκόνας of the saving mystery of the incarnate godhead (6A 2.1). In this respect he reflected the position in the East where "priests and priestesses personified the deity whom they served."²⁵ It is in such a context that Halsberghe locates the marriage of Elagabalus with the Vestal Virgin Aquilia Severa. She represented Vesta as he represented Elagabal.

The *palladium* of Minerva-Athena, taken out of the temple of the former, was transported to *Elagabalium* on the Palatine. Vesta's shrine contained no image of herself. Thus the marriage of priest and priestess was in fact regarded by him as a theogamy. Their children would be the representatives of combined divinities, and *Sol Invictus* would thus exhibit the divine essence also of Vesta-Minerva. "I did this (τοῦτ' ἐποίησα) in order that, of course (ἵνα δὴ καὶ) godlike children (θεοπρεπεῖς παῖδες) might be born from me the high-priest and from this high-priestess (ἐκ τε ἐμοῦ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως ἐκ τε ταύτης τῆς ἀρχιερείας γεννῶνται)."²⁶ His justification for this act to the Senate was that "a

²⁴ Tertullian, *De Pudic.* 1,1-2 cf. Brent (1995), pp. 504-505.

²⁵ Halsberghe (1972), p. 90.

²⁶ Dio (Xiphilinus) 80, 9,3.

marriage of a priest and a priestess was a thing of reverence (σεβάσμιον εἶναι γάμον ἱερέως τε καὶ ἱερείας).²⁷ Thus Elagabalus justified his marriage to the Vestal Virgin Aquilia Severa as a theogamy that united through their sacred and divine offspring the combined divinities of *Sol Invictus* and Vesta-Minerva. A line of divine priests incarnating the essences of the male and female divinities into a unity or μοναρχία would thus result. In that justification, the claim for both to be ἀρχιερέυς and ἀρχιερεία now combined was clearly present.

Such a controversy is mirrored too in the dispute between Callistus and the author of *El.* Callistus is claiming the ultimate right to absolve over presbyters of the other house groups. And for the first time in the history of the apostolic ministry images of ἀρχιερατεία now become important. I have argued elsewhere that the notion that James' authority was sacerdotal, and that the episcopal succession lists were modelled on those of Jewish High Priests is misconceived.²⁸ But in the literature of the Hippolytan community, in particular, that composite work published under the title of the *Apostolic Tradition*, Aaronic and sacerdotal images of the bishop's office begin to fuse with Mosaic images that had characterised that office as essential one of a teaching succession. That fusion is one of the consequences of the Callistan reformation.²⁹

Certainly the author of *El.* insists on a plurality of successors to the apostles. As he says, referring to himself as one amongst others in the Roman community by use of the collective "we":

We have become their successors (ὧν ἡμεῖς διάδοχοι τυγχάνοντες), and we participate in the same grace of both high priesthood and teaching, (τῆς τε αὐτῆς χάριτος μετέχοντες ἀρχιερατείας τε καὶ διδασκαλίας), and, being reckoned as guardians of the Church (καὶ φρουροὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας λελογισμένοι), we neither let our eye slumber (οὐκ ὀφθαλμῆς νυστάζομεν), nor do we keep silence about orthodox discourse (οὐδὲ λόγον ὀρθὸν σιωπῶμεν). . . .

Elenchos I, prooem. 6

In the confluent currents of imagery, Mosaic and Aaronic, Callistus is claiming that at the head of the tradition must stand not simply a single Moses who could have been Christ, but a sacerdotal rep-

²⁷ Herodian V,6,2.

²⁸ A. Brent, Diogenes Laertius and the Apostolic Succession, in *JEH* 44,3 (1993), pp. 367–389; Brent (1995), pp. 477–481.

²⁹ *Ap. Trad.* 3 and 7 cf. Brent (1995), pp. 471–492.

representative of Moses (Christ), who, like an Ignatian bishop or indeed like Elagabalus stood as an icon of the divine being that he represented. But according to Pseudo-Hippolytus, all the presiding ἐπίσκοποι-πρεσβύτεροι could be said not simply to participate in the priesthood but in the high priesthood (τῆς τε αὐτῆς χάριτος μετέχοντες ἀρχιερατείας τε καὶ διδασκαλίας). Callistus could not simply make himself the supreme teacher by claiming that such an office needed to be consecrated in the person of a single ἀρχιερεύς.

But Elagabalus was clearly claiming the indivisibility of the ἀρχιερατεία. The μοναρχία required the ἀπόρροια from a single ἀρχή, *Sol Invictus*. To secure a single hierocratic iconography, children must be produced (θεοπρεπεῖς παῖδες) who were icons of *Sol Invictus* incorporating Vesta-Minerva. Callistus likewise is concerned with μοναρχία in which one source of power within the godhead corresponds to one source of authority over the fractionalized Roman community. He will secure this, as had Caracalla, by pointing to the ἀρχιερατεία as flowing through him as his high-priest, as opposed to existing as an abstract principle in which all could generally and without gradation participate. For him, as for Ignatius, there could be only one High Priest and therefore, when the sacerdotal is imposed upon the Mosaic, one leader emerges over the πρεσβύτεροι from whose spirit their authority was derived.³⁰

The title *episcopus episcoporum*, which goes with the title *Pontifex Maximus*, reflects clearly Tertullian's criticism of what was happening specifically within the changing pattern of authority within the Roman Church. But that such a title can be seen to be part of the common Pagan and Christian program of the early third century, in which the real character of historical movements and ideas could be established with reference to their ultimate historical origin, can be seen from its use in the Clementine literature. Here James called *episcopus episcoporum* in the pseudonymous letter of Peter to him.³¹ But, as we have argued, in Diogenes' historiography, the two successions are fused into one by means of a fictional epistolary exchange. A fictional exchange of letters is also the literary device which the Clementines share with Diogenes Laertios. The exchange of letters express the validity, whether of Christianity or of Greek

³⁰ Brent (1995), p. 473.

³¹ *Petr. ad Iac.* insc. cf. Brent (1995), pp. 512-513.

philosophy, by reference to an ultimate historical ἀρχή, an *Urzeit* in which the exchange took place and such a unity arose (7C 1.1). Once more we find ourselves at the centre of discourse about ultimate origins that is clearly controlling both Christian and Pagan ontology and the corresponding ideology of both Imperial and Christian Order.

Callistus therefore appeared to Tertullian as behaving like a pagan *Pontifex Maximus* in trying to become *episcopus episcoporum*. In so doing he, as putative bishop of Rome, was but making similar claims to those of the emperor Elagabalus, as *Pontifex Maximus*, of a syncretism that found its final expression in the Baal of Emesa as *Sol Invictus*.³² As a Monarchian theologian, Callistus was looking for the ultimate principle in the godhead from which all lesser beings or persons were derived just as Elagabalus could find that principle in the cult of *Sol Invictus*. Both emperor and putative pope were reflecting, in their own way, ideals of imperial unity in the societies over which they claimed to have the right to rule absolutely.

Let us now turn to the second way in which Callistus is seen to be associated with the events of his time, and to reflect imperial policy in his ecclesiastical policy.

8B 1.1.2.3. Social values of Callistus and Pseudo-Hippolytus

The highly contrived piece of casuistry by means of which the author of *El.* convicts Callistus of absolving the mortal sin of murder reads as follows:

For he even allowed women (καὶ γὰρ καὶ γυναῖξιν ἐπέτρεψεν), if they should be without husbands (εἰ ἄνανδροι εἶεν) and they burned due to their youthful age for a man (καὶ ἡλικία γε τε εἰς ἄνδρα ἐκκαίοντο), they [being] of noble rank (αἱ ἐν ἀξίᾳ), if they were unwilling to degrade their rank (εἰ τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀξίαν ἢν μὴ βούλοιντο καθαιρεῖν) through legal marriage (διὰ τοῦ νομίμως γαμηθῆναι), to take someone whom they should choose as a bed partner (ἔχειν ἕνα, ὃν ἂν αἰρήσωνται, σύγκοιτον), whether household slave or free (εἴτε οἰκέτην εἴτε ἐλεύθερον), to treat this person (καὶ τοῦτον κρίνειν) as in place of a husband (ἀντὶ ἀνδρός) even though she was not married by law (τὴν μὴ νόμῳ γεγαμημένην). In consequence (ἔνθεν) women who were so called believers began to try (ἤρξαντο ἐπιχειρεῖν αἱ πισταὶ λεγόμεναι) even to bind themselves round with medicines against conception (ἀτοκίοις φαρμάκοις καὶ τῷ περιδεσ-

³² For the use of these terms in the cult of *Sol Invictus*, and their association with the Emperor, see Halsberghe (1972), p. 77.

μείσθαι) in order to abort what they had conceived (πρὸς τὸ τὰ συλλαμβανόμενα καταβάλλειν) because they were unwilling either to have a child from a slave (διὰ τὸ μήτε ἐκ δούλου βούλεσθαι ἔχειν τέκνον) or from a social inferior (μήτε ἐξ εὐτελοῦς), because of their noble and superior birth (διὰ τὴν αὐτῶν εὐγένειαν καὶ ὑπέρογκον οὐσίαν).

Elenchos IX, 12,24–25

As Preysing pointed out, the author here reveals a clash of social values between Callistus' group and his own. His critique assumes a senatorial and patrician perspective on Callistus' activity.³³ For the leader of one group of what is an illegal sect to accuse the other of not following pagan law on matrimony seems bizarre, but that is precisely to what the criticism amounts: Callistus had sanctioned a union involving a woman τὴν μὴ νόμφ γεγαμημένην, that is to say pagan marriage law. No doubt, as Döllinger pointed out, Callistus would have replied that there were no distinctions after baptism between "male and female, bond nor free."³⁴

The writer clearly attributes the quest for ἀτόκια φάρμακα to the proper repugnance of "ladies of noble rank (αἱ ἐν ἀξίᾳ)" not to dilute their "noble and superior birth (τὴν αὐτῶν εὐγένειαν καὶ ὑπέρογκον οὐσίαν)" with progeny "from someone socially inferior (ἐξ εὐτελοῦς)." Undoubtedly this represents the patrician repugnance that he feels and which he attributes to the ladies in question. But for them child-birth in this situation was not necessary a question of repugnance towards offspring from a partner who was εὐτελής, which means literally "of depleted value", nor indeed a desire to avoid degrading their rank (τὴν . . . ἀξίαν . . . καθαιρεῖν). Rather the quest for abortions, and hence the φονεῖα of their unborn children, was because they as women of senatorial rank lived under the threat of capital punishment for cohabitation with a slave (οἰκέτης).³⁵ Certainly marriage with a freedman was illegal, as the author claims.³⁶

³³ K. von Preysing, *Der Leserkreis der Philosophoumena Hippolyts*, in *ZKTh* 38 (1914), pp. 421–445.

³⁴ *Gal.* 3,28 cf. I. von Döllinger, *Hippolytus und Kallistus, oder Die römische Kirche in der ersten Hälfte des dritten Jahrhunderts*, (Regensburg: Joseph Manz 1853), p. 254.

³⁵ In Justinian, *Dig.* I, 9,8, Ulpian, the contemporary of the author of *El.*, states that a *matrona* was subject to the death penalty for sexual relations with slaves.

³⁶ Justinian, *Dig.* XXIII, 2,42: "Modestinus, Bk 1 De ritu nuptiarum: Si senatoris filia neptis proneptis libertino vel qui artem ludicram exercuit cuiusue pater materue id fecerit nupserit, nuptiae non erunt," which clearly denies the validity of the marriage of αἱ ἐν ἀξίᾳ (= *senatoris filia*) to an ἐλεύθερος (= *libertinus*) or even a free εὐτελής (vel qui artem ludicram).

Certainly Elagabalus would have no claim to share the value-system of Roman patrician society. Indeed, the Severan dynasty itself was founded on the perfidy of the murder of Pertinax, whose name Septimius Severus born with ostentatious pride as his own, by Didius Julianus who led a senatorial reaction that clearly failed (A.D. 193). Julianus' credentials with the Senate were high due to his having been prosecuted several times during the reign of Commodus.³⁷ But the notion that, with appropriate theological justification, senatorial ladies should marry their slaves or freedmen, despite patrician hostility, would not have appeared as scandalous as before, in the social environment of the imposition of *Sol Invictus Elagab* as the final form and definition of the Imperial Cult. Certainly such marriages would not be more scandalous than the action of the Emperor as *Pontifex Maximus* of the Imperial Cult of *Sol Invictus* marrying a Vestal Virgin also with a new and radical theological justification.

Certainly the *senaculum mulierum*, established by Elagabalus, mentioned in an otherwise dubious source but confirmed by excavations, was indicative of a social policy in which social roles and status were becoming fluid.³⁸ The writer of the SHA mentions, moreover, the predecessor of this *senaculum* being held on certain festivals (*sollemnibus . . . diebus*). Its prior function was to provide kinswomen of the emperors who had married husbands who were not *nobilitati* with "ornaments of consular marriage (*consularis coniugii ornamenta*)."³⁹ The purpose was that "they should not lose their consular rank (*ne innobilitatae remanerent*)" in consequence of such marriages. The author of *El.* would clearly have upheld this previous function in his desire that αἱ ἐν ἀξίᾳ did not degrade their rank (τὴν ἀξίαν καθαιρεῖν). But clearly new rules, the purpose of which it is difficult to discern, were now being developed. Upholders of traditional senatorial values might well criticise Elagabalus for transgressing established norms (ὄροι) of Roman, pagan society, just as we have seen the author of *El.* to have done in the case of Callistus and Christian society.

We must now consider a third piece of evidence for how, in the minds of contemporary observers, the events of Callistus' career paralleled those of Elagabalus.

³⁷ A. Birley, *Septimius Severus, the African Emperor*, (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode 1971), p. 154.

³⁸ SHA, *Elagab.*, 4,3 cf. A. Pasqui, Regione VI. Antico edificio riconosciuto per la sede del *senaculum mulierum*, in *NScavAnt*, Ann. 311, 5,11 (1914), pp. 141-146. See also Halsberghe (1972), p. 70.

8B 1.1.2.4. Callistus' martyrdom and the fall of Elagabalus

Both the martyrdom of Callistus and the violent end of Elagabalus took place in the same year (A.D. 222). There is no need to see Elagabalus as a definite supporter of Christianity, on the shallow basis of the SHA, and on the very dubious notion that his consort and former Vestal Virgin, Aquilia Severa, was in fact the Severina to which one work on the Statue of the HIPPOLYTAN community was dedicated.³⁹ Most of the references to dedications point to Julia Mamaea and her circle, in the next reign, that of her son Severus Alexander, after Elagabalus' downfall in which she was directly instrumental. Certainly the HIPPOLYTAN community addressed Julia Mamaea with respect.⁴⁰ But it was otherwise with the reforms of Elagabalus, and with what Callistus partially against the background of those reforms proposed for the Christian community.

That a later martyrology will describe the events of the latter's death in similar terms to those of Elagabalus show that the general impression on the minds of contemporaries and later was that the two figures were in some way associated. It is my argument that the sociological thesis that I have pursued and invoked throughout this monograph can explain the association without any conscious and intentional links on the part of the individuals participating in the action. Christian communities form contra-cultures to the pagan host culture, in part imitating both its social and its ontological construction of reality. But in part they also reconstruct the host culture, so that their dependence on that culture is concealed but none the less necessary.

There was, according to Allard, a historical core to the late *Acta Martyrii Sancti Callisti*.⁴¹ There is at all events clearly a relationship between the descriptions of the manner of their deaths, suggesting a clear folk memory that these were the products of similar historical events at a similar moment which were in some way related to

³⁹ SHA, *Elagab.*, 3,4 cf. M. Sordi, Il Cristianesimo e Roma, in *Storia di Roma* XIX, Istituto di Studi Romani, (Bologna: Cappelli 1965), p. 238

⁴⁰ For the identification of this with a work mentioned in Theodoret, and in Anastasius Sinaïtica, see Brent (1995), pp. 84–85 and p. 331. For Julia Mamaea's role in the downfall of Elagabalus, see Halsberghe (1972), pp. 101–103.

⁴¹ P. Allard, *Histoire des Persécutions pendant la première moitié du troisième siècle (Septime Sévère, Maximin, Dèce), d'après les documents archéologiques*, (Paris: LeCoffre 1886), pp. 188–190 cf. H. Dal Covolo, I Severi e il cristianesimo: Ricerche sull'ambiente storico-istituzionale delle origini cristiane tra il secondo e il terzo secolo, in *Biblioteca di Scienze Religiose*, 87 (Libreria Atheneo Salesiano: Rome 1989), p. 16 and pp. 64–65.

each other. Callistus is martyred by being “thrown through the window of a house (*per fenestram domus praecipitari*) and with a stone tied to his neck (*ligatoque ad collum eius saxo*), submerged in a well (*in puteum demergi*), and rubbish piled upon him (*et in eo rudera cumulari*).”⁴²

After Elagabalus is slain by the praetorian guard on Alexander and Mamaea’s instruction, his mutilated body is dragged through the streets.⁴³ This, one source informs us, is:

in order that the soldiers might throw it into the sewer (*ut id in cloacam (= cloaca maxima) milites mitterent*). But when the cloaca by chance failed to take it (*sed cum non cepisset cloaca fortuito*), they attached a weight that it should not float (*adnexo pondere ne fluitaret*), and threw it into the Tiber from the Aurelian bridge (*per pontem Aemilium . . . in Tiberim abiectum est*), so that it could never be buried (*ne umquam sepeliri posset*). His body had also been dragged around the Circus (*tractum est cadaver eius etiam per Circi spatia*) before thrown into the Tiber (*priusquam in Tiberim praecipitaretur*).

SHA, *Elagabalus*, 17, 1–3.

The idea that the *cloaca maxima* could not take his body seems strange, but clearly required the second stage of throwing the body into the Tiber direct. The Epitomist to Cassius Dio claims that the body was thrown directly into the Tiber (ἐς τὸν ποταμὸν ἐνεβλήθη), but mentions the unsuccessful attempt to escape by hiding in a chest (ἔμελλεν ἐς τύλλον ἐμβληθεὶς ἐκδρᾶναι).⁴⁴ It is Herodian, however, who gives us the simplest and most likely original account, namely that, after Elagabalus and Soaemias were drawn and mutilated: “he was thrown into the sewers (ἐς τοὺς ὀχετοὺς ἀπερρίφθη) which run down into the river Tiber (τοὺς ἐς τὸν Θύβριν ποταμὸν ρέοντας).”⁴⁵

In attempting to reconstruct the true relationship between the accounts of the martyrdom of Callistus and the assassination of Elagabalus, we can be certain only of equivalences or near equivalences in both descriptions. Both Callistus and Elagabalus are “thrown (*praecipitari/praecipitaretur/ἀπερρίφθη*)” into a well or sewer (*in puteum/*

⁴² Acta S. Callisti Papae Martyris Romae, 8, in Migne *P.L.* 10, col. 120.

⁴³ SHA, *Elagab.*, 17, 1–3: “Post hoc in eum impetus factus est atque in latrina ad quam confugerat occisus. tractatus deinde per publicum; addita iniuria cadaveri est . . .” cf. Dio Cassius LXXX, 20,2: καὶ αἱ τε κεφαλαὶ ἀπεκόπησαν, καὶ τὰ σώματα γυμνωθέντα τὸ μὲν πρῶτον διὰ πάσης τῆς πόλεως ἐσύρη . . . and Herodian V, 8,9: τὰ δὲ σώματα τοῦ τε Ἀντωνίου καὶ τῆς Σοαμίδος παρέδωσαν σύρειν τε καὶ ἐνυβρίζειν τοῖς βουλομένοις· ἄπερ ἐπὶ πολὺ διὰ πάσης τῆς πόλεως συρέντα . . .

⁴⁴ Dio Cassius, 80, 20,2.

⁴⁵ Herodian, V, 8,9.

in cloacam/ἐς τοὺς ὀχετοὺς) which in Callistus case, given the region of the city, is clearly the sewers or *cloaca maxima* as it is in Elagabalus' case. A weight was attached to Elagabalus' body (*adnexo pondere*) just as a stone was tied to Callistus' neck (*ligatoque ad collum eius saxo*).

We could emphasise the historicity of this "core" in the martyrology, as we have seen that Dal Covolo proposes, following Sordi and Allard.⁴⁶ If we did so, we could consider that it was the known relationship of Callistus and his policies, as favouring or enjoying favour of the regime, that lead to his death in the same revolutionary turmoil that saw the end of Elagabalus with whom he had been associated in the popular imagination. But there is no need to go thus far, particularly since the policies and behaviour of Elagabalus as recorded would have been equally repugnant to Callistus as to the author of *El*. The latter does not accuse the former of sympathising with child sacrifices countenanced by Elagabalus,⁴⁷ even though he might try to make him indirectly responsible for the murder of the unborn due to his marriage policy.

Our account in terms of contra-cultural theory does not however require such a meeting of the minds of individual participants in the events to account for such association. It is enough that in the minds of those who passed on the account of Callistus' martyrdom there was a consciousness that his end was similar to that of Elagabalus, and so for them there was some association between the two events. My application of contra-cultural social theory to the development of Church Order shows how the events could be interpreted sociologically. The structure of the Christian Roman community in terms of a collection of house-churches, loosely related to one another, was undergoing dynamic change through their interaction with wider society. The Order of the Christian Community, as we have argued, mirrored contra-culturally the order of the Imperial Cult, reversing some of its imagery and values, in order to give that community status and legitimation in the eyes of its members that wider society denied them.

The social construction of reality develops in terms of a contra-culture in marginal groups deprived of status and legitimation by their host culture. It is therefore inevitable that, when radical change

⁴⁶ See footnote 41 above.

⁴⁷ Dio Cassius 80, 11, where Sardanapalus is recorded as sacrificing boys to Elagabalus.

occurs in the structure of the host culture, that change, however temporary, is a reversal of an evolving goal. In consequence, the contra-culture that is related dialectically with the host culture will find itself subject to the same revolutionary forces endeavouring to change the host culture. This has clearly happened in the case of Callistus. No doubt he and his followers would not have identified themselves with the host culture, yet, in order to make their case against it plausible with a legitimation of their existence to themselves as well as to others, they needed the backcloth of both ontology and political ideology derived from the host culture on which they were parasitic. But having pursued and constructed such a legitimation, that legitimation was bound to fail in the eyes of those seeking to change radically the direction of the host-culture. Thus Callistus fell, or appeared in the eyes of his contemporaries to fall, for similar reasons and in a similar way to Elagabalus.

The author of *El.* and his group, who sought to construct their legitimacy in a different way regarding the host culture, would not have lamented Callistus' fate. As I have already pointed out, those whose thinking was clearly at home in the circle of Julia Domna (7C 1.2) did not shrink from dedicating works of theological philosophy to Julia Mamaea, mother of Severus Alexander, who led the revolution.

PART C. IN CONCLUSION:
THE LEGACY FOR DECIUS AND CYPRIAN

There was no concerted persecution of the Christian Church before the fall of the Severan dynasty and the accession of Maximus who, according to Eusebius, persecuted the leaders of the Church who had befriended the former regime.⁴⁸ Callistus died, as we have seen, as the result of a perceived association with imperial policies that were overthrown by revolution within the Severan dynasty itself, and in the general chaos that swept Elagabalus away. The general persecution, when it came, was that of Decius Trajan in A.D. 251, with which we began our discussion in Chapter 1.

But as Frend has cogently argued, the political structures in which that persecution occurred, and the legitimation of those structures

⁴⁸ Eusebius, *H.E.* VI, 28,1-2, cf Brent (1995), p. 81; p. 291; pp. 378-379.

were the creation of the Severan dynasty.⁴⁹ These religious and political objectives Elagabalus shared. He simply failed in the means to secure them because of a religious fundamentalism that identified his own local Baal of Emesa with *Sol Invictus*, and thus obscured the syncretism of a gradualist policy. Caracalla's citizenship law in A.D. 212, and his interpretation of his sacred role as Emperor as the source of divine power as *κοσμοκράτωρ* through which the unifying archetypal light flowed, made possible the Decian persecution. If the majority of the population throughout the Roman Empire were inscribed on rolls of citizens, the administrative machinery was in place to secure their act of sacrificing incense at their local altar of the Imperial Cult. If the Imperial Cult was now the means of symbolising imperial unity, and indeed effecting what it symbolised by the participation of all citizens, then the logic of what was in effect the sacrament of imperial unity clearly required that participation to be legally enforced.

Over against that cult, as we saw also in Chapter 1, Cyprian placed his view of the Christian *episcopatus*, in which every local bishop stood for the whole, like the sun's rays emanating from a common source and giving unity and light to the natural order. Their mutual recognition and intercommunion constituted the unity of the Body of Christ. At the centre of the nexus of intercommunion stood the bishop of Rome. The successors of Callistus truly were a converse reflection of the divine Emperor as *Pontifex Maximus*, and mediating a unifying ontological reality just as finally Caracalla and Elagabalus had claimed. Thus Episcopal Order reflected Imperial Order, not as a derivation or expression of it, but as its reverse image in an opposing counter-culture. True Christians were not to participate in the sacrament of imperial unity but in the sacrament of the Body of Christ.

This monograph has demonstrated that Cyprian's theology of Order was not simply an *ad hoc* reaction to Imperial power as manifested in the Decian persecution. Cyprian finished an edifice of Church Order that developed, *pari passu*, with Imperial Order, as the priesthood of the Christian Cult had developed, *pari passu*, with the Imperial Cult, whether in St. Luke or St. Clement, the Seer

⁴⁹ W.C.H. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church*, (Oxford: Blackwell 1965), p. 312; *idem*. *The Rise of Christianity*, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd 1986), p. 440. See also Dal Covolo (1989), pp. 54-55.

of the *Apocalypse* or St. Ignatius, or indeed in St. Irenaeus or St. Hippolytus.

The dynamic of the development and its dialectic has also been at least partly explained by a sociological model of counter-culture. But I am aware that the emergence of Church Order supported by a Monarchian theology of the godhead that arose as a contra-cultural reaction was an heretical and not an orthodox theology. And, to the extent that modern forms of episcopacy, of the kind that I have attacked in a previous work, reflect such a Monarchian basis, they clearly reflect, in both theology and practice, heretical roots.⁵⁰

The emerging orthodox doctrine of the Trinity as three persons, each consubstantial and co-eternal, cannot fit into the mould of a such a socially and culturally conditioned development. In consequence there may here be the possibility of an argument for the transcendent grounds of divine revelation breaking into, but not absorbed by, its surrounding culture.

But that must be another argument and another story.

⁵⁰ A. Brent, *Ecumenical Relations and Cultural Episcopates*, in *ATHR* 72,3 (1990), pp. 255–279; *Idem*. *Cultural Episcopacy and Ecumenism, Representative Ministry in Church History from the Age of Ignatius of Antioch to the Reformation*, with special reference to contemporary ecumenism, in *Studies in Christian Mission* 6, (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1992).

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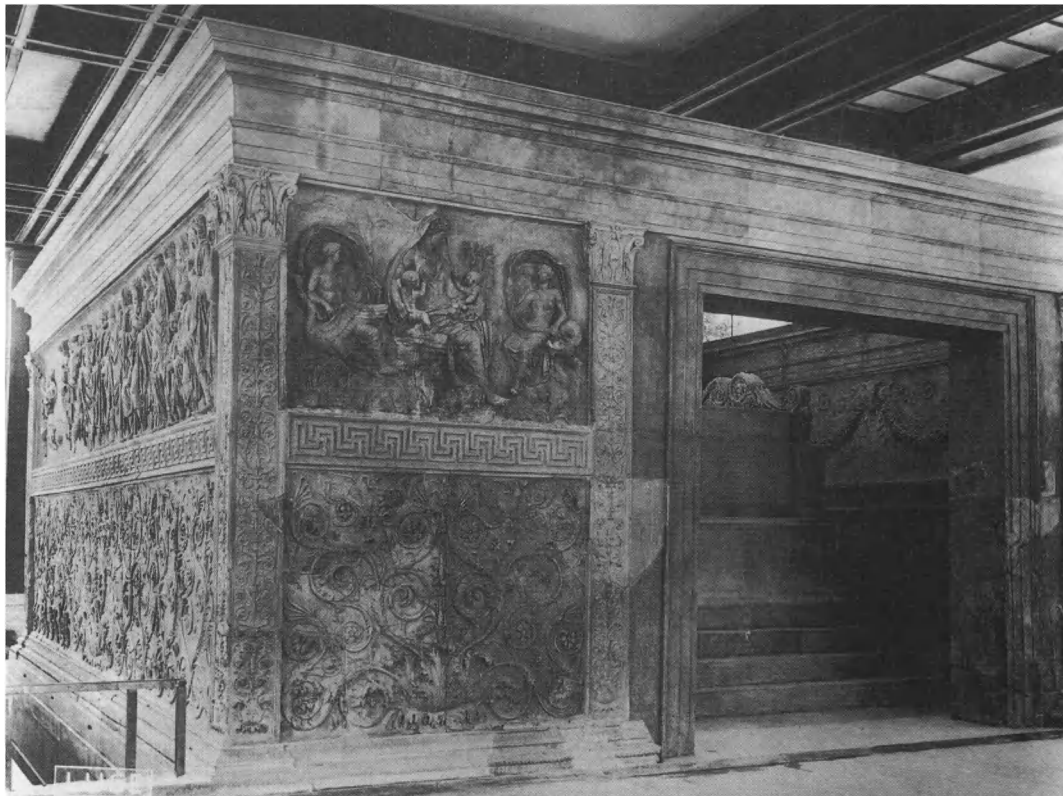


Plate 1. Ara Pacis Augusti. DAI Neg. 53.307.



Plate 2. Ara Pacis: Tellus: celebration of *Pax* in nature and society. DAI Neg. 86.1448.



Plate 3. Ara Pacis: Tellus and her children in a fruitful earth.
DAI Neg. 32.1744.



Plate 4. Ara Pacis: Nymph (*Hora*) of sea-realm seated on a tamed dragon.
DAI Neg. 32.1746.



Plate 5. Ara Pacis: Close-up of Tellus' child in Nature's superabundance.
DAI Neg. 86.1458.



Plate 6. Ara Pacis: Sacrificial Scene (*Suovetaurilia*). DAI Neg. 66.107.



Plate 7. Altar of Lares: Augustus as *augur* with *lituus*. DAI Neg. 75.293.

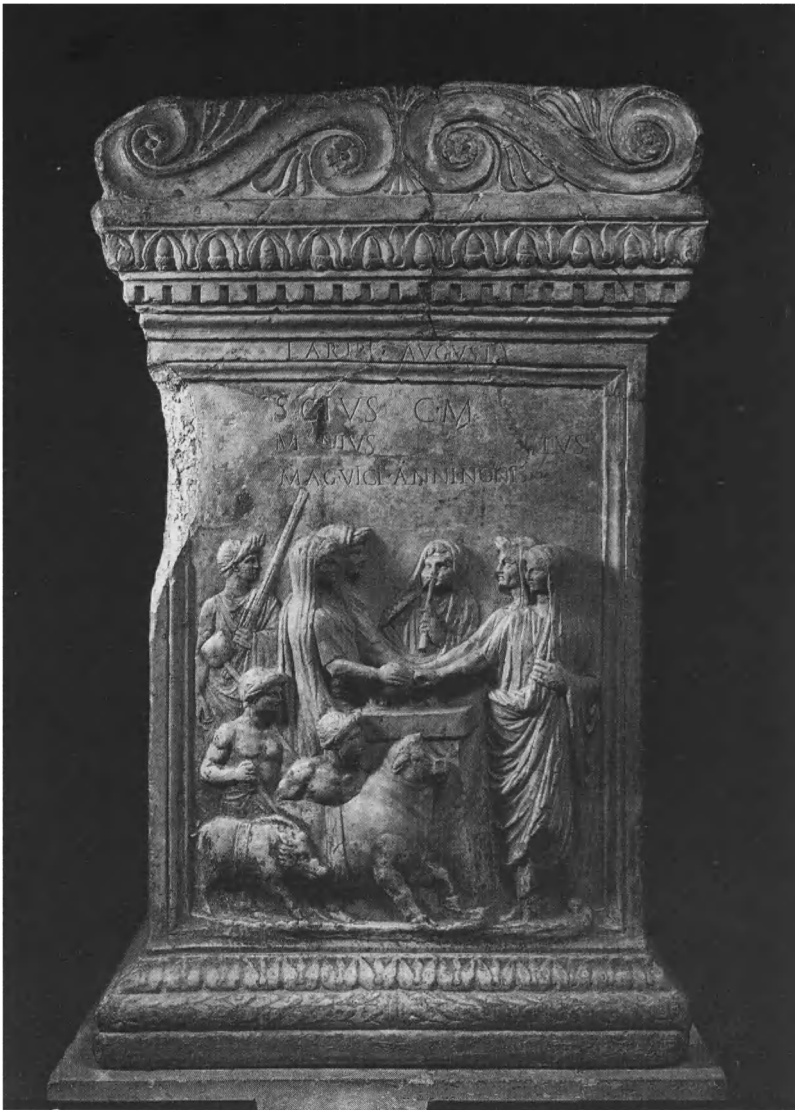


Plate 8. Altar of the Lares: *Vicomagistri* at joint sacrifice. DAI Neg. 60.1472.



Plate 9. Altar of Lares: Augustus hands statuettes to *ministri* of a *compitum*.
Mus. Vatic. Arch. Fotog. Neg. N. A.16.6.



Plate 10. *Ministri* with statuettes of *Lares* and *Genius Augusti*. Mus. Vatic. Arch. Fotog. Neg. N. XXXV.5.9.



Plate 11. Altar dedicated to the *Lares* of Augustus.
Mus. Capit. Arch. Fotog. Inv. 855/S.



Plate 12. Augustus presents statue of Minerva to *magistri* of woodworkers.
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Plate 13. Gemma Augustea. Vienna, Kunsthist. Mus. Inv. IX.A.79.



Plate 14. Pompeii: Priestess with *stola* and *patera*.
Naples, Mus. Naz. Inv. 6041.



Plate 15. Priest with incense box.
Lyon, Mus. Gallo-Rom. (Photo: Ch. Thioc).



Plate 16. Head of Augustus with thunderbolt and star.
BMC (Tiberius) 151.c.216.20 (Pl. 26.3). (Obv.)



Plate 17. Livia as priestess holding *patera* and sceptre.
BMC (Tiberius) 151.c.216.20 (Pl. 26.3). (Rev.)



Plate 18. Head of Augustus with star.
BMC (Titus) 271.c.219.86 (Pl. 54,3). (Obv.)



Plate 19. Altar to *Providentia*.
BMC (Titus) 271.c.219.86 (Pl. 54,3). (Rev.)



Plate 20. Domitia Augusta.
BMC (Domitian) 65.c.194.56 (Pl. 61,9). (Obv.)



Plate 21. Domitia (Pietas) with sceptre, left, extending right
hand towards her child.
BMC (Domitian) 65.c.194.56 (Pl. 61,9). (Rev.)



Plate 22. Domitia Augusta.
BMC (Domitian) 62 (Pl. 61,6). (Obv.)



Plate 23. Divus Caesar (Domitian's son) as baby Jupiter
seated on a globe circled by seven stars.
BMC (Domitian) 62 (Pl. 61,6). (Rev.)



Plate 24. Victory (Domitian) draped and holding a shield.
BMC (Domitian) 504.c.220.3. (Rev.)



Plate 25. *Aeternitas* holding the sun and moon.
BMC (Domitian) 346.c.219.94 (Pl. 73,4)



Plate 26. Sabina Augusta.
BMC (Hadrian) 1095.c.391.8 (Pl. 75,7). (Obv.)



Plate 27. Cybele, towered, draped and seated.
BMC (Hadrian) 1095.c.391.8 (Pl. 75,7). (Rev.)



Plate 28. Faustina (I) Augusta.
BMC (Antoninus Pius) 1436.c.223.190 (Pl. 34,4). (Obv.)



Plate 29. Cybele towered and enthroned with two lions.
BMC (Antoninus Pius) 1436.c.223.190 (Pl. 34,4). (Rev.)



Plate 30. Faustina (II) Augusta.
BMC (Marcus Aurelius) 934.c.225.1 (Pl. 73,11). (Obv.)



Plate 31. Cybele (Mater Magna) towered.
BMC (Marcus Aurelius) 934.c.225.1 (Pl. 73,11). (Rev.)



Plate 32. *Matri Deum Salutari*: Cybele towered and on a lion's back.
BMC (Commodus) 680 (Pl. 109,15). (Rev.)



Plate 33. Julia (Domna) Augusta.
BMC (Septimius Severus) 77.c.198.154 B (a) (Pl. 28,18) (Obv.)



Plate 34. Isis with Horus in both arms.
BMC (Septimius Severus) 77.c.198.154 B (a)
(Pl. 28,18) (Rev.)