

JAMES CARLETON PAGET

Jews, Christians
and Jewish Christians
in Antiquity

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen

zum Neuen Testament

251

Mohr Siebeck

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For my children, Emily, Hope and Harry, with thanks
for all that they are and will be

Preface

Collections of essays are often dubious things, and I reserve the right to a less-than-adequate defence of this one to some introductory remarks, which follow this preface.

I would like to thank the following for extending help, of various kinds, in the production of this work: the editor of the series in which the volume appears, Prof. Jörg Frey; the editorial staff at Mohr Siebeck, in particular Dr. Henning Ziebritzki; and Frau Ilse König; Di Hakala for outstanding editorial and computational assistance, carried out with great efficiency, intelligence, assiduity well beyond the call of duty and always with an enviable cheerfulness and patience, especially in the face of my lamentable technophobia; Dave Goode for his patient help with computational matters; Philip Alexander, Susanna Avery-Quash, Markus Bockmuehl, Nicholas de Lange, Judith Lieu and Annette Yoshiko Reed for reading one or more of the unpublished chapters and making helpful, and sometimes detailed, comments on their contents; William Horbury for reading almost everything in this volume, for giving so generously of his immense, yet lightly held, erudition, and for being such a stalwart and immensely encouraging friend (together with his wife, Kathy) over many years; Simon Gathercole for reading all the unpublished chapters, for helping in the reformatting of others, work well beyond the call of duty in a very busy schedule, and for his greatly valued and stimulating friendship; Andrew Chester, my colleague for many years, and with whom I have shared in much fruitful discussion; the late Graham Stanton for the encouragement he gave me to produce this collection, for his wonderful friendship, and for the remarkable example of courage and resilience he gave all who knew him over a considerable period of debilitating and painful illness; to the Master, Fellows and staff of Peterhouse, not least the bursar, Richard Grigson, for all the help and kindness they have afforded me over many years; and for the great friendship of Susanna Avery-Quash, John Bew, Petà Dunstan, Mari Jones, Magnus Ryan, Brendan Simms and Anita Bunyan, and Alexander Studholme; and, last but not least, my family.

I wish to dedicate this book, in spite of its many grave shortcomings, to my children. I hope that they will never have reason to make use of it for anything other than a door stop (surely the legitimate fate, and most useful

function, of many an academic book, and *certainly* of this one), but that they will see its dedication as a testimony to their father's love for them.

Cambridge, March 2010

James Carleton Paget

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations used throughout the book for both ancient texts, periodicals, reference works and serials are almost entirely according to those given in P. H. Alexander *et al.* (eds.), *The SBL Handbook of Style: for Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999). The few exceptions to these will be spelt out in the individual bibliographies.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The collection of essays brought together in this volume span a period of some nineteen years, and range from the shorter article on a quite specific subject to the longer, discursive piece. Nine have been previously published; three are published here for the first time. The published pieces have been minimally edited with some new bibliography added, and known mistakes eradicated. While the essays do not form a coherent collection in the sense that the sum of their parts constitutes a self-standing, interconnected argument, bringing them together under one roof seems justified on a number of grounds. The first is practical: most of these essays have appeared in journals or sometimes rather inaccessible collective volumes. To place them in a single volume serves the purpose of making them more easily available to the interested scholar. Such an assertion, however, merely begs the question whether it is worth making this particular set of essays more accessible. Whatever justification might exist for this lies partly in the claim that the collection focuses upon subjects, which have elicited intense and fruitful discussion in recent times. These are, in order, Jewish-Christian relations in antiquity, Jewish Christianity, and Judaism in the second century. Some central points in the debate about these matters will be noted below, and it will, I hope, become clear to the reader that the recent stimulus given to their investigation by a range of scholars is significant. In different ways each of the essays in this volume seeks to interact with elements of the debate about these three subjects, and to sharpen discussion of them.

Another partial justification lies in the argument that the three subjects upon which it focuses, as well as being important in their own right, are interconnected, and have become increasingly so in more recent debate. So, for instance, Daniel Boyarin contends that precisely because, according to him, one cannot talk about Jews and Christians as self-contained definable groups in the first three centuries C.E. (or possibly ever in the sense that there is an essence of being a Jew or a Christian somehow distinct from the perspective of the person doing the defining), the term ‘Jewish

Christian' or 'Jewish Christianity' has no meaning.¹ Whether Boyarin's radical thesis is right or not, it is true that one's understanding of the definition of Jew and Christian, and so the extent to which one can differentiate between them, will inevitably intrude upon one's understanding of the term 'Jewish Christian', a point which in a variety of ways has been accepted by scholars since the middle of the nineteenth century. After all, one needs to understand when the term is meaningful, and one can only do that if one has a view about when the categories, Jew and Christian, are distinguishable one from another.² It is also the case that if we adopt Boyarin's new paradigm of Jewish-Christian relations, alluded to above, our view of the importance of those designated 'Jewish Christian' will be significantly altered – rather than seeing them as a group of individuals whose significance wanes at a very early stage in Christian history, a victim of the so-called 'parting of the ways' between Judaism and Christianity, they become individuals who are less marginalised than at first appeared.³

The connection of these two subjects, however conceived, to the third, Judaism in the second century, is less obvious, and yet this subject is significant for both. First, it is the case that the earliest *adversus Judaeos* texts appear in the second century, that is, it can be argued that it is only from the second century onwards that some Christians sought in a conscious way to engage with the question of 'Judaism', or put differently, it was only in the second century, for whatever reason, that Christians began to seek to define the Jew as they sought in some senses to define themselves. Secondly, and related to the first point, it was only in the same period that some Christian writers began to pronounce heretical, a term which first comes into being in the second century, those Christians whom they thought too Jewish, and to give them names such as Ebionite. That is, it was in the second century that what scholarship has come to call 'Jewish Christianity' first came explicitly to be a subject of discussion amongst some and the cause of censure amongst others. Investigation of both of these points will necessarily involve discussion of Judaism in the second century, and in a variety of ways, may be said to impact upon discussion of that subject. Was there anything, for instance, about the development of Judaism in this period insofar as we can speak about such an entity, which led to the two developments we have outlined, namely the beginnings of

¹ See Boyarin 2009. He also believes it has no meaning because it is a category created by heresiologists. However, that is only the case by implication, for the word 'Jewish Christian' is a neologism dating from the sixteenth century. On this, see below.

² See Skarsaune and Hvalvik 2007, 748-50; and Reed 2003 and 2008, for scholars who have made much of the relevance of Boyarin's view of Jewish-Christian relations for the study of Jewish Christianity.

³ See Reed 2003.

the *adversus Iudaeos* tradition, and of the criticism of those called ‘Jewish Christians’?

An initial claim, then, can be made for the interconnectedness of the subjects of this book, and by extension, the coherence, broadly conceived, of the medley of essays gathered in this volume.

Jewish-Christian relations in antiquity

Recent discussion of Jewish-Christian relations has in part been preoccupied with a critical examination of the paradigm of the so-called ‘parting of the ways.’⁴ In brief this view, associated in particular with James Parkes,⁵ and given magisterial expression by Marcel Simon,⁶ emphasised the Jewish origins of Christianity and argued that Christians remained initially within the Jewish fold, Judaism understood as a diverse and variegated entity in the first century. But as a result of the Jewish revolts of 66-70 and 132-5, the hostility of the emerging rabbinic movement to Christians, given partial expression in the so-called *Birkath ha-minim*, or Twelfth Benediction of the *Amidah*, which had the effect of excluding Christians from the synagogue, and the Christian commitment to a Gentile mission, the ways of the two religions parted, probably some time in the early second century, although a number of advocates of this view prefer to speak in terms of ‘partings’ rather than a single, particular ‘parting’.⁷ The popularity of this paradigm, consciously a response to scholarship of an earlier era on Judaism, which had tended to argue a supersessionist case in which Jesus emerged in a Judaism in decay, and Christians almost immediately became part of a separate movement, can be variously explained. Part of it has to do with its neatness; part to do with the fact that it is in most of its forms palatable to both Jews and Christians; and part to do with its ecumenical potential.⁸

Those who have criticised this model have done so from a variety of angles.⁹ Some have questioned it from a factual perspective, drawing attention to evidence, literary and archaeological, which would contradict the

⁴ See Jacobs 2008. His succinct and helpful review of the *status quaestionis* begins with attacks upon this approach to Jewish-Christian relations. For other critiques, see Lieu 2002; Becker and Reed 2003; Boyarin 2004; Fonrobert 2005.

⁵ See Parkes 1934.

⁶ See Simon 1986.

⁷ Dunn 1991.

⁸ For the historical context of Parkes’ views and an explanation of the popularity of the ‘parting’ model, see Becker and Reed 2003, 7-16; and Lieu 2002.

⁹ For significant critical engagement, see Boyarin 1999; 2003; 2004; Fonrobert 2001; Lieu 2003; Becker and Reed 2003; and Jacobs 2008.

idea of an early, and universal, parting.¹⁰ Particularly criticised are the views of those who would attribute importance to the so-called *Birkath ha-minim* as a means of effecting separation, and who would accordingly assume a kind of monolithic Judaism under the hegemony of the rabbis.¹¹ Such a Judaism did not exist, nor did a monolithic Christianity.¹² Both, at least for some time, were varied entities with loose authority structures, an observation, which has obvious implications for the question of when, how and in what circumstances they ‘parted’. This has led in turn to a call for less generalised and abstract talk of parting, and a stronger interest in limited, micro-geographical studies of the phenomenon.¹³ Also criticised, and related to the points made above, is the assumption, implicit in the ‘partings’ model, that interaction between the Jews and Christians was limited and exceptional. Above all else critics of the ‘partings’ model want to emphasise ‘meaningful convergence’, convergences which often follow ‘partings’; and see this as much more the norm than the exception.¹⁴ These types of observation have emerged from a close attention to questions of identity. In this context scholars argue that it is wrong to think about self-contained, clearly definable *entities* called Judaism and Christianity, something which a ‘partings’ model can be said to assume. Yes, there were people at the time who thought one could speak of these two entities, but these so-called separatists, whose most important early representative is often taken to be Justin Martyr (although it is Ignatius who first uses the two terms ‘Judaism’ and ‘Christianity’ – interestingly, Justin does not use either term), on the one hand, and the evolving rabbinate, on the other, are seeking to create something which did not exist at the time they wrote.¹⁵ In this view it is precisely the existence of the *adversus Judaeos* tradition, in some senses the embodiment of separatist tendencies, which is taken as proof of the existence of a more complex ‘blurred’ view of Christian/Jew-

¹⁰ See Rutgers 1992; and Lieu 2002

¹¹ For a review of some important work on this vexed subject, see van der Horst 1994. For a detailed engagement with the subject, see Tepler 2007. For a recent defence of the earliness of the version of the *Birkat* and its relevance to questions of separation, see Marcus 2009.

¹² Becker and Reed in their introduction to Becker and Reed 2003.

¹³ See Lieu 2002, 18: “The problem with the model of the ‘partings of the ways’ is that ... it operates essentially with the abstract or universal conception of each religion, Judaism and Christianity, when what we know about is the local and specific. I would suggest that the abstract or universal is, certainly for our period, problematic. What we need is a more nuanced analysis of the local and specific before we seek to develop models which will set them within a more comprehensive overview.”

¹⁴ Becker and Reed 2003, 23.

¹⁵ ‘Separatists’, of course, are taken to be responsible for the construction of ‘master narratives’ which scholars, unknowingly sometimes, have followed. On this, see Gager 2003, 368; and Reed 2008, here discussing Eusebius.

ish difference on the ground, the argument being that an emphasis on difference only occurs because enough people do not see such difference.¹⁶ This kind of view also emerges from a suspicion of all forms of essentialism, which would assert that there is something which, almost metaphysically, makes a Christian a Christian or a Jew a Jew. So Daniel Boyarin, one of the most radical participants in the current debate, has written: “Even if we grant the statistical dominance ... of the separatists ... are there sets of features that absolutely define who is a Jew and who is a Christian in such wise that the two categories will not seriously overlap, irrespective of the numbers of members of the blurring sets? I think not.”¹⁷ For Boyarin, we should no longer think of Jews and Christians in the ancient period, at least up until the time of Constantine, but rather of various types of Jews occupying different positions along a Judaeo-Christian continuum, stretching at one end from Jews who had no belief in Jesus to Marcion, at the other end, who denied the validity of the Old Testament with the middle a kind of complex blur.¹⁸ It was only when Christianity became the state religion, in the time of Constantine, that the vision of the separatists could be aligned to state power and become the norm,¹⁹ a norm, which involved the creation of two religions, Christianity and its opposite, Judaism, or the separating out of ‘religion’ from other parts of life, which one might call civic, cultural and ethnic.²⁰ Of course, in response to part of this evolving alternative vision, some might argue that a Christian can be defined as someone who is a disciple of Christ, but to this Boyarin responds by noting that such a “feature hardly captures enough richness and depth to produce an interesting category, for in so many ways groups that follow Jesus and

¹⁶ See Fonrobert 2005, 254: “It is perhaps this inability to control the borderland (between Judaism and Christianity) that finally accounts for the anti-Jewish rhetoric in early Christianity.”

¹⁷ Boyarin 2003, 78.

¹⁸ Boyarin further elucidates what he is trying to convey by referring to the model of dialect study. He writes (Boyarin 2003, 76), “I am not claiming an undifferentiated ‘Judaism’ that formed itself into Judaism and Christianity through the borrowing of various religious traits but rather an assortment of religious dialects throughout the Jewish world that gradually developed structure as clusters through diffusion and were eventually organized as languages (religions) through processes very much analogous to those by which national languages, such as French and Italian, were also formed.”

¹⁹ See Boyarin 2009, 28: “I suggest ... that there is no nontheological and nonanachronistic way at all to distinguish Christianity from Judaism until institutions are in place that make and enforce that distinction, and even then, we know precious little about what the nonelite and nonchattering classes were thinking and doing.”

²⁰ Boyarin owes aspects of this thesis to the work of Seth Schwartz who in Schwartz 2001 had argued that the emergence of post-Constantinian Christianity had led to the creation, by imitation, of the Jewish religion.

groups that ignore him are similar to each other”,²¹ here developing observations about the shared culture of Jews and Christians. Boyarin’s views are, as stated, at the radical, and more theoretical, end of those who would seek to criticise the ‘partings’ model, but he embodies, in striking ways, many of their assumptions and tendencies.

In all of this, then, the ‘partings’ paradigm appears at once historically and hermeneutically naive, and in need of a considerable overhaul.²² That does not mean that a new paradigm has emerged, although some have sought to create one.²³ So the title of Becker and Reed’s multi-authored volume, *The Ways that Never Parted*, contains a variety of approaches to the subject, as the authors themselves admit. The title of the volume is provocative, but is understood by the editors in a number of ways. First, as a challenge to the convention that no meaningful convergence between Jews and Christians occurred. Secondly, to suggest that Jews and Christians may have been engaged in the task of ‘parting’ throughout Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, *precisely because* the two never really parted during that period with the degree of decisiveness or finality needed to render either tradition irrelevant to the self-definition of the other, or to make participation in both unattractive or inconceivable (or as they state on the same page that they were meaningfully intertwined).²⁴ None of the above would appear to carry the radical implications that the title might be seen to have (although Boyarin’s contribution comes closest to endorsing these, at least for the ancient period). What might be said to bind together scholars of this new tendency is a call to look at the relevant primary material again and ask: “What happens when we approach our evidence from a different perspective, treating the ‘parting of the ways’ as a principle that needs to be proved rather than presupposed?”²⁵

In commenting on this development in recent study, we should note that much of what has been outlined above is to be welcomed in that it has sent us back to what we thought was established, and made it seem less so. Texts, for instance, that we once believed to be easy to define as Jewish or Christian, are shown to be less easily described in such a way;²⁶ and this

²¹ Boyarin 2003, 80. Also Lieu 2004, 1-26.

²² See Becker and Reed 2003, 2, who refer to “its methodological paucity, its inadequacy as an historical account, and its inability to explain much of our primary evidence.”

²³ Note Boyarin’s use of recent theories about dialects and the formation of language, as well as his own use of wave theory. See n. 18 above.

²⁴ Becker and Reed 2003, 22-3.

²⁵ Becker and Reed 2003, 22.

²⁶ On this, see Frankfurter 2003, who analyses a number of texts which are generally held to be of Jewish origin but then appropriated by Christians, and asks the question: “What happens in the discussion of these texts if one abandons the category ‘Christian’ –

has necessarily led to a sharpening of thinking. Divisions, which we took to be inevitable, appear less so. Texts which some held to describe a state of separation, such as the *adversus Judaeos* texts, are held to be trying to create one in the face of opposition both direct and indirect.

Skepticism about the ‘partings’ model has, I would contend, emerged from a combination of factors. One of these has been new discoveries, either of texts, such as Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hekhalot literature, or inscriptions and other archaeological evidence, reflection upon which has led a number of scholars to question monolithic views of Jewish identity, and to emphasise its diversity in the ancient period (sometimes by drawing attention to known texts like the Old Testament pseudepigrapha), and the relative lack of influence of the rabbis.²⁷ Similar emphases are reflected in the study of early Christianity,²⁸ though here perhaps less as a result of new discoveries. All of this has led to the adoption of generally less institutional views of both ‘religions’.²⁹ However, it is also important, I would suggest, to see aspects of this new approach to Jewish-Christian relations as emerging from an ever-growing influence of aspects of post-modern thought upon early Christian studies and Judaism.³⁰ This is seen in the

as a distinct stage in these texts’ composition and, implicitly, as a distinct religious mentality? What if we were to look at these texts, rather, as the work of continuous communities of halakically-observant Jewish groups ... that incorporated Jesus into their cosmologies and liturgies, while retaining an essentially Jewish, or even priestly, self-definition?” (Frankfurter 2003, 134-5). Note also Davila 2005, who, taking up a suggestion of Robert Kraft, seeks to look again at the whole question of how we might seek to define a pseudepigraphon as Jewish or Christian. It should, of course, be noted that the issue of the Jewish or Christian provenance of a text had been openly discussed for many years in relation to works such as *The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, *The Lives of the Prophets*, and even Revelation. Followers of the more recent trend outlined above have simply extended the debate on this matter to encompass more and different texts.

²⁷ Although, see Horbury 1998, 3f., who, while asserting that “diversity rather than unity in the Jewish practice and belief of the Second Temple period has been repeatedly discerned and stressed in the last thirty years”, goes on to show how the debate about a diverse or more uniform Judaism goes back as far as W. Bousset in the early twentieth century, and can be seen in the reaction to G. F. Moore’s assertion about the existence of a common pattern within rabbinic and pre-rabbinic literature, found in his *Judaism in the first centuries of the Christian era, the age of the Tannaim*, published between 1927 and 30.

²⁸ Note especially the importance of Bauer’s *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (Bauer 1971; originally published in 1934), for the study of early Christianity.

²⁹ Lieu 2002, 26, talks about ‘de-institutionalisation.’ She writes: “Once we de-institutionalise our understanding of Jewish communities, once we remove the synagogue, understood much as some Christians speak of the church, from the centre of our perception of their essential identity, with what are we left?”

³⁰ For a discussion of the significance of aspects of post-modernity for the study of early church history, see Clarke 2008.

general suspicion of ‘master narratives’, the related interest in recovering lost voices or little noted witnesses, in taking seriously the constructed character of identity, particularly as this manifests itself in texts, in paying greater attention to local differences in the manifestations of Judaism and Christianity rather than in engaging in general stories with teleologies, and in a flight from what some have termed ‘positivistic historicism’.³¹

Secondly, it is important to note that some of the observations out of which the criticism of the ‘parting of the ways’ paradigm emerged have always been a part of the discussion. So, for instance, many scholars have sought to emphasise the continuities between Judaism and Christianity, the shared culture of the two faiths, in particular as a result of Christian and Jewish commitment to what the former came to call the Old Testament. Here similarities between Jews and Christians are seen both in terms of shared methods of interpretation as well as common exegetical traditions. Some of these same scholars, who emphasise this shared culture, interestingly, are committed to a version of the ‘parting of the ways’ paradigm.³² It need not be assumed, therefore, that a commitment to this apparently discredited paradigm excludes the idea of convergence. In this context it is interesting to note that what possibly divides these scholars from those who attack the paradigm of ‘parting of the ways’ as this relates to issues of convergence, is that the latter see such convergences as having implications for questions of identity, of having repercussions for the extent to which we can talk of Judaism or Christianity as self-contained entities, for our understanding of the meaning of ‘separation’. The former generally do not, and indeed sometimes their views about ‘convergence’, however un-

³¹ For some elements of this, see Boyarin 1999; 2004; Gager 2003; Lieu 2004; Jacobson 2008. Annette Reed, in correspondence with me, preferred the term ‘post-structural’ for what I have termed ‘post-modern’, in particular highlighting the indebtedness of this broadly new approach to Jewish-Christian relations to “Saussurian linguistics and its extension by Levi-Strauss, Foucault, Derrida et al.”, although she goes on to note that they also reflect other streams of thinking about identity-construction in psychology, sociology, and historiography.

³² An example, one amongst many, would be the Cambridge scholar, William Horbury. Almost more than any other British scholar he has sought to emphasise cultural continuities between Christianity and Judaism, both in terms of scriptural interpretation, and shared emphases (e.g. messianism). And yet he is keener than some to emphasise evidence for separation from a relatively early stage in Christian history. On all of this, see various essays in Horbury 1998. This point is implicitly made in Becker and Reed 2003 where a number of the contributors appear to assume a form of the ‘parting’ paradigm while playing up the significance of convergence.

derstood,³³ can appear to depend upon the idea that there were assured boundaries between Jews and Christians.

Thirdly, the unease that critics of the ‘parting of the ways’ paradigm feel at its apparent failure to take sufficient account of the complexity of issues of identity and of the fact of convergence between Jews and Christians, leads many of them, to varying degrees, to question the idea that we can, at least until Constantine, legitimately talk about Jews and Christians. This reaches its strongest expression in the work of Boyarin where legitimacy can only be attached to the designation ‘Judaeo-Christianity’, but it is there, in possibly less clear form, in a number of other writers. The question that arises in the face of this relates to the meaning of such assertions. Is this a point which has its origin in a suspicion of essentialism? Or is it something that emerges from the evidence? After all, while we might doubt that there was something called ‘Judaism’ and something called ‘Christianity’ in the period preceding Constantine, and indeed afterwards, if we are assuming the existence of such things in the abstract, there were people who called themselves Jews and people who called themselves Christians and these people did not regard themselves as a single group.³⁴ Some would say that it is only such self-identifying Christians or Jews to whom we can, in any meaningful way, apply the terms; and that even then, we are dealing with individual perspectives on the subject rather than clearly articulated general definitions.³⁵ It is interesting in this context to take note of the pagan evidence (questions relating to the Christian evidence will be dealt with below). The witnesses here are not thick on the ground, and they are often very limited in what they do say. They are, nevertheless, striking. Nero, we are told by Tacitus, was apparently able to differentiate between Jews and Christians as early as 64 C.E., at least in the city of Rome. Tacitus himself, writing some fifty years after this event, acknowledges the origins of the Christian movement in Judea but does not go on to associate it with the Jewish *ethnos*, stating that the movement began in Judea and then moved to Rome (*Annales* 15.44).³⁶ Strikingly also, given his negative opinions of the Christians, he never mentions their association with the Jews in what most take to be his strongly polemical account of the

³³ Convergence can be understood in a number of ways. So in relation to exegesis it could be taken to imply: (i) independent development of shared traditions; (ii) a shared culture of exegesis; (iii) direct influence of one exegete upon another.

³⁴ See Kalmin in Burrus, Kalmin, Lapin and Marcus 2006, 19.

³⁵ See Williams 2009, 41. On the question of perspective, see Goodman 2003.

³⁶ Some think that Tacitus, possibly writing in the wake of the Trajanic revolt of 115-117, deliberately associates Christians with Jews here so as to pour more opprobrium upon them. See Lieu 2002, 21. However, this, seems unlikely not only because Tacitus makes no attempt to exploit their ‘Judean’ association; but also because it makes little sense of the mention of their movement to Rome where Jews had been for some time.

latter in his *Histories* (*Hist.* 5.1-13). Suetonius, while possibly failing to differentiate Christians from Jews, understood as the followers of ‘Chrestus’, in his notoriously unclear notice about the expulsion from Rome of the Jews by Claudius in the *Life of Claudius* 25.4,³⁷ in his other notice about Christians (*Nero* 16.2), makes no reference to their Jewish associations. A similar observation can be made about Pliny the Younger’s famous letter to Trajan (*Ep.* 10.96). The Christians, insofar as they are described in that precious epistolary token, are simply associated with worship of Christ and certain customs, but not with Jews or Judaism.³⁸ Celsus, writing somewhat later, can affirm that Christians are apostates from Judaism (*Cels.* 2.1), here at least giving unambiguous evidence of an association with Jews; and Tertullian refers to pagans who slander the Christians as “the third race” (*Nat.* 1.1), possibly taking up a Christian self-designation, which differentiated between themselves, Jews and pagans, but which was obviously accepted by a wider public.³⁹ *Prima facie*, then, such evidence would appear to show that to some outsiders, Christians had an identity separate from that associated with Jews, and precisely because this is the view of those looking in from outside, it should be taken seriously.⁴⁰ In response to such an observation, it could be argued that a figure like Celsus may be adopting the viewpoint of a Jewish separatist; and that by extension all of the utterances of the above inevitably reflect a particular perspective, or even ignorance. Added to that it should be noted that not all pagan witnesses reflect, so apparently unambiguously, the separatist position implicit or explicit, in the examples cited above. Galen, the well-known medical writer, speaks of the “school of Moses and Christ”, and

³⁷ Judge 2008, 436.

³⁸ Benko 1985, tried to argue that the test given to recanting Christians bears some likeness to tests given to Jews (*B.J.* 7.50-1), and so, therefore, the passage should be read as implying an identification of the Christians with the Jews. For criticism of this view, see Lieu 2002, 22, who, following others, makes the point that the language is closer to that used to describe other non-Jewish groups. See also Judge 2008, 435-6.

³⁹ For references to Christians as a ‘third race’, either directly or by implication, see *inter alia* *Kerygma Petrou* Fragment 2, although the phrase here could refer to a third type of worship; *Diognetus* 1.1 where Christians are differentiated from Jews and Greeks, although there is no reference to them as a third race. The derogatory reference in Suetonius, *Nero* 16.2, to Christians as a *genus* might point to an originally negative use adapted by Christians.

⁴⁰ “The official position is clear, and remained so for the next two centuries. Incomprehensible as the activities of Christians were, they could be tolerated providing (as Romans) they did not abandon their national duty of sacrifice to the Roman gods. The Romans had always understood and accepted that this was impossible for Jews, for whom exemption was secured. Why did they not, see that Christians stood in the same tradition, and were often themselves Jews into the bargain? There is no hint that anyone ever tried to suggest such a solution” (Judge 2008, 436).

elsewhere of the “followers of Moses and Christ” (*de Puls. Diff.* 2.4 and 3.3 respectively); and Lucian, in describing the Christian group whom the religious quack, Peregrinus, succeeds in duping, presents them in a manner that some have construed as strongly Jewish (*Peregrinus* 11-13).⁴¹ These counter examples are, however, not as telling as some suggest. Lucian is describing a group in Palestine, so aspects of his description are understandable in that context (and in any case he nowhere calls those Peregrinus dupes Jews – they are clearly Christians – and he did know of Jews); and one could argue that Galen does differentiate between the two groups, but simply without using the terms ‘Jew’ and ‘Christian’. One might respond by noting that the singular ‘school’ implies something unified; but in this context we should note that Galen’s reference to a ‘school’ is simply an acknowledgement of a shared culture; and that his retention of separate names (of Moses and of Christ) indicates a clear sense of their separateness at a social level.⁴² Into this bag of evidence we may also want to place the reforms of the *fiscus judaicus* under Nerva, which may have had the effect of making plain who identified with the Jewish community (the absence of extant evidence for Christians paying the *fiscus* may be further proof of social separation, and indeed of a particular cause of such a phenomenon),⁴³ as well as the fact of persecution of Christians (and not Jews) by Romans, which could have served to encourage a sense of separateness on the part of some non-Christian Jews.

Scholars who object to the ‘partings’ paradigm would not necessarily find the points made above too problematic for their position. That there are people who designate themselves Jews and Christians is not so important to them, not least because such people may have understood their Jewishness and their Christianity differently, some attributing considerable importance to it, and others not, especially in relation to differences with

⁴¹ It is a weakness of Judge’s robust essay (Judge 2008) that he fails to address the relevant evidence from Lucian and Galen. Reference could also be made to the passage in Epictetus, cited by Arrian in *Epict. diss.* 1.22.4, where Epictetus argues that if one is not deemed simply to be playing the part of a Jew, one must be baptised. Because of the reference to baptism rather than circumcision, some have taken Epictetus to be referring to Christians but as Jews. For a variety of reasons such an interpretation seems unlikely, not only because of its erroneous view about the exclusive association of baptism with Christian, rather than Jewish, initiation, but also because on the one occasion where Epictetus appears to be referring to Christians, he calls them “Galileans”. See Arrian, *Epict. diss.* 4.7.6, and the discussion of Stern 1980, 541 and 543-4.

⁴² Note in this respect the comment in the *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* 8.5 to the effect that there is absolute convergence between the teachings of Moses and Christ. “For, there being one teaching by both (Moses and Jesus understood), God accepts him who has believed either of these.” For two contrasting accounts of the pagan evidence as it relates to Jewish and Christian identity, see Lieu 2002, 21-4, and Judge 2008.

⁴³ See Goodman 1989.

other groups (that is, between themselves and pagans, heretics, Marcionites etc.). Furthermore, and related to this, some might want to differentiate between the terms ‘Jew’ and ‘Christian’, on the one hand, and ‘Judaism’ and ‘Christianity’, on the other. The former terms are clearly the kind of thing with which one can identify oneself; the latter are not, for when authors use these terms, they “are engaged in constructing conceptual frameworks, in which these categories and their relation to each other in turn serve to configure reality in new ways.”⁴⁴ Ignatius, then, may early on refer to something he calls ‘Ioudaismos’ and something he calls ‘Christianismos’ (Ign. *Magn.* 10.1, 3; Ign. *Phld.* 6.1), but these are constructed concepts in which one term depends for its meaning upon the other, and which are constantly in a state of flux. To try to define their essence is to engage in an unrealistic exercise.

Fourthly, and related to the previous point, the view that “elite authors remained so preoccupied with, and so vehement about, the boundaries between ‘Judaism’ and ‘Christianity’ precisely because these boundaries were still being constructed, negotiated, contested and blurred ‘on the ground’ ...”, raises a number of questions.⁴⁵ For instance, how might we prove that such writers are seeking to create a reality (of separation) rather than, at least in part, giving expression to one? This is, of course, a complex task; and there may be as much pressure on those who would claim that such boundary-concerned works do reflect a reality, as upon those who would claim the opposite, to justify their view. Part of the approach of non-separatist scholars lies in emphasising evidence, minority evidence in this instance, which appears to contradict the kind of vision that the boundary-makers, like Justin, want to create;⁴⁶ and by asserting that there exist

⁴⁴ Williams 2009, 42. See also Lieu 2004, 306-7. After mentioning these terms (Judaism and Christianity), she writes, “... although rooted in the language of (a very small minority of) our texts, the conceptual baggage these terms carry belongs rather more to our contemporary agenda. Far too frequently recent scholarly discussion has forgotten this, and slips ... from speaking of ‘Jews’ and ‘Christians’, to conceptualizing and fixing ‘Judaism’ and ‘Christianity’ as if these, at least, required no further definition.”

⁴⁵ For he calls to read such texts “against the grain”, see also Gager 2003, 369: “Thus we have no choice but to read against the grain.” Note also Lieu’s observation that “systemic ‘othering’ was ... a textual achievement.” (Lieu 2004, 308).

⁴⁶ Note the strong words of Gager: “Once we look behind the historical and theological smoke screen released by these elites, what we find among what I will call ‘ordinary Christians’ is plenty of evidence to suggest that for them there was no such parting at all.” But how much evidence is plenty of evidence? Gager refers his reader to his own book of some eighteen years earlier (Gager 1985) where he emphasises a number of sources which apparently support his position (John Chrysostom, *Adversus Iudaeos*; some pertinent texts from Syria; Ignatius of Antioch; and Paul). In many ways the problem here lies in how we weight these texts, especially Chrysostom’s work. For Gager Chrysostom appears to give voice to an ongoing and significant presence of non-

clear disjunctions between assertions that such authors as Justin make in texts and the reality which some authors experienced “on the ground”.⁴⁷ So it would be wrong to argue that such a mistrust of early *adversus Judaeos* texts is simply the result of a type of mirror-reading, that is, a view that these ‘separatist’ texts only speak the way they do because they oppose a conflicting opinion of the way things are. But on occasion it may seem to some that elements of the case made are exaggerated. So, if Justin is the man who tries, for the first time to create Judaism and Christianity (although, interestingly, he does not, as previously noted, use these terms) and he does so by artificially emphasising their absolute difference, why should he have taken the apparently liberal position he did on the issue of Jews who continue to obey the Jewish Torah when they convert to Christianity (*Dial.* 47)? Interestingly, he contrasts his view on this matter with the apparent *opinio communis*, which seems to be in favour of harsher treatment of such individuals, implying, interestingly, that ‘separatism’ as an ideal precedes his own time. Such an observation implies questions about the extent to which Justin is the kind of innovative separatist some scholars, especially Boyarin, assume him to be, although for the latter Justin’s distinctiveness partially lies in the way in which he seeks to define Judaism in the process of defining heresy.

This raises the important question of weighting; or expressed as a question, is it possible to affirm that separatists were from an early stage the most influential members of the Christian and Jewish communities? The answer is clearly ‘yes’ if we take seriously the texts which have come down to us, both within the New Testament, where, interestingly, on a number of occasions, separatism is a measure associated with Jews, and one which Christians resent,⁴⁸ and outside of it (*Barnabas*; Ignatius; Melito). But, as we have indicated, suspicion about the representative character of received texts is precisely the problem; and many of these texts could be said to ‘protest too much’. What other courses lie open to us if we wish to answer this question? Recently, Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra has argued that one way forward lies in analysing the contents of libraries and looking at the distribution of the remains of texts which might be described as ‘core’ (the

separatists within the church whereas for others the best explanation for Chrysostom’s outburst lies in the circumstances of the time when large number of new converts were entering the church, converts who were unaware of the separate nature of Judaism and Christianity. For further discussion of Chrysostom’s work, see Kinzig 1991; and Fonrobert 2005, 237-43.

⁴⁷ See Lieu 2002, 25.

⁴⁸ See especially John 9:22. For this point, see Horbury 1998, 13, who notes that “(e)ternal impulses towards separation ... impinged on Christians from the majority Jewish community long before the Christians themselves were ready to envisage such separate existence.”

LXX), ‘shared’ (apocryphal and related texts), and ‘group-specific’. Where group-specific texts appear to be in the majority, then we can, so Stökl Ben Ezra argues, assume something approaching separation. Stökl Ben Ezra first engages in a test of the remains at Qumran, by far and away the most substantially intact ancient library for which we have material evidence. He shows how the distribution of the books preserved here point to a substantially Jewish identity for the group. Turning to the Christian evidence, he notes that nothing comparable to Qumran survives but that a test can be carried out on the basis of all surviving Christian papyri, all of which come from Egypt. On the basis of the statistics produced, Stökl Ben Ezra is able to state that “our only papyrological evidence speaks so far in favor of a developed independent Christian identity quite early on.”⁴⁹

Scholars may question some of the assumptions upon which Stökl Ben Ezra’s article is based;⁵⁰ and papyrologists will need to examine his claims with their expert eye. Also open to critical scrutiny is his definition of what constitutes a ‘group specific’ Christian text, especially in the light of all that we have discussed above. However, Stökl Ben Ezra has at least gone some way to indicating an alternative and possibly less controversial way of approaching the question of ‘the partings’ than simply arguing about the representative or accurate character of the received literary tradition. That it tends to a more conservative position on the matter is interesting.⁵¹

Related to this point is a fifth one. If it is only the elite who are arguing for boundaries, or if such individuals misrepresent the reality of the situation as they actually experience it, a reality, which is altogether more complex, a criss-crossing of muddy paths, which only the expert tracker can make sense of,⁵² then we have to ask how it was that the lucubrations of such a group came, relatively quickly, to be the reality, and to dictate how Jewish-Christian relations turned out. As Kalmin notes, in his critique of Boyarin’s *Border Lines*: “He (Boyarin) never satisfactorily answers the question of how we move from the production of a few intellectuals to the beliefs and practices of the overwhelming majority of Jews and Chris-

⁴⁹ Stökl Ben Ezra 2009, 186.

⁵⁰ These are: that “there exists a relation between a group’s identity and its library”; that “there is a correlation between accidental survival and representativeness;” and that it is legitimate to draw general conclusions from specifically Egyptian evidence. All of these issues are addressed by Stökl Ben Ezra.

⁵¹ Note the cautious way he summarizes his conclusion: “That form of Christianity, whose textual identity largely relied on its own group-specific texts, was most probably numerically more important than that form of Christianity, whose textual identity was similar to a Jewish sect such as Qumran or presumably Jewish Christianity.” (Stökl Ben Ezra 2009, 186. Also note his use of the colours of the rainbow analogy).

⁵² Lieu 2002, 29.

tians.”⁵³ Surely the writings of the elite had some effect, that is, they did help in the *actual* formation of boundaries, and no doubt they helped because they reflected a developing reality. Of course, in all of this I am not excluding the reasonable assumption that boundary-formers, if we might use that term, were engaged in an interpretative process, that their presentation of the views, opinions and profile of a ‘Jew’ and a ‘Christian’ were subjective in a very real sense, and that they concealed a more complex reality, in the same way as a more complex reality is concealed beneath the political tags of ‘liberal’ and ‘conservative’ as these are used in the United States.⁵⁴ I simply wish to assert a more complex interaction between these opinion formers and those whose opinions they were trying to form.

Another point relates to questions of difference and their role in the whole reconstruction of the history of Jewish-Christian relations. A positive effect of the ‘ways that never parted’ paradigm has been to play up continuities, and often to see efforts at constructing difference to be artificial. This is most obviously the case in Daniel Boyarin’s intriguing discussion of Justin’s use of binitarian theology.⁵⁵ It is Boyarin’s claim that Justin’s view that Jews do not hold binitarian views, that Jewish difference can be located especially at this point, is a constructed one, and that it intentionally misrepresents Jewish opinion, for in Boyarin’s opinion, Jews in general did entertain a Logos, and so implicitly, binitarian, theology. It is only the rabbis, in response, or apparently in response, to Christianity who begin to make such opinions heretical with their attack upon those who entertain the idea of there being ‘two powers in heaven’. Boyarin’s thesis is contentious. The sources on which he bases his wide-ranging conclusions about Jewish binitarianism are problematic, as is his reading of the prologue of John’s Gospel in terms of a kind of history of Jewish binitarianism.⁵⁶ If Jews did not entertain binitarian theology to the extent suggested by Boyarin, then is the connection between them less obvious than Boyarin contends, and the view, to quote Boyarin himself, that Jews and Christians were joined at the hip⁵⁷ less compelling? And what might the role of such difference have been in dividing Christ-believers amongst Jews from non-Christian believers? This matter, of course, has been the subject of massive debate amongst Christian and Jewish scholars with various opinions expressed. But the question it raises, namely about the extent to which Christianity was divisive in early Christian history is vital. Boyarin’s attempt to

⁵³ Kalmin in Burrus, Kalmin, Lapin, and Marcus 2006, 15.

⁵⁴ I owe this opinion to Annette Yoshiko Reed in email correspondence.

⁵⁵ Boyarin 2004, 89-150.

⁵⁶ Boyarin 2004, 89-111. For an intelligent and convincing critique of this interpretation, see Marcus in Burrus, Kalmin, Lapin, and Marcus 2006, 27-9.

⁵⁷ Boyarin 2004, 5.

dampen its impact by assuming its shared character remains unproven (although the very fact of the shared character of the beliefs, but a difference of opinion on the identity of the Logos, might have served to aggravate relations). This does not mean that even if we can prove the divisiveness of the issue, we have thereby demonstrated the separateness of Judaism and Christianity. Questions of authority and uniformity are raised as well as some others, but in such discussion we should not lose sight of the issue of difference.⁵⁸ Such observations also apply to the question of the ever-increasing Gentile profile of the developing church. Would not non-Christian Jews have seen that as problematic? And even if that may not have led to a casting out of Christians from the non-Christian Jewish fold, could it not have led to a drifting away, particularly when these Gentiles would not have observed distinctive Jewish laws?⁵⁹

Another question concerns the relationship of social separation (that is, the view that Jews and Christians could be identified as different) and ideological separation. When we turn to many of the extant sources which talk about Jews and Christians, it would not seem unreasonable to assume on many occasions that Jews and Christians lived separately. But living separately is not the same as being different ideologically. So, for instance, when Galen refers to the “school of Moses and of Christ”, to which reference has already been made, is he doing no more than acknowledging social separateness, but pointing up ideological convergence?⁶⁰ And if so,

⁵⁸ For the importance of Christology for separation, see Hurtado 2003; and from a different angle, Horbury 1998, 12. Although taking issue with Hurtado’s view that early Christology was ‘deviant’ in relation to known Jewish speculation about a range of mediatorial figures, Horbury still argues that the claim that Jesus was the Messiah “defined Christians sharply as a group with separate meetings and a distinct allegiance.” Corresponding claims about the true Israel would simply have served to make this sense of difference more acute.

⁵⁹ Goodman 2007, 512-38, argues strongly for the view that Christians were largely responsible for separating from non-Christian Jews, and not vice-versa. Part of his thesis is dependent upon the view that Christians whom we know of never call themselves Jews, an observation which inclines him to the view that they consciously sought to avoid the term. Such avoidance was understandable given the strong unpopularity of Jews in the period following 70 C.E. and the fall of Jerusalem. Goodman’s thesis does not take enough account of places in the New Testament where Jewish exclusion of Christians is implied, or places both in the New Testament and later sources where an association with Jews is not held to be undesirable. For a critique of Goodman’s work, see Carleton Paget 2009.

⁶⁰ “Yet, for the outsider, doctrinal issues must have seemed to put the two groups close together, depending perhaps on one’s sensitivity to the significance of abstruse doctrinal debate.” (Lieu 2002, 23). A vague parallel to that of Galen might be found in Josephus. In referring to Christians, he can at one point assume that they are a separate group (his description of them in the much discussed *Testimonium Flavianum*, as a tribe or φύλον at *A.J.* 18.64, implies separation. If he had used the term αἵρεσις, or school of

how does that impact upon issues of separation considered more generally? How, in short, are we to define separation?

The points raised above in response to the criticism of the ‘parting of the ways’ paradigm are not attempts to reinstate that paradigm. Rather they are attempts to question what has become its alternative and a few of the assumptions which support it. In some senses the word ‘alternative’ misrepresents the scholars opposed to the old paradigm. For instance, some are intent on doing no more than correcting the apparent, but not always self-evident, assumption of the paradigm that Christianity and Judaism developed without reference to each other. Others, by contrast, are keen to take on the whole separateness issue, and by extension the question of the legitimacy of talking about Judaism and Christianity; and even this group of scholars may differ in the degree to which they argue that case. So, for instance, there seems to be a difference between the way Boyarin approaches this question with his claim that until Constantine only Judaeo-Christianity existed, and Reed and Becker’s understanding of the matter. They question separateness as a category because of issues of convergence but they do not appear to adopt as radical a position on the appropriateness of the terms ‘Jew’ and ‘Christian’ through the creation of the category ‘Judaeo-Christianity’. And one may be able to distinguish this position from the one adopted by Lieu.⁶¹

Much of this debate, of course, boils down to issues of perspective, as Martin Goodman has noted,⁶² and this is the case not just when we come to consider the ancient evidence, but also when we come to consider those studying the ancient evidence, many of whom may be operating with different understandings of identity, and in turn, of separation. My own view is a mildly separatist one, that is, I hold to the thesis that relatively early on, for whatever reason,⁶³ whether by design or not, Jews and Christians

thought, as he does when discussing the Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, and the ‘fourth philosophy’, he would have indicated much more clearly that they were a movement within Judaism); but at another (his almost certainly authentic account of the death of James where the fact that James is the brother of Jesus is acknowledged but there is no sense in which he is anything other than a Jew [*A.J.* 20.200]) can imply that he understands them as Jews. Here, of course, the difference may be accounted for by reference to different sources emanating from different periods and/or places.

⁶¹ See Lieu 1996.

⁶² Goodman 2003. See also Lieu 2004, 305. In commenting on why the debate about the relationship of Judaism and Christianity has largely failed to arrive at a consensus, she states that “much depends on whether the respondent is a hypothetical Jew, Christian, or pagan of the time, or is the contemporary scholar, or even the believer, both the latter having the benefits of hindsight and of subsequent history.”

⁶³ I doubt, as many have argued, that the first Jewish revolt and the Bar Kokhba revolt played a formative role in separation. Certainly the former must have considerably weakened the status and importance of the Jerusalem community of Christians, and the ap-

were, in the main, discernible groups occupying different spaces for the purposes of worship (broadly social separation), and were perceived as different (in this context we should note the importance of the pagan evidence cited earlier in this piece), but that such a reality did not exclude interaction and convergence, nor the observation that those who worried about such interaction and convergence, sought in different and contrasting ways to articulate and construct what they thought that difference consisted in, while others played down difference. Moreover, I do not doubt, and do not think that my position excludes, the possibility that there were groups of people marked by a certain ‘religious lability’, groups, for instance, who may originally have been Jews but had failed to sever their family ties, or felt at ease moving between both communities, a point implied in comments made by Origen, by the canons of Elvira and Laodicea in the fourth century, by John Chrysostom’s attack on Judaizing Christians, and by some ecclesiastical legislation.⁶⁴ Also my conclusion is general, and does not seek to play down the possibility that even the proposed mild form of separatism was less in evidence in some places (for instance, the Persian Empire), than it was elsewhere. Such a view, it seems to me at least, takes seriously the evidence for the existence of different Christian and Jewish communities, observed as such by a medley of outsiders, while at the same time not indulging in some essentialist vision of how and in what way Jews and Christians differed, or being too rigid in how important they perceived that difference

I think it is correct to suggest that the debate I have outlined above, with all its complexity and lack of certitude, constitutes the most significant recent development in the discussion of ancient Jewish-Christian relations. It relates in various ways to another aspect of the subject, namely the question of Jewish-Christian interaction albeit in a somewhat complex way. Lying at the centre of this question, as with the one we have just been dealing

parent failure of Christians to participate in either revolt may have served to antagonise relations between some non-Christian Jews and Christian Jews resident in Palestine (we hear from Justin of explicit instances of tension in the Bar Kokhba revolt). But Christian objection to the revolts may have reflected a significant aspect of Jewish opinion, a point made plain by the failure of either revolt to elicit much Jewish support beyond the confines of Palestine. I doubt also that institutional moves, such as the alleged publication of the Twelfth Benediction of the *Amidah*, were as important as some have traditionally contended, though we should not dismiss the possibility that in certain places where rabbis had some authority, and where the prayer was operative, it played some role in dividing Christian from Jew (on this see Marcus 2009). The process I would suggest was determined by local factors and not straightforwardly linear. Its causes may have arisen because of non-Christian Jewish hostility to Christians, but may also have arisen through the less easily described drift of Christians from the local synagogue, already implied in the writings of Paul.

⁶⁴ This point is made by Schwartz 2001, 184.

with, is the issue of sources. Do the sources we possess allow us to assume that Christians and Jews in fact took an interest in each other, that they were in fact in *viva voce* contact? Or are the relevant sources deceptive in this regard, and in fact evidence of no more than how Jews and Christians imagined each other? This debate has a long history stretching back to the late nineteenth century to A. von Harnack who argued strongly that in most cases where Christians argued *adversus Judaeos* they were arguing *adversus gentes*. In support of his thesis Harnack pointed to the stereotypical manner in which the Jews were presented and the repetitive character of much of the material. The thesis also arose from his own assumption, already referred to, that Judaism, or *Spätjudentum*, as he put it, was hardly worthy of debating with, so insignificant and inward-looking had it become. The subject of 'Judaism' was only relevant to Christians, so Harnack claimed, insofar as it impinged upon the debate Christians were having with Gentiles.⁶⁵ Refutations of Harnack's view were presented by J. Juster,⁶⁶ and more influentially, by Marcel Simon. Simon argued that Harnack's explanation of the existence of *adversus Judaeos* literature was less than convincing. Why not simply have literature *adversus gentes* if the intended audience were the Gentiles? More particularly, Simon attempted to show that Christians could not ignore Jews, who far from being members of an ailing and depleted body, were part of a vigorous movement intent upon proselytising Gentiles, and so inevitably involved in a conflict with Christians. In such a setting literature *adversus Judaeos* became necessary. In more recent times Harnack's position, which continued to have its advocates, has resurrected itself, in admittedly different, and more radical, guise in the work of Rosemary Radford Ruether⁶⁷ and Miriam Taylor.⁶⁸ In distinctive ways both argue for the thesis that much Christian *adversus Judaeos* literature is best accounted for by reference to tendencies in Christian theology; and in the work of Taylor the point is made that attempts to argue for the reactive character of the Christian anti-Jewish tradition too easily assume that Jews merited the polemic they received.⁶⁹ Others have sought a mediating position in which Christian comments about Jews are seen to be a complex cocktail of 'image and reality'.⁷⁰

The difficulty in all of this is not only the obvious rhetorical setting of much anti-Jewish Christian writing, but the relative absence of any relevant Jewish literature, with the exception of the large corpus of rabbinic

⁶⁵ See Harnack 1883.

⁶⁶ Juster 1914.

⁶⁷ Ruether 1974.

⁶⁸ Taylor 1995.

⁶⁹ Taylor 1995, 196.

⁷⁰ Lieu 1996.

material, much of which is quite late, and most of which refers irregularly to Christians. This latter point is important because without Jewish sources we are unable to ‘fact check’ as one scholar has aptly put it, that is, we are unable to determine whether what we are being told about Judaism in anti-Jewish Christian works, or even non-polemical works, accords with the ‘facts’. And what sources we do have, in the main rabbinic, carry with them their own difficulties, in part bound up with the degree to which we deem them ‘representative’ of Judaism more widely. Scholars do, of course, make attempts to tie in what we read in Christian sources with the Jewish material, but their ‘results’ are often subjects of dispute.

Three further points need to be made: recent times have seen a growing interest in trying to indicate the shared culture of Jews and Christians, in particular as this relates to scriptural interpretation.⁷¹ The aim of much of this work is to indicate the liveliness of contact between Christian and Jew, and much interesting work has been done. But there remain cautious voices who are clear that the existence of such common traditions need not imply contact, and that there are differences between Jews and Christians in the biblical texts they use;⁷² and the manner in which they use them.⁷³ So, for instance, Martin Hengel has argued for the essentially Christian character of the Septuagintal collection of books, and maintained that fervid Christian usage of that collection led to a growing dissatisfaction amongst Jews with this particular biblical version.⁷⁴ Others, however, have argued for an ongoing respect for the Septuagint amongst Jews and for the essentially Jewish character of the collection seeking, *inter alia*, to correct what they take to be a one-sided interpretation of rabbinic evidence for a negative attitude to the Septuagint, and to argue, here in part anticipating trends in the study of Jewish-Christian relations, that “the evident wish to possess the scriptures revered by the Jews would have hindered Christian adoption of a strikingly non-Jewish collection.”⁷⁵

The second point relates to archaeological evidence. Such evidence has been used in a variety of ways. At one level some have sought to emphasise how the existence of a large public building like the synagogue at Sardis indicates how it would have been almost impossible for the Christians to ignore the Jewish community, a community whose self-confidence and opulence are plainly evidenced in the grandeur of the excavated building.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Stemberger 1996; Horbury 1998.

⁷² Stemberger 1996, commented upon by Horbury 1998, 26-7; and 200-25.

⁷³ For a list of these perceived differences and a critique of an emphasis on contrast, see Reed 2007.

⁷⁴ Hengel 1994.

⁷⁵ Horbury 1998, 32. He provides further arguments for holding the Septuagintal collection of books to be Jewish.

⁷⁶ See Kraabel 1983, and many others.

At another level finds in various parts of the western empire, which imply the proximity of Jewish and Christian communities in various cities⁷⁷ as well as the use of the same cemeteries⁷⁸ and reuse of artefacts used by one group by another group without obliterating distinctive symbols, which betrayed ownership by the former,⁷⁹ have been used to support the likelihood of interaction and exchange, and the accuracy of the 'official' picture of Jewish-Christian relations presented in well-known patristic literature.⁸⁰ Of course, much of the evidence cited is ambiguous, and can lead different scholars to quite different conclusions,⁸¹ but the fact it can at times stand in tension with the implication of the more familiar textual sources is at least of note.

The third point worth noting concerns the relationship of this discussion to the 'partings' debate outlined above. To many who oppose the 'partings' paradigm, convergence, cross-fertilisation, in essence contact, is an assumption of their critical position (in fact for some contact might not quite be the appropriate term for it could be said to assume contact between clearly defined entities and it is precisely their point that the entities discussed are not clearly defined, and that the boundaries between them are constantly being negotiated). Many of these scholars would, of course, be sympathetic to a reading of the *adversus Judaeos* literature in terms, which emphasises the artificiality of what we find in these texts, even if with different purposes. But they would be far keener to press home evidence of convergence and interaction as it manifests itself elsewhere, not simply in

⁷⁷ See Crawford 1988, 40-3, who draws attention to the fact that the colonnade proximate to the Sardis synagogue, and built about 400 C.E., contained ten shops owned by Christians and six by Jews, some of which were next to each other.

⁷⁸ See Rutgers 1992, 109-15. He points to evidence of shared cemeteries at Venosa, Taranto, S. Antioco, Thessaloniki, several sites in Asia Minor, Alexandria, Carthage and Edessa, amongst others. He notes that "(i)n an area of life where good care and proper procedures were of prime importance (such as burial), people must have acted very consciously." That Jews did not mind being buried alongside non-Jews is an indication of more peaceable and involved relations than might be indicated in the literary sources.

⁷⁹ See Crawford 1988, 42, who notes the existence in one of what he assumes to be the Jewish shops of Sardis of a weighing device which still retains a Christian cross on it. By contrast, he goes on to argue, pagan symbols were removed from artefacts acquired by Jews and Christians.

⁸⁰ So, see Crawford 1988, 38: "Archaeology, however, provides somewhat of a corrective (to evidence of anti-Semitic attitudes amongst Christians)"; and more forcibly, Rutgers 1992, 115: "Their (Jews' and Christians') lives were hardly affected by the sterile patristic discussions as to which faith really constituted *Verus Israel*."

⁸¹ "Usually, material remains can establish only the bare fact of proximity or coexistence, leaving the analyst to fill in the quality of such spatial relations, often with highly contradictory conclusions. Stones can only tell so much of the story, and, eventually, the historian will find herself turning to the fraught literary remains of Christians." (Jacobs 2008, 174).

terms of Christians being influenced by Jews but vice-versa.⁸² That is, for them Miriam Taylor and others assume a hermetically sealed sense of separation between the two where Jews by and large ignore Christians, while Christians argue abstractly with Jews of their own creation. These assumptions they take to be in need of considerable revision, while accepting the constructed character of many of the elite texts' presentations of Jews.

The recent debate about Jewish-Christian relations discussed above has served to complicate what was thought to be a well understood subject. Where, in broad terms, it was once argued that a coherent narrative of the Jewish-Christian schism could be told, involving a moment or moments of separation, and the establishment of clearly defined entities, Judaism and Christianity, recognised as such by insiders and outsiders alike, now a growing number of scholars argue against moments of separation and for less clear boundaries between movements who can only with difficulty, and possibly not at all, be referred to as Judaism and Christianity, these understood to be fixed entities with core beliefs. Flux, fluidity, convergence, blur, negotiation, porousness, these have, to some at least, become the buzz words in the study of the subject. In many ways this movement away from a narrative with an end, caused by significant events on the way, is itself the result of developments in the study of ancient Judaism and Christianity, and a straightforward admission on the part of some that the sources available to us are "fraught and complex" (Jacobs 2008), and do not allow us to gain a properly objective view from the 'ground'. Of course, such an observation can on occasion fall both ways, whether we are engaged in discussion of elite sources and the extent to which they reflect reality or not, especially the reality of separation, or the consequences of the Constantinian settlement, for example. And there is also a sense, following from this remark, of the weight of importance one attributes to various pieces of evidence. What is clear is that the evidence will not sit easily with any one interpretation, even if the present author prefers a thesis in favour of what he has termed a mild form of separatism.

In various ways the essays reprinted here interact with aspects of the debate I have outlined above. In the first essay, "Anti-Judaism and Early Christian Identity", by way of a review article of Miriam Taylor's work of 1995, I seek to present the arguments in favour of seeing Christian anti-Jewish literature as in some sense reflective of aspects of Jewish-Christian interaction, while appreciating the complexities involved in presenting such a case. The two essays, which follow argue the same case, in the first in relation to a particular verse in the *Epistle of Barnabas*; and in the second to the writings of Clement of Alexandria.

⁸² See, for instance, Stökl Ben Ezra 2003.

The three pieces, which follow on messianism, Jews and Christians in Alexandria, and proselytism, might be said to come under the general heading of ideological continuity, or convergence, if one prefers that term. The first of these addresses the role of messianism amongst Jews and Christians in Egypt and asks to what extent these are reflective one of the other. There is a sense, of course, in which Christian messianism is at once antagonistic to non-Christian Jewish messianism precisely in its identification of Jesus as the Messiah. In this regard, it is reasonable to see the possibly messianic Jewish revolt of 115-117 C.E., sometimes referred to as the Trajanic revolt, as decisively dividing Christians and non-Christian Jews in Egypt. But, as the essay attempts to show, continuities of an ideological kind exist, not only in the assertions made by Jews and Christians in Egypt about what attributes and actions were expected of the Messiah, but also in the apparent ambivalence towards messianic categories, as evidenced in Philo from the Jewish side, and his later Christian successor, Origen. The second looks at Jews and Christians in the city of Alexandria, and in particular at the image of the city, which emerges from each of the traditions. More often than not the image we are presented with is implicit rather than explicit, especially in the work of the famous Christian writers, Clement and Origen. These writers as well as Aristobulus and Philo imply an intellectual place in which biblical and Hellenic culture can be seen to come together. However, there is also a sense of the city as a place of temptations and debauchery, and of violence, where the mob remains a threat, and where revolt becomes a reality. In this seamier image of the city Jews and Christians come close to some pagan views of the city, as seen in the second-century Dio Chrysostom's *Oration* 32. The third piece is a point-by-point response to Martin Goodman's, *Mission and Conversion* which presented the bold thesis that Christians introduced a new concept into the ancient world, that of proselytic mission understood as the self-conscious pursuit of converts. In the article an attempt is made to show why such a thesis seems to be a tendentious reading of the available evidence. This piece is more generally relevant to the discussion of Jewish-Christian relations in that it is directly concerned with the complex issue of missionary competition between Jews and Christians.⁸³

The last two essays deal with evidence for Jewish comment on Christianity. As noted above, such evidence is in very short supply relative to Christian comment, and is often created by the mirror reading of relevant Christian texts or the discovery of apparently genuine anti-Christian Jewish traditions in the same literature. In the first of these two contributions, and the longest piece in the volume, I deal with two notorious passages in

⁸³ Publications written subsequent to the appearance of this article have divided quite evenly on the central question.

Josephus, which comment upon two central characters in the history of the earliest manifestation of the Christian movement, Jesus and his brother, James. Much of the article is taken up with a detailed review of conflicting theories about the original content, if any, of in particular the passage about Jesus, the so-called *Testimonium Flavianum*. In the process of the study the point is made, in an extended form at the end of the article, that many of the difficulties connected with the passage emerge from the fact that much of the discussion, directly or indirectly, pertains to assumptions about Jewish-Christian relations at the time Josephus wrote. One's decision as to what to include or not in a mooted version of the *Testimonium*, in the face of the absence of compelling textual evidence, will inevitably be related to what one deems it possible for a non-Christian Jew, like Josephus, who lived at the end of the first century, to write about the founding figure of Christianity. The second piece concerns itself with evidence for Jewish knowledge of the Christian Gospels. Much of the relevant evidence is covered as this appears in Jewish and Christian sources, and a tentative case is made for the existence of a Jewish anti-gospel before the fourth century.

Jewish Christianity

The discussion of Jewish Christianity has, from its inception, always been contested. Recent developments in a variety of areas related to ancient Jewish and Christian history, in particular concerning the discussion of Jewish-Christian relations, as described above, have only served to make the subject more controversial. In this context pressing questions have been asked about the viability of the term, the identity of Jewish Christians (are they to be considered as Jews or Christians, or something else?), and their place in traditional histories of ancient Christianity and Judaism, where they are more often than not seen as relics or fossils of an earlier apostolic and sub-apostolic age, but where, if one accepts the view of the leakiness and fluidity of the boundaries, which divided Jews from Christians, their position can be seen as less transgressive than some have assumed.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ "If we can no longer presume that 'Jew' and 'Christian' were firmly established as mutually-exclusive religious identities by the close of the second century C.E., then we cannot also assume as a matter of course that the so-called 'Jewish Christians' of Late Antiquity were transgressing a clear-cut boundary between 'normative' Judaism and 'normative' Christianity or forging a hybrid identity based on universally accepted notions of 'Jew' and 'Christian'." (Reed 2003, 202).

A central question in much discussion of this subject relates to the problem of definition. Recent engagement with the subject has tended, in a slightly different guise, to repeat many of the definitions of an earlier age. In general it might be said that J. Daniélou's understanding of the term as somehow describing a theological atmosphere continues to have its advocates.⁸⁵ So many is the place in a book about early Christian theology where we will find the adjective 'Jewish Christian' used to describe something Jewish-sounding in a Christian text (for want of a better term). Such usage may not imply an endorsement of Daniélou's wider thesis of a Jewish-Christian period in the church's history, or his view that this can somehow be defined as a movement,⁸⁶ but in its tendency to see some concepts as 'Jewish Christian', it comes close to something that Daniélou would recognise.⁸⁷

More popular, however, has been a narrower definition which associates the term with those, normally assumed to be of Jewish birth, who insist on continuing observance of distinctive Jewish laws such as circumcision, Sabbath, the food laws etc.⁸⁸ Sometimes such a definition can be aligned to particular Christologies as well as some sort of 'genealogical' relationship to the earliest Christian community in Jerusalem; and frequently scholars who adopt this definition argue, here reflecting the old position of F. C. Baur, that what they describe is a significant movement within the church. However, many eschew such specificity on the grounds that the theological profiles developed do not always accord with the views attributed to those Christians who appear to adopt distinctive Jewish practices, and that establishing a genealogical link of these Jewish Christian groups with the earliest Jerusalem community is fraught with difficulty. Preference is expressed for the acceptance of 'Jewish Christianities' whose common inheritance lays in aspects of their behaviour (observance of distinctive Jewish laws) but who vary in the ideological positions they adopt.

And yet such a definition presents a number of problems. First, it remains unclear which parts of the law should be kept in order to make someone a Jewish Christian. In addition to this, and following the work of J. Z. Smith,⁸⁹ It has been asked whether there is not something inherently problematic about identifying a single trait as "the hard core of a given class of religion ... for inasmuch as religions are subject to change over time, there is neither a theoretical basis nor an empirical warrant for the

⁸⁵ See Daniélou 1964.

⁸⁶ Criticisms of Daniélou's work are found in many places. For a recent one, see Jackson-McCabe 2007.

⁸⁷ Mimouni and Jones 2001. Note the varied character of the essays there.

⁸⁸ See Mimouni 1998, 70, for one recent expression of such a definition.

⁸⁹ See Smith 1990 and 1996.

assumption that any given ancestral trait would persist in any given descendant.”⁹⁰ This has led Smith and others to argue that classification should be ‘polythetic’, that is, that classes should be viewed in terms of sets of traits, many of which are possessed by many members of the same class, but with no single one necessary for inclusion. Thirdly, and possibly less obviously, some have noted that such a definition “does not adequately address the basic problem highlighted by post-Holocaust scholarship, namely the rationale for including any given ancient group or text within the class ‘Christianity’ rather than ‘Judaism.’”⁹¹ This point obviously has its roots in an understanding of the diversity of ancient Judaism, and the capacity for people called Jews to entertain high opinions of Jesus without ceasing to be Jews.

Against this background, the editors of what is up to this point, the most detailed book on the subject yet written, have decided to use the term “Jewish believer in Jesus”.⁹² Insisting on origin as the determinative criterion in establishing the group, has the advantage that it appears to pick up on ideas already found in the relevant primary literature where on occasion Christian authors describe people as ‘believing Jews.’⁹³ Moreover, in these instances their Jewishness appears to be exclusively bound up with their origins, or as Skarsaune and Hvalvik put it, “ethnicity is the sole criterion for the adjective ‘Jewish.’”⁹⁴

In response, however, to this attempt at redefinition, one is inevitably led to ask if we are actually defining anything meaningful. Skarsaune and Hvalvik are aware of this problem and address it directly by asserting that for the “Jewish and Christian leadership”, left undefined, Jewish believers were always in some sense a problem. Unlike Gentile believers they were perceived by the Jewish leadership as apostate; and regarded by the Christian leadership as special and/or problematic. “The Jewish believers themselves could, by the very nature of things, hardly be totally unaffected by these outside evaluations. As believers in Jesus they had, in one way or other, to relate to the fact of their Jewishness. They were hardly ever allowed not to.”⁹⁵ What, then, is meaningful about the category is precisely that the Jewishness it describes is problematic and a clear factor in the view of both the Jewish believer and leadership figures of the Jewish and Christian communities viewing them. Hvalvik and Skarsaune accept that

⁹⁰ Jackson-McCabe 2007, 36.

⁹¹ Jackson-McCabe 2007, 35.

⁹² See Skarsaune and Hvalvik 2007.

⁹³ The relevant passages are listed in Skarsaune and Hvalvik 2007, 5-6.

⁹⁴ Skarsaune and Hvalvik 2007, 7. Interestingly, they do not abandon the term ‘Jewish Christian’, using it to refer to those of Jewish origin who continue to lead their life in accordance with Jewish practices. See *ibid.*, 9-10.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* 7-8.

their thesis may fall foul of those who deny a clear distinction between Jew and Christian at this early stage in Christian history, but they argue that those who sought to police the border between the two, namely the leaders of both groups, eventually did win out. “Those who crossed the border or who settled on it could hardly be unaware that the emerging and gradually dominant leadership of their respective religious communities defined them as people trying to combine incompatible identities.”⁹⁶ All of this raises questions about the identification of the ‘leadership’ described;⁹⁷ and the degree to which either group of leaders would have seen the difficulty with these individuals explicitly in terms of their Jewishness and in what way (the mere fact of it? Some manifestation of it?). It is, of course, well known that insofar as ‘Jewishness’ was felt by leaders of the Christian community to be a problematic characteristic of followers of Christ, it was more often than not associated with their observance of certain Jewish laws, and not ethnicity. Moreover, the number of texts Hvalvik and Skarsaune can point to which actually refer to Christians in terms of their origins is quite small;⁹⁸ and only in one case can one demonstrate that the author who reports their existence notes that their origin as ethnic Jews is an issue, and in this context not because it is problematic to him.⁹⁹ We can no doubt speculate about how Jewish believers related to their Jewishness insofar as they even thought about it in a conscious way; but explicit evidence is rare – in fact our extant sources are uninterested in questions of ethnic origins, at least as that question is perceived in the present. Skarsaune and Hvalvik admit at least the first part of the criticism when they concede that if “we were to limit the ancient evidence on Jewish believers in Jesus to those passages that explicitly speak about them, the story of Jewish believers would be rather slim ...”¹⁰⁰ In the face of this observation they seek to create criteria for establishing the Jewish origins of a believer, the most important of which is a demonstration of competence in things Jewish, which they admit is not fool-proof, a point which becomes clear

⁹⁶ Ibid. 8.

⁹⁷ See Boyarin 2009, 31-2. He notes that Skarsaune and Hvalvik fail to define what they mean by ‘Jewish leadership’; or to take seriously the fact that the category to which they are referring are not ‘apostates’ but *minim*, that is, deviant Jews. Similarly, he objects to allowing the leadership to define the entity.

⁹⁸ Only eight references are cited to (ibid. 5-6), of which four come from Origen, *Cels.* 2.1. The passages are referred to as a selection but it is a selection from a very small pool.

⁹⁹ This is the passage from Origen’s *Contra Celsum* mentioned above, and here Origen introduces them as a riposte to Celsus’ claim that Christianity is an apostate movement from Judaism.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 18.

when we examine Skarsaune's own chapters in the volume on what for want of better term we might call implicit Jewish believers.

So in the end the real difficulty with Skarsaune and Hvalvik's conception of Jewish believers is not that it fails to refer to a known reality – it obviously does, and one to which on occasion Christian and Jewish sources refer – but that it is difficult for a variety of reasons to know how important the origin of such people was, both to themselves and to others. Moreover, establishing criteria for determining who might belong to such a reality is almost impossible; and we have, in the end, to wonder that even if we think we can extend our information about such people beyond the places where their Jewish origin is explicitly mentioned whether we have in fact defined something worth defining.¹⁰¹ However, in this context we should note that what is deemed 'worth defining' may be determined to some extent by a Bauresque quest for a party or some broadly unified ideology.

In the face of this malaise some have announced the need to do away with the term; and to those who doubt the helpfulness or indeed the accuracy of talking about Judaism and Christianity in this period, the term is in any case meaningless.¹⁰² Those who have expressed themselves skeptical of current definitions, and on occasion have announced that there has been almost no progress in the study of the subject, have, in spite of their sharply expressed reservations, sought to argue for the ongoing significance of the subject. So Jackson-McCabe, in his introduction to the multi-authored volume of 2007 entitled *Jewish Christianity Reconsidered*, has asserted that the ancient groups who have given rise to the terms 'Jewish Christian' and 'Jewish Christianity' "(i)nasmuch as they exhibit traits associated with *either* Judaism *or* Christianity as these categories are traditionally conceived ... challenge us to rethink received wisdom about the boundaries that define and separate these classes and the extent to which the appeal to them is helpful for the historical redescription of religions in antiquity."¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Boyarin 2009, 33, thinks that there is something worthwhile in taking seriously the interaction between groups of Jewish and groups of Gentile origin, but does not address the issue of how we might identify these groups.

¹⁰² Boyarin 2009, 29: "... an historical understanding that obviates the categories of Judaism and Christianity (for some purposes until the mid-second century and for others until the fourth) will certainly have no use whatever for the category of Jewish Christianity, implying as it does, precisely what the historical account denies." And: "I am suggesting that the problem is not how to define Jewish Christianity, but why we should be using such a category at all?" Also note Skarsaune, summarising Boyarin's take on the term, in Skarsaune and Hvalvik 2007, 747: "Talking about a Jewish Christian before Constantine is to make use of an artificial category, because the components of the term are artificial."

¹⁰³ Jackson-McCabe 2007, 37.

Similarly, Annette Yoshiko Reed has argued for the retention of the term as “heuristic for unsettling modern scholarly assumptions about the mutual exclusivity of ‘Jewish’ and ‘Christian’ identities in Late Antiquity.” However, in contrast to Jackson-McCabe, she has gone on to be more assertive about what she means by the term.¹⁰⁴ If ‘Jewish Christian’ is used in the sense outlined by Reed, it can be applied to sources (a) which exhibit more and different ‘Jewish’ features than we typically associate with early and late antique Christianity, (b) which were shaped in meaningful ways by direct contact with post-Christian Judaism (especially rabbinic Judaism), and/or (c) which self-consciously adopt a Jewish identity and/or self-consciously seek to recover elements of Christianity’s Jewish heritage which other sectors of the church rejected. This flexible approach to the definition of the term attempts to avoid the imposition of any single image of Jewish Christianity on our sources as well as the problematic equation of Jewish ethnicity with specific proclivities. Such an approach also allows for the inclusion of many more sources as ‘Jewish Christian’ than is normal (the essay in which she argues for these things is devoted to a discussion of some apocryphal sources), and might be thought by some to possess the ‘polythetic’ quality thought by some to be desirable.¹⁰⁵ That stated, some might ask whether it is always easy to identify the kind of characteristics, which Reed has described. What amount of Jewishness is required to make something Jewish Christian (how much Jewishness do we “typically associate with early and late antique Christianity”, especially if we adopt a strongly critical attitude towards the idea that such categories exist, at least before Constantine, in any meaningful way)? In circumstances where we can establish that the author of a text has borrowed, what degree of ‘borrowing’ is necessary to make something Jewish Christian as opposed to Christian? And if we can determine that, why not call the phenomenon ‘Jewish’ or ‘Christian’ rather than a combination of the two? And how does one deal with a text which borrows heavily, or supposedly does, from Judaism but denies any relationship with Judaism? And can we be clear what *self-conscious* adoption of a Jewish identity might be? In correspondence Reed has noted that the term has some meaning, in relation to the criteria mentioned, when applied to a text like the *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* for here, she argues, Christian/apostolic can be un-

¹⁰⁴ For the first instance of this point, see Reed 2003, 190-1, n. 5, where it is described as a ‘heuristic irritant’. Much of what is reported below is found in its pre-print form on the web. See Reed forthcoming in the bibliography.

¹⁰⁵ In the end there are not that many texts which emerge as Jewish Christian on this definition (*Apocalypse of Peter*, *Protevangelium of James*, *Didascalia apostolorum*, *Book of the Cock*, *Clem. Rec.* 1.27-71, the *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies*, *Gospel of Hebrews*, *Gospel of Nazarenes*, *Gospel of Ebionites*, *Testament of Abraham* and *Testament of Job* in their final forms).

derstood as Jewish/non-Greek, which contrasts strongly with a text like Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* where Christian/apostolic is clearly non-Jewish/Greek.¹⁰⁶ But we might wonder about the helpfulness of her criteria in relation to a text like the *Didascalia apostolorum*. While it shares much in common with Judaism, however conceived, it appears consciously to distinguish itself and what it is advocating from things associated with Jews, including certain halakhic requirements. In what sense, then, is such a text Jewish Christian except in the sense that it has a Jewish character to it (one could argue that it *self-consciously* does not adopt a Jewish character)?¹⁰⁷ Here we might wonder whether the last of the three characteristics outlined by Reed should be an optional extra.¹⁰⁸

It has been stated that in typical histories of Jewish Christianity, the tendency is to assume that, as Christianity and Judaism went their own ways, so Jewish Christianity, hated by both sides, became a minority movement, and subsequently a relic. To some, then, Jewish Christians, however defined, have become unfortunate victims of the 'partings' paradigm. Annette Yoshiko Reed has been one of those who have sought to press home this point most emphatically. As she writes, here in the context of a discussion of the *Pseudo-Clementines*: "... the scholarly approach to the 'Jewish Christianity' of the *Pseudo-Clementine* literature has been inextricably shaped by the broader tendency to treat post-70/post-135 survival of 'Jewish Christianity' as merely a footnote to a narrative about early Christian history in which its alleged demise functions as a necessary contrast to the triumphant rise of 'Gentile Christianity' and as a necessary corollary of the parting of the Ways with Judaism."¹⁰⁹ But if we cannot assume that Judaism and Christianity were firmly established by the close of second century, then we cannot assume as a matter of course that so-called Jewish Christians of Late Antiquity were transgressing a clear-cut boundary between normative Judaism and normative Christianity and were, as a consequence, a minority phenomenon. Similar points have been made by John Gager.¹¹⁰ The latter, while attacking the deleterious effects of certain

¹⁰⁶ See Reed 2008.

¹⁰⁷ See Fonrobert 2001 for a subtle attempt to argue for the Jewish Christian character of the *Didascalia*.

¹⁰⁸ There is little doubt that the text opposes individuals, including specifically women, who appear to retain certain practices from their non-Christian Jewish past. See further Fonrobert 2005, 250.

¹⁰⁹ Reed 2003, 201. The kind of sentiment Reed is criticising is well exemplified in an essay penned by the present author: "What is clear is that excluded from both Church and synagogue ... it (Jewish Christianity) declined dramatically ... Evidence for the existence of such (Jewish Christian) sects beyond the fifth century is almost non-existent ..." (Carleton Paget 1998, 750).

¹¹⁰ Gager 2003, esp. 366-72.

‘master narratives’ about Judaism and Christianity on the study of Jewish Christianity, has sought to play up extant evidence for the phenomenon, including Islamic material from the ninth century and later.¹¹¹ In more recent times Reed has sought to develop her views, in this instance, as noted above, through a comparison of Eusebius’ account of Christian origins and that of the *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies*, contrasting the supersessionist approach to Christianity’s Jewish origins, evidenced in Eusebius, and the much more eirenic approach of the Homilist where Jewish origins are accepted and Judaism accorded a legitimate, ongoing place in history.¹¹² Reed suggests that the popularity of the *Homilies* indicates the widespread character of his opinions, and the fact that Eusebius’ vision was a contested one.¹¹³ In such a thesis Reed appears to be operating with the more flexible definition of Jewish Christianity, already referred to above; and in part what she is seeking to argue has less to do with creating a clear definition of the word ‘Jewish Christian’ and more with seeking to raise questions about older models of Jewish-Christian engagement and interaction in the period following Bar Kokhba. In this context, and here I write as an interpreter of Reed’s work, rather than on the basis of anything she has explicitly stated, Jewish Christianity becomes another way of undermining those models, almost an umbrella term for much that is explicitly the concern for those who belong to the group of scholars who would prefer to speak, with different emphases, about the ways that never parted.¹¹⁴ In such a discussion we are a long way from defining a group or party.¹¹⁵

Another approach, possibly more reductionist, is to cast aside the term ‘Jewish Christian’ with all its difficulties and ambiguities (something we had already observed in the work of Skarsaune and Hvalvik), and replace it with something like ‘Torah-observing’ Christians. Such an approach would have the effect of focusing study upon those named groups sometimes

¹¹¹ Note the discussion of this material, albeit brief, on pp. 371-2 of this volume.

¹¹² See Reed 2008.

¹¹³ “(I)f Jewish Christianity was ... so marginalized after the ‘parting of the Ways’ and thus so irrelevant to the majority of Christians, why would a fourth-century Christian wish to rework and transmit this material in the first place? And, more puzzling still, why would Rufinus translate it into Latin?” (Reed 2003, 224). Note also the contrast that Strecker 1958, 260, draws between John Chrysostom’s tract *Against the Judaizing Christians*, and the writings of the *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies*.

¹¹⁴ In email correspondence, Professor Reed confirmed some of this, writing that the term served to loosen “some of the assumptions that are already in the process of being exposed as inadequate for our data”; and that the term points to “the limits of imposing any single notion of ‘Judaism’ and ‘Christianity’ on different times and places.”

¹¹⁵ We are possibly closer to such a thing in John Gager’s defence of the ongoing vitality of Jewish Christianity. He seems to operate with a narrower definition of the term, broadly along the lines of law-observing Christians, and traces their ongoing existence well into the Byzantine period. See Gager 2003.

called by scholars 'Jewish Christian sects', as well as Judaisers and others. Such a move could be construed as similar to what Michael Williams recommends when he exhorts scholars to disband with the word 'Gnostic' and replace it with 'biblical demiurgical traditions.'¹¹⁶ While such a move would appear to commend itself, not least in its abandonment of a very difficult term, and its replacement with something altogether less problematic, again we must wonder whether we are defining anything worth defining, even when we have managed to agree on what we might understand by the word 'Torah-observing.'¹¹⁷

Some might think that in the end scholarship on the vexed subject of Jewish Christianity is best served by accepting the impossibility of the term while at the same time acknowledging its unavoidability. Retaining the term because it serves to challenge scholarly assumptions about the mutual exclusivity of Judaism and Christianity in antiquity is fair enough, even if the challenge hardly takes us much further down the road to a clear, or even satisfyingly blurred, definition; and one might contend that what the term Jewish Christianity apparently challenges can be challenged without the need to preserve so troublesome a term. Nevertheless, scholars continue to have a sense that there are some people in the ancient world who, while professing belief in Jesus, adopt a profile which looks distinctly Jewish, and description of whom is not well served by either declaring them Christian or Jewish. The difficulty lies in formulating with any precision a term which best describes them (at least from our perspective – the term, after all, is a neologism introduced some time in the sixteenth century); and possibly we should admit that the word 'Jewish Christian' remains the best, even if an inadequate, way of doing such a thing.

The two essays in this section of the volume are broadly historiographic in content. In the first of these I attempt to show how the definition of the terms 'Jewish Christian'/'Jewish Christianity' was from the beginnings of its usage, possibly some time in the sixteenth century, a matter of dispute, and how different scholars, for a variety of reasons, used the term to describe different phenomena, and that in the process of scholarly discussion a complex and inconsistently applied secondary vocabulary grew around

¹¹⁶ Williams 1996.

¹¹⁷ But Reed is anxious about such a procedure because it would limit our understanding of the fluidity and hybridity of self-definition to places where an ancient witness comments on someone else's identity. This, in Reed's view, would simply predetermine the conclusion that all fluidity and hybridity is heterodox, a point that obviously contradicts her own and others' views of the nature of ancient Christian and Jewish identity as in the process of formation and of its nature fluid. However, by examining such groups would we not simply be examining one form of hybridity without necessarily excluding other forms, or excluding a more nuanced and complex view of Jewish and Christian self-understanding?

the terms. I try and demonstrate how in a number of ways, aspects of that confused scholarly heritage prevail in the current debate about the terms and their meaning. The second essay is an examination of recent research on the Ebionites. I begin by expressing surprise that this so-called 'Jewish Christian' sect has not been the subject of a full-length published book in English, not least because in the history of scholarship the term was, and sometimes is, used synonymously with 'Jewish Christian', and it is about Ebionites, of the Jewish Christian sects, that we ostensibly know the most. One possible explanation, I suggest, lies in the fact that the question of the sources relating to the Ebionites is so contested, and part of the essay surveys this complex problem, in particular Epiphanius' account in his *Panarion*. Other sections examine the origins of the term (it was probably originally a self-designation deriving from Aramaic, used by Christians of Jewish origin who dwelt in Palestine, which over time, and as knowledge of its origins ceased to exist, came to be applied more generally to groups who adopted Jewish practices and entertained apparently unorthodox christological opinions), the opinions of the sect, its history (here some scepticism is shown towards theories, which would suggest that Ebionism underwent reform or ideological change, suggestions which in part at least, arise from a desire to explain the apparent difference between early accounts of the Ebionites, deriving from Irenaeus and Hippolytus, and subsequently, Origen, and Epiphanius) as well as claims that the sect went on existing well beyond the fifth century. Towards the end of the essay, I engage with Daniel Boyarin's point that what is interesting about the Ebionites (and Jewish Christians more generally) is not that they existed but why it was that Christian writers sought at such length, and quite late, to polemise against them. In part the answer, Boyarin claims, lies in these writers' desire to expose hybrids who challenged their attempts to create a pure Christianity, and its opposite, a pure Judaism. I note how such a thesis has the effect both of making later accounts of Ebionites almost entirely theoretical, and of failing to take seriously a writer like Epiphanius' view of the *general* hybridity of Ebionites, that is, Epiphanius does not present them as just hybrids of Judaism and Christianity. In different ways, and through a more specifically-oriented study, the essay addresses a number of central questions in the study of Jewish Christianity.

Judaism in the second century

Second century Jewish history can be construed as significant. It witnessed, after all, two Jewish revolts against Rome, the end of Jerusalem as a Jewish city and Palestine as a predominantly Jewish province. It saw the

beginnings of the rising power of the rabbinate, and almost culminated in the production of the seminal text of the movement, the Mishnah. In the same period important new versions of the Greek bible were written; and some Christians, conscious of the fact that they belonged to a group, which was developing a distinct identity, began to write tracts *adversus Judaeos*, either, as we have noted above, because they wished to create a border between what they conceived of as Christianity and Judaism, or to give expression to something that was already happening.

And yet the apparent importance of the century for Jews could be said to be in inverse proportion to the amount of evidence we have about it. Greek evidence, relatively profuse for the preceding period, appears to dry up; and evidence in Hebrew, specifically the Mishnah, is thought to inform us only minimally about the life of the majority of Jews. Although, as noted above, Christians wrote about Jews, normally in a polemical context, such evidence has been thought by many to cast an only very partial light upon Jewish the Jewish community and its concerns. This lack of evidence, however, has not deterred scholars from developing overarching views about this period. Some of these are what is generally termed ‘lachrymose’, that is, the view is taken that in the aftermath of the Trajanic and Bar Kokhba revolts, Jews became culturally isolated and dependent upon an influential rabbinate. More recently, Seth Schwartz, in a much cited work of 2001, and containing distant lachrymose chimes, without being straightforwardly lachrymose, has argued that the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in 70 and the failure of the Bar Kokhba revolt, led to an almost complete collapse of pre-70 Jewish life in Palestine, with only the rabbis standing out as an exception. It was only, according to him, in the fourth and fifth centuries that something like a Jewish revival or a re-judaisation of Jews, began. Much of what Schwartz argues is dependent upon his interpretation of extant archaeological evidence, especially in towns, which we can assume to have had a large Jewish population; on what he argues are the natural consequence of Roman annexation of Palestine; on the place or indeed absence of Jews from the legal texts of the Romans until the fourth century; and his own construction of the central elements of the pre-70 Jewish polity, which he sees as shattered in the wake of successive revolts and their consequences. Martin Goodman, in an equally ambitious book, has argued that the century witnessed an ongoing growth in anti-Jewish sentiment amongst the Romans, a process which had its origin in the propaganda of the Flavian dynasty following the fall of Jerusalem in 70, and its culmination in the founding of the *colonia* of Aelia Capitolina on the site of the old Jewish Jerusalem, the banning of Jews from that city and the renaming of the province as *Palaestina* rather than Judea. Goodman’s thesis, which posits some improvement in Jewish-

Roman relations towards the end of the century, also takes into its ambit the growth of Christianity. For Goodman it is precisely the fact of Roman hatred of Jews, which leads Christians to distance themselves from association with Judaism, in part, therefore, accounting for the advent of *adversus Judaeos* literature in the period.

While Schwartz and Goodman present variant, but generally negative, readings of the fate of Jews in the second century, others, by contrast, have eked out more positive and optimistic typologies for the century. In these Jews are neither isolated, nor down-trodden, but rather they appear as integrated and confident members of a flourishing western (and eastern) Diaspora. Such views, which have reached their most influential form in works by Marcel Simon and, more particularly, A. T. Kraabel, derive their strength from surviving literary evidence, especially Christian material, and from archaeology, especially the surviving remains of synagogues, and Jewish inscriptions.

Most recently, Edrei and Mendels have argued, at least implicitly, that the second century witnessed to the sharpening of an already existent division between an eastern, and rabbinic-dominated, Diaspora, and western one, where rabbinic influence was negligible.¹¹⁸ The consequences of such a division, they contend, were that the western Diaspora soon became prey to the developing ideology of Christianity, while the eastern retained a more robustly Jewish profile.

In the first of the two essays, which form this third section of the volume, I attempt to re-examine the century against these contrasting typologies. Amongst other things I challenge the vision of Jewish history in this period which speaks about it in terms of rabbinization, and tends to underestimate the important evidence we have for ongoing Greek literary life in the western Diaspora. In addition to listing what evidence exists for the writing of Greek works, questions are raised about the possibility of the ongoing Jewish transmission of the LXX, the apocrypha, and well-known Hellenistic Jewish authors, questions which, it is hoped, expose a number of prejudices about post-Bar Kokhba Jewish history. In pursuing such a course, I reflect a recent scholarly trend, which seeks, in a variety of ways, to reinstate the place of Jewish-Hellenistic culture in the second century and beyond.¹¹⁹

Other evidence for Jewish life is examined, in the process of which the conflicting typologies for the century are critiqued. While generally sympathetic to the more positive view of the experiences of the Jewish in this period, in particular in the western Diaspora, I draw attention to the fact that often these conclusions, particularly those based upon archaeological

¹¹⁸ Edrei and Mendels 2007 and 2008.

¹¹⁹ For the most recent expression of such a view, see Rajak 2009.

evidence, are not justified, not least because the implications of the evidence cited is ambiguous. In some senses, therefore, the view is taken that to speak in generalities about such a period, whether in lachrymose vein, or more sanguine tones, is impossible. The evidence, in spite of the bold assertions of past and more recent scholarship, will not allow it.

The final essay in the volume seeks to rekindle an old thesis about the Jewish origins of an intriguing section of the *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* (*Hom.* 4-6). Much of the essay is taken up with the technical business of proving the case as well as examining the ideological profile of the source. The conclusion, namely that the relevant text is part of a Jewish apology from the middle second century, again raises questions about the understanding of Judaism in this intriguing period, especially as these arise in current historiography. The source, which both betrays solid grounding in Greek *paideia*, while at the same time adopting a strikingly negative view of the latter, can be seen as supporting and challenging the kinds of typologies of the century outlined in the first essay of this final section, although it is noted that any extrapolations from what would appear to be an incomplete version of a larger work preserved by a Christian author, should be made with great caution.

Conclusion

The essays presented in this volume, then, address a number of significant themes upon which abundant comment has been passed. In general rather than arriving at new and unambiguous theories concerning these, they have tended to highlight difficulties. Such a tendency might be thought to be the result of a certain lack of imagination or of intelligence, or both, and this may indeed be true. It also, however, results from the strong conviction, made clear, I hope, in my necessarily limited review of recent scholarly work on these themes, that the fragmentary and sometimes vague evidence at our disposal, does not sit easily with definite conclusions. Against such a background it is my conviction that an important aim of the scholar should lie in presenting the entangled difficulties of his or her subject with clarity, in charting the complex territory with the skills of a well-trained cartographer. The hope, possibly forlorn, is that in the process he or she not only informs but also stimulates. If I have managed to do both of these things, then I will have succeeded in my aim in publishing these essays.

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Section 1

Jewish-Christian Relations

Chapter 2

Anti-Judaism and early Christian identity*

Introduction

In the first volume of his magisterial *Les Juifs dans l'Empire Romain*, published in Paris in 1914, Jean Juster declared that very little work had as yet been done on early Christian anti-Jewish polemic.¹ Juster made a start at rectifying what he implied was an oversight on the part of the scholarly world, and since his time a plethora of publications on this subject have appeared.

Those scholars who have studied this literature, both in the time before and after Juster's own significant contribution, have often concerned themselves with the question of its audience and purpose. Did the Christian *ad-versus Judaeos* tradition, and indeed Christian anti-Judaism in general, reflect genuine disputes between Christians and Jews, so that it could be understood either as a response to a threat posed by the Jewish community to the nascent church, or as an attempt to convert Jews to Christianity? Or, contrary to this thesis, was it literature which should be understood without any reference to an outside Jewish reality, and seen rather as the result of internal tendencies within Christian theology and parenthesis?

Famously, and some thirty years before the appearance of Juster's volume, Adolf von Harnack had boldly argued the latter thesis.² Taking as his starting point the observation that before the rise of philosophical speculation in Christianity the main concern of Christians was to align the facts of Christianity with the prophecies of the Old Testament (a thesis that was later, and notably, to be espoused by J. R. Harris³), he argued that collections of proof-texts with an anti-Jewish tendency were bound up with this concern and not with opposition to Jews. He supported this contention by arguing that in such literature Jews were often presented in a stereotypical

* First published in *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 1 (1997), 195-225.

¹ Juster 1914, 50: "Aucune étude sérieuse n'a été consacrée à cette polémique anti-juive et presque rien n'a été fait pour réunir dans un recueil systématique ses divers renseignements relatifs aux Juifs."

² Harnack 1883, 56f.

³ Harris 1916-1920.

way, which bore no relationship to real Jews;⁴ and in the fact that, with some exceptions, there was no evidence for contact between Jews and Christians after the time of Domitian. He did accept that there was an apologetic dimension to this anti-Jewish literature, but it was an apologia addressed to Gentiles not Jews (in debates with pagans, Christians often argued for the reasonableness of their religion by reference to its conformity to promises found in the Jewish Scriptures. Pagans often refuted this assertion by referring to the fact that such interpretations did not comply with the views of the oldest exponents of these texts, namely the Jews). In this interpretation Jewish arguments against Christianity which appear in this literature are in fact pagan arguments. However, Harnack stated that not all anti-Jewish literature need be interpreted in this way, for he argued that in certain texts a genuine Jewish presence was discernible,⁵ though these texts were easily distinguished from those where no genuine Jewish presence was assumed.

Harnack's thesis has been subject to considerable criticism, particularly since the Second World War. In this respect, one might point, amongst many others, to the work of Juster himself,⁶ Samuel Krauss,⁷ A. Lukyn Williams,⁸ James Parkes,⁹ B. Blumenkranz,¹⁰ Marcel Simon,¹¹ Robert Wilken,¹² F. Blanchetière,¹³ William Horbury,¹⁴ Nicholas de Lange,¹⁵ and S. G. Wilson.¹⁶ In the writings of these scholars, and others, the vibrant character of the Jewish community in the ancient world has been emphasised, particularly in relation to the cities in which Christians lived (in this respect much has been made of archaeological evidence). The view has been espoused that it would have been difficult for Christians with their interest in and reliance upon the Jewish scriptures, to avoid contact with Jews. Against this background, evidence for Jewish-Christian contact has been brought forward, and it has often been asserted that Christians and Jews

⁴ "Der Gegner ist hier in der That nur ein Gedachter, er besitzt keinen anderen Horizont als sein Widerpart; eben darum ist er nicht der Jude, wie er wirklich war, sondern der Jude, wie ihn der Christ fürchtete." (Harnack 1883, 63).

⁵ See *ibid.*, 73f., 78 n. 59.

⁶ Juster 1914, 53-4 n. 4.

⁷ Krauss 1892-3; 1893-4; and the revised Krauss and Horbury 1996.

⁸ Williams 1935, 17.

⁹ Parkes 1934.

¹⁰ Blumenkranz 1946 and 1960.

¹¹ Simon 1986, esp. 137f., for his own summary and refutation of Harnack.

¹² Wilken 1971, 1-38; and 1983.

¹³ See Blanchetière 1995.

¹⁴ See *inter alia* Horbury 1998; and Horbury's revisions in Krauss and Horbury 1996.

¹⁵ De Lange 1976.

¹⁶ Wilson 1995.

were rivals in a battle for converts.¹⁷ If these assertions are accepted, then it follows that Christian-Jewish contact must be considered as part of the setting in which to read Christian *adversus Judaeos* literature.

But Harnack's opinions live on in modern scholarship, admittedly in different clothing. In this respect, we might point to the work of H. Tränkle,¹⁸ T.D. Barnes,¹⁹ D. Rokeah,²⁰ H. Schreckenberg,²¹ R. Ruether,²² and most recently, and most radically, Miriam Taylor.²³ It is the aim of this paper to present the arguments of this most recent work (the published form of an Oxford D. Phil. thesis, supervised by Martin Goodman), and to discuss them at some length.²⁴ In the process of this discussion some tentative comments will be offered on the question of the role of anti-Judaism as a component part in the expression of Christian identity.

Miriam Taylor's book

Taylor's book deals with Christian texts written between 150 and 312 C.E.²⁵ She sets out her stall early on. "This book aims to demonstrate that

¹⁷ This is very strongly emphasised in Simon's work: "If Judaism had withdrawn into itself, then it no longer really confronted the church but restricted itself to a conflict in the realm of theory, to a bookish, sterile controversy around the sacred texts. If it was still a proselytizing movement, then it was a real and dangerous rival." (Simon 1986, 271).

¹⁸ Tränkle 1964, lxx-lxxiv. See especially his comment: "So liegt die Vermutung nahe, dass sich diese Literaturgattung über die Juden hinaus noch an einen anderen Leserkreis wandte: die Christen selbst ..." (lxx).

¹⁹ Barnes 1985.

²⁰ Rokeah 1982 and 1988.

²¹ Schreckenberg 1990, 16 and 26f.

²² Ruether 1974.

²³ Taylor 1995.

²⁴ Another summary of her book can be found in Blanchetière 1995, 169-80.

²⁵ Taylor sees this period as "a critical time". But it is not easy to understand why she has chosen 150 as the starting point (it may have something to do with the inferred date of Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*, though this is sometimes put at 160, or with an unstated conviction that before this time Jews and Christians were in genuine contact, and only afterwards did that contact cease, a thesis argued for by, for instance, David Rokeah). The date of 312 has been chosen as the endpoint because Taylor believes that after the ascent of Constantine to the Principate, and his espousal of Christianity, Christians and Jews did begin to pay attention to each other. What should be noted is that this period (150-312 C.E.) saw the writing of much literature *adversus Judaeos*, not all of which is extant. Cf. Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*, Miltiades' lost *Adversus Judaeos* (referred to by Eusebius at *Hist. eccl.* 5.17), Apollinaris' lost *Adversus Judaeos* (referred to by Eusebius at *Hist. eccl.* 4.27); Tertullian's *Adversus Judaeos*; Hippolytus' lost *Homily against the Jews*; the lost *Dialogue of Jason and Papiscus* (referred to by Origen at *Cels.*

the Jews in the writings of the fathers are neither the men of straw envisaged by Harnack, nor Simon's formidable rivals, but symbolic figures who play an essential role in the communication and development of the church's own distinctive conception of God's plan for his chosen people, and in the formation of the church's cultural identity." (4). In pursuit of her cause, Taylor is much more intent upon criticising Simon and his ilk than Harnack. This is because she sees Simon's position as representative of the consensus, and in some sense, because as indicated above, her position is much closer to that of Harnack, even if its emphasis and tone are different.

Taylor argues that the position adopted by Simon and many others is based upon a "conflict theory". Such a theory assumes, she maintains, that Jews and Christians in the second and third centuries of the Common Era were involved in a fierce rivalry for converts in the pagan world, and that this conflict or competition defined the way in which they interacted. "In place of a theologically predetermined view of Christian expansion, which assumed that Judaism was of no real consequence to the Christians, the "conflict theory" claims to interpret the sources of Christian anti-Judaism in terms of wider social realities, and to account in a more credible way for the vehemence and persistence of the anti-Jewish arguments in the writings of the church fathers." (3). She goes on to state that the conflict theory has served in the development of a number of hypotheses seeking to account for the anti-Judaism expressed in the writings of the early church. Scholars have theorised about the religious, social, political and environmental dimensions of what is conceived of as a complex phenomenon rooted in conflict, and working with the assumption that these various forms of anti-Judaism complement each other, they have gone on to argue that they provide a helpful key to unravelling the patterns of Jewish-Christian interaction.

What Taylor will attempt to do is to produce a typology of these anti-Judaisms assumed to exist by modern scholarship. She will reveal, so she maintains, the confusions and contradictions contained within them, and show that they are based upon dubious assumptions that lead to "hasty and unjustified conclusions". She will then show how her own thesis, already alluded to above, better accounts for the phenomenon of Christian anti-Judaism, at least as it manifests itself in the period (150-312 C.E.) with which she is interested.

4.52); at least four works attributed to Cyprian, of which perhaps one (the *ad Quirinium*) is genuinely by Cyprian; and perhaps the extant *Dialogue of Simon and Theophilus*. We should also include in all this polemical statements about Jews which are not found in tracts aimed specifically against them. In this respect particular note should be taken of Origen, who peppers his writings with anti-Jewish comments, but who never, interestingly, wrote a tract *adversus Judaeos*.

Taylor begins the main section of her book by discussing what she terms the model of competitive anti-Judaism (8). She accepts that Judaism was attractive to a certain group of people, but the attraction had nothing to do with efforts on the part of Jews. She dismisses Christian evidence that might point to the existence of Jewish missionaries²⁶ (8f.). She accepts that Jewish evidence supports the idea that proselytes were welcomed into the community, but argues that there is no reason to conclude from this that there was such a thing as a Jewish mission. Indeed, if we examine the Judaism of this period it becomes clear that certain features apparently common to it (vagueness on entrance requirements, failure to accord equality to the new member, and a failure to assert that salvation was exclusively associated with Judaism) militate against seeing Judaism as possessing a missionary consciousness. While Taylor accepts, along with Martin Goodman,²⁷ that into the second and third centuries, some rabbis did advocate proselytic activity, this was by no means an enthusiastic or comprehensive advocacy, and one that in any case emerged out of the atmosphere created by Christianity. If we admit that there is little evidence for Jewish proselytism, then one of the major planks in Simon's and others' arguments about the grounds for Jewish and Christian interaction disappears.

She then goes on to discuss the two types of anti-Judaism that she sees as emerging from assumptions about the competitiveness of the two religions. The first is "polemical and apologetic" anti-Judaism. Here the scholar is encouraged to think that *adversus Judaeos* literature gives evidence of debates between Jews and Christians about scripture. And yet this literature is so repetitive and stereo-typed as to make it unlikely that it reflects genuine debates at all.²⁸ The second typology that emerges out of assumptions relating to the proselytic tendencies of Judaism is termed by Taylor defensive anti-Judaism in which Christians oppose the adoption by other Christians of Jewish practices. But Judaising tendencies within the church were chiefly an internal matter with no apparent connection to the drawing power of contemporary Judaism or Jewish interest in attracting Christians to their faith; and in any case there is only sparse evidence for Judaising tendencies in the church in the pre-Constantinian period.²⁹ Those who assume differently rely heavily upon evidence from the fourth century, in particular upon John Chrysostom's eight sermons against the Jews. The

²⁶ Cf. Justin, *Dial.* 122-3; and Tertullian, *Nat.* 1.13; and *Adv. Jud.* 1.

²⁷ Goodman 1994.

²⁸ Cf. 22-5.

²⁹ She discusses (33f.) passages in Ignatius (*Ign. Phld.* 6.1 and 8.2; and *Ign. Magn.* 8.1-2 and 9.1); and the *Didascalía Apostolorum*. In both writings Judaising has "a purely theoretical dimension which served in the definition of theological issues and in the illustration of a peculiarly Christian way of life." (40).

use of such evidence to illuminate material from an earlier age of history is unwarranted, for Chrysostom wrote in a post-Constantinian period when the character of Jewish-Christian relations had changed.³⁰ “If the pre-Constantinian evidence for Judaising is examined more closely, free of presuppositions, and in its proper context, then its connection to Judaism, to external pressures and influences, becomes remote.” (40).

The final typology in the category “competitive anti-Judaism” is termed by Taylor “embittered anti-Judaism”. This form of anti-Judaism is a response to the church’s failure to convert Jews, and manifests itself in bitter recriminations against the faithless Jew. But for Taylor such recrimination is a significant by-product of Christianity. The notion of Jewish rejection was actually indispensable to the church. Jewish sin and rejection of the Christian God formed the backdrop for the claim that the church had displaced the synagogue as the chosen people.

There then follows a discussion of “conflictual anti-Judaism”. In this form of anti-Judaism great emphasis is placed upon the power of the synagogue over against the weakness of the church. “If the conflict theorists emphasise this contrast, it is because they hope thereby to add greater depth and substance to their understanding of Jewish-Christian relations.” Here the church can either react with bitterness because of its feeling of social inferiority in relation to the synagogue particularly in a city with a large and powerful Jewish population (this is one way, for instance, of explaining the strident anti-Jewish character of Melito’s *Peri Pascha*), or with recrimination in response to Jewish persecution of Christians. But in relation to the former claim, Taylor argues that we should not assume that Christians felt threatened by a large and successful Jewish community,³¹ and that when we examine, for example, the anti-Judaism of Melito’s *Peri Pascha*, it is best explained as arising out of theological tendencies found within the writing.³² Nearly all references to Jewish persecution of Chris-

³⁰ In this she follows Neusner 1987, who argued that it was only in the fourth century that Judaism and Christianity met. This was brought about by Constantine’s conversion and the consequent rise of Christianity to a pre-eminent state in the Empire; and the flowering of the Talmudic tradition.

³¹ Taylor notes that there is no attempt made by Theophilus to distance himself or his tradition from its Jewish roots, and his work is free from anti-Jewish polemic. If two Christian writers, writing at approximately the same time and in cities with large Jewish populations, can react in very different ways to these situations, we cannot assume that Melito’s anti-Jewish tone had anything to do with a ‘psycho-social’ response to his Jewish neighbours (see Taylor 1995, 62-3).

³² “The Sardinian Christians who came to hear their bishop’s paschal homily, were made to understand that the christological significance of the feast extended beyond the mere commemoration of Christ’s passion and resurrection. In the Pascha, Christians celebrated the mystery of that turning point around which all of history revolved. This was the key historical event that earned for Christians their status as the new chosen people,

tians, she argues, relate back to the apostolic period³³ (92f.), or can be explained in other ways, which bear no relationship to actual persecution of Christians by Jews³⁴ (100f.). She also notes that many of the passages, which refer to Jewish opposition to Christianity, are indicative rather of the way in which Christian authors tended at times to universalise conceptually opposition to them, and lump together all those whom they saw as standing against them.³⁵

In the third chapter of the book entitled "Inherited anti-Judaism", Taylor argues first that Christian anti-Judaism differed quite markedly from pagan anti-Judaism. "Whereas the pagans denigrated the Jews 'gratuitously and without proof'", the Christians backed their accusations "with texts of scripture" (Simon 1986: 215) (119). Again quoting from Simon, she notes that the Christian variety of anti-Judaism was rooted in exegesis, and had a sanction and coherence its pagan predecessor lacked; and it was neither spontaneous nor unorganized, nor based on hearsay, as were pagan objections to the Jews. Members of the Gentile church may well have been subject to the cultural influences of the pagan world, but in the Christian writings that have come down to us, the objections to Judaism clearly have their source in a peculiarly Christian strain of thought and sentiment. This observation acts as another support to her idea that the Christian objection to Judaism was essentially a theological one. She then goes on to repeat her judgment about the traditional nature of Christian anti-Judaism (she isolates three main themes – the exposition of the christological meaning of the scriptures; the critique of the Mosaic dispensation particularly in relation to the Jewish laws; and an interpretation of salvation-history in terms of God's rejection of the sinful Jews, and his acceptance of the Gen-

and sealed the fate of those who failed to recognise in Christ's passion their own God's ultimate act of salvation. In the Pascha, then, Christians celebrated the justification of the faithful and the corresponding condemnation of the faithless." (72).

³³ See her discussion of Justin, *Dial.* 17; and Tertullian, *Scorp.* 10.

³⁴ See her discussion of *Mart. Pol.* on 102f. where she argues that the references to Jews have probably been included in order to make the parallels between Polycarp and Christ all the greater (105), and that this is made more likely when one notes that the portrayal of the Jews appears very unconvincing. What Jews known to us would refer to Christians as: "the destroyer of our gods..." (*Mart. Pol.* 12)? References to Jewish involvement in the *Martyrdom of Pionius* are also dismissed as fabrications bound up with the author's purposes.

³⁵ She discusses in this vein Tertullian *Apol.* 7, and a variety of passages from Origen (*Hom. Judic.* 8.1; *Sel. Ps.* 126.1), and some passages from Tertullian's *Marc.* (3.7.1; 3.8.1; 3.23.1), where the heresiologist states that Marcion has borrowed poison from the Jews, an assertion which in the opinion of Taylor, cannot be true, and is simply included "because Marcion, like the Jew before him, was considered to have fallen into the same ditch by virtue of the fact that both made the same most fundamental of errors in denying that Christ has come." (113).

tiles), and asserts that this is enough to discount it as a source for Christian disputation with Jews. "Can we really believe", she asks, "that ten generations of Jews and Christians living in such different cities as Rome, Sardis and Carthage interacted with one another according to one fixed pattern?" (124).

The final chapter of the book (127f.) concerns "symbolic anti-Judaism", and it is here that we get to the nub of Taylor's thesis. She notes that many scholars have observed that there is a clear and unambiguous connection in the catholic position between the church's claim to the Jewish tradition and inheritance, and its chastisement of the Jewish people. Christian anti-Judaism functions according to an internal logic in which the invalidation of Judaism emerges as a theoretical necessity in the appropriation of the Jewish God and the Jewish Bible for the church, an appropriation that for a variety of reasons was necessary. This becomes especially clear when we examine the anti-Marcionite writings of a man like Tertullian. In order to save the Jewish God and the Jewish scriptures for the church against the assertions of Marcion, Tertullian was forced to attack Judaism. "The church's portrayal of Judaism is expressed in terms of a dualism opposing Christians and Jews which is built into the very logic and into the very structure of Christian teaching." (139). She notes that a large number of scholars have, to varying degrees, accepted this judgment, but have gone on to assert that Christian anti-Judaism bears some relationship to an external reality. And yet, states Taylor, "it is difficult to determine exactly how scholars evaluate the various motivating factors, and what role they grant to each of them. The reason for the lack of clarity is that most interpreters of the Christian texts on Judaism seem unaware of the need to distinguish clearly between orders of motivation in their hermeneutical efforts. They obviously operate on the unspoken assumption that there is no impediment to the accumulation of motivations in the attempt to account for anti-Judaism as a global phenomenon ... If indeed, we detect in this expression both theological and social objections to Judaism, then we need to be precise about where and how each order of explanation holds true in the writings ... But if anti-Judaism is a creation of Christian logic for the purposes of Christian self-definition, then it becomes of limited usefulness to those who seek in it an expression of how Christians typically responded to their Jewish contemporaries in day-to-day interaction." (141f.). For Taylor an acceptance of the necessity of Christian anti-Judaism on a theological level necessarily excludes any sort of relationship of this polemic to a vibrant external reality called Judaism. In support of her theory she cites the work of the cultural theorist Clifford Geertz, who placed a priority on the symbolic analysis of religion over against the social-psychological analysis. "Geertz's cultural approach to religions allows the scholar to interpret

the patristic references to Judaism without removing them from the theoretical context in which they appear ... and it is no longer necessary to assume that the theological inadvertently or deliberately conceals a more 'objective', more concrete, social or psycho-social reality." (157). "When the church fathers declared the law null and void, and when they claimed that the old people had been disinherited and surpassed, this was no mere justification developed to meet immediate apologetic needs. It was central to the whole theological argumentation of the church ..." (166). Having demonstrated a variety of ways in which symbolic anti-Judaism functions outside the theological, Taylor concludes with the strong assertion that "Anti-Judaism is not an adventitious phenomenon but something intrinsic to Christianity" (196).

This, then, in brief is the argument of Taylor, and one she contrives to present in a mere 198 pages. Hers is a clear-cut thesis, which picks up on observations made by earlier writers, but in its denial that Christian anti-Judaism is in any way a response to an outside reality which somehow encroached upon Christian life, goes beyond even the claims of Ruether. The latter saw anti-Judaism as an inevitable part of Christian self-definition,³⁶ but still asserted that its existence was proof of a Christian community fearful of the reality that was Judaism.³⁷

A critique

How, then, should we assess this bold thesis?

First, we should call into question the extent to which Taylor's book constitutes a comprehensive or representative survey either of the primary or secondary literature relevant to the subject under discussion. In relation to the former we should note that she omits completely to mention any of those texts associated with the so-called Pseudo-Cyprianic corpus,³⁸ or the

³⁶ "For Christianity, anti-Judaism was not merely a defense against attack, but an intrinsic need in Christian self-affirmation. Anti-Judaism is a part of Christian exegesis." (Ruether 1974, 159).

³⁷ "The tradition [of Christian anti-Judaism] was a tool of active polemic between the two faiths. It expresses Christian self-affirmation in the face of a live and proselytising anti-Judaism that continued to challenge Christianity." (Ruether 1974, 123). Taylor notes this difference between herself and Ruether (*ibid.*, 149-51). Also note that those authors referred to earlier as adopting a position not dissimilar to that of Harnack, do virtually all concede, like Harnack, that in some cases Christian *adversus Judaeos* literature can be seen to be directed outward against a Jewish reality.

³⁸ In this respect we should mention the *Adversus Judaeos* (PL 4.919-26); and a recent edition edited by D. van Damme 1969; *De Montibus et Sion* (PL 4.909-18); *De Pascha*

corpus of works attributed to Commodian.³⁹ Some other important texts, notably the canons of the Council of Elvira, are dismissed in a couple of lines, and certain important corpora, particularly that of Origen, are not discussed in the sort of detail they should have been. Jewish sources, rabbinic and non-rabbinic alike, which might be relevant to the argument, receive no attention at all.

Taylor is also remiss in her survey of secondary material. She does not indicate that there are more scholars than she in fact mentions, who, to varying degrees, accept her thesis about the nature of anti-Jewish Christian polemic. In this respect mention might have been made of H. Tränkle and H. Schreckenberg, already referred to above; and when these individuals are joined by the likes of Rokeah and others, one sees that in its broad outline at least, Taylor's thesis is not as singular as might at first appear to be the case. Moreover, she fails to make any extensive reference to the works of at least two significant Jewish scholars, Jean Juster and B. Blumenkranz, who endorse the "conflict theory" of Jewish-Christian relations, which she is so keen to denounce. Omission of the latter is perhaps understandable because his published works dealt with a later period than the one Taylor wishes to discuss (though they did not exclusively deal with a later period). But omission of Juster is more of an oversight because Simon, whose *Verus Israel* she sees as so pivotal to the advancement of the "conflict theory", was himself in part reliant upon Juster's work. As noted above, both Blumenkranz and Juster were Jewish scholars, the former of whom, opposed the thesis of the Christian Harnack, under whose influence to a certain extent Taylor stands. This is significant because the sub-text of Taylor's book is clear for all to read – the "conflict theory" is the construction of Christian scholars, determined to show that ancient Christian anti-Jewish texts are a response to certain social and psychological circumstances created by an actual external Jewish reality. These scholars' dismissal (or ignorance of) the view that Christian anti-Judaism emerges from the inner-logic of Christian theology, is a failure to accept the essentially anti-Jewish character of Christianity, and makes them unable to "explain the continuing impact through the Christian centuries of the ideas which these texts have perpetuated." (196). That Juster and Blumenkranz, both Jews, and to this small list we might add de Lange (mentioned by Taylor), Vitsotzky and Irsai (both unmentioned), support the "conflict theory", should lead us to question at least an aspect of the argument of this sub-text.

Computus (PL 4.939-74); and *De Judaica Incredulitate* (PL 6.49-58). The content of these texts is helpfully discussed and summarised by Blumenkranz 1946, 13-17.

³⁹ For a discussion of the work of Commodian as it relates to our subject, see Blumenkranz 1946, 19-26.

Taylor's assertion that the so-called post-war consensus concerning Jewish-Christian relations is based upon a conflict model, which itself emerges from the idea that Judaism and Christianity were competing for the same set of converts seems in fact to be theoretically problematic. Not all the typologies of Christian anti-Judaism, which she suggests are present in scholarship on the subject, are in fact derivable from the assumed existence of proselytic rivalry between Christians and Jews. If we argue that Christian anti-Judaism is explicable in terms of a genuine concern for the attractiveness of Judaism to some Christians, for instance, let alone a sense of inferiority in relation to it, we may at a general level be assuming an idea of conflict between the two religions, but we need not assume the existence of proselytic activity on the part of Jews.

But leaving this point aside, is Taylor right to argue that there is no evidence for Jewish proselytising activity in the period in which she is interested?

As we noted above, Taylor accepted the fact that there was evidence for proselytes during this period, that Judaism was an attractive religion for some, that Jews welcomed proselytes into the fold, and that the third century may even have seen a shift of some Jewish opinion to an acceptance of the need for proselytising. However, she argues that in general Jews were not proselytisers in a zealous/Christian way, and certainly not in the way Simon perceived them.

A number of points need to be made. First, Taylor makes no reference to imperial legislation, issued between the second and the fifth century, which prohibits conversion to Judaism.⁴⁰ This evidence is regarded by Goodman as ambiguous,⁴¹ at least as far as evidence for Jewish mission is concerned, but as clear attestation of the existence of such a phenomenon by Feldman.⁴² Goodman's point is well made, because it is by no means always clear from this legislation that actual proselytic activity on the part of Jews is assumed but there is still sufficient evidence, especially from the late third century onwards, which could be construed as indicating proselytic activity.⁴³ Secondly, the evidence for an increased interest in proselyt-

⁴⁰ The texts relevant to legislation on this question are discussed with a commentary by Linder 1987.

⁴¹ Goodman 1994, 134f.

⁴² Feldman 1993a, 4f. The substance of this article is repeated in Feldman 1993b, 383-413. Linder, *ibid.*, does not show any particular interest in how the legislation might relate to the whole question of Jewish proselytism.

⁴³ Early legislation which might relate to this question comes from the time of Hadrian (*Historia Augusta, Hadriani*, 14.2 – here the reference is to the prohibition of circumcision by Hadrian); Antoninus Pius (referred to by Modestinus, *Dig.* 48.8.11. See Linder, *ibid.*, 99f.), who allows for Jews to circumcise their sons, but explicitly prohibits non-Jews from performing the same operation (the implication here might be that Anto-

ism, which we witness in some rabbinic texts,⁴⁴ and which can be gleaned in particular from the various portrayals of Abraham and other biblical figures as missionaries,⁴⁵ from a variety of positive comments made about

ninus was striking a bargain whereby in return for the right of full practice of their religion the Jews were to give up proselytism. But note that such an interpretation is called into question by Feldman 1993a, 6); the *Sententiae* of the jurist Paul whose work was completed by 300, where we read at one point (5.22.3-4. See Linder, *ibid.*, 117f.) of the imposition of exile and confiscation of property upon non-Jews who allow themselves to be circumcised, and the infliction of the death penalty upon the circumcisers (here we have a greater sense of proselytic activity, although it is possible that the circumcisers, who are described as ‘doctors’ (*medici*), could simply be non-Jewish physicians – on this interpretation see Goodman 1994, 136. See also Linder, who agrees that they are medical doctors, but makes no statement about their ethnic origin); and from the *Theodosian Code*, where the single most significant issue relating to legislation concerning Jews appears to have been conversion to Judaism (Linder 1987, 79. See also Feldman 1993a, 7, who gives the statistics). We should especially note 16.8.1 (Linder 1987, 126f.), which refers to a law issued by Constantine in 329, stating that “if one of the people shall approach their nefarious sect and join himself to their conventicles, he shall suffer with them (*cum ipsis*) the deserved punishments.” ‘with them’ could well be taken to refer to proselytizers as well as proselytes; and 16.8.6 (Linder, *ibid.*, 144), dating from 339, which seems to give us information concerning Jewish missionaries who entered a wool-weaving factory and succeeded in converting a number of female slaves. Some, such as Goodman, have wanted to argue that the passage could be seen to refer to intermarriage and not conversion, but as Bachrach 1985, 408 n. 37, has shown, one can only translate the Latin words *turpitudinis suae duxere consortium* as “to lead into the association of their turpitude”, with *turpitude* referring to Judaism and not marriage (see also Linder 1987, 150, n. 9, who notes that in addition to its meaning of marriage, *turpitude* could also refer to administrative corporations, organizations of Christian clerics and fellowships of co-religionists such as Jews and Manicheans); and 3.9.1, which forbids the circumcising of slaves by Jews (on legislation relating to slaves and Judaism, see Linder, *ibid.*, 82f.). For other legislation on this matter see, *inter alia*, a law issued by Honorius in 409 (16.8.19. See Linder, *ibid.*, 256f.) and two laws issued by Theodosius II (16.8.22; 16.8.26. See Linder 1987, 269 and 291). See also Goodman’s discussion in Goodman 1994, 139-40. Note should be taken of the harsh punishments inflicted upon converts, already commented upon by Linder, *ibid.*, 81.

⁴⁴ But such assertions do not rely exclusively on references found in rabbinic literature. Goodman 1994, 144, argues that Dio can be seen to support the hypothesis. At 57.18.5a, Dio states that because of proselytic activity the Jews were expelled from Rome. Unfortunately the passage appears in Dio without any particular context. Some have argued that it in fact refers to an incident in the reign of Tiberius (we hear of an expulsion of Jews from Rome in Josephus, Tacitus and Suetonius). Goodman rejects such a context for the passage, arguing instead that it reflects realities at the time Dio was writing in the third century.

⁴⁵ Discussed by Goodman 1994, 144-6, following in large part the work of Bamberger and Braude. In this respect, see especially *Sifre Deut.* 32, where the words found in Gen 12:5 about Abraham and Sarah creating souls in Haran is interpreted in terms of bringing men and women under the wings of the Shekhinah, which on the basis of the use of this phrase in Ruth 2:12 came to mean converting someone to Judaism.

proselytism by various rabbis,⁴⁶ and from the existence of a Talmudic tractate *Gerim*, evidence which is known to Taylor, seems important enough to be accorded more weight than she in fact accords it. Admittedly, she follows Goodman in arguing that the testimony with regard to the desirability of proselytism is by no means unambiguous.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, this does not thereby lessen its significance, significance which grows in importance when we note that both she and Goodman see the adoption of a proselytic attitude on the part of some Jews as related to Christian proselytism. Goodman is quick to assert that such a thesis does not assume a competitive streak on the part of the rabbis, but rather “that the triumphs of the Church gradually changed the religious assumptions of some in the ancient world – not just Jews – until the notion of a mission to convert was taken for granted by those ancients who thought about religion at all ...”⁴⁸ But if we are to assume that an apparent change in Jewish attitude towards proselytism occurred because of the impact of Christianity, we are surely coming closer to Simon’s conflictual model, not only because Goodman sees Jews as in some sense reacting to a Christian phenomenon, but also because people attracted to Judaism might not, in many instances, have been so very different from those attracted to Christianity.

If it is reasonable to conclude that some Jews may have proselytised during this period, we have not thereby demonstrated that there was necessarily rivalry between Christian and Jew for pagan converts, or that Jews tried to convert Christians and vice-versa. Such a supposition might, however, be suggested by some pieces of evidence. So at the beginning of the *Dialogue* (8), after Justin has told Trypho of his conversion to Christianity, Trypho states that had Justin remained a good pagan he might have been saved, but now he has become a Christian his only hope for salvation lies in adopting circumcision and observing the laws.⁴⁹ We should also note that Justin peppers his utterances in the *Dialogue* with urgent calls to the

⁴⁶ Discussed by Goodman 1994, 146-7, and by Feldman 1993a, 41f.

⁴⁷ Goodman points in particular to the apparent paradox witnessed to in the rabbinic literature, that rabbis exhorted people to convert while at the same time undercutting such an exhortation by asserting that a Gentile need not convert to Judaism, but need only keep the Noachide laws. For disputes amongst rabbis about the desirability of encouraging people to proselytise, see Feldman 1993a, 46f.

⁴⁸ Goodman 1994, 152.

⁴⁹ This piece of evidence is not discussed by Taylor, but is dismissed by Goodman 1994, 142, because of Trypho’s assertion that if Justin had remained a pagan philosopher he would have possessed a hope of a better destiny. “If Trypho was said to have taught that a moral pagan philosopher could achieve salvation, he could not have taught that everyone should become Jewish.” But Trypho’s point could simply be, as Horbury 1996, 310 n. 41, has pointed out, that “*even* a pagan is better than a Christian, not as doubting that Justin ought to accept Judaism.”

Jews to repent and convert;⁵⁰ that he seems to give evidence of a lively debate between Jews and Christians about the interpretation of certain Old Testament texts (e.g. Isaiah 42:6-7), which Jews saw as fulfilled in the coming of proselytes to Judaism and Christians in the conversion of Gentiles to Christianity (*Dial.* 122-3); and that he asserts that the Jewish leaders do not allow Jews to speak with Christians (*Dial.* 38 and 112) makes good sense in a context of missionary rivalry. The beginning of Tertullian's *Adversus Iudaeos* (one of his earliest works) assumes contact between Christians and Jews in a possibly conversionary context (a Jewish proselyte is described as disputing with a Christian), which we should not, with amongst others Tränkle, assume to be an entirely artificial setting⁵¹—comports with Christian evidence found elsewhere of the zeal of proselytes (Ignatius, *Phld.* 6.1; and Justin, *Dial.* 122); and differs from other Dialogue literature which usually presents a dispute with a Jew and a Christian whose origins are not referred to.⁵² Furthermore, it seems unlikely that Tertullian would have set his work in such a context unless it reflected a realistic scenario. In Pseudo-Cyprian's *Adversus Iudaeos*, a work which probably dates from a similar period, the condemnation and rejection of the Jews, is followed by a plea for their conversion (74f.), which does not appear to be artificial.⁵³ Origen himself, recalling the Jewish tradition which saw the Diaspora as providentially created for the increase of proselytes to Judaism, complains of pagans who go over to Judaism without considering Christianity (*Cels.* 1.55; *Schol. Matt.* 16),⁵⁴ a complaint which appears to be repeated by the probably third century Roman Commodianus who, in his *Carmen Apologeticum*, berates pagans for having gone over to Judaism, without considering Christianity (677f.).⁵⁵ The writer of the third century *Martyrdom of Pionius* reports that during the Decian persecution in Smyrna some Jews, exploiting the fear that some Christians felt during these dangerous times, attempted to lure Christians to their synagogue

⁵⁰ Cf. *Dial.* 14; 18; 24; 28; 44; 115; 138; 142. Lieu, 1996, 104, draws attention to the urgency of these pleas, which betray "a deep awareness that only a little time remains for the Jews to choose the way of salvation."

⁵¹ Tränkle 1964, lxx.

⁵² For other endorsements of the verisimilitude of the setting see Horbury 1989, 296-7, who refers also to the judgment of Harnack 1914, 312 n. 12.

⁵³ See Horbury's discussion in Horbury 1989, 305f. He shows that van Damme's thesis that the plea is directed to Jewish-Christians, is unjustified.

⁵⁴ This concurs with the view of R. Eleazar ben Pedath who stated that the only reason why God dispersed Israel among the nations was so that proselytes might join them (*Pesah* 87b).

⁵⁵ This poem, and the other works ascribed to Commodianus, is discussed by Blumenkranz 1946, 19-26.

where they would apparently be safe.⁵⁶ “I hear”, states Pionius, “that the Jews call some of you to the synagogues.”⁵⁷

Related to the question of proselytising is that of Judaising, a term applied to Christians who adopted Jewish practices. Taylor’s main assertion concerning this phenomenon is that in neither its practical nor its theoretical manifestations does it appear to imply any meaningful connection with Judaism itself. But is this a justifiable assertion? In part it is. It is perfectly reasonable to think that some Christians would have adopted Jewish practices without reference to Judaism itself, and this might well have been the case with those upbraided by Ignatius,⁵⁸ and Justin,⁵⁹ the *Didascalía*,⁶⁰ and Novatian,⁶¹ though in each of these examples the conviction that a proximity to Jews had something to do with decisions made by Christians to adopt certain Jewish practices cannot be excluded. However, evidence found

⁵⁶ *Mart. Pion* 13. On this passage with a strong defence of its claim to historicity see Lane Fox 1986, 479f.; and the introduction to Robert 1994. For another example of a Christian becoming a Jew during a time of persecution, note Eusebius’ statement about a certain Domnus who, during a time of Jewish persecution, fell away into a form of Jewish will worship (*Hist. eccl.* 6.12.1).

⁵⁷ This text is discussed by Taylor 1995, 105-10, but not in relation to this passage.

⁵⁸ Taylor’s dismissal of the reference in Ign. *Magn.* 8.1 as an illustrative parallel whereby the docetists (the main opponents of Ignatius in this epistle) are associated with Judaism as a warning that if they continue in their unorthodox ideas, they will, like the Jews, forfeit their claim to “live according to Christ”, seems untenable. “Strange doctrines and old fables” looks like a reference to Jewish practices, which is confirmed by 9.1 and 10.3. The whole section seems to entertain the genuine fear that some will turn to Jewish practices, and need not have anything to do with docetists.

⁵⁹ See *Dial.* 47 where the tendency on the part of Gentile Christians to Judaize is seen as motivated by the exhortations of Jews who have become Christians. But we should balance this fact with the observation that Justin begins his discussion of the phenomenon of Judaising in the church by accusing Trypho of wanting to persuade him to observe certain Jewish laws (47.1).

⁶⁰ See Taylor’s discussion of evidence for Judaising in the *Didascalía* at op. cit., 37f. Her theological arguments against Simon’s view that Judaisers are not envisaged here do not convince (cf. above). It is, however, true, though she does not mention this fact, that when the writer discusses the so-called *Deuterosis*, or second giving of the law, in which an attack upon Jewish laws is found, he seems to indicate that the real problem is former Jews, who have converted to Christianity, continuing in the observance of these laws (see Connolly 1929, 217). The position adopted by the writer of the *Didascalía* seems less liberal than that adopted by Justin in *Dial.* 47 where there seems to be an acceptance that Jews who have become Christians could continue in their former practices.

⁶¹ Taylor fails to make any reference to Novatian’s *de cibis Judaicis*, which formed part of a trilogy of works directed against Jewish customs (the other customs being that of keeping the Sabbath and circumcision, though these two books do not survive. See *de cibis* 1.6). The fact that Novatian took the trouble to write such a work is proof of the existence of Judaisers in his community, but it is not *de facto* proof of the existence of Jewish proselytizers, or of the attractiveness of an external community of Jews.

elsewhere for a connection between the two seems much clearer. So, for instance, on a number of occasions in his homilies, Origen asserts that there are those in his congregation who attend the synagogue on Saturday and the church on Sunday (*Hom. Lev.* 5.8), and elsewhere he attacks women who wash themselves on the sabbath day (*Hom. Jer.* 12.13; *Sel. Ps.* 118.38), as well as those who bake unleavened bread for the Passover (*Comm. ser. Matt.* 79).⁶² There is no reason to think that such people were exclusive to Caesarea where there was obviously a significant Jewish presence. This is suggested by the existence of canons from at least two councils (those held at Elvira in 306, and Laodicea in 363?⁶³), one of which, Elvira, falls within the chronological period Taylor wishes to discuss (Taylor refers to the Council of Elvira on p. 30, but, as we mentioned above, does not deem its contents relevant to her discussion), and which suggest that at a popular level attendance of Jewish services, intermarriage with Jews, and other forms of social contact were not infrequent.⁶⁴ Also significant in this respect is the evidence of John Chrysostom in his much-discussed eight sermons against the Jews. Taylor argues that this evidence is not relevant to her discussion because it falls into the post-Constantinian period when, she contends, following, amongst others, Jacob Neusner, Jews and Christians finally began to acknowledge each other in any real way.⁶⁵ Not only is Taylor's view about the sudden change which occurred in Jewish-Christian relations as a result of Constantine's conversion problematic,⁶⁶ but she fails to take note of the fact that the kind of association

⁶² For a discussion of some of these references see Feldman 1993a, 30.

⁶³ On the difficulties of dating this council see Nardi 1993, 472-3.

⁶⁴ In this respect we should take special note of canons 16, 26, 49, 50 and 78 (for the text see Lauchert 1961, 21). These forbid marriages with Jews of either sex (16), making the Sabbath into a festival (26), eating with Jews (something indulged in by clerics and laymen alike – 50), and asking Jews to bless their fruits (49). For relevant material from the Council of Laodicea see canons 16 (stating that the Gospels as well as other portions of the scriptures should be read aloud on the Sabbath), 29 (prohibition of Judaizing), 36 (forbidding the use of phylacteries and magic), 37 (forbidding the acceptance of festal gifts from Jews and attendance of their feasts), 38 (forbidding them from sharing unleavened bread with Jews and participating in Jewish rites generally). Cf. Simon 1986, 327f.; Feldman 1993a, 22f.; and Pakter 1992, 717f. Pakter argues, against Blumenkranz, that these laws were not based on earlier models. This is indicated by the words *si quis* and *placuit* implying the provision of something which had been agreed upon after some controversy, perhaps indicating the regularity with which Christians were in contact with Jews.

⁶⁵ Neusner 1987.

⁶⁶ While it is certainly the case that post-Constantine, the situation for Jews became more difficult (for a helpful summary of the ways in which matters became more difficult for Jews, especially after the 380s, and with particular reference to imperial legislation, see Millar 1992, 116-21), there seems to be no good reason to assume that contact between Christian and Jew became much more frequent than it had been in the preceding

between Jews and Christians assumed to be a reality at the Council of Elvira are partially consistent with what Chrysostom himself complains about – an association between Jews and Christians at the level of popular piety which does not necessarily imply conversion.⁶⁷ This type of ‘popular’ association with Judaism must have been far more widely prevalent than the evidence would in fact suggest precisely because it is association at a popular level, where absolute distinctions between Judaism and Christianity were likely to be less clear.⁶⁸ This is in part supported by a statement that Chrysostom makes, paradoxically one might think in the light of his own very public sermons, to the effect that Christians should keep silent about the success of Jews in attracting Christians to their synagogues (*Adv. Jud.* 8.3).⁶⁹ Such association would be consistent with the type of association with Judaism, well-attested in the pagan world, whereby people adopted Jewish practices without necessarily becoming Jews. Such people were sometimes referred to as ‘God-fearers’. If pagans felt attracted to Judaism, how much more might Christians, sharing a heritage with Judaism, feel the same attraction?

Also relevant in this context might be the evidence to which we have already alluded, namely imperial legislation forbidding people, especially Christians, from becoming Jews. If this evidence is excluded as evidence for proselytising on the part of Jews, it remains important testimony to the attractiveness of Judaism.

period, or that Judaism became somehow more attractive (one would expect quite the opposite). Indeed the evidence seems to point to essential continuity in the relations between the two religions. In this respect one should note in particular the continuity between anti-Jewish texts of this period with that of the preceding.

⁶⁷ Chrysostom indicates that Christians took part in the synagogue services (*Adv. Jud.* 1.8.1); that they celebrated Jewish feasts like Rosh HaShanah and Sukkot (*Adv. Jud.* 1.1.5; 1.8.1; 7.1.2); that they observed Jewish fasts and Sabbaths (*Adv. Jud.* 1.1.5; 1.8.1), and that they observed the law (*Adv. Jud.* 1.2.3). Jewish doctors were also sought out (1.7.5-11), and cures involved incantations, amulets and charms (*Adv. Jud.* 8.5.6; 8.6.4-6; 8.7.1). This material is helpfully summarised by Kinzig 1991, 37f., who also gives reasons for the Judaising behaviour. None of the reasons he presents, except perhaps one (the strong influx into the church, as a result of Theodosius’ issuing of the decree *Cunctos Populos*, of people not really committed to the church), could not have pertained in the period before the fourth century.

⁶⁸ The question of connections between Christians and Jews at the level of popular piety is discussed by Kinzig 1991, 38f., who accepts the testimony of Chrysostom that the Judaisers were mainly women and uneducated people (*Adv. Jud.* 2.3.4; 4.7.3), and writes: “From other passages it seems to be clear that these Christians did not really think about the significance of the law at the doctrinal level, but obeyed it because of popular piety ...”

⁶⁹ Cited by Feldman 1993a, 3-4.

Taylor makes very little reference to evidence for contact between Christians and Jews in the area of biblical exegesis. She, of course, emphasises the centrality of the Old Testament in *adversus Judaeos* literature, but she sees no reason to believe that this literature, and indeed, other relevant Christian literature, hints at all at contact between Christians and Jews. As we have seen, the presence of anti-Jewish exegesis in these writings has, in her opinion, much more to do with questions of Christian self-definition.

But there is much more evidence than she in fact concedes for contact between Christians and Jews at the exegetical level. It is, as de Lange has demonstrated, well-attested in Origen. So, for instance, Celsus himself asserts that Jews and Christians argue about the Bible, an argument that he polemically refers to as concerned with the shadow of an ass (see *Cels.* 1.45, 49, 56; 6.26). Origen is clearly reliant on Jewish exegetical traditions for many aspects of his biblical interpretation, and at one point in his letter to Africanus, he asserts that the principal reason for consulting the Greek versions of the Hebrew Bible other than the LXX, was to be in a better position to argue with Jews, who would often cite these versions in disputes with Christians and mock them for their ignorance.⁷⁰ Adopting the mindset of Taylor, one could argue that such evidence is rendered less important by the exceptional nature of Origen in virtually everything, including his attitude to the LXX. But to adopt such a view flies in the face of other evidence which indicates a concern and even a reliance upon Jewish exegetical opinion. Justin is clearly concerned that Jews disagree with certain Christian readings of the LXX (*Dial.* 101-5, here specifically on the text of Psalm 96), accusing their leaders of falsifying the text of scripture,⁷¹ but at the same time regularly agreeing to rely on those scriptures and the text acknowledged by the Jews (*Dial.* 73.6; 120.5; 124.4).⁷² Moreover, Justin's knowledge of Jewish exegetical traditions has been widely recognised.⁷³ When the same man asserts that the scriptures belong to the Christians and not the Jews (*Dial.* 29.2), there is an element of special pleading in his claim. We might also point to evidence in Tertullian. In *Apol.* 21.15, he notes that the most important argument between Christians and Jews concerns the coming of the Messiah, and elsewhere shows the significance which Christians ascribed to Jewish opinion when he states that some (Christians) do not accept the Book of Enoch because it is not admitted

⁷⁰ *Ep. Afr.* 9 (SC 302, 534 de Lange/Harl).

⁷¹ For this opinion see *Dial.* 68.7; 71.1-73.4; 84.4.

⁷² This is a point made by Lieu 1996, 125.

⁷³ See Horbury 1992a, 337f.

into the Jewish book-case or *armarium* (*Cult. fem.* 1.3).⁷⁴ The sense that these were Jewish scriptures is affirmed by Tertullian in the same passage, and also at *Marc.* 3.6 and at *Apol.* 19.2, an assertion which is also found in Origen,⁷⁵ and must have had its corollary in Christian concern for Jewish exegetical opinion.⁷⁶ In this context we should also note the obvious reverence that some Christians had for the synagogue because it was the place in which the holy scriptures were held (see Justin, *Dial.* 72.3; Chrysostom, *Adv. Jud.* 6.7).

We need to make one final point. Taylor, and many others before her, have pointed to the contradictory nature of Christian attitudes to Jews. On the one hand, there is unadulterated slander, particularly with reference to Jewish failure to read the scriptures as the Christians read them. And yet on the other hand there is affirmation of the Jews as the biblical people, the people of Moses, who preserve the Old Testament, and are superior in wisdom to the pagans. Such an apparently paradoxical attitude to Judaism, witnessed to in particular in *Contra Celsum*,⁷⁷ but evidenced in many other places,⁷⁸ arises out of the genuinely ambivalent nature of the relationship Christians saw themselves as having with the Jews. On the one hand, Christians shared the same scriptures with the Jews, and through their relationship to the Jewish scriptures, were able to present themselves to the world as an ancient people with a long history. On the other hand, Jews and Christians disagreed with each other in what was pivotal in coming to an understanding of that revelation. Such ambivalence may well have led on the part of Christians to an intermingling with Jews as well as a distancing from them. Indeed there still seem to me to be good grounds, some of which we have referred to above, for being suspicious of the 'official version' of Jewish-Christian relations, typified by the *adversus Judaeos* texts themselves, which implies that a relationship of animosity (implying a type of absolute separation) existed between the two faiths from a relatively early stage.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ See also Origen, as referred to by Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.4, who refers to the number of the covenant books as handed down by the Hebrews.

⁷⁵ Horbury 1989, 296, assumes that such striking descriptions of the Christian biblical heritage can only be explained if Jewish communities were familiar.

⁷⁶ See also in this respect Pseudo-Cyprian's *Adversus Judaeos* 74 and 81f. where the author notes implicitly how learned the Jews are and how inferior the Christians are in matters of exegesis.

⁷⁷ This contradictory attitude is discussed by de Lange 1976, 63-73.

⁷⁸ See in particular Lieu's discussion of the role of the Jews in second century Christian apologetic writings in Lieu 1996, 151-93.

⁷⁹ On this, see above. A similar point is made by Garnsey 1984, 26, when he notes the disjunction which sometimes existed between the attitudes of intolerance of the government and members of the elite, and those of relative tolerance on the part of ordinary

The evidence cited above, then, combines to support the contention which theoretically at least, seems self-evident, that Christians felt a certain reverence for the Jewish interpretation of scripture. Following on from this they felt the need to consult Jews on certain exegetical matters, and that they correspondingly felt the need to refute Jewish objections to Christian positions, objections, which seem to be in evidence in a number of writings.

The purport of what we have written above is that there was interaction between Christians and Jews in the period Taylor discusses, and that the evidence for this interaction *prima facie* calls into question her view that all Christian anti-Judaism operates on a symbolic level, and is the inevitable consequence of certain emphases in Christian theology.

But what of Jewish reaction to Christianity to which we referred only briefly above?

The difficulty we experience in trying to determine Jewish reaction to Christianity arises out of the lack of Jewish sources for this period (indeed this problem aids Taylor's cause quite considerably). So we possess no indisputable Jewish texts in Latin or Greek after the end of the first century C.E.⁸⁰ (though we have good reason to believe that these existed). Furthermore, rabbinic texts (Mishnah, Tosefta, midrash, Talmud), whose representative character is difficult to determine, throw up often disputed evidence in relation to our subject.

However, in spite of all this, it is odd, that Taylor makes no reference to this disputed rabbinic evidence, nor to discussions of this material by such scholars as A. Marmorstein,⁸¹ E. Urbach,⁸² Travers Herford,⁸³ and indeed, J. Maier,⁸⁴ who adopts a probably over-skeptical attitude to the whole question.⁸⁵ In the same context, Taylor should have made reference to evi-

people. He makes this point in part in relation to Christian attitudes towards paganism, but also in relation to Christian attitudes towards Jews. In this respect he notes how Jews and Christians in the Balearic island of Minorca lived peaceably together until the arrival in 417 or 418 of the relics of St. Stephen, which set in motion a series of anti-Jewish actions on the part of the Christian bishop. On this incident, see Hunt 1982, 106-23.

⁸⁰ As Feldman has written, "For this period we no longer have a Josephus, nor do we have a Jewish Eusebius to describe the history of the Jews during the centuries when the Church grew; and the rabbis, even in their haggadic discussions, show a singular lack of interest in historical matters, being concerned with the exposition of texts and of the laws of Judaism." (Feldman 1993a, 3).

⁸¹ Marmorstein 1910.

⁸² Urbach 1971, 188-201.

⁸³ Herford 1903.

⁸⁴ Maier 1982.

⁸⁵ Passages that might be cited in this respect are *Eccl. Rab.* 1.1.8, where Jewish-Christians are accused of incest, magic, and wife-sharing; *b. Šabb.* 116a-b, where there appears a possibly early parody on Matt 5:14-17 (both passages are discussed by Vi-

dence in support of the probable early existence of polemical anti-Christian Jewish traditions connected with the life of Jesus. Evidence from early on for the existence of such early traditions, which bear a striking resemblance to traditions found in the so-called *Toledoth Yeshu*, a text that is not cited until the medieval period but contains within it much that is ancient, is supported not only by some rabbinic passages of a probably early date,⁸⁶ but also by statements ascribed by Celsus to a nameless Jew,⁸⁷ and by passages found in, amongst others, Justin,⁸⁸ Eusebius,⁸⁹ *The Martyrdom of Pionius*,⁹⁰ *The Martyrdom of Conon*,⁹¹ and Tertullian.⁹² Such

sotzky 1995, 79-83). Horbury, 1992b, puts particular store by the statement of R. Abbahu (made in response to the failure of Safra, his Babylonian colleague, to respond effectively to the anti-Jewish verse from Amos 3:2: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; and therefore I will punish you for your iniquities."), which he addresses to the *minim*: "We [in Palestine], because we live cheek by jowl with you, make it our business to study [the Bible]; they [in Babylon] do not study it." (*b. 'Abod. Zar.* 4a). As Horbury notes: "The importance of the saying in the present context is its demonstration that a close connection between exegesis and apologetic was recognised by Jews."

⁸⁶ See *b. Sanh.* 43a; and *t. Hul.* 2.22-3; 2.24.

⁸⁷ See especially *Cels.* 1.28, 32, 39, 71; 2.11, 12, 46. For a useful summary of this material, see de Lange 1976, 66; and for a defence of Celsus' Jew as representative of actual Jewish opinions, see esp. Bammel 1986, 265-83.

⁸⁸ See *Dial.* 108, where Justin speaks of men who were chosen and sent out Jews in Jerusalem to declare that (i) Jesus was a Galilean deceiver; (ii) the Jews had crucified him; (iii) his disciples had stolen his body by night; (iv) the disciples were deceiving men in asserting that he had been raised from the dead. According to Horbury, "These points, in a developed form, are basic to the Hebrew and Aramaic *Toledoth Yeshu*." (Horbury 1970, 377).

⁸⁹ In his *Hist. eccl.* 1.11.9, just after his quotation of the *Testimonium Flavianum*, Eusebius refers to forged memoranda, which blacken the name of both Jesus and John the Baptist. In the *Toledoth Yeshu* John the Baptist is criticised together with Jesus, so Eusebius' reference may point to knowledge of this narrative. But note *Hist. eccl.* 9.5.1, where the same work is associated with the *Acta Pilati* and assumed to be written by Gentiles.

⁹⁰ The author alludes to two statements made by Jews against Jesus. The first relates to the charge that Jesus suffered the death of a criminal (*biothanes*), and the second to the charge that Jesus could not have been raised from the dead because his spirit was particularly susceptible to the power of Jewish magicians. For a discussion of this passage in *Pionius*, and its connection to an anti-Christian accusation in the Talmud, see Gero 1974, 164-8.

⁹¹ See *Conon* 4 (text in Musurillo 1972, 188). Here the nameless prefect at Magdylus in Pamphylia asks Conon why Christians err in saying that a man is God who in fact was a criminal, "for I accurately learned from the Jews what his family was, the works he showed forth to his people, and how he died on a cross." He goes on to state that the Jews have brought him his accounts (*hupomnemata*) and have read them to him. Horbury 1970, 386, comments: "The specified contents of the *hupomnemata* correspond entirely to what is known from inner-Jewish sources, where however they are found in a similarly connected form in the *Toledoth Yeshu*."

evidence, found in a variety of writings, “indicates the currency of Jewish anti-Christian traditions in the second century and later”,⁹³ and, what is more, Christian knowledge of these traditions.⁹⁴

Any assessment of the value of Christian evidence relating to Jewish persecution of Christians is difficult. Taylor is right to stress that there is not in fact as much evidence for this phenomenon as one might expect (91). This might seem strange, given the tendency for Christian writers to stress the Jewish persecution of prophets, culminating in their condemnation of Jesus. This, *prima facie*, might lead to the view that where mention of such persecution is found, it should in fact be taken seriously. So, for instance, evidence in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and the *Martyrdom of Pionius* seems to have more claim to historicity than Taylor in fact allows.⁹⁵ The same does not always apply to other pieces of evidence, where sometimes the persecution referred to may, as Taylor quite correctly notes, relate to the persecution of the church from much earlier times,⁹⁶ or where the references are simply too vague.

Related to the question of Jewish persecution of Christians is the possibility that on occasions Jews were used by Romans to substantiate, or elaborate on, allegations made by Christians, or that at times they provided information to pagans that was detrimental to Christians. This is suggested by Celsus’ deployment of a Jew in his denunciation of Christianity in the *True Word*, and by the *Martyrdom of Conon* 4, already alluded to above, where the proconsul attempts to persuade Conon to desist from his Christian allegiance on the basis of assertions made by Jews concerning Jesus.⁹⁷

⁹² In this respect see especially *Spect.* 30.5-6, where Tertullian refers to imaginary words spoken by the Jews when they see Christ’s glorious return, words which recall traditions found in the *Toledoth* (“This is he whom his disciples secretly stole away, that it might be said that he had risen again, or that the gardener abstracted him that his lettuces might come to no harm.”). For the contention that this verse reflects genuine Jewish opinion see Horbury 1972, 455-9.

⁹³ Horbury 1992b, 76.

⁹⁴ See Chapter 8 for a more detailed discussion of this material.

⁹⁵ Taylor’s argument that *Mart. Pol* cannot be historical because the Jews are made to say that Polycarp is the destroyer of our gods is not convincing. As Musurillo 1972, 11, notes, the accusations made against Polycarp are representative of accusations made against him in general.

⁹⁶ See Tertullian *Scorp.* 10 where the reference to the synagogues as *fontes persecutionum* appears to refer back to incidences of Jewish hostility to Christians recorded in Acts (note the words that follow [*apud quas apostoli flagella perpassi sunt*]). For a negative assessment of other relevant evidence found in Tertullian, see Scholer 1982, 822-8; and Millar 1966, 132f.

⁹⁷ Visotzky 1995, 79, seems to accord some significance to the accusation made by Origen that Jews have spread the malicious rumour that Christians “sacrifice a child and partake of its flesh, and again that when the followers of the Gospel want to do the works

One aspect of the evidence relating to Jewish reaction to Christianity which Taylor fails to discuss concerns Jewish cursing of Christians and Christ. On a number of occasions in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, Justin refers to such cursing (16.4; 93.4; 95.4; 96.2; 108.3; 123.6; 133.6; 137.2) as do Origen (*Hom. Jer.* 10 [on Jer 8:2]; 19; *Hom. Ps.* 37 [on Ps 2:8]), Jerome (*Comm. Amos I* [on Amos 1.11]; *Comm. Is. II* [on Isa 5:19]; XIII [on Isa 49:7]; XIV [on Isa 52:4-6]) and Epiphanius (*Pan.* 29.9.1). It has become customary to link these references to the so-called Twelfth Benediction of the Jewish communal prayer, *The Eighteen Benedictions*, where a curse is placed upon heretics or *minim*, which in later manuscripts become *Notzrim* or *Nazareans*. It is not my intention to discuss the complex question of the precise reference of the *Birkath ha-minim*. Suffice it to say that some scholars contest such a link, arguing instead that in the first four centuries in which the curse was part of this important Jewish communal prayer, it referred generally to those deemed unorthodox within the Jewish community, and that if it contained any reference to Christians, it was to Jewish Christians or Nazareans, deemed a part of Judaism. The arguments used to support this latter position are by no means decisive,⁹⁸ but even if they

of darkness, they turn out the lamp and each has sexual intercourse with the first woman he meets.” (*Cels.* 6.27). See also Justin, *Dial.* 10, which could be taken to imply the same thing.

⁹⁸ For a recent summary of research into the *Birkath ha-minim* see van der Horst 1994, 99-111. He refers to works by Kimelman 1981, 226-44; by Maier 1982; by Horbury 1982; by Katz 1984, 43-76; and by Schiffman 1985. Arguments in favour of seeing this curse as only referring to Christians in general at a relatively late date (a thesis to which van der Horst himself subscribes) are: (i) that the term *minim* in Tannaic times refers to Jews (implying that those Christians who would have been the subject of a curse relating to the *minim* would have been Jewish Christians); (ii) that the term *notzrim* was only added at a relatively late date to the curse and in any case probably refers to Jewish Christians (as it does in Talmudic sources, and as Epiphanius (*Pan.* 29.9.1), and at one point Jerome [*Epist.* 112.13, though not at *Comm. Is. II* on 5:18-19; *XIII* on 49.7; and *XIV* on 52.4-6], imply it did in the curse); (iii) that Jews wanted to attract Christians to their synagogues and so the presence of such a curse would have been detrimental to their proselytic cause; and (iv) that if there had been such a curse in operation before the fifth century we would expect to find mention of it in anti-Jewish Christian literature (especially John Chrysostom) or anti-Jewish Christian legislation from this period, and yet in neither of these do we find mention of the curse. This argument is made with some force by Thornton 1987, 419-31, to whom van der Horst does not refer. A response to these arguments comes from Horbury, both in the article cited above and elsewhere. He attributes particular importance to the evidence from Justin, arguing that Justin does not mistake a curse of Jewish Christians for one of Christians, for a curse directed against Christians in general would be compatible with what we know of Jewish-Christian relations at the time, and with the fact that Judaism and Christianity were clearly separate entities by the second century. He agrees that *notzrim* may have been a late addition to the prayer, but that does not exclude the possibility that Christians may have been the

were, the references to cursing of Christ and Christians in Christian sources still stand as testimony to Jewish reaction against Christians.

What we have written above goes some way, it is hoped, to showing that, in the period in which she is interested, there is more evidence than Taylor allows for Jewish-Christian contact, both of a polemical and non-polemical kind. Jews and Christians did *react* to each other's presence, and did so for a variety of reasons. Once this is conceded, it becomes probable that texts *adversus Judaeos* bear some relationship to an external reality that was Judaism, that is, on the basis of evidence available to us, a need for such texts seems to emerge.

What then of Taylor's assertion, in which she follows many before her, that this literature is largely repetitive over a number of centuries? First, the themes that Taylor identifies as those, including support from the scriptures for: (i) Jesus' messianic status; (ii) the abandonment of the Jewish law; (iii) Christians as the rightful inheritors of the promises found in the Hebrew Scriptures, would most naturally have been the themes discussed by Jews and Christians, and indeed appear to cohere with Jewish criticism of Christianity in apparently independent sources (Celsus' Jew).⁹⁹ That these arguments had scripture as their central focus is again not surprising. An argument between a Christian and a Jew would most naturally have been an argument about scripture because in the eyes of both this was a text of the highest authority, and fundamental to the expression of each other's faith. This serves to dampen the force of the observation that Christian criticism of Judaism differed from that of pagan criticism (an assertion that Taylor in any case exaggerates¹⁰⁰), in that Christian criticism of Judaism was essentially exegetical and therefore theological. Moreover, it is not surprising that there is a stereotyping of Jewish opinion, a presentation of the Jew as a sometimes-feeble opponent. This is polemical literature,

group principally under consideration in the term *minim*. The assertion that Jews could at once curse and try to attract Christians is not a problem. The cursing could have been part of the attraction play. The force of the observation that we lack references to the cursing in Christian patristic sources (other than Justin) is in part softened by arguing that Jerome is right, and not Epiphanius, when he asserts that the cursing applied to all Christians, and not just Jewish Christians; by the fact that Christian legislation against Jews, until the time of Justinian when it seems a ban on the curse was implemented, is notably mild (particularly in relation to legislation against heretics – the practice of Judaism was always protected, and this in the face of increasing hostility expressed towards Jews [see *inter alia* *Codex Theodosianus* 16.8.9; and 16.8.12), and so a lack of reference to the prohibition of such a curse is unsurprising; and by the fact that Ambrose in the *Callinicum* affair, referred to above, can simply assume that the Jews are enemies of Christ without referring to a curse.

⁹⁹ So, for instance, Celsus' Jew attacks Christians for not obeying the law of Moses (*Cels.* 2.1 and 2.4), and for hailing Jesus as Messiah and divine (2.29, 30).

¹⁰⁰ On this see Juster 1914, 45-8, repeated by Krauss and Horbury 1996, 19-26.

and like much polemical literature, is not always nuanced in its presentation of the opponents' view. Secondly, it is not strictly true that the literature is no more than repetitive. This is neither the case in terms of the forms in which it appears (the dialogue, the straightforward polemical tract, the sermon, the poem, the letter), or the tone it adopts (in this respect note should be taken of the oscillations in tone [sometimes positive; sometimes negative] in the *Dialogue with Trypho*; and the unremitting negativity of Tertullian), or its content (variety of openings and endings; the inclusion in some of a call to repentance and conversion, leading in some instances to the conversion of a Jew [*The Dialogue of Simon and Theophilus*], but in others to a notable omission of such a conversion [*The Dialogue with Trypho*]; and the defensive, non-propagandistic character of some texts). Finally, we must ask, as Simon did in response to Harnack many years ago, why, if these texts assume an opponent other than a Jewish one, did some Christians dedicate themselves to writing separate *adversus Judaeos* texts, in very different genres? If anti-Judaism and Christian identity are so intimately connected, then is there any need for separate *adversus Judaeos* texts? Surely all we should really have are Christian doctrinal or exegetical texts which contain anti-Jewish statements. That is, of course, precisely what we get on occasions, but it is not the context in which such material always appears.

This in turn raises another fundamental question, already hinted at in the immediately preceding paragraph. If Taylor's thesis is correct it would be reasonable to expect that Christian writers would, by and large, be relatively consistent in their expression of anti-Jewish sentiment? But this is not in fact the case. Taylor herself makes this point, but in support of her own view. In discussing Melito of Sardis' *Peri Pascha*, she criticises the view that its anti-Jewishness is somehow related to the significant presence of Jews in Sardis at the time Melito was writing by noting that Theophilus of Antioch, writing at approximately the same time in a city also well-populated by Jews, does not give voice to similarly rebarbative sentiments in his *Ad Autolyicum*. But this is an observation which could be used effectively against Taylor, for it shows that the expression of anti-Jewish sentiment was not necessarily an inherent part of the expression of Christian identity. The implication of this is that where such polemic occurs, it should have a *prima facie* claim on our attention.

On the subject of the varied distribution of anti-Judaism amongst second and third century Christian writers, two further observations should be made. The first relates to Christian apologetic literature. It is certainly true, though Taylor does not discuss this, that some Christian apologists indulge in anti-Jewish sentiment when writing for a pagan audience (a point that Harnack was keen to make), and that they do so when discussing

the interconnection between Old Testament promise and Christian fulfilment of that promise. One might in this respect point to Justin¹⁰¹ and Tertullian.¹⁰² But what is interesting, as I noted above, is that in addition to these apologies, both writers wrote specifically anti-Jewish works, whose concerns and emphases are different from those found in their apologies.¹⁰³

The second point relates to Clement of Alexandria, a figure not discussed by Taylor at all, but one of particular interest. Here we have an example of a Christian who is keen on the exegesis of scripture, indeed upon its allegorical exegesis, and keen to emphasise a covenantal theology, but whose extant works show an almost complete absence of anti-Judaism.¹⁰⁴ This seems strange against the background of Taylor's thesis, and might well be explained by the fact that in the Alexandria in which Clement was writing Jews were not a significant presence.¹⁰⁵ In this respect it is interesting to note that the only anti-Jewish work we know that Clement wrote (*Against the Judaizing Christians*, or the *Ecclesiastical Canon*), was written at the request of Victor, Bishop of Jerusalem (cf. Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 6.13.3).¹⁰⁶

But in opposing Taylor's thesis, we should sound a note of caution. Much of the *adversus Judaeos* literature from the period under discussion

¹⁰¹ It is noticeable, for instance, that in his first Apology, Justin begins to attack the Jews as soon as he attempts to show that the arrival of Christ was foretold in the scriptures. See especially *1 Apol.* 36, where having asserted that one must hear the scriptural words as if they were uttered by the Logos, he goes on: "And this the Jews who possessed the books of the prophets did not understand, and therefore did not recognise Christ even when he came ..."; and continues in the next chapter (37) by producing a group of anti-Jewish testimonies from the Old Testament. Elsewhere in specifically scriptural contexts, anti-Jewish comments occur (cf. 49; 53).

¹⁰² See *Apol.* 21, where Tertullian, having defended the antiquity of the Christians on the basis of the majesty of their scriptures, notes the objection that what he is arguing is specious because Christians do not behave in a way similar to the Jews to whom the scriptures really belong. It is then that the Jews are attacked in relation to their own scriptures, and their failure to recognise Christ.

¹⁰³ On this see Lieu 1996, 151-93.

¹⁰⁴ The evidence is helpfully summarised by Krauss 1892-3, 134-8; Wilde 1949, 180f.; Méhat 1966, 395-8. Clement's writings do contain some negative comments about Jews (at *Strom.* 2.21.2 he describes them as faithless and ignorant; he criticises them for not understanding the inner meaning of the law at *Strom.* 2.42.4-5; and he can blame them for the death of Christ at *Paed.* 2.63.4; 2.73.5f.). But his comments are in general less severe than those found in other Christian writings and appear only infrequently. This contrasts strongly with *The Epistle of Barnabas*, also probably a text of Alexandrian provenance, which Clement knows and uses, but never in an overtly anti-Jewish way.

¹⁰⁵ Support for this contention is based upon the lack of papyri and inscriptions which attest to a Jewish presence from the period of the Jewish revolt of 115-117 against Trajan until the fourth century. See Tcherikover 1957, 92-3.

¹⁰⁶ See chapter 4 in this volume for a more detailed discussion of this material.

often comes to us without any reference to the general context out of which it emerges. There is very little attempt, except in the most minimal way, to indicate why what has been written has been written.¹⁰⁷ We have, more often than not, to read the context out of the literature itself, rather as redaction critics of the Gospels, bereft of any reliable *external* evidence about the historical circumstances which produced these works, and have to reconstruct these circumstances on the basis of perceived emphases in the texts themselves. We can on occasions, if we know the geographical context out of which the text emerges, allow our knowledge of the Jewish and Christian communities in that area, if we indeed have any precise knowledge, to inform our understanding of the purposes of the writing in question. However, even then such information may not help us in assessing the nature of Jewish-Christian relations in that area, of which our only evidence may be the *adversus Judaeos* text whose purpose we are seeking to understand. And in all our lack of in-depth knowledge of Jewish response to Christianity, our shortage of Jewish literature specifically *adversus Christianos*, makes our task yet more difficult, for such literature would indicate the extent to which Christian texts were in fact responding to real Jewish arguments. This is precisely where Taylor has a point, namely that any assessment of the purpose of these texts will in part be bound up with certain assumptions about the nature of Jewish-Christian relations in general.

As an example of the difficulties outlined above we might take the strikingly anti-Jewish utterances of Melito in his *Peri Pascha*. In order to explain this aspect of the homily, some, like Kraabel, emphasise the vibrant nature of the Jewish community in Sardis and simply assume a connection between this and Melito's anti-Judaism.¹⁰⁸ Others, like Taylor, assume no connection between the reality of the Jewish community in Sardis and Melito's anti-Judaism, and argue that the internal logic of Melito's theology/typology lead him to be as anti-Jewish as he is, while others have argued that a variety of explanations can be brought into play, including the Jewish community at Sardis as well as aspects of Melito's theology.¹⁰⁹ In essence the problem we face arises precisely from the fact that we have no information about the nature of Jewish-Christian relations in Sardis for the relevant period, and this lacuna in our knowledge allows for the variety of interpretations presented above. This, however, does not mean that Tay-

¹⁰⁷ Exceptions to this rule might be the *Dialogue with Trypho*, Tertullian's *Adversus Judaeos*, and Cyprian's *Ad Quirinium*. But however we assess the verisimilitude of these settings, they may not give us precise information as to why the texts were written and distributed.

¹⁰⁸ Kraabel 1971, 77-85.

¹⁰⁹ See Wilson 1985, 337-55.

lor's thesis, or Kraabel's diametrically opposed alternative, is right. Indeed on the basis of a number of observations, the third alternative, which assumes a mixture of motives for Melito's anti-Judaism, in which awareness of the synagogue plays a part, seems most convincing.¹¹⁰

However, sometimes our knowledge of these matters is less scrappy, and there does seem to exist a relationship between the external factors of what we know of the condition of the Jewish and Christian communities in the area from which a particular text was written, and what scraps and fragments we may be able to discern of the nature of relations between them, and the internal indicators of that same text.¹¹¹ But the example of Melito, and of other writings, is a warning that we cannot make the macro-context in which Jewish-Christian contact is assumed, the arguments in

¹¹⁰ In addition to Wilson, cited in n. 109 above, see Lieu 1996, 224f. She writes, "Recognition of the interweaving elements which contributed to the passion of the *Peri Pascha* should not make us simply remove the 'synagogue' from the map altogether." In this respect she points to, amongst other things, the fact that in a liturgical context events and figures from an apparent past are invariably related to the present; that the emphasis upon the rejoicing of the Jews has its parallel in their own celebration of the Passover; that the *Peri Pascha* has clearly been influenced by aspects of the Jewish Passover Haggadah; and that when the *Peri Pascha*'s attitude to the Jews is compared with a work of perhaps the same provenance and date, the anonymous *On the Pascha*, its portrayal of the Jews appears much less abstract.

¹¹¹ See, for instance, the interplay of these factors in Horbury's analysis of the purpose of Pseudo-Cyprian's *Adversus Judaeos* (Horbury 1989). He begins by analysing the relations between Christians and Jews in Italy and Africa, the probable provenance of the text. In relation to Italy, he refers to the story of Callistus's dealings with the Jews and his visit to the synagogue on a Sabbath-day synagogue (Hippolytus, *Haer.* 9.7.7-9), to Novatian's three epistles on Jewish subjects of which only one survives, the *de cibis Iudaicis* (1.6), and to the statement of Hippolytus on the watchfulness of the Jews who bear false witness against the church (*Dan.* 1 14f.). A different type of consciousness of the Jews is shown by Caecilian and Octavius in the *Minucius Felix* (33.5, taking up 10.4), which is entirely appropriate given that the setting for the debate is on the beach at Ostia where there was a large Jewish synagogue. With this general background in mind (he provides evidence from Africa as well), he proceeds to a reading of Pseudo-Cyprian's *Adversus Judaeos* in which he is able to show that the general argument and emphasis of the work show that the author had a genuine interest in Judaism, and that this interest reflects a knowledge of the self-awareness of the Jews in Africa and Rome at the time. In this respect he draws particular attention to the reference to Jewish vessels (64), which the writer claims that the Jews have lost, stating that it "has noteworthy correspondences with frequently attested catacomb symbols" such as the menorah, Torah-shrine, amphorae and shofar; and to the notably hieratic description of the Jews at the end of the work (80). When this evidence is combined with the general evidence about Jewish-Christian relations in this area with which he began, Horbury is able to assert that "the purpose of the pseudo-Cyprianic sermon is ... best summed up by reference to its ancient title, *Adversus Judaeos*." For a discussion of some of these methodological questions see Waegeman 1986, 295-313.

favour of which we have outlined above, the sole determinant in our consideration of the purpose of anti-Jewish Christian literature.¹¹²

Finally, it is worth noting at the end of this section that in virtually every example we possess of texts *adversus Judaeos*, we know that those texts more often than not emerged from parts of the Roman Empire in which evidence, inscriptional or otherwise, supports the thesis that there was a large Jewish community. This remains a suggestive observation, without in any way being a knockdown refutation of Taylor's arguments.¹¹³

Before ending our discussion of Taylor's book, we should make some reference to Marcion. It has long been noted that in order for Christians to prove the invalidity of Marcion's contention that there was no relationship between the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New, and no continuity between the messianic promises of the former and the figure of Jesus, they had to indulge in anti-Jewish polemic. After all, in some respects there was a conjunction between Marcionite criticism of standard Christian views on this matter, and Jewish contentions. For Taylor the fact of the existence of this anti-Jewish dimension in such works as Irenaeus' 4th book of his *Adversus Haereses* and Tertullian's *Adversus Marcionem*, especially book 3, proves her point about the necessary conjunction between the expression of Christian identity (at least when it comes to the appropriation of the Old Testament) and anti-Judaism. After all, Jews are not the overt opponents of the heresiologists in their battle against Marcion, and yet they are often the butt of their criticism. But is this as powerful an argument as it seems? It is possible that Marcion may well have been impressed by Jewish criticism of Christian contentions about the disjunction between Christian assertion about the Old Testament and the reality that was the New. Tertullian, after all, asserts that his criticisms show that Marcion has associated with the Jews, although this may be no more

¹¹² A balancing of these factors is seen in Lieu 1996. However, she would perhaps be less keen than the present reviewer to emphasise the importance of reading these texts against a particular macro-context. While there is certainly an emphasis in her work on reading the texts she is studying in relation to external facts about Jews and Christians, she does not construct out of these external facts any all-consuming macro-context, and prefers to read each text in relation to its own apparent emphases, emphases which show up the complex relationship between the image of the Jew, as constructed by Christians, and the reality which seems to lie behind this image.

¹¹³ In a similar vein, see Blumenkranz 1964, 135-40. He argues that the appearance of anti-Jewish tracts in medieval Europe usually occurred in communities where there was a known Jewish population, and at times when church councils were issuing anti-Jewish statements.

than misleading polemic.¹¹⁴ More importantly, just because Marcion's criticisms are rebutted by aligning them with Jewish criticisms, and the presence of Marcionism within the church may serve to make anti-Jewish sentiments more common particularly in relation to talk about the God of the Old Testament, it does not thereby show that actual Jewish criticisms of Christian exegesis were not of any significance, or indeed did not exist.

Some concluding observations

By demonstrating grounds for positing interaction between Christian and Jew in the period under discussion, I am not wishing to argue that Taylor is wrong to suppose a relationship between Christian identity and anti-Judaism. It is perfectly reasonable to argue that there are good grounds for Christians, in affirming their right to be called the people of the God of the Bible, of the new covenant, automatically to attack those who would also claim that right. Furthermore, it is perfectly reasonable to argue that Christians who came to canonise those texts found in what came to be called the New Testament, texts which asserted Jewish responsibility for the death of Christ and criticised non-Christian Jews on other grounds, would come by dint of association with these texts and not by dint of association with actual Jews, to be anti-Jewish. I would not wish to deny any of this. But to dismiss all anti-Jewish sentiment in Christianity as the result of inner-Christian tendencies does not do sufficient justice to the evidence, and suffers from a certain unsubtlety which manifests itself in an 'either-or' mentality – either Christian anti-Judaism genuinely reflects concern and interaction with an external reality called Judaism, and if it does, we should expect very specific types of evidence, or it does not. But as Judith Lieu has shown, the evidence as we have it will not sit easily with such a simple

¹¹⁴ Note especially *Marc.* 3.7: "It is now possible for the heretic to learn, and the Jew as well, what he ought to know already, the reason for the Jew's errors: for from the Jew the heretic has accepted guidance in this discussion (*a quo ducatum mutuatus in hac argumentatione*), the blind borrowing from the blind, and has fallen into the same ditch." See also 3.6: "And so it was compelled to form an alliance with Jewish error (*atque ita coacta est cum Iudaico errore sociari*), and from it to build up an argument for itself on the pretext that the Jews, assured that he who was to come was an alien, not only rejected him as a stranger but even put him to death as an opponent, although they would have beyond doubt recognised him and have treated him with all religious devotion if he had been their own. It can have been no Rhodian law, but a Pontic one, which assured this shipmaster that the Jews were incapable of making a mistake ..." (from Evans' edition), 187 and 183. Further support for this contention might come from the observation that Marcion seemed to accept the legitimacy of Jewish hope in the Messiah of the 'Demurge' who would bring about *restitutionem iudaici status* (*Marc.* 4.6.3).

solution. In her study she concentrates on the way in which Jews and Judaism are presented in second century Christian writings from Asia Minor. She emphasises the varied nature of the presentation, and while she is quite prepared to admit that the image of the Jew which she finds in these writings is certainly a part of the Christian self-image, she shows how such literature does sometimes give us genuine glimpses of a Jewish reality behind the image. For Lieu there is a complex interplay in the Christian presentation of the Jew between image and reality. Such a conclusion could be stated another way. In any analysis of Christian anti-Jewish literature, there is an intriguing relationship, not always clearly discernible, between the needs of Christian polemic and theology, and the fact of an external reality called Judaism.

A proper answer to the question of the role of anti-Judaism in the expression of Christian identity for the period under discussion could only be given by examining the role that Jewish polemic plays in each Christian writer whose writings survive. This has not been attempted here. But it is hoped that something of the complexity involved in seeking to answer such a question has been conveyed, complexity which excludes the 'either/or' approach of Miriam Taylor (or of anyone else for that matter). It is also hoped, moreover, that the arguments in favour of the view that there was contact between Jews and Christians and that therefore Christian anti-Judaism has, on occasions at least, something to tell us about Jewish-Christian interaction, have also been successfully advanced.

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Chapter 3

Barnabas 9.4 a peculiar verse on circumcision*

In recent times interest in the study of *Barnabas* has centered on the author's use of sources.¹ One of *the* results of this approach has been the realisation that material in the epistle previously regarded as anti-Jewish is taken from Judaism itself. Hence to describe the author as anti-Jewish is to misrepresent him. So R. A. Kraft, in his review of P. Prigent's monograph of 1961, writes: "One would do well to dismiss this term (anti-Jewish) altogether from the description of the epistle."² Not only is this statement unimaginative (a criticism *extra muros* is in tone quite different from a criticism *intra muros*. Note in this respect Christian use of the Hebrew Bible's many critical comments about Jews), but it fails to take account of harsh statements in the epistle that, in the opinion of the present writer, come from the pen of Barnabas himself (from now on *Barnabas*). It is the aim of this paper to examine a verse in which such a statement occurs, and argue for the uniqueness of its sentiment as this relates to available evidence, claiming that it originates with its author. In a broader context an attempt will be made to show how the verse illuminates the situation *Barnabas* is addressing.

At the beginning of the second section of his discussion of circumcision *Barnabas* writes: ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ περιτομὴ ἐφ' ἣ πεποιθήσιν κατήργηται περιτομὴν γὰρ εἴρηκεν οὐ σαρκὸς γεννηθῆναι ἀλλὰ παρέβησαν ὅτι ἄγγελος πονηρὸς ἐσόφιζεν αὐτούς (*Barn.* 9.4). K. Lake translates: "But moreover the circumcision in which they trusted has been abolished. For he declared that circumcision is not of the flesh, but they erred because an evil angel was deceiving them."³

An alteration of this rendering might be suggested at two points. First, the perfect passive κατήργηται should be translated as 'rejected',⁴ for this

* First published in *Vigiliae Christianae* 45 (1991), 242-54.

¹ See Windisch 1920, 408-11; Prigent 1961; Kraft 1961; Wengst 1971; Prigent and Kraft 1971.

² Kraft 1962, 405.

³ Lake 1912, 1.370-3.

⁴ Abolition can seem natural if the epistle is viewed against the background of Hadrian's supposed measures against circumcision (See Spartianus in *SHA Hadriani* 14.2) to which the passage was said to refer by Haeuser 1912, 58. Such an inference, based

more clearly conveys the idea indicated in the verse, that literal circumcision never had any validity in the eyes of God; ‘abolish’ implies that it did.⁵ Secondly, παραβήσαν is better translated as ‘sinned’ (not ‘erred’). This is significant, because in the LXX παραβαίνω is used frequently to describe the sins of Israel against God.⁶ Hence the use of this word implies that for *Barnabas* the literal implementation of circumcision is a sin against God, a statement that constitutes an extraordinary inversion of the Genesis account, where it is stated that he who is not circumcised “shall be cut off from the kin of his father” (Gen 17:14). *Barnabas* goes further in his inversion of canonical traditions by claiming that the commandment was the work of an evil angel. Bardenhewer was accurate when he wrote that, according to *Barnabas*, “beruhte der jüdische Gebrauch der Beschneidung nicht auf göttlicher Einsetzung, sondern auf einer Täuschung der Juden durch einen bösen Engel.”⁷ In effect *Barnabas* has demonised the covenantal rite.

In the first part of this paper I will undertake to discover the possible sources or theological influences behind this verse.

What *Barnabas* writes in 9.4 appears partly as an attempt to support his highly symbolical interpretation of circumcision (see what precedes and follows this verse). Nowhere does he deny that there was a commandment to circumcise; he merely refutes the belief that the command was ever meant literally. In adopting such an allegorical understanding of the rite, he was journeying down an exegetical path well trodden by his Jewish predecessors. Such an interpretation appears in partial form in the prophetic insistence on the circumcision of the heart, but finds its clearest surviving expression in Philo. So, for instance, the latter writes: “I consider circumcision to be a symbol of the things most necessary to our well being. One is the excision of pleasures which bewitch the mind ... The other reason is that a man should know himself and banish from the soul grievous maladies.” (*Spec.* 1.8-10). He expresses similar views in *QG* 3.45-6, *QE*

upon the passive form of καταργέω, and the omission in the Latin text of the words ἀλλὰ καὶ το γένηθῆναι (L reads: *sed praeterierunt, quia angelus nequam docebat illos*), is problematic. The perfect passive could refer to the event of the angel’s deception, and the omission of the Latin text proves nothing. Furthermore the reliability of the Spartianus account has been called into question. For a defence of Spartianus see Smallwood 1959, and, more recently, Smallwood 1981, 428-9. For a differently formulated attempt to argue a similar case to that of Haeuser see Schwartz 1980, and a response in Carleton Paget 1994, 29-30.

⁵ Prigent 1961, 84 ad loc. discusses the verb as it appears in *Barnabas* and opts for a translation of ‘rejeter’. It is worth noting that a translation by the word ‘abrogate/cancel’ in 2.6 might seem more suitable.

⁶ See *inter alia* Lev 26:40; Num 14:1; Josh 7:11; 3 *Macc.* 7.10; 4 *Macc.* 13.15.

⁷ Bardenhewer 1902, 88.

2.2, *Agr.* 39, and *Somn.* 2.25.⁸ However, while Philo is willing to endorse the application of the allegorical method to circumcision, nowhere does he deny that circumcision was meant to be implemented literally (in contrast to *Barnabas*). Indeed, in *Spec.* and *QG*, he appends sound medical reasons for circumcision;⁹ while in *Migr.* he explicitly rejects the argument that an allegorical interpretation of the rite excludes *de facto* a literal interpretation.¹⁰ This final passage is especially noteworthy, informing us, albeit in threadbare form, that some Jews, favouring a more abstract interpretation of Torah, disregarded its literal intention. It has been suggested that *Barnabas*, particularly at this point in his epistle, is indebted to a Jewish tradition emanating from such a group.¹¹

Even if this were the case, that would account only for the κατήργηται of 9.4, and not the πονηρὸς ἄγγελος. Reference at this point might also usefully be made to the practice, evidenced amongst certain Jews, of epispasm (the concealing of circumcision by the surgical lengthening of the foreskin), though whether those who had this operation done belonged to a group similar to that mentioned in Philo, remains questionable. Motivations for epispasm were social and economic, as well as theological. Furthermore, epispasm could be said to be in accord with the commandment of Genesis; those who adopted it had in the past already been circumcised.¹²

The question whether newly baptised Gentile Christians should be circumcised was from a very early stage a burning issue in the Christian community. That this controversy arose only because of antipathy amongst a body of Christians towards the observance prescribed in the Torah seems highly unlikely. Much more probable is the view that the dispute in part reflected a genuine ambiguity in Judaism as to whether proselytes should be circumcised.¹³ Paul's argument that circumcision was unnecessary for

⁸ For a discussion of these references, especially those in *Spec.*, see Hecht 1984.

⁹ In *Spec.* 1.6-7, he describes how circumcision frees one from chronic inflammation of the prepuce, and is an aid to fertility.

¹⁰ *Migr.* 92 reads: "It is true that circumcision does indeed portray the excision of pleasure ... but let us not on this account lay down the law for circumcising." (μηδ' ... ἀνέλωμεν τὸν ἐπὶ τῇ περιτομῇ τεθέντα νόμον.)

¹¹ In this respect see Prigent 1961, 145 of *Comm.*: "Ces gens que Philon décrit peuvent-ils être considérés comme les auteurs de la tradition utilisée ici par Ps. B." But further on he continues: "Ce serait bâtir une hypothèse sur une base singulièrement étroite. Disons seulement que ce florilège est une oeuvre chrétienne, mais le Judaïsme en a préparé les voies."

¹² Such a phenomenon is most famously witnessed in *1 Macc.* 1.15 (καὶ ἐποίησαν ἑαυτοῖς ἀκροβυστίαν), and inveighed against, at least implicitly, in *Jub.* 15.9-34. That the practice continued a long time after this period appears evident from references to it in the rabbis and Epiphanius. For a recent discussion of the subject see Hall 1988.

¹³ See McElenny 1973. For a response to this article, see Nolland 1981.

the Gentile convert most likely arose from what E. P. Sanders has called his “exclusivist soteriology” (that is, salvation is through Christ alone; therefore there is no need for anything else). In Galatians, a letter addressed to a church in the throes of a ‘Judaising’ crisis, Paul has some brutal things to say about circumcision, at one point comparing it to a form of mutilation.¹⁴ Indeed at 5.2, the act of circumcision becomes the means by which a Christian cuts himself/herself off from Christ.¹⁵ Not even here, however, where Paul is at his most acrimonious, is circumcision denied a valid role in the history of Israel, let alone imputed to the inspiration of a demon. Furthermore, it is important to balance this negativism with the sober tone of Romans where circumcision is accorded a rightful place in salvation history (see particularly Rom 4). Certain early church fathers appear to adopt a position similar to that of Paul. Hence while most are clear that the requirement of circumcision is superseded by the Gospel (Origen *Cels.* 2.7), they seek to find in it a spiritual significance (Justin *Dial.* 41.4; Origen *Comm. Matt.* 12.4; *Princ.* 2.6,7), on many occasions interpreting it as a type of baptism (*Dial.* 29.1; Origen *Hom. Jos.* 5.6). The most sharply negative critique of the rite comes in Justin. Writing after the Bar Kokhba revolt, he sees circumcision merely as a mark designed to make the Hadrianic ban on Jews entering Jerusalem easier to implement (*Dial.* 16.2-3; 19.2; 92.1-3). Such a punitive interpretation of circumcision is certainly harsh, but it is some distance from *Barnabas*’ vituperative tone. Indeed in this respect it is interesting to note how Christian writers, however virulently anti-Jewish they might have been (and this is the case even with John Chrysostom), never indulged in popular pagan polemic against the rite, as witnessed in Petronius, Martial, Tacitus, and Juvenal.¹⁶

Three points emerge from this brief consideration of Jewish and early Christian understandings of circumcision. First, a spiritual interpretation of the rite existed long before *Barnabas*. This interpretation reaches its clearest expression in Philo. Secondly, in *Migr.* Philo gives evidence of a body of Jews who interpreted the act of circumcision, along with other commandments of the Torah, in an exclusively allegorical sense. These people might have been, as Prigent suggested, the exegetical ancestors of *Barnabas*. Thirdly, even if we accept Prigent’s tentative suggestion (point 2), the theological antecedents of *Barnabas*’ demonisation of the rite are still unclear.

¹⁴ Gal 5.12; see also Phil 3:2.

¹⁵ This might indicate that it has some sort of demonic quality.

¹⁶ See Petronius *Satyricon* 68.8; Martial *Epigrammata* 7.82; Tacitus *Historiae* 5.2; and Juvenal *Satire* 14.96-106. For a possible exception to the view that Christians never indulged in pagan polemic against circumcision see *Diog.* 4.2.

In Gal 3:19 Paul writes: τί οὖν ὁ νόμος; τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν προσετέθη ἄχρισ οὐ ἔλθη τὸ σπέρμα ᾧ ἐπήγγελται· διαταγείς δι' ἀγγέλων εἰς χειρὶ μεσίτου. In the context of the present discussion the importance of this verse lies in its attribution of the giving of the law to angels. Scholars have for a long time argued over the moral quality of these angels. Most agree that Paul does not think of them as evil,¹⁷ but mentions them to show that the law is mediated rather than directly revealed. Whatever the answer to this question, there is here an early Christian statement to the effect that the law is given by angels, and this tradition is used in a negative sense. This usage contrasts strongly with that found in Judaism where the presence of the angels at Mt. Sinai becomes a means of further extolling the glory of Torah. Thus in the texts which link angels and the *nomothesis*, cited by Strack and Billerbeck,¹⁸ only one has a negative slant (*Pesiq. Rab.* 107b), while the others (see, *inter alia*, the LXX of Deut 33:2; *Pesiq. Rab.* 21 (104a); *Mek. Ex.* 20.18 (78b); *b Šabb.* 88a) have a positive one. Further examples of this association of angels and the law appear in Josephus who at one point in his *Antiquities* writes: “And we have learnt the noblest of our doctrines and the holiest of our laws from angels sent by God”,¹⁹ and *Jubilees*, where the Angel of Presence commanded by God (1.27), dictates the law to Moses (2.1).²⁰ Is it not reasonable to argue that *Barnabas*, familiar with the tradition that attributed angelic inspiration to the law and this in a positive light, has quite deliberately given it a negative twist – inspired perhaps by Paul’s negative, albeit milder usage, witnessed in Galatians²¹ – and then has concentrated the negativism more narrowly on circumcision?

Jewish angelology provides us with further clues concerning the theological provenance of *Barnabas*’ harsh sentiment. Jewish literature is replete with evil angels. For instance, Philo, in *Gig.* 16 writes: “So, too, you also will not go wrong if you reckon as angels, not only those who are worthy of the name ... but also those who are unholy and unworthy of the

¹⁷ This is not the case with Schoeps. He thinks that the angels are “obviously hostile to the Jewish people” (1961, 182).

¹⁸ Strack and Billerbeck 1926, 3.554-6.

¹⁹ For the argument that ἀγγέλων refers to human agents (e.g. Prophets) see Davies 1954, 135-40; and Markus 1963, 66-7.

²⁰ On the mediatory role of angels it is interesting to note Schäfer’s view expressed in Schäfer 1975, 44-51. He argues that in later times the rabbis, probably under the influence of the kind of exegesis exemplified in Paul, and perhaps *Barnabas*, lessened or excluded this role. I am indebted for this reference to Skarsaune 1987, 316 n. 164.

²¹ Linguistic affinities might suggest a direct reliance upon Paul. See ἄγγελος/δι’ ἀγγέλων; παρέβησαν/τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν. The latter parallel is particularly significant given the fact that *Barnabas* usually characterises Jewish interpretative failures as *error*, not *sin*. If *Barnabas* is reliant upon Paul at this point it is odd that he makes no reference to him. Lack of allusions to Paul or to Pauline works is a general and interesting feature of the epistle.

title.”²² He cites Ps 78:49 as proof that these malicious agents exist. “He sent upon them the anger of his wrath, wrath and anger and affliction, a mission of evil angels”, and then goes on to explain how these figures deceive men into leading noxious lives by playing on their sense perceptions.²³

Even more significant are the references to evil agents in the pseudographic literature. In this respect special attention should be paid to *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*. Here the angels function as pervasive and pernicious influences in the present age, always willing to attack men openly or surreptitiously. Chief amongst their roles is that of deceiving men into committing sins against God. So we read in *T. Dan* 5.5: “And you are motivated to all evil by the spirits of deceit (τῶν πνευμάτων τῆς πλάνης).” The notion that angels deceive, constantly repeated in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*,²⁴ should be seen as a close parallel to *Barnabas*’ attribution of deceitful qualities to the evil angel (in 9.4), implied by his use of ἐσόφισεν.²⁵

Some scholars have ignored any connection with classical Jewish angelology, and explained *Barn.* 9.4 in terms of Gnostic/Marcionite influence. Windisch is typical when he writes: “Die Zurückführung der doch im Gesetz ausdrücklich befohlenen Beschneidung auf Betörung durch einen bösen Engel führt den Barnabas dicht an gnostische Vorstellungen heran.”²⁶ Such a hypothesis is based upon the tradition, found in the early

²² For other references to angels in Philo see *Conf.* 181; *Deo* 157; *Mut.* 32, 41; *Fug.* 67.

²³ Philo understands the angels to exploit the sensual faculty of man (what he terms the aesthetic. See the words at 17 δι’ ἧς αἴσθησις ἀπατᾶται). *Barnabas* attributes the failure of the Jews to understand the scriptures to an equivalent sensuality. At 10.9 he writes: “Moses made three doctrines concerning food and spoke thus in the spirit; but they received them as really referring to food, owing to the lust of their flesh.”

²⁴ It is important to note that in *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* the activity of the spirits has a mainly anthropological function. As Hollander and de Jonge write: “The emphasis (of the book) lies clearly in the struggle of men in their own personal circumstances with evil influences coming from outside but operating in their minds” (1985, 50). They continue, however: “Sometimes elements come in which are more clearly mythological.” Here they cite particularly references to the promised destruction of Beliar and his evil spirits (*T. Sim.* 6.6; 7.6; 18.12). In some respects this combination of the anthropological and mythological has parallels in *Barnabas*. So at 2.10 and 4.9, *Barnabas* can entertain the idea that the evil angel gains an entrance into the Christian, while in 2.1, 18.1 and 20.1 he can entertain a more mythological viewpoint.

²⁵ See also in the O.T. the evil spirits sent to create false prophecy (1 Kings 22:22). In *Jubilees* evil spirits are sent by God to lead men astray (10.2, 8; 15.31), and in *CD* 12.2 it is written: “Every man who preaches apostasy under the dominion of the spirits of Satan shall be judged according to the law.” For negative uses of σοφίζω see Philo *Leg.* 3.64; *Mut.* 240; and *Ios.* 217.

²⁶ Windisch 1920, 352. For the earliest expression of this view see Baur 1835, 89.

church fathers, that Marcion attributed an evil personality to the Demiurge, or Creator God of the Old Testament. This interpretation is inadequate on two grounds. First, the moral quality of the Marcionite Demiurge is not as unambiguous as some would lead us to believe. While it is true that Irenaeus can impute to Marcion a view of the Demiurge as *malorum factor et bellorum concupiscens et inconstans quoque sententia et contrarius sibi ipse*, at another point the same man can write that in his subject's theological scheme there are two gods, one good, and the other, in fact, *judicialis*. A similar ambiguity exists in Tertullian's *Adversus Marcionem* (See 1.6; 5.13 and 5.18).²⁷ Secondly, for Marcion the whole of the Old Testament is a tale of the work of the Demiurge. For *Barnabas*, the circumcision legislation alone is his work, and this only in its literalist form.²⁸ Furthermore, we should be cautious in describing the πονηρὸς ἄγγελος as an entity equivalent to the Demiurge; it is *an* evil angel, not *the* evil angel.

This final observation that *Barnabas* has restricted the work of the evil angel to deceiving the Jews into literal observance of the circumcision law, acts as a pointer to another contributory factor in the creation of this verse, namely the belief that the Torah could contain false precepts. This is most radically and dramatically stated in Ezek 20:25, where it is written: "So I gave them commandments that were not good, and ordinances in which they should not live." In his commentary, Zimmerli, rejecting theories of interpolation, or mollifying textual reconstructions,²⁹ writes: "The statement that Yahweh makes his law ... the occasion of punishment is quite unique in the Old Testament."³⁰ Certain early church fathers were quick to exploit the verse for anti-Jewish purposes. For instance, Irenaeus (*Haer.* 4.15.1), in distinguishing between the good and natural precepts of the Ten Commandments and the existentially enslaving ritual law, writes: "But when they turned back themselves to make a calf ... they were placed for the future in a state of servitude suited to their wish. As Ezekiel the prophet writes ..." And he then proceeds to quote the above passage.³¹ Origen (*Cels.* 7.20; *Hom. Exod.* 7.2) indulges in exegesis of the same text, claim-

²⁷ Blackman 1948, 66-7, attributes this ambiguity to a genuine confusedness in the mind of Marcion. This would explain Irenaeus' description of the Demiurge as *contrarius sibi*.

²⁸ See Windisch's statement that "Barnabas seine These ausdrücklich nur von diesem einem Institut des jüdischen Zeremonialswesens behauptet ..." (1920, 352).

²⁹ See Bewer 1953, 159-61.

³⁰ Zimmerli 1979, 411.

³¹ Such a view can be seen to be linked to the argument, found particularly in Justin, that the laws given after the episode of the Golden Calf (mainly the ritual laws), constituted an accommodation to the idolatrous tendencies of the Jews (named by M. Simon "the homeopathic argument"). For the possible connection between 9.4 and this anti-Jewish argument see Skarsaune 1987, 315-16.

ing that the bad statutes constitute the Jewish law interpreted in a literal sense.

Not directly related to Ezekiel 20:25, but nevertheless germane to the idea that false precepts existed in the Old Testament, is *The Letter of Ptolemy to Flora*.³² This document is evidence of apparent controversy (from perhaps the same provenance as *Barnabas*, namely Egypt) about the origins of the law. Some, it seems, claimed that the law was promulgated by God, while others, “taking the opposite road, insist that our corruptor and adversary (ἀντικειμένου φθοροποιού διαβόλου) the Devil, promulgated it ...”³³ Ptolemy rejects both these extremes, as he sees them, preferring a modified form of the false precepts argument in which he differentiates between three types of legislation in the Old Testament: that of God, in Ptolemy’s scheme *the Demiurge*, that of Moses, and that of the Fathers. The latter two are seen as contrary to God, and as either abolished or modified by the coming of Christ (it should be noted that he divides up the law of God into three: good laws associated with the Decalogue, those that have an admixture of evil and righteousness, and those that are typical and symbolic). This position gives us a matrix out of which *Barnabas*’ idea of demonised circumcision becomes understandable, particularly in respect of hermeneutical method (what you do not like in the law you impute to agents lesser than God). That *Barnabas* has sought refuge in evil agencies makes him in one respect closer to those opponents of Ptolemy who attribute the giving of the law to the Devil. The fact that he does this for circumcision alone places him closer to the spirit of Ptolemy, though he is a less sophisticated thinker than the Valentinian. It would be wrong, however, to argue that this form of thinking was essentially Christian. As Fallon,³⁴ following Quispel, has noted, the traditions lying behind this sentiment may well have been Jewish. Support for this theory is indicated not only by reference to the Ezekiel passage cited above, but also by reference to the peculiar words found in Strabo, which probably reflecting a marginal Jewish tradition, attribute much of the Pentateuchal legislation, including circumcision, to tyrannical people.³⁵

³² For text see Quispel 1950. The letter is taken from Epiphanius, *Panarion* 33.3-8.

³³ Epiphanius, *Panarion*, 33.3.2. The translation is from Trigg 1988, 61. For a similar dissectory approach to the O.T. see Rhodon in his book *Against the Marcionites*, who, according to Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 5.13.2), mentions a Marcionite sect, led by Apelles, who believed in one *arche* (μίαν ἀρχὴν ὁμολογεῖ) but attributed the prophets to an opposing spirit (τὰς δὲ προφητείας ἐξ ἀντικειμένου λέγει πνεύματος).

³⁴ See Fallon 1976. For a further discussion of the idea of false precepts see Strecker 1958, 166-187; and Horbury 1988, 759-60.

³⁵ “His (Moses’) successors abided for some time by the same course, acting righteously and being truly pious towards God; but afterwards, in the first stage, superstitious men (δεισιδαιμόνων) were appointed to the priesthood, and then tyrannical people

Finally, and closely connected to the preceding point, reference ought to be made to the theological technique, found amongst both Jews and Christians, of imputing the teaching or activity of one's opponent to the work of a demon (what Lampe has elsewhere called "the demonology of prophecy"). This is most famously exemplified in Mark 3, where the Pharisees, unable to deny the fact of Jesus' miracles, argue for their demonic inspiration; and in John 8:44 where the failure of the Jews to believe that Jesus comes from God leads to the accusation that they are "of their father, the devil." Similar language is found in Paul (2 Cor 11:3; Gal 3:1), Ignatius (Ign. *Eph.* 10.3; 17.1), Justin (*Dial.* 35), and most of the heresiologists.

From all the above investigation, we can argue that what *Barnabas* has written at 9.4 is unique in the limited sense of that word. That is, while the specific demonisation of circumcision, or at least its literal interpretation, is unique (insofar as we know), the traditions and theological premises lying behind it can be discerned through careful study. Of its anti-Jewish quality, there can be no doubt.

Some commentators have sought, however, to dilute these conclusions. So Kraft calls into question the view that any part of ch. 9 can be called anti-Jewish. He writes, "Ps. Barnabas is much more interested in arguing (in the chapter) that he who has a right understanding has the true circumcision instead of arguing against circumcision itself."³⁶ While this is true of 9.1-3 and 9.7f., it too easily overlooks the negativism of 9.4 and what follows in vv. 5-6. Interestingly, some scholars regard these verses (4-6) as interpolatory precisely because of their harshness of tone. So Robillard³⁷ argues that originally the section beginning from 9.1 was merely a conventional Jewish argument in favour of a spiritualist interpretation of circumcision, but that an editor, writing during the Bar Kokhba revolt and entertaining understandably hostile opinions of his Jewish brothers, has given the whole passage an anti-Jewish hue by inserting 9.4-6. While I do not hold to Robillard's view that 9.4f. is an interpolaton in the sense that it has been added to a pre-existent text of the epistle, the case he makes for seeing 9.4f. as strangely anti-Jewish in relation to the material surrounding it, and as therefore affecting the overall interpretation of the chapter, is well founded.³⁸

(τυρρανικῶν ἀνθρώπων); and from superstition arose abstinence from flesh ... and circumcision and excisions and other observances of the same kind." Strabo, *Geogr.* 16.2.37. For further comments on the passage see Stern 1984, 306f.; and Lebram 1974.

³⁶ Kraft 1961, 187.

³⁷ Robillard 1971, 188 n. 9.

³⁸ Völter 1904, 350, comes to the opposite conclusion. He sees 9.4-6 as the earlier text, which in the original letter followed on from 5.4. An editor has separated these two verses and added the section 5.4-9.3. This theory is less compelling than Robillard's for

Kraft's argument might still seem powerful, however, if we take into account 9.7f., for here in contradiction to 9.4, physical circumcision is accorded a positive value. As D. Völter has written: "... derjenige, der in IX:7-9 als den Urheber der Beschneidung den Abraham nennt und ihn dabei auf Christum hinblicken lässt, kann nicht vorher gesagt haben, die Juden hätten bloss durch einen bösen Engel verführt die Beschneidung angenommen."³⁹ But against this two counters can be made. First, *Barnabas* attributes such a positive value to Abraham's circumcision only. Secondly, he is forced to do this because in the Bible Abraham actually is circumcised. Furthermore, we may see it as part of his general exegetical technique of implicating as many as possible of the Old Testament alumni into his christological cast (see 12.2; 12.10; 13.4-5).⁴⁰ In refutation of the view that the verse is original to *Barnabas*, Wengst (amongst others)⁴¹ has argued that it goes back to a pre-existent source. But such an argument seems to the present writer to overlook clear indications in the verse of its Barnabite origin. These will be enumerated below.

First, *Barnabas*' introduction of the verse by ἀλλὰ καί adds to it a certain intrusive quality, though the words could merely be proof of a crude redactional method whereby different sources are kneaded together with the addition of the odd connecting phrase. The use of a form of καταργέω in 9.4a constitutes, moreover, a second and more convincing argument, recalling 2.6 and 16.2, where the writer uses the same verb in the typically Barnabite fashion of 'reject' (for this see above). A third and decisive argument lies in the presence of ἐσόφισεν in 9.4c. This verb is only found once elsewhere in the epistle, and there in a verse that is clearly written by *Barnabas* himself. At 5.3a he writes, οὐκοῦν ὑπερευχαριστεῖν ὀφείλομεν τῷ κυρίῳ ὅτι καὶ τὰ παρεληλυθότα ἡμῖν ἐγνώρισεν καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐνεστῶσιν ἡμᾶς ἐσόφισεν.⁴² It is interesting to note that here σοφίζω appears with God as the subject, but in 9.4c it is the evil angel who is the subject. I would contend, however, that it is a typically Barnabite touch to make an evil agent the subject when applied to the Jews, and God the subject when

it begs the question why the later editor did not simply expunge 9.4-6 from the original letter.

³⁹ Völter 1904, 39.

⁴⁰ For a similar judgment see Scorza-Barcellona 1975, 147-8: "Tuttavia sembra più probabile che Barnaba consideri il rito praticato da Abramo *soltanto* come una prefigurazione di Cristo, e non come una vera circoncisione secondo l'uso di Israele: oppure che consideri *soltanto* il rito praticato da Abramo, e non l'istituzione successiva della circoncisione, che resterebbe opera diabolica."

⁴¹ Wengst 1971, 36.

⁴² See Wengst 1971, 22, where he himself admits this verse comes from *Barnabas*, stating that "5.3 hätte sich als eine ad hoc Bildung des *Barnabas* erwiesen."

applied to the Christians. It is in keeping with the more general contrast *Barnabas* draws between Christian illumination and Jewish error.⁴³

A further observation supports this linguistic argument. Even on a superficial reading of *Barnabas* it is evident that its author is of a dualistic turn of mind. This present age is an evil one (see 2.1) which, though tempered by the arrival of Christ, remains evil until the return of that same Christ who will usher in the new world (15.5). *Barnabas*' particular form of dualism depicts this world as governed by an evil figure (see 2.1, 10; 4.9; 16.7; 18.1; 20.1; 21.3). Indeed, at 2.10 and 21.13 he refers to the figure as πονήρος. Hence it seems reasonable to argue that the use of πονήρος ἄγγελος to describe the figure who deceives the Jews into implementing circumcision literally is wholly in keeping with *Barnabas*' generally dualistic view that sees evil personified in an evil figure.

At the end of this paper a number of observations seem in order. First, what we find expressed in *Barn.* 9.4 is, in relation to the Jewish, early Christian, and Gnostic literature of which we have knowledge, unique. That is not to say, however, that it emerges from a theological vacuum. As our study has shown, *Barnabas*, in attributing the literal interpretation of the circumcision command to the work of a demon, has melded different traditions, from both Judaism and early Christianity; radicalism emerges out of a peculiar blend of theological ideas. This is typical of the general hermeneutical procedure of the letter. In this respect one need only look at *Barnabas*' critique of temple worship and the covenant where he seems to radicalise criticisms of Judaism, found both within Judaism itself and Christianity. Secondly, the observation that *Barn.* 9.4 comes from the pen of *Barnabas* and not simply out of a tradition to which he was privy, is further support to those who see the letter as directed to a situation in which Judaism was perceived as a threat. This threat probably arose from proselytising activity on the part of Jews whose confidence had been revitalised by the prospect of a rebuilt temple. In the face of such a crisis, *Barnabas* writes a letter in which he negates the view that the Jews ever had a covenantal relationship with God. From the time of Sinai onwards the history of Judaism has been one of darkness and misunderstanding. Obviously in such circumstances the question of circumcision would have arisen,⁴⁴ just as it had for Paul in Galatia. Indeed so critical an issue was it that *Barnabas* was not willing simply to argue for the truth of a purely symbolic interpretation of the rite (as he had for sacrifice, the temple and the dietary laws), but to demonise it. In the physical implementation of circumcision the Jews and implicitly those whom they converted, were participating in a

⁴³ In this respect see 8.7 and 10.12.

⁴⁴ That circumcision was a definite issue is evident from the fact that in 9.6, *Barnabas* seems to quote the words of his opponents (see also in this respect 4.6b and 12.10b).

demonic act. In the expression of such a sentiment *Barnabas* holds the dubious distinction of being unique. But the extremity of his interpretation is probably reflective of the extremity of his circumstances.

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Chapter 4

Clement of Alexandria and the Jews^{*}

Introduction

Did Justin Martyr really have a conversation with Trypho the Jew as he states that he did in his *Dialogue with Trypho*? When Tertullian in his *Adversus Judaeos* reviled Jews for their failure to understand the scriptures in the way he did, was he in fact reviling Jews known to him who actually disagreed with him? Or put another way, do the accusations he makes against Jews give evidence of an ongoing debate with that ancient community?

We could address similar sorts of questions to the writings of many other patristic authors who took it upon themselves to polemise against Jews and the Jewish community in general. Does the anti-Jewish polemic found in these writings give us evidence of a genuine debate/controversy between Christian and Jew?

Prima facie a thesis that answered this question positively would seem to cohere best with the evidence, if only because anti-Jewish sentiments are such a persistent presence in Christian literature of the patristic period.¹

A contrary opinion also exists, however, one first given scholarly credibility by Adolf von Harnack,² and supported since then by a number of scholars, including Miriam Taylor.³ They have argued, with different emphases, that Christian texts *adversus Judaeos*, and Christian anti-Jewish polemic in general, are not directed against Jews at all, but rather arise out of an inner need within Christian theology itself. Christian theologians relied heavily upon the Jewish scriptures for the expression of their own identity – they, after all, claimed to be in possession of a revelation that was the fulfillment of those scriptures. Christians had therefore to show that their interpretation of these scriptures was correct, and this led of necessity to the expression of anti-Jewish sentiments, for the majority of Jews had not adopted Christianity, and so appeared its most formidable opponent. The fact that Christian polemic bore no relationship to *actual*

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¹This thesis is supported by, amongst many others, Simon 1986.

²Harnack 1883, 56f.

³Taylor 1995.

Jewish criticism of Christianity is supported by the stereo-typical and standardised form of these criticisms, witnessed over a number of centuries.

If the thesis of Taylor and others is true, that Christian anti-Jewish polemic was not directed against Jews but was used as a didactic tool to explain Christian theology, then one would expect to find such polemic throughout Christian theological discussion. However, this is not the case. To illustrate this point, I shall look at the writings of Clement of Alexandria, and attempt to demonstrate how his relative lack of anti-Jewish sentiment casts doubt on the thesis of Taylor and others.

Clement's references to the Jews

It is reasonable to think that Clement of Alexandria was influenced by Jews, an influence that might be reflected both in the use he makes of Jewish literature, and the presence within his extant works of Jewish opinion, both of which might imply *viva voce* contact with Jews. Such an assumption is supported by a number of observations. Clement spent the majority of his life in a city in which Jews had played a significant role; and he had converted to a religion, which in Alexandria at least, had arisen out of Judaism, and was much influenced by it.⁴ Clement himself tells us that one of his teachers had been a Jew from Palestine,⁵ probably Pantaenus,⁶ the first named head of the Christian catechetical school in that city.⁷ Furthermore, we are informed by Jerome that Clement was one of those earlier Christian authors who would often cite Jewish opinion when engaged in

⁴ This is now the consensus position put forward by, amongst others, Pearson 1986; and van den Broek 1990, 102-3, especially n. 5, where other literature on the subject is mentioned. This thesis replaces Bauer's view of heterodox origins espoused in Bauer 1971, 44-53. For a helpful survey of a variety of theories on the origins of Christianity in Alexandria see Sangrador 1994, 69-107.

⁵ See *Strom.* 1.11.2.

⁶ This is the opinion of Eusebius at *Hist. eccl.* 5.11.1, who states "that in Book 1 of the *Miscellanies* there is a covert allusion to that scholar (i.e. Pantaenus)." Eusebius does not go on to explore the supposed Jewish origins of Pantaenus. In his extant works Clement only refers to Pantaenus explicitly once, and this to explain Pantaenus' view on the understanding of verb tenses in the prophetic writings (*Ecl.* 56.2). On this passage see Nardi 1985, 136. Such an obviously expert exegetical remark on the Old Testament might indicate Pantaenus' Jewish origin, though the currency of such a view amongst Christians might be indicated by the fact that the same rule is referred to in Justin, *Dial.* 114.1; and Irenaeus, *Epid.* 67.

⁷ The debate on whether such a school in fact existed in Alexandria before the third century, and what Pantaenus' role in it might have been, is summed up by, amongst others, Lilla 1992, 639. For the most recent discussion of this vexing problem, see van den Hoek 1997, 59-87.

biblical interpretation.⁸ However, the general consensus on this subject (which has in fact been little studied) is that Clement's extant works show that Jews do not loom large in his consciousness.⁹

It is certainly true that Clement shows knowledge of Jewish sources in Greek,¹⁰ that he appears on a number of occasions to be conversant with Jewish opinion,¹¹ and that he is a staunch supporter of what he terms the 'barbarian philosophy', arguing that Jewish philosophy (or perhaps more accurately, biblical philosophy), is the root of all Greek thought.¹²

⁸ *Ipse Origenes et Clemens et Eusebius atque alii complures, quando de scripturis aliqua disputant et volunt approbare dicunt, sic solent scribere: "Referebat mihi Hebraeus" et "Audiui ab Hebraeo" et "Hebraeorum ista sententia est."* The quotation comes from *Ruf.* 1.13, and is cited in full in Stählin & Früchtel 1970, 225. Jerome does not refer to Clement's association with Jews in his brief account of Clement's life in *Vir. ill.* 38, although he does allude to the fact that Clement makes use of a number of Jewish authors.

⁹ For such an assessment of the evidence see Krauss 1892-3, 134-8; Wilde 1949, 180; Méhat 1966, 395-8; van den Broek 1990, 111; van den Hoek 1990, 185; and Runia 1993, 120 (largely repeating the judgment of van den Broek). For a contrary opinion, but one that is not substantiated by the evidence, see Wilken 1971, 41.

¹⁰ Clement refers to Demetrius (*Strom.* 1.141.1-2; 1.150.2); Aristobulus (*Strom.* 1.72.4; 1.150.1; 5.97.7; 6.32.5); Aristeeas (*Strom.* 1.148.1-149.3); Artapanus (*Strom.* 1.154.2); Pseudo-Hecataeus (*Strom.* 5.113); Ezekiel the Tragedian (*Strom.* 1.155.1-1.156.2); and *The Assumption of Moses* (*Strom.* 6.132). A Jewish Greek source may well lie behind his detailed account of Jewish history at *Strom.* 1.101.1f. For references to Philo see Stählin 1909, 47-9; and for the most recent survey of these citations and allusions, see van den Hoek 1988; and the helpful summary of her conclusions in Runia 1993, 130-56.

¹¹ There are a number of occasions where Clement alludes to Jewish opinion. In two of these Clement refers to those he calls the *μύσται* (see *Strom.* 1.153.1 concerning the interpretation of the change of name Moses undergoes at his Ascension; and 1.154.1 concerning the way in which Pharaoh died, an interpretation paralleled in *Ex. Rab.* and Rashi on Gen 2:14. See de Lange 1976, 150 n. 40). Clement never explicitly refers to the *μύσται* as Jewish, but Krauss 1892-3, 136f., on account of parallels with extra-biblical Jewish material, argued that such an identification was justified. At *Strom.* 5.36.3 Clement bases an interpretation of the ark on the grounds of its rendition in Aramaic as *Thebutha*; at *Strom.* 7.89, Clement cites a Jewish (and pagan) objection to Christianity, namely its sectarian character; at *Strom.* 7.33 his arguments for the rationality of the dietary laws seem to reflect Jewish opinion; and at *Quis div* 28.2 Clement provides his reader with a list of those whom the Jews regard as their neighbours. See also his references to Judaic interpretations at *Paed.* 1.34, and *Strom.* 6.41.6; and the possibility that his interpretation of Psalm 19 at *Ecl.* 51-62 reflects Jewish exegesis (note its apparently 'pe-sharic' form). On this see Nardi 1985, 16 and 134-40.

¹² See *Strom.* 2.1f. and many other places. For a discussion of this topos in Clement's work, and the different ways in which it is expounded, see Lilla 1971, 12f. and 31-3. We should note that it is not always the case that the term 'barbarian' as used by Clement refers to Jews. See, *inter alia*, *Strom.* 1.66.3.

But it is not clear that we can deduce from this evidence that Clement was in *viva voce* contact with Jews. On a number of occasions it seems beyond doubt that Clement is reliant upon non-Jewish sources for his citations of Jewish authorities in Greek.¹³ He never refers to his most significant Jewish Greek source, namely Philo, as a Jew, but rather as a Pythagorean,¹⁴ indicating perhaps that knowledge of Philo's Jewish roots had disappeared.¹⁵ Jerome's statement, referred to above, that Clement would often support an exegetical opinion by stating that a Jew was its source, does not appear to be born out by any of his extant works.¹⁶ Similar observations seem to hold true in relation to apparent evidence for knowledge of Jewish opinion, exegetical or otherwise. Conversance with traditions that were prevalent in the Alexandrian Christian community, which had itself at an earlier stage in its history been heavily influenced by Judaism, or the influence of the perhaps originally Jewish Pantaenus, might explain their presence.

Evidence of an association with Jews could, however, be demonstrated in other ways. At one point in his *Stromateis*, Clement does express the hope that what he is writing might persuade the Jews to turn to Christ.¹⁷ But this reference seems to be incidental, a conclusion supported by the fact that a consciousness of wanting to proselytise Jews appears almost nowhere in Clement's extant works, least of all in the *Stromateis*.

Where association with Jews might be implied is in Clement's more obviously anti-Jewish comments. These are often connected with the Jews'

¹³ So, for instance, it seems clear that his source for the citations from Ezekiel the Tragedian, Artapanus and Demetrius, was Alexander Polyhistor. For this and other examples of borrowing, see van den Hoek 1990, 179-94.

¹⁴ For these references see *Strom.* 1.72.4; and 2.101.3.

¹⁵ Clement only rarely refers to Philo directly (apart from the references noted in n. 10 see also *Strom.* 1.31.1 and 1.153.1). This may be explained by Clement's general reluctance to refer to his sources, something noted in Chadwick and Oulton 1954, 19-21. This could also explain his rather allusive reference to the *μύσται*, already noted above. For a recent discussion of Clement's description of Philo as a Pythagorean, see Runia 1995. Runia argues that the designation 'Pythagorean' should be seen as complimentary and not as evidence for Clement's ignorance of Philo's Jewishness. The contexts in which Clement makes use of Philo, which are mainly exegetical, indicate that he thought of him as a Jew (see esp. 13-14).

¹⁶ The context in which Jerome makes this statement is one in which he is defending his use of the Jew Baranina as a source of information concerning the Hebrew Bible. He refers to Clement's apparent use of Jewish expertise as a means of justifying his own actions in that regard.

¹⁷ See *Strom.* 2.2 where Clement states that one of his purposes in writing the *Stromateis* is "to defend those tenets, on account of which the Greeks assail us, making use of a few scriptures, if perchance the Jew may listen and be able to turn from what he has believed to him whom he has not believed."

failure to adopt the Christian faith¹⁸ and with their crucifixion of Jesus,¹⁹ and at times with certain Jewish practices.²⁰ But this anti-Jewish polemic is less intense than in other Christian writers, and has an at times almost incidental and disengaged feeling to it.²¹ While the Jews are attacked for reading the scriptures without faith, attending more to the external than the internal meaning, such an accusation appears very infrequently, especially when one considers how often Clement chooses to allegorise the Old Testament. This is particularly noticeable when we compare Clement's attitude to the Jewish interpretation of the law with that of the writer of *Barnabas* (a probably Alexandrian document²² to which Clement alludes with some frequency,²³ but never for the purposes of exploiting its anti-Jewish polemic), of Justin, Irenaeus, and of Origen. The Jewish law is obviously not accorded the same value as it is in a writer like Philo,²⁴ but a literal understanding of that law is rarely seen in a totally negative light, entirely subsumed by the Christian claim that it is a prefiguration of Christ.²⁵ We

¹⁸ He describes the Jews as faithless and ignorant (*Strom.* 2.21.2); as those who do not understand the intention of the law and have no faith in its prophetic power, and hence follow the bare and not the inner meaning (*Strom.* 2.42.4-5). See also *Strom.* 7.109.3, where Clement describes the same failing of the Jews by means of an allegory of the Jewish food laws. The Jews, he states, are like those who chew the cud but they do not part the hoof. Such an interpretation is based on the fact that the Jews possess the oracles of God, but they do not believe in Christ. See further *Strom.* 6.41.2 and 46.1.

¹⁹ See *Paed.* 2.63.4; 2.73.5f. where the Jewish crucifixion of Christ is linked to their lack of understanding; and *Strom.* 6.128.1, though, in this instance, Clement is quoting from the now lost second century work, the *Kerygma Petrou*, and does not make use of the quotation to advance anti-Jewish claims.

²⁰ See *Strom.* 7.35, where, while arguing for the need on the part of the true Gnostic for continual prayer, Clement dismisses the Jewish habit of praying seven times a day (Psalm 119:64).

²¹ See *Strom.* 2.67.4 and the almost incidental observation that some regard the way of the sinners, mentioned in Ps 1:1, as the Ἰουδαϊκὴν ὑπόληψιν and his anti-Jewish quotation of the *Kerygma Petrou* at 6.41.2 where the anti-Jewish aspect is not exploited. In this respect see also his interpretation 1 Cor 2:8, and his reference to the destruction of Jerusalem at *Strom.* 1.146 and 147.2.

²² For the most recent endorsement of this view of the provenance of the epistle, see Sangrador 1994, 145-55.

²³ See Stählin 1909, 27. Stählin, in the opinion of the present author, is somewhat generous in his attributions. But there exist eight explicit references to the epistle, all in the *Stromateis* (2.31.2; 2.35.5; 2.67.3; 2.84.3; 2.116.3; 5.51.4; 5.63.1; 6.64.3).

²⁴ See van den Hoek 1997, 69f., where, commenting on Clement's use of Philo in *Strom.* 2.78-100, a passage concerned with an exposition of virtue as expounded in the law, she shows how Clement is keener to allegorise the law than Philo.

²⁵ For this opinion see especially van den Hoek 1988, 228: "There is no trace of a negative attitude toward the law in Clement. He defends the position of the law against the attacks of the followers of Marcion. He does not, moreover, echo the negative valuations that are well known from other Christian writers, nor does he interpret the law ex-

can see this, for instance, in Clement's attitude to the Jewish food laws. Where, for instance, *Barnabas* sees a *literal* understanding of these laws to have been wrong from the start (*Barnabas* 10), and Justin, as others, interprets them as an accommodation to Jewish hard-heartedness,²⁶ Clement attributes considerable value to them as understood literally, arguing in the *Paedagogus* that when interpreted in such a way, they promote moderation.²⁷

It is also noticeable that while Clement is keen to emphasise the fact that the Jewish revelation finds its only fulfilment in Christ;²⁸ that it is only through Christ that the Jewish scriptures can be understood; and that, with the arrival of Christ, Jewish privilege has come to an end,²⁹ he is not intent upon exploiting the anti-Jewish implications of these conclusions, either by emphasising the idea of the rejection of the Jews by God, or by villifying the Jews more generally. The idea of 'salvation history' exists within the writings of Clement, but it is not expounded in a notably anti-Jewish manner.³⁰

We might, of course, explain the relatively friendly attitude to the Jewish law by reference to Clement's obvious fear of the presence of Marcionism. This is certainly the opinion of one scholar.³¹ But this is only a partial explanation. Often anti-Marcionite writers who attempt to defend the Hebrew bible from the Sinopean's attacks, do so by arguing against supposedly literal, Jewish interpretation of that text. It has, for instance, been recognised by many that Tertullian's *Adversus Judaeos* looks very much like parts of his *Adversus Marcionem*.

clusively as a prefiguration of Christ." Relevant in this respect is a passage like *Strom.* 4.46.1. Here Clement writes that "the design of the law is to divert us from extravagance and all forms of disorderly behaviour; this is its object to draw us from unrighteousness to righteousness." He then quotes Matt 5:17 ("I did not come to destroy but to fulfil the law"), and comments: "Fulfilment does not mean that it (the law) was defective." Of course, Clement is keen to stress that the law is a *paidagogos* to Christ (*Paed.* 1.59f.), and to allegorise it, but none of these assumptions lead to a radical diminution of its literal value. For further elucidation of this point, see Schreckenberg 1992, 212-13.

²⁶ See *Dial.* 20. For a recent discussion of these attitudes see Carleton Paget 1994, 151f.

²⁷ See *Paed.* 2.17.

²⁸ See, *inter alia*, *Strom.* 4.134.4; and 6.159.2.

²⁹ See, *inter alia*, *Strom.* 6.47.2.

³⁰ See *Paed.* 59.1f. for a comparison of the old covenant of the Jews and the new covenant of the Christians.

³¹ See van den Hoek 1988, 228, quoted in n. 25.

Three theses concerning Clement and the Jews

So why this apparently surprising paucity of interest in the Jews, most notably expressed in the relative absence from Clement's extant writings of anti-Jewish polemic? At least three answers to this question commend themselves.

(1) In relation to the absence of anti-Jewish polemic we might make reference to the apparently moderate disposition of Clement. Tollinton's judgment that Clement was a true Anglican (at least as Tollinton perceived such a person), one who "in his distrust of extremes, in his love of peace, in his reverent and sober piety ... anticipates some of the best aspects of our race", is relevant.³² But here two points need to be made. First, Clement's assaults upon Gnostics and encratites in book 3 of his *Stromata*, show that Clement was perfectly capable of being polemical when he felt the need. Secondly, we know that Clement could be polemical about Jewish beliefs, again when he felt the need. We hear from Eusebius,³³ and from other ecclesiastical writers,³⁴ that Clement wrote a work entitled *Against the Judaizing Christians* or *The Ecclesiastical Canon*.³⁵ Van Unnik, in a perceptive though little-cited article,³⁶ argued, on reasonably good grounds, that this work "dealt with the typological application of the Old Testament to Christ and the Church",³⁷ and that this was "in the nature of a defence against people who denied any such connection, who were deemed to read the Old Testament according to the flesh in that they accorded to the law and the prophets an independent meaning and authority in the life of the church." It is, of course, the existence of this work which might immediately call into question our view that Clement was notably unpolemical about Jews and Judaism in general. But we should draw attention to two points relevant to it. First, the tract was written against Judaizing

³² Tollinton 1914, 2.283.

³³ *Hist. eccl.* 6.13.3

³⁴ See Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 38; and Photius, *Bibliothèque* 111, l. 42 (Henry 1960).

³⁵ ὁ ἐπιγεγράμμενος Κανὼν Ἐκκλησιαστικὸς ἢ πρὸς τοὺς Ἰουδαίζοντας ὄν Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τῷ δεδελημένῳ ἐπισκόπῳ ἀνατέθεικεν.

³⁶ van Unnik 1983, 40-51. I am indebted for this reference to Prof. W. Horbury.

³⁷ van Unnik 1983, 48. His argument is in part based upon the content of the one existing fragment of this work, found in a polemical treatise of Nicephorus of Constantine (Stählin & Fruchtel 1970, 218-19), where Clement states that the words in 1 Kings 8:27a ("But can God indeed dwell on the earth?") allude not only to the heavenly temple, but also to the Lord's flesh; in part upon Clement's own definition of ἐκκλησιαστικὸς κανὼν in terms of the unity of the law and the prophets and their fulfillment in Jesus (see *Strom.* 6.125); and in part upon the apparent similarity of this work to the *Didascalia Apostolorum*. van Unnik shows that there is no evidence to support the claim in Zahn 1884, 35-6, that the work was an extended polemic against the Quartodecimans.

Christians and not Jews.³⁸ Secondly, as Eusebius notes, and there is no reason to doubt the information he gives us, that this was a work requested by Alexander the Bishop of Jerusalem. It had nothing to do with the demands of the Alexandrian Christian community. The significance of this latter observation will be developed later on.

(2) The audience of Clement's works. In this regard R. Wilde, in his book on the place of the Jews in a variety of early Christian writers, states: "As a Christian, it was his purpose, in missionary and apostolic style, to make Christianity acceptable to the pagan and learned circle he left. The notice he takes of Jews is only incidental to the end that he is pursuing."³⁹ This observation should be accorded some weight,⁴⁰ but it is probably not the full explanation. In this context we should note that the possibly Alexandrian Celsus,⁴¹ a noted critic of Christianity, was at pains to employ Jewish criticisms of Christianity in his assault upon the Christian faith. Comments *adversus Judaeos* could, as Harnack noted (though he used this observation to come to some not entirely sustainable conclusions), be used by those who had as their principal objective a defence or an advocacy of the Christian faith in the face of pagan criticism. This observation might indicate that even if we accept the fact that Clement's principal audience was a Greek and learned one, we still might expect more interest in Jews, and certainly more polemic aimed against them.

(3) The third solution points to the beleaguered state of Jews in Alexandria and Egypt when Clement was writing. Here we need to cite the evidence brought forward by such scholars as Tcherikover⁴² in support of the thesis that after the so-called Trajanic revolt of the Jews of Egypt, Cyprus, Cyrenaica and Mesopotamia against the Romans, which took place between 115 and 117, the Jewish population in Alexandria was considerably depleted. In this respect reference needs to be made to the dearth of inscriptional and papyrological evidence for Jews from 117 to about the end of the third century, to the confiscation of the property of Jews who had died in the revolt,⁴³ and to the fact that for the populations for which we have evidence in the post-117 period, only very small percentages of these

³⁸ See the almost complete absence of any reference to Judaizing Christians in Clement's definitely Alexandrian works.

³⁹ Wilde 1949, 180.

⁴⁰ See the title of his *Protrepticus* (ΠΡΟΤΡΕΠΤΙΚΟΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΑΣ), apparently the first work in a trilogy, definitely including the *Paedagogus*, and perhaps the *Stromata*. See also *Strom.* 1.15.

⁴¹ For the evidence in favour of an Alexandrian identification, see Chadwick 1965, xxviii-xxix.

⁴² Tcherikover and Fuks 1957, 92-3.

⁴³ See *CPJ* II, 445 and 449.

populations were Jewish.⁴⁴ However, we should show some caution in adopting the thesis that there was “a total annihilation” of the Jewish population. We do read in at least one papyrus that the Emperor Hadrian (probably in the immediate aftermath of the revolt) supported the creation of a Jewish settlement outside Alexandria, and this in the face of Greek opposition.⁴⁵ Moreover, the description of Hadrian as πανάριστος ἀνὴρ in the *Sibylline Oracle 5* (*Sib. Or.* 5.46-50), itself probably of Jewish origin, should also be considered.⁴⁶ And it is also of significance that, in general, inscriptions for Egypt are more plentiful for the Chora than for Alexandria itself, and it was the Chora that was worst hit by the revolt.⁴⁷ But even when this evidence is accorded its true value, we are still left with the impression of a considerably depleted population of Jews in Egypt and Alexandria.⁴⁸

But some might want to counter the substance of this solution by pointing to the figure of Origen. He, after all, was an Alexandrian, who appeared much interested in Jews. If the relative absence of Jews from Clement’s works can be explained by reference to their small number and minimal influence in the Alexandria and Egypt of his day, then what of the relative importance of Jews for the Alexandrian Origen, who himself wrote not long after Clement?⁴⁹

It would be wrong to overlook the implications of this observation. But before we accord it too much significance we should note that: (1) the majority of references to Jews in Origen’s works come from the time he spent in Caesarea when he was living in a city with an obviously influential Jewish population; and (2) although Jews and Jewish opinion are referred to in Origen’s Alexandrian works, it is not clear whether these references are not the result of his earlier visits to Caesarea.⁵⁰

⁴⁴ See *CPJ* II, 460, where out of a population of 1000 in Karanis, only one Jew is mentioned.

⁴⁵ *CPJ* II, 158a.

⁴⁶ For an assembly of the albeit flimsy evidence pertaining to Alexandrian Judaism from the period 117 to about 300, see de Lange 1976, 8-9.

⁴⁷ Prof. W. Horbury, who is of the opinion that Tcherikover et al. exaggerate the extent of damage done to the Jewish community as a result of the revolt, has brought to my attention the fact that the anti-Jewish *Acts of the Alexandrians* continued to be copied after the revolt. For further doubts about Tcherikover’s thesis see Haas 1997, 103-4.

⁴⁸ While discussing the period running from 117-337, Tcherikover notes: “The general impression is that of a complete breakdown of Jewish life in Egypt, at least at the beginning of this period.” (*CPJ* 1.94). This view is supported by, amongst others, Runia 1993, 120.

⁴⁹ For this observation see Méhat 1966, 397.

⁵⁰ This point is made by van den Broek 1990, 113-14. For references to Jewish traditions in Origen’s *Peri archon* see 4.3.2 (conflicting Jewish traditions on what is prohibited on the sabbath, discussed by de Lange 1976, 40); 4.3.14 for an interpretation of Isa 6:2-3, the source of which was an anonymous man, referred to by Origen as *Hebraeus*

In the end the third of these solutions seems the most plausible. In part this arises from the fact that the first two solutions are not convincing; in part from what information we possess of the state of the Jewish community in Alexandria and Egypt at this time; and in part from the fact that we know from the preserved title of an almost entirely lost work of Clement (namely, *Against the Judaizing Christians* or *The Ecclesiastical Canon*) that if called upon, and in an appropriate context, Clement could pen anti-Jewish comments. Intriguingly, the appropriate context in this instance was Jerusalem, and not Alexandria.

It would be wrong to press our thesis too far. The text which the Bishop of Jerusalem requested from Clement is aimed against Judaizers, not Jews, though the presence of Judaizers in Jerusalem might have been inspired by the presence of Jews in the same city. Furthermore, it is important to note that not all Christian writers were automatically anti-Jewish, even if they did live in proximity to large Jewish communities. However, the thesis offered above does go some way to explaining the apparent disjunction between a text like *Barnabas* and Clement's own writings in relation to their respective attitudes to the Jews.

So how might what we have written above call into question the thesis which argues for a non-relationship between Jews and Christians in the ancient period, at least up to the fourth century, and which asserts the importance of the Jew as a symbolic figure made use of to express Christian identity? Two points, emerging from what we have said above need to be stressed in this regard. First, Clement does not feel it necessary for his own expression of Christian self-understanding to be sharply anti-Jewish. If anti-Judaism is so much a part of the Christian attempt to define itself, as, for instance, Taylor claims it is, then why should some Christian writers choose to be anti-Jewish and others not, or why might there be variations in the intensity with which anti-Jewish sentiments are expressed? This question becomes particularly pressing in the case of someone like Clement of Alexandria, for whom the Old Testament is such an important literary source. The second point relates to the tentative conclusion reached above, namely that the absence of anti-Judaism, and other evidence for contact with Jews, in Clement's writings can best be explained by reference to the fact that there was not a powerful Jewish population in the city in which he spent much of his life. If this conclusion is right, it suggests

Doctor, probably indicating a Jew who had become a Christian. De Lange 1976, 9, wishes to leave the question of Origen's knowledge of Alexandrian Jewry 'open', and seems to come close to endorsing van den Broek's view that what knowledge of Judaism he may display in apparently Alexandrian works, could have been acquired in his visits to Caesarea. He continues: "Such knowledge as he displays of non-rabbinic Judaism he may have acquired in Alexandria, or in his travels in Rome, Achaea, or in Palestine."

that the expression of anti-Jewish polemic by Christians may have been closely related to the presence of Jews in the areas in which they lived.

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Chapter 5

Messianism and resistance amongst Jews and Christians in Egypt^{*}

Introduction

Origen reports that Celsus, himself possibly an Alexandrian, described the dispute between Jews and Christians in Plato's terms as no more than "a battle about the shadow of an ass" (*Cels.* 3.1 and Plato, *Phaedrus* 260C). The content of this 'battle', Celsus stated, was Christ or the Messiah. "(T)hey both believe", he continues, "that by divine inspiration a certain saviour was prophesied to be coming to dwell among mankind; but they do not agree as to whether the one prophesied has come or not."¹ What precisely they believed and the extent to which their beliefs coincided, has been a major concern of William Horbury's research.² In articles and books on the subject he has emphasised what he sees as the considerable extent to which Jewish messianic beliefs influenced Christian ones, a view which forms part of a larger thesis about the ongoing contact between Jews and Christians in antiquity.³ The applicability of Horbury's convergence thesis to the Jewish and Christian material of Egypt is not easy to determine. This is mainly because our sources, though richer for Egypt than many other parts of the Roman Empire, do not teem with messianic references. Moreover, for a variety of reasons, Christian and Jewish sources rarely emerge from the same chronological period, making comparison more difficult.

It is the aim of this essay to re-examine the material from Egypt pertinent to messianism, here understood to refer to a coming pre-eminent ruler, associated either with a pre-existent or human figure, often in an

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¹ For a discussion of this passage and the view that it should not be taken literally, see Lona 2005, 178-9.

² I am delighted to contribute to a volume in honour of William Horbury. Over many years, as undergraduate, graduate and colleague, I have benefited immeasurably from his immense learning and friendship.

³ Reflected in Horbury 1998c and 2003a.

eschatological or millennial setting, and not necessarily termed ‘Messiah’;⁴ to see to what extent something coherent and self-contained emerges from it; to determine how much such material relates to issues of resistance; and to look again at the ways in which Jewish and Christian ideas about the Messiah converged.

Messianism amongst Jews in Egypt

An account of messianism in Egypt should begin with the Septuagint. Egypt constitutes the home of initial efforts to translate the Hebrew Bible into Greek, in particular the Pentateuch. The date of the earliest translation of the Pentateuch remains a matter of dispute but a consensus seems to have gathered around a time in the late third/early second century. William Horbury, in particular, has drawn attention to passages in the Septuagint whose rendition into Greek seems to be motivated by messianic presuppositions. Especially important in this respect are three Pentateuchal passages, Gen 49:9-10, Num 24:7 and 17, and Deut 33:4-5.⁵ They come from oracles associated with Jacob, Balaam and Moses respectively and appear at significant moments in the text. Most important, especially from the perspective of its subsequent interpretation, were the two verses in Numbers 24, which seem to envisage a future ruler, referred to both as a man and a star who will rule over an Empire. *Sib. Or.* 3 and 5, Philo and the Targumim all support this messianic view of the passage.⁶ But assessing the importance of these passages as witness to late third century Egyptian

⁴ For difficulties connected with the term see Green 1987; and for an equivalent definition see Horbury 1998c, 6-7.

⁵ Horbury 1998c, 50-1. LXX Gen 49:9-10 seems to have messianic overtones in its rendition of MT “gone up” by ἀναβαίνω, here recalling the use of the same verb in the messianic Isa 11:1; and in its translation by ‘ruler’ and ‘governor’ of MT’s ‘sceptre’ and ‘staff.’ LXX Num 24:7 famously renders “Water shall flow from his buckets” with “There shall come forth a man from his seed”; LXX Num 24:17 renders MT ‘sceptre’ as ‘man’, again with an apparently messianic meaning (on the messianic connotations of ‘man’ see Horbury 2003b, 144-51). LXX Deut 33:4-5 states that “they shall have a ruler in the beloved”, here rendering a verb in the past in the MT by the future; and replaces MT ‘nation’ by ‘nations’ rendering the messianic aspect a bit stronger. For a more cautious study of the LXX of these passages, see Salvesen 2007, reflecting much other literature.

⁶ See Hengel 1996, 338.

messianism is difficult.⁷ Their subsequent interpretation should be distinguished from what they actually say.⁸

Mention of the Septuagint brings to mind the obvious importance that the Old Testament ascribes to Egypt and its place in Israel's future. In this context we might in particular note Isa 19:20 and 25 (cf. Jeremiah 46), in which the bright future of Israel is bound up with the punishment of Egypt, and where in Isa 19:20, a deliverer for the Jews originates in that country. Egypt's significance, at least from an eschatological perspective, is heightened, because of its association with the events of the Exodus.⁹

Sib. Or. 3 is generally held to have been written in Egypt. Support for this position is found in the double reference to Egypt in 156-61 in which it appears as a second world empire after the Macedonians, the sympathetic references to a seventh king of Egypt (see 193, 318 and 608), and the presence of material apparently reliant upon the Egyptian *Potter's Oracle*.¹⁰ While none of these arguments clinches the matter, Egypt on balance still seems the best suggestion.¹¹ Dating the work is problematic, if only because it consists of oracles emanating from different periods. Most scholars settle upon a rolling period of 180 to 130 B.C.E.¹² Two of these oracles contain possibly messianic passages, although nowhere is the word 'Messiah' explicitly mentioned. In the first (286-7) the seer states that the God of heaven will send a king and will judge each man in blood and the gleam of fire. Here the context might imply a reference to Cyrus who will rebuild the temple,¹³ and "if the passage has any bearing on the eschatology of the sibyl, it suggests that the final restoration of the Jews will also be mediated by a Gentile king."¹⁴ The passage may operate on a second, messianic level. In this case, the king could either be a non-Jewish (for instance, Egyptian) 'messianic' deliverer, as with Cyrus, or a Jewish Messiah proper. The second reference occurs at 652-6. Here it is stated "then God will send a king from the sun who will give every land respite from the evil war, killing some and imposing pledges of loyalty on others. Nor will he do all these things by himself, but in obedience to the excellent de-

⁷ Horbury 1998c, 48, quotes Frankel's extravagant judgment, arising from the LXX of the above passages, that messianism was more developed in Alexandria than Judea in the third century B.C.E.

⁸ For a skeptical discussion see Oegema 1994, 44-8.

⁹ See Horbury 1996, 298-301.

¹⁰ See Collins 1983, 355-6.

¹¹ For arguments in favour of an Asian provenance, see Buitenwerf 2003, 130-3. For a general interest in Asia seen in Egypt, see Frankfurter 1996, 147 and 165.

¹² See Collins 1974, 28-32; 1983, 354-5.

¹³ This seems likely, as the whole passage (265-94) is a kind of retrospective prophecy of the Babylonian exile.

¹⁴ Collins 1987, 99.

creed of the great God.” Much of the debate over this passage has centred on the extent to which the ‘king’ can be taken to refer to an Egyptian monarch (here parallels with the reference in the Egyptian *Potter’s Oracle’s* to a king who “comes from the sun as a bestower of blessings” are made), probably the seventh king, already alluded to above, and often thought to be Philometor (180-145 B.C.E.).¹⁵ On this reading “Egyptian royal ideology serves the purpose of Jewish messianic hope and eschatological deliverance”,¹⁶ and the author is seen to look to the political power of Egypt to free Judea from Seleucid rule.¹⁷ But such an identification of the Jewish Messiah with an Egyptian monarch can seem forced. In 601-18 the seventh king is depicted as defeated by the monarch from Asia.¹⁸ Moreover, we could render ἀπ’ ἡλίου as “from the east”, here viewing it as a contraction of ἕξ ἀνατολῶν ἡλίου, and possibly as a reference to a Cyrus-like monarch, an observation which would render the parallel with *The Potter’s Oracle* unsound.¹⁹ But also the general tone of *Sib. Or.* 3 is antagonistic to the culture in which the author resides, an observation which is supported by, amongst other things, a strong criticism of the Greeks and Macedonians (171-4, 381-3, 545-9),²⁰ and threats against Egypt and Alexandria (348-9, 611-15). In such a setting “it is hard to see how these Sibylline authors could be considered supporters of the Ptolemaic ideology.”²¹ Such a thesis sees the messianism of *Sib. Or.* 3 as compatible with a revival of nationalistic sentiment,²² further evidenced in the author’s accentuated interest in

¹⁵ Frankfurter 1996, 144, argues that such use of indigenous Egyptian tradition is evidenced elsewhere in Jewish Egyptian writings. See, for instance, the *Testament of Abraham* where extensive use is made of Egyptian afterlife mythology.

¹⁶ Chester 1991, 35; Gruen 1998, 277-8, agrees that Egyptian royal terminology is being used but denies that it contains any clues about the identity of the Egyptian monarch concerned. First, he notes that Egyptian monarchs never identified themselves by numbers; and secondly that the number seven should be taken to have a kind of mystical quality, “not the denotation of royal stature.”

¹⁷ Collins 1987, 99.

¹⁸ Gruen 1998, 274-5.

¹⁹ See Isa 41:2, 25; and Buitenwerf 2003, 273.

²⁰ Gruen 1998, 287-290, argues that the author is more irenic towards the Greeks, in particular highlighting the fact that he calls for the Greeks to convert (545-72; 624-34). Barclay 1996, 222, noting that this only takes place when the Greeks have abandoned idolatry, sees it “as the correlate of a cultural antagonism which recognizes no value in the religious practice of non-Jews.”

²¹ Barclay 1996, 223, contrasts the tone of *Sib. Or.* 3 with that of *The Letter of Aristeas*, with its strong endorsement of Ptolemaic kingship.

²² See passages predicting ultimate vindication of the Jews at 211-17, 282-94, 573-600, 669-731, 767-808.

the land, the law, and the temple,²³ all possibly stimulated by the Maccabean revolt.²⁴

For the period following the writing of the *Sib. Or.* 3, we lack much evidence for messianic belief. *3 Maccabees*, militant in tone, and highly nationalistic in sentiment, never refers to a messianic figure. The *Exagoge* of Ezekiel the Tragedian, although concerned with the future redemption of Israel,²⁵ and portraying Moses in a kingly manner (36-41; 68-89), also has no messianic references. And Wisdom, although keen to attack rulers and to herald the time of the righteous' vindication and Wisdom's actions on behalf of Israel, is similarly non-messianic.

It is with Philo that evidence for messianic belief re-emerges, although this has been differently assessed. Wolfson²⁶ and Goodenough²⁷ famously argued that something like a conventional nationalistic messianism could be discerned within his works. Citing the passage from *Praem.* 79-172 in which Philo presented what looks like a conventional eschatological scenario (reunion of exiles, the prosperity of the land, peace among men and beasts and the ruin of Israel's enemies), Wolfson argued that the solution found by Philo for the Jewish problem of his time was the revival of the old prophetic promises of the ultimate disappearance of the Diaspora, something which would involve the activities of the Messiah (here in particular citing *Praem.* 95). Others have argued for the presence of an almost allegorized messianism in Philo.²⁸ In one strategy messianic terminology is applied to the Logos. In this context one might point to the passage in *Conf.* 62-3 where Philo quotes the possibly messianic LXX of Zech 6:12²⁹ which reads: "Behold a man who is the rising". In the subsequent interpretation he associates the man with the son who follows the ways of his father and shaped the different kinds, looking at the archetypal patterns, a clear reference to the Logos.³⁰ In another strategy messianic-like scenarios are denationalised. An example of this is present at *Praem.* where what looks like the dramatic reversal of Jewish fortunes is dependent upon Jewish repentance [164]; where the eschatological battle is seen in terms of a victory of ethics over the enemy; where, by extension, Philo is not interested in contrasting the Jews with the Gentiles but the virtuous with the wicked [94; see also 162]; and where the messianic figure mentioned in

²³ See esp. 218-64; 573-600.

²⁴ See Momigliano 1975.

²⁵ *Exagoge* 106-7 and the reference to 'my gifts'; and Horbury 2003d.

²⁶ Wolfson 1947, 407.

²⁷ Goodenough 1938, 25.

²⁸ De Savignac 1959; and Hecht 1987.

²⁹ On the messianic associations of this passage see Horbury 2003c, 145, and relevant bibliography.

³⁰ Hecht 1987, 150. See also *Virt.* 75; *Vita Mosis* 2.44 and 288; *Opif.* 89-91.

Num 24:7 and clearly alluded to in *Praem.* 95, does battle with some fanatics “whose lust for war defies restraint or remonstrance.”³¹

While those who argue that Philo consciously sought to denude biblical texts of their nationalistic-messianic content have a point, they can appear on occasion to overplay their card. So, for instance, Philo goes one better than the more cautious Josephus (*A.J.* 4.115-6) in at least referring to Balaam’s oracle in Num 24:7, and while it is possible to see his interpretation of it in *Praem.* as strongly ethical, that is less clearly the case in *Mos.* 1.290 where the passage is quoted without allegorising comment.³² Moreover, it is wrong to denude Philo’s work of any eschatological thrust for he does read the blessings and curses of Deuteronomy 28 and Leviticus 26 as predictions of a definitive eschatological upheaval,³³ and there is in any case in *Praem.* a complex interweaving of ethical and more nationalistic language (see 162f.), something which we find in strongly messianic texts like the *Psalms of Solomon* (see 17. 26, 32, 37).

Some would take Philo’s references to messianic texts and his interest in issues of national redemption (however conceived) to point to the importance of such views in the Alexandria, and by extension, Egypt, of his day. As Collins has written, “The fact that he (Philo) still finds some place for national eschatology indicates that messianic beliefs must have been widespread in his time ...”³⁴ Hecht argues that if it is right to see Philo as consciously denuding messianic passages of their nationalist content, and this at a tumultuous time in the history of the Alexandrian community,³⁵ then this could imply the presence of a number of messianically oriented Jews in Alexandria.³⁶

Verification of such a conclusion is impossible. An attempt to mirror-read Philo’s reinterpretation of well-known messianic passages seems unconvincing, not least because his rereading, if that is what it is, seems strangely lacking in polemic, an important point when one considers that on many occasions he is explicit that his interpretations of biblical passages are refutations of alternative, unsatisfactory ones. Moreover, we hear of

³¹ Collins 2000, 135-6; Hecht 1987, 154-7, esp. 155, who argues “the particularism gives way to a general vision of the Golden Age.”

³² See Oegema 1994, 116 and 121, who argues that Philo’s thought on this passage, under the influence of the changed political circumstances of the post-Flaccus era, has changed from the militaristic view of the passage in *Mos.* 1 to the more ethical interpretation in *Praem.*

³³ Collins 2000, 137.

³⁴ Collins *ibid.*, 137.

³⁵ On this see Méléze Modrzejewski 1997, 161-83.

³⁶ Hecht 1987, 160-2. He realizes that it is difficult to date the relevant treatises and maintains that his thesis stands whether we date them before or after the governorship of Flaccus.

no messianically-oriented disturbances in Egypt until the Trajanic revolt of 115-117. True, Josephus reports that an Egyptian false prophet appeared in Judea ca. 52-60 and quickly gathered to himself a large following (*B.J.* 2.261-3; *A.J.* 20.169-272), a fact which might “hint uncertainly at the contemporary importance of messianism in Egypt ...”³⁷. And we do hear of disturbances in Egypt connected with the first Jewish revolt, in particular at the end of it when in 73 some Sicarii, fleeing from Judea, entered Alexandria and tried “to induce many of their hosts to assert their independence, to look upon the Romans as no better than themselves and to esteem God as their Lord.”³⁸ But it is difficult to deduce that much of importance from the Egyptian; and in relation to the incident involving the Sicarii, we should note that Josephus asserts that the assembly was able to persuade the people to desist from following them and to hand them over to the Romans. Moreover, it is important to note that the Egyptian Jews did not join in the first revolt that was itself possibly inspired by messianic longings (see *B.J.* 6.312).

The oracles contained within *Sib. Or.* 5 are thought to span a period running from about 80 to 130 C.E.³⁹ While there are parallels between this collection and the contents of *Sib. Or.* 3, in significant areas its tone and emphases are different. It is considerably harsher in the manner in which it attacks non-Jews, in particular the Romans and Egyptians.⁴⁰ Its endorsement of the Jewish people is uncritical:⁴¹ they are envisaged as “the divine and heavenly race of the blessed Jews” (249) whose triumph in an Egypt rid of its gods and the unclean foot of Greeks seems inevitable. Like *Sib. Or.* 3, in its vision of the future it attributes an important place to Judea,⁴² and in particular the temple (418-33), although at one point the temple is envisaged as being rebuilt in Egypt (492-511). These strongly nationalistic sentiments are expressed against the background of a violent and militaristic end time scenario which will be marked by the arrival of an antichrist figure in the form of *Nero redevivus*, who emerges from the east and is seen both as a symbol of Rome’s wickedness and an instrument of her punishment.⁴³

³⁷ Horbury 1996, 296. See also Frankfurter 1995, 145-6, here citing the story as evidence of Jewish prophets ‘spilling over’ into Palestine, perhaps wielding Exodus imagery as an extension of their Egyptian provenance.

³⁸ Josephus, *B.J.* 7.410-11.

³⁹ See Collins 1974, 73-9; and Barclay 1996, 225 and 450-1, for further bibliography.

⁴⁰ For the attack on the Romans, see 162-78. For attacks upon the Egyptians, see 75-85, 276-80, 351-60, 403-5, and 484-91. See Hengel 1996, 329-30.

⁴¹ See 238-85. Hengel 1996 notes the complete absence of any criticism of the Jewish people, something that is at least hinted at in *Sib. Or.* 3.

⁴² See 250f.; and Hengel 1996, 332 n. 71.

⁴³ See 93-110, 137-54, 214-27, 361-85.

Less prominent than the antichrist is a messianic-like figure described in possibly four passages (in none of these is he called the Messiah). In 5.414-27, in the most detailed description, appearing after a harshly judgmental discussion of the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, we are presented with a blessed man who comes from the expanses of Heaven holding a sceptre in his hand which God has given him. After destroying the wicked and removing every city from its foundation with fire, he goes on to establish the holy city and its temple with a brightness exceeding the sun, the moon and the stars (420f.),⁴⁴ rid of all immoral activity (429-31). In this oracle we can discern the influence of Daniel 7⁴⁵ as we can in the oracle at 258-60. This shows signs of Christian redaction but is held by a majority of scholars, at least in part, to be of Jewish origin.⁴⁶ The Messiah is again viewed as a man from heaven (here from the sky) and portrayed as the “best of the Hebrews” who causes the sun to stand and speaks with fair speech and holy lips. Again the context in which this much briefer passage is set envisages the future in a paradisaical reconstituted holy land with Jerusalem and its temple at the centre of things. The two other passages have often been taken to have fewer claims to being called messianic. The first of these, found at 108-9, simply speaks of a certain king sent from God who will destroy all the great kings and noble men; and the second (158-61) of a star who will destroy the whole earth including Rome, described as Babylon. This oracle, with its allusion to Num 24:17, has a greater claim to being messianic, and to envisaging a heavenly Messiah.

Whether these oracles, including or excluding 258-60, witness to a unified conception of the Messiah, is unclear. Chester has explicitly denied unity, differentiating between 414f. and 256f., and 108-9 and 158-60 respectively, noting that the latter are brief, enigmatic and negative in their emphasis, while the former “are much fuller and clearer, containing not only the theme of judgment but also positive emphasis on the nature of the messianic age ... and especially the place of the Jews, land, Jerusalem and temple ...”.⁴⁷ Horbury, on the other hand, has emphasised their unity, seeing them as complementary, and arguing implicitly for their general endorsement of a pre-existent, heavenly Messiah.⁴⁸ The matter is difficult to decide. It is not clear that any of the oracles contradict each other, even if

⁴⁴ See Isa 60:1-3, 19-20.

⁴⁵ See Horbury 2003b, 143, drawing attention to the fact that the author refers to a blessed man from the heavens (414) in the time of the saints (432).

⁴⁶ See Chester 1990, 241, for a defence of its Jewish origin, especially because it fits the context in which it is found and that the term ‘man’ appears elsewhere in the first century as a designation for the Messiah; and Horbury 1998c, 103 and 192 n. 139, for the view that the whole oracle is an interpolation.

⁴⁷ Chester 1990, 243.

⁴⁸ Horbury 1998c, 103. See also Oegema 1994, 226.

some are more detailed in what they assert than others. Moreover, the brevity of 108-9 makes it impossible to say whether it endorses a pre-existent understanding of the Messiah or not. What is more important to observe is that in the descriptions of the Messiah(s) we find in *Sib. Or. 5* there is a greater emphasis on the nationalistic and militaristic/judgmental aspect of the figure (see the use of Daniel 7) than was the case in *Sib. Or. 3* where the thought has been entertained by some that the Messiah might be an Egyptian king. Such a possibility for a work as flagrantly nationalistic as *Sib. Or. 5* is out of the question.⁴⁹

Why Jews in Cyrenaica, Cyprus and Egypt (and possibly Mesopotamia) revolted against Rome towards the end of Trajan's principate remains "notoriously obscure",⁵⁰ not least because our sources have nothing to say on the subject.⁵¹ On one reading, it was a reaction to the revolt of Jews in Mesopotamia, but such a view depends upon dating the outbreak of the revolt after the events in Mesopotamia and this seems unlikely.⁵² Others have emphasised ethnic tensions, in particular tensions with Greeks,⁵³ social difficulties, growing discontent at the failure of the Romans to rebuild the temple⁵⁴ or the ongoing decline of the Jews' political status in Egypt.⁵⁵ However, while some of the above must have been contributory, none can account for all aspects of this *tumultus judaicus*.⁵⁶ Perhaps more is accounted for, some have claimed, if we assert its messianic origins.⁵⁷ In such an interpretation direct evidence for a Messiah figure is found in Eusebius' mention of a kingly figure, Loukuas, who, he claims, led the Cyrenian Jews and later on the combined Cyrenian and Egyptian forces;⁵⁸ and in the reference in the *Acta Pauli et Antonini*, dated to 119 or 120, but referring to events possibly in the direct aftermath of the revolt,⁵⁹ to a Jewish king led out by the Greeks and lampooned by them in a mock procession.

⁴⁹ Oegema 1994, 226-7.

⁵⁰ Barnes 1989, 145.

⁵¹ See especially Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 4.2.1-5; and Cassius Dio, 58.32. For a presentation of all relevant sources see Zeev 2005.

⁵² See Barnes 1989. For a refutation of Barnes see Horbury 1996, 284-95.

⁵³ See Applebaum 1979, 335 n. 445, and his own reservations about such a view. *CPJ* 439 implies some tension between Jews and Greeks but this seems to precede the revolt.

⁵⁴ Goodman 2004, 26.

⁵⁵ Méléze Modrzejewski 1997, 205.

⁵⁶ This description of the revolt is found on inscriptions from the Caesareum in Cyrene which mention parts of buildings or buildings pulled down by the Jewish rebels.

⁵⁷ See Fuks 1961; Tcherikover 1963; Applebaum 1979; Hengel 1996; Frankfurter 1992 and 1996; Horbury 1996.

⁵⁸ *Hist. eccl.* 4.1.2. Cassius Dio 58.32 mentions a certain Andreas and some have been tempted to assimilate him to Loukuas. See Fuks 1961, 103 n. 74; and Applebaum 1979, 259.

⁵⁹ Musurillo 1954, 183-4.

The claim that this is a reference to Loukuas who was captured by the Romans and exposed to ridicule in Alexandria is speculative,⁶⁰ but the passage possibly gives evidence of an association of the revolt with a king. Other proof of messianic origin is found in the implied suddenness with which the revolt broke out,⁶¹ its violent character,⁶² in the rebels' strongly anti-idolatrous character seen in particular in the destruction of religious buildings,⁶³ which may have led to the description of them as *anosioi* or impious.⁶⁴ The possibility that the revolt appeared to be heading eastward toward Palestine, and more specifically, Jerusalem, has been seen as another factor supporting messianic origins.⁶⁵

Such an interpretation of the causes of the revolt has its difficulties and none of the points necessarily implies a messianic cause.⁶⁶ What makes it cogent is the convergence between some of the emphases identified in *Sib. Or.* 5 and aspects of the revolt itself. An extreme and hostile nationalism allied to a messianic figure with strongly militaristic aims, whose eyes may have been set on occupying Jerusalem and Palestine, chimes in with the concerns of *Sib. Or.* 5, as outlined above.⁶⁷ Indeed in the mysterious figure of Loukuas we might gain a clear view of what messianism looks like in its natural state – violent, nationalistic and destructive, good grounds to explain why such a figure may only have rarely been witnessed in the ancient history of the Jews.

⁶⁰ Fuks 1961, 103.

⁶¹ Hengel 1996, 337-9.

⁶² See Cassius Dio 58.32, possibly confirmed by *CPJ* 437.

⁶³ Note the destruction of the temples of Apollo, of Hecate, and of Artemis in Cyrene, and in Alexandria, of the Serapeum and Nemesion. See Applebaum 1979, 259f., 274-6, and 316-17.

⁶⁴ See *CPJ* 438 where it is stated "villagers massed against the impious (*anosious*) Jews." See Fuks 1961, 104, who argues that the term refers to the iconoclasm of the Jews and implies that "they waged war not only against the pagans but against their gods." For the possibility that the religious character of the war was reciprocated on the Egyptian side, in particular by local priests, see Frankfurter 1992.

⁶⁵ Applebaum 1979, 336-7, supports this view, highlighting the movement of the Cyrenian Jews into Egypt, the struggle for the Delta junction at Memphis and the activities in Cyprus. Horbury 1996, 298-9, while not supporting Applebaum's thesis, does point to the importance in certain Jewish texts, including Jewish prayer, of the theme of the return from exile and of the presence in some Septuagintal texts of Egypt in lists of Jewish communities presented as returning from exile. See especially LXX Isa 11:11-16 where a highway will be made across the Delta and the Egyptian sea, not for the Assyrians, as in the MT, but for "my people left in Egypt."

⁶⁶ On objections, see Horbury 1996, 297-8.

⁶⁷ Hengel 1996, exploits this convergence. See Frankfurter 1998, 145, who notes the convergence between the massing of Jewish forces in Memphis (*CPJ* 439) and the curses on that city at *Sib. Or.* 5.60-92 and 179-86.

Christian messianism in Egypt

The origins in Egypt of the messianic movement, later to be known as Christianity, are not easy to determine.⁶⁸ Most scholars agree that it began within the Jewish community and was probably started by missionaries from Palestine. For whatever reason there is no information about the impact that the earliest Christians had upon the Egyptian Jewish community. The claim that Claudius' statement to the Jews in his letter to the Alexandrians (P. Lond. 1912, dated to 38 C.E.) that they ought not "to bring in or invite Jews coming from Syria or Egypt ..." is the first known allusion to Christians in Egypt, and gives evidence of early disturbances caused by them, remains a conjecture with few supporters, even if it is based upon believable premises.⁶⁹

Christian reaction to the Trajanic revolt is not known. Certainly if it possessed messianic elements, then on the basis of what is known about the Bar Kokhba revolt,⁷⁰ a rift between the rebels and their Jesus-worshipping fellow Jews seems likely, although we should not discount the possibility that some Christians joined the revolt, or found themselves caught up in its general violence. The view that its result was the demise of Christian Judaism in Egypt and the rise of Gentile Christianity, and a concomitant break with the Jewish community, itself in an almost completely annihilated state, could be seen as overplayed, especially in its suggestion that continuities between the Judaism of pre-117 and the Christianity post-117 did not exist.⁷¹

In this context it is worth examining the probably Alexandrian *Epistle of Barnabas*.⁷² Its date is uncertain but the majority of scholars place it after 117, although a date before is possible.⁷³ Whatever the date, it is interesting to note that the epistle shows a number of features in common with *Sib. Or.* 5 and other Jewish apocalypses. The text posits the return of Christ (4.3; 7.9; 15.4), and in its strongly eschatological tone, displays a

⁶⁸ On this, see Pearson 1990 and 2006, 336-7.

⁶⁹ For this thesis see Méléze Modrzejewski 1997, 229. It is easy to imagine that the arrival of Christian missionaries in the city would have caused a disturbance, particularly at the frenzied time at which Claudius wrote his letter, just as they were to do in Antioch and Rome, for example. But verisimilitude is one thing, proof another. Frankfurter 1998, 145, uses this letter to support his view that the outer regions of Egypt were hotbeds of insurgency.

⁷⁰ See Justin, *1 Apol.* 31.

⁷¹ See Méléze Modrzejewski 1997, 228, and for a view favouring some continuity see Pearson 2003.

⁷² See Carleton Paget 1994, 30-45. For a Syrian provenance, see Hvalvik 1996, 41.

⁷³ For a Hadrianic date, see Hvalvik 1996, 17-27, and Prostmeier 1999, 14-19. For an earlier date, in the Principate of Nerva, see Carleton Paget 1994, 9-30.

strikingly anti-Roman aspect. In 4.3-5, here interpreting Dan 7, and displaying similarities with *Sib. Or.* 5.403-33 and *4 Ezra* 11-13, the author expects the imminent fall of Rome, to be followed by the messianic reign of the saints when the beloved comes to his inheritance (4.3). This anti-Roman character is also possibly present at 12.9 where the Son of God is seen to uproot Amalek (Exod 17:14);⁷⁴ and again in the reference to the 'enemies' at 16.4.⁷⁵ *Barnabas* shows an interest in related messianic themes. So, for instance, in 6.8-19 he engages in an interpretation of the words of Exod 33:1, 3 about entering into the land flowing with milk and honey, and at 16.5 he presents what he takes to be the proper understanding of the eschatological temple, here citing Dan 9:24-7 (see also 6.15). Both of these passages constitute christological/spiritualised reinterpretations of hopes associated with the land and the temple, hopes which featured so importantly in *Sib. Or.* 3 and 5. But such reinterpretation gives evidence of dependence upon Jewish messianic aspirations, indicated in the fact that the author feels the need to express his hopes using such symbols, and in the possibility that this reinterpretation could be taken to imply the presence in *Barnabas*' community of those who were tempted to follow the hopes of a nationalistic Jewish author like the writer of *Sib. Or.* 5. This possibility is enhanced if we accept the view that *Barnabas* was writing at a time full of Jewish expectation stimulated by the thought that the temple might be rebuilt;⁷⁶ and that there are other signs that *Barnabas*' addressees were being attracted to aspects of non-Christian Judaism.⁷⁷

Barnabas could be seen to display some continuity with Jewish messianic hope and to support the thesis of Jewish origins for early Christianity in Egypt and the ongoing importance of Jewish influence even after the Trajanic revolt, dependent, of course, upon one's dating of the text. Such continuity, at least in terms of messianic ideas, is less easy to demonstrate for the following period. Jewish literature dries up, and the Jewish community recovered only slowly from the devastation of the revolt.⁷⁸ Our Christian sources are dominated by a series of Gnostic writers, including Basilides and Valentinus, and then products of the school of the elusive Pantaenus, Clement and Origen, all of whom in the main tend to evince a

⁷⁴ The evidence for seeing Amalek as Rome is presented by Horbury 1998b, 146-7.

⁷⁵ This should probably be taken as a reference to the Romans who are rebuilding the temple.

⁷⁶ Some scholars take 16.3-4 to refer to a mooted rebuilding of the temple either in Nerva's or Hadrian's principate.

⁷⁷ See especially 3.6 and 4.6b, although the reading of the latter verse is disputed.

⁷⁸ For the view that the Jews of Egypt almost disappeared see Méléze Modrzejewski 1997, 227-30. Haas 1997, 103-4, accepts that the Jewish community was "dealt a severe blow" by the revolt but thinks that traces of life can be espied in the pamphlets making up the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. Cf. esp. *Acta Pauli et Antonini*.

distaste for an eschatologically-oriented messianism, and this in spite of the fact that some of their sources clearly held to such opinions.⁷⁹ Origen indirectly gives evidence of millenarian interpretations, especially in his harsh comments about Christians who interpret Revelation literally. At *Princ.* 2.11.2 he criticises those whom he describes as “disciples of the mere word” who “consider that the promises of the future are to be looked for in the form of pleasure and bodily luxury ... and picture for themselves the earthly city of Jerusalem about to be rebuilt with precious stones ...”, clearly alluding to Revelation 21:10-21. Origen tells us nothing about the messianic beliefs of those to whom he alludes.⁸⁰ But given that they are literalist interpreters of Revelation, one must assume that they maintained a view of Christ’s return and a messianism which bore some relationship to what we have noted in *Barnabas*.⁸¹

One incident from the middle of the third century indicates ongoing interest in messianic-like speculation on the part of some Egyptian Christians. Eusebius records in *Hist. eccl.* 7.24.1-25.7 that the Bishop of Alexandria and follower of Origen, Dionysius, wrote two treatises entitled *On Promises* in refutation of the teaching of an Egyptian Bishop, Nepos.⁸² The latter had written a book entitled *Against the Allegorists* in which he had argued for a literalist exegesis of Revelation from which arose the view “that the kingdom of Christ will be on earth.” (24.4). Dionysius’ *On Promises* contained an attack upon Nepos’ work in which amongst other things, Dionysius describes how he came to the Nome of Arsinoe where the ‘doctrine’, as he calls it, had been present for some time and had caused schisms and defections of whole churches. Dionysius called together the whole community and urged them to discuss the issue publicly. This led the leaders to bring forth Nepos’ book which was refuted in such a way by Dionysius that the community and its leaders, in particular, the major lead-

⁷⁹ Relevant sources in this context would be *Barnabas*, *Apocalypse of Peter*, Justin and Irenaeus. For possible signs of veneration of Christ as a king in Clement, here in the hymn at *Paed.* 3.12, see Horbury 2003c, 278. In the curious work known as the *Prophetic Eclogues*, there may be some muted signs of messianism. See especially the interpretation of Psalm 19.

⁸⁰ For the possibility that he might be referring to millenarians like Irenaeus see Simonetti 1975, 46.

⁸¹ It is interesting that in at least two places in his *Cels.* Origen appears to endorse a two advents view for Jesus, the first being his earthly life ending in his resurrection, and the second being his return in glory (see 1.56 and 2.29). But we should probably regard this Origenist nod to messianism, present in *Barnabas* and Tertullian, as an opportunistic rebuttal of a Jewish argument against Jesus (his coming did not comport with Jewish expectations of a glorious Messiah) rather than as a reflection of sincerely held convictions.

⁸² Helpful analysis is found in Simonetti 1975 and Frankfurter 1993, 270-8.

er, Coracion, described as “the leader and introducer of this teaching” (*Hist. eccl.* 7.24.6), came over to him.

The movement in rural Egypt described by Dionysius seems to have received its support from a predominantly peasant population.⁸³ The popularity of millennialist ideas amongst this social group may be explicable by reference to the difficult economic and social circumstances of third century Egypt.⁸⁴ It seems that Nepos gave intellectual support to the movement by writing down ideas which originally had been communicated orally to a largely illiterate audience, and his presence may imply that the movement, although predominantly agrarian and poor, boasted supporters from more educated circles.⁸⁵ The debate takes on a hermeneutical character, although it is clear that Dionysius is principally concerned with the conclusions drawn from the interpretations of the movement’s leaders, not straightforwardly the method of interpretation. In this respect it is relevant that he refers to it as a doctrine or teaching (*Hist. eccl.* 7.24.9), and he attempts to undermine the authority of Revelation (*Hist. eccl.* 7.24.8-25.27). The fact that the whole incident had led to schisms and defections is significant. When Origen described the views of those millennialists known to him, he spoke about them critically but did not imply that they were heretics.⁸⁶ How this schism manifested itself is not clear, although it seems to have been initiated by the millennialists themselves. The fact of its existence points to the fervour with which opinions on both sides were held (the Origenist Dionysius’ account, possibly falsely, makes us think of a gentlemanly tiff which was easily resolved by argument). As with the passage in Origen’s *Princ.*, the reader is not given a detailed description of the beliefs of the group, although we should assume a messianic component based upon the claim attributed to them that “the kingdom of Christ will be on earth.” (*Hist. eccl.* 7.24.4).

An insight into the kind of atmosphere out of which the movement associated with Coracion and Nepos emerged comes from the *Apocalypse of Elijah*. This text, which has a complex transmission history, has been taken by some to have a Jewish *Vorlage*, although its most recent detailed expositor disagrees with this.⁸⁷ The text is taken up with themes of an apocalyptic nature, including the actions and defeat of the antichrist, the sufferings of the end time and the establishment of the millennium. A messianic fig-

⁸³ See *Hist. eccl.* 7.24.6 where Eusebius implies that it was a movement mainly found in villages. The incident can be seen as a battle between town (Alexandria) and country.

⁸⁴ See Frankfurter 1993, 247-78.

⁸⁵ Frankfurter 1993, 272-4.

⁸⁶ Simonetti 1975, 50-1, notes this point but sees the whole incident as of more general significance, constituting an attack upon the spiritualist exegesis of the Origenist school.

⁸⁷ See Frankfurter 1993 opposing Wintermute 1983 and others.

ure is also mentioned. At 3.2 a person is described who will come in the manner of a covey of doves with a crown of doves surrounding him. He will walk upon heaven's vault with the sign of the cross leading him. "The whole world will behold him like the sun which shines from the eastern horizon to the western." In another passage, here interrupting a detailed account of the wicked actions of the antichrist, the messianic figure, described as Christ, will pity those who are his own and send out a large number of angels and those with the sign of Christ on their head will be taken up into heaven (5.2-4). Right at the end of the piece (5.36-9), at the execution of the antichrist, and here recalling Revelation 21, "Christ the king and all his saints will come forth from heaven. He will burn the earth and spend a thousand years upon it. Because the world has been contaminated with sinners, he will create a new heaven and earth, and rule with the saints." These presentations hint at a possibly richer messianic tradition, a point which is supported by noting the detailed character of the description of the antichrist,⁸⁸ in some ways a greater focus of the author's attention, and the possibly messianic-like descriptions of Enoch and Elijah.⁸⁹

There is a temptation to connect *The Apocalypse of Elijah* with the group around Nepos and Coracion. Both emerge from approximately the same period in rural Egypt, and entertained millennial beliefs influenced by Revelation (in the case of *The Apocalypse of Elijah* we should assume the influence of other texts as well). Frankfurter resists this temptation, preferring to argue that at this period of Egyptian history, which was marked by rebellion, and when Christianity in the Chora at least only grew sporadically, it would be better to take the two as representing "a type of religious situation that occurred often around Egypt in the third century ..."⁹⁰

However we conceive the relationship between the Dionysius text and *The Apocalypse of Elijah*, what do they tell us about the development of messianism in Egypt? On one reading, they could be taken to represent an ongoing trail of millennialism, going back beyond the Trajanic revolt, and of Jewish provenance. *The Apocalypse of Elijah* is a text that has so much in common with Judaism that the suggestion has been made, as was noted, that it betrays a Jewish *Vorlage*; and the millennial interpretation associated with Coracion and Nepos was described by Dionysius as "rather Jewish", though such a description may have more to do with a growing view that millennialism was Judaizing than with a sense that its content bore a close relationship to actual Jewish concerns. Frankfurter, who sees

⁸⁸ See 3.5 where the work of the antichrist is clearly aligned with that of Christ. On this see Frankfurter 1993, 112-25.

⁸⁹ See Oegema 1994, 256-7.

⁹⁰ Frankfurter 1993, 278.

some continuity between what he terms the prophetic, millennialist activities of pre-117 Egyptian Jews and later Christian apocalyptic traditions, argues that the heightened eschatological tone of the group around Coracion and Nepos and *The Apocalypse of Elijah*, arose in particularly straitened social and political circumstances associated with third century Egypt. Such a view could imply that the millennialism described above was not a part of an ongoing tradition stretching back some way, and this in spite of Dionysius' claim that "the doctrine had long been prevalent." (*Hist. eccl.* 7.24.6).

Conclusions

The story of messianism and resistance amongst Jews and Christians in Egypt is constructed out of fragments of information. In one narrative which ends with the Trajanic revolt, the view is taken that in increasingly trying political circumstances, particularly those following the Roman conquest of Egypt, many Jews (but by no means all) began to look towards some messianically-inspired redemption from Roman rule. In such a view a contrast is drawn between, on the one hand, the messianic, but only mildly nationalistic, *Sib. Or.* 3, and on the other the similarly messianic but much more rebarbatively nationalistic *Sib. Or.* 5. In this reconstruction emphasis is also placed upon the possibility that refugee Sicarii who entered Egypt at the end of the first revolt continued to cause ferment and contributed both to a growing messianic expectation and a developing sense of resistance to Roman rule especially amongst the poorer element of the population, a development which in the aftermath of the first Jewish revolt seems understandable.⁹¹ In all of this Egyptian Jews are seen to be closer to Palestinian Jewry than to Jews elsewhere in the Diaspora including Asia where, in spite of evidence of apocalyptic writings, there was never any serious sign of resistance to Roman rule or of messianic movements. There are lots of 'gaps' in such a narrative which runs counter to another view of Egyptian, especially Alexandrian, Judaism, which sees it, sometimes uncritically, as the homestead of Jewish efforts at integration with the prevailing culture taken to be exemplified in an Aristobulus or Philo, rather than the learned rant of the authors of *Sib. Or.* 5, and it is very difficult to construct from it a detailed or unified account of Jewish messianism as it supposedly developed.

⁹¹ This can perhaps be overplayed. Both *Sib. Or.* 3 and 5 were probably written by people educated enough to have composed Homeric pentameters. For the view that after 66 C.E. there was a radicalisation of the Jewish upper classes in Egypt and Cyrenaica, see Kerkeslager 2006, 58.

The Christian evidence is even more fragmentary. Jews who held Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah and entered Alexandria at the time they probably did (the 30s C.E.) might have been expected to have left their mark but we hear nothing of them for some time. The first Christian source which is probably Egyptian, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, shows clear signs of continuity with Jewish messianic ideas and related millennial hopes; and here, too, we witness signs of resistance to Romans but in a setting where Jewish literal interpretation of the law is harshly condemned and Jewish nationalistic promises are interpreted in a broadly christocentric manner. Tracing the messianic/millennialist tendencies evidenced in *Barnabas* into a later era is more difficult. *Barnabas* remained a popular text in Egypt (its place in the Sinaitic Codex is evidence of as much) and Origen, in his opposition to millennialists, hints at their presence within the community. Clearer evidence of their subsequent presence emerges from the mid-third century in the groups gathered around Nepos and Coracion, and the author of the *Apocalypse of Elijah*. Both boast a strong interest in Revelation and, in the case of the latter, an explicit interest in messianism. To what extent they were dependent upon a Jewish interpretative tradition is difficult to discern; the Jewish *Vorlage* of *The Apocalypse of Elijah* has not been established and the description of Nepos' interpretation of Revelation as Ἰουδαϊκώτερον has more to do with a growing sense that Jewishness was equivalent to brash millennialism. That neither of these sources nor many earlier ones, save *Barnabas*, witness to evidence of an ongoing argument between Jews and Christians about the nature of messianism, as presented by Celsus,⁹² may have something to do with the limited presence of Jews in Egypt in the period following the Trajanic revolt rather than with a belief that Jews and Christians no longer argued about this matter.

Finally, and with an eye to later developments, we should note the degree to which texts boasting an apocalyptic, and on occasion, messianic, content, become the preserve of some sectarian groups like the Melitians, and subsequently of Egyptian monks, although the grounds for keeping and copying such works may not straightforwardly have been connected with their millennial or messianic content.⁹³

⁹² If Celsus is an Alexandrian, then his reference to a Jew who appeared to say things which directly contradicted Christian messianic assertions (see especially *Cels.* 1.28 and 32), would be directly relevant to our discussion.

⁹³ For a list of such texts preserved by Egyptian monks see Frankfurter 1998, 186-7, and his preceding and following discussion about their use and appeal.

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Chapter 6

Jews and Christians in ancient Alexandria – from the Ptolemies to Caracalla*

The problem of sources

Any consideration of the history of Jews and Christians in ancient Alexandria, and in particular their response to the environment in which they found themselves, has to contend with the problem of sources. In this context a number of points need to be made.

First, it is well known that the dampness of Alexandria and the way in which the modern city has been built up mean that, in comparison with other parts of Egypt, we possess very little papyrological, epigraphic or archaeological evidence for the city from the period in question. There are some Jewish, but no Christian, papyri from Alexandria, dated earlier than the death of Caracalla (217 C.E.), and even the Jewish papyri are relatively few in number.¹ Similarly, we have Alexandrian Jewish, but not Christian, inscriptions, and again their number is small.² We can, of course, extrapolate from papyri and inscriptions from other parts of Egypt to illuminate the situation in Alexandria, but only with caution, for Alexandria had a sense of itself as a place different from other parts of Egypt, as is admirably conveyed in its description as “Alexandria ad Aegyptum” (“Alexandria next to Egypt”).³ Archaeology, too, has yielded little that is truly helpful, even though we know, for instance, that the city boasted a number of synagogues, including one so large and beautiful that it merited a fulsome de-

* First published in A. Hirst and M. Silk (eds.), *Alexandria. Real and Imagined* (Aldershot: Variorum), 143-66.

¹ Papyri pertinent to Judaism can be found in Tcherikover and Fuks 1957 nos. 127a-e; Tcherikover and Fuks 1960, nos. 142-9, 150-3, 418 a-f, 419a-e, 420, 435, 436-50. For papyri published since the work of Tcherikover et al., see Méléze Modrzejewski 1997, 249.

² For these, see Horbury and Noy 1992, XIII-XVI, and comments on inscriptions 1-23.

³ See Dio Chrysostom’s description of Alexandria as the “appendage (προσθήκη) of Egypt” (*Alex.* 32.36). For a brief analysis of Alexandria’s political and economic relationship with the rest of Egypt, see Bowman 1996, 204-5.

scription in the Talmud.⁴ The paucity of material evidence from both Jewish and Christian communities only serves to reinforce our sense of the incompleteness of what we know.

Secondly, the literary evidence at our disposal, though much more extensive than the material evidence, presents difficulties of its own. It is rather patchy, and is obscure about such important matters as the origins of the Jewish and Christian communities in the city. Moreover, the provenance of Jewish or Christian works generally thought to be Alexandrian is somewhat uncertain. Should we, for instance, accept the commonly found assumption that all Jewish works written in Greek, and probably of Egyptian provenance, were written in Alexandria? In some instances we simply cannot do so.⁵ Similarly, even if we can be certain that an individual writer was from Alexandria or spent time there – as is the case with both Clement and Origen – we cannot always be certain which of their works were produced in that city. Clement we know spent both the early and latter parts of his life away from the city, while Origen spent the latter part of his life in Caesarea, out of favour with Alexandria's ecclesiastical authorities. Issues of provenance are part of a more general problem: that of determining the precise purpose and the intended audience of our extant sources, sources about whose authors we often know very little or nothing at all.⁶ Finally, we should note that it is not clear how representative of the Jewish and Christian communities these supposedly Alexandrian works are. So, for instance, although we possess texts of various kinds (poetry, novel, philosophical tract, exegetical works of a variety of kinds), produced by the Jewish community over a considerable period of time and from differing perspectives, many of these emerge from the educated elite, and only come down to us through the selective hands of Christians. It is sobering to note that it is not Jews who have preserved for us the voluminous writings of Philo, but Christians.⁷ Christian literature, too, suffers from a not dissimilar deficiency. Clement and Origen could not be deemed typical representatives of the Alexandrian community, and they themselves, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, the church historian Eusebius, and the Gnostic texts from Nag Hammadi hint at considerable variety within that community.

⁴ See *j. Sukkah* 5.1, 55a-b. The passage is introduced with a statement attributed to R. Judah, "Whoever has never seen the double colonnade (that is, the basilica-synagogue) of Alexandria in Egypt has never seen Israel's glory in his entire life."

⁵ Fraser 1972, 688, who comments that Jewish literature supposedly from Alexandria "lacks clear marks of local origin."

⁶ In this respect we should note how many Jewish, and to a lesser extent, Christian texts are pseudonymous.

⁷ Sterling 1995, 6, is keener than the present author to emphasise the representative character of the extant Jewish literature.

A third problem relates to the pagan context of our investigation. Here too there are considerable lacunae in our knowledge. Of course, we know a good deal about the political history of the city, but in other areas, we are less well-served. So, for instance, when we come to consider the Alexandrian pagan philosophical context out of which Philo arose, we are no doubt right to accept its essentially middle-Platonist character, and in this respect, to point to the pupils of Antiochus of Aschalon and to Eudorus, who are all associated with Alexandria and more or less contemporary. But these characters remain shadowy at best, and do not allow us to paint a detailed picture of the intellectual environment in which Jews like Philo worked, or to envisage clearly how such people interacted with the intellectual culture from which they had emerged.⁸

Similarly, in relation to the Christian community, we should note that for the period which saw the beginning of the efflorescence of Christian culture in Alexandria (late second to mid third century), we know very little about the city's intellectual ethos, and very few names of distinguished pagan Alexandrian philosophers have come down to us. In this respect, it is interesting that Porphyry, in his biography of Plotinus, Origen's contemporary, stated that the young man came to Alexandria because its teachers were men of the highest reputation, but that he was disappointed with those he met, and ended up sitting at the feet of a certain Ammonius Saccas.⁹ It is the name of Ammonius Saccas that we know, but not those of the apparently famous teachers who had originally attracted Plotinus to the city. Moreover, it is very difficult to find any sign of a reaction on the part of pagans to the presence of Jews and Christians in their city. We do admittedly have evidence of a negative response to Jews in the works of certain Egyptians, notably Manetho, Lysimachus and Apion, to name but three, and we have Philo's and Josephus' account of the breakdown in the relations between Jew and Greek in the late 30s and early 40s C.E., together with the so-called *Acts of the Pagan Martyrs*. But evidence of an intellectual response to Judaism is much more difficult to come by. In this respect, it is telling that we have to search hard in extant pagan literature for any references to the Jewish Bible, which, as I will argue below, was so central to Alexandrian Jewish self-understanding. Clearly Christians elicited responses from their pagan contemporaries, but apart from Celsus,¹⁰ who in the last quarter of the second century wrote a treatise against the Christians, and whom some suspect came from Alexandria, we have no other witnesses to report.

⁸ On this philosophical background, see Dillon 1977.

⁹ Porphyry, *Vit. Plot.* 3.

¹⁰ For a tentative endorsement of the view that Celsus was from Alexandria, see Chadwick 1965, xxviii-xxix.

But such a negative prolegomenon should not lead us to despair. We can, I believe, still say some quite specific things about the responses of Jews and Christians to their Alexandrian environment. It will be my aim here to show up some of the continuities and differences in those responses, and to say something about the images of the city which they conjure up.

Jews in Alexandria – from ‘our city’ to an alien place

We have no precise and reliable information about how and why Jews first came to Alexandria. We are probably right to assume a gradual process of immigration which began not long after the foundation of the city, reaching its high point in the early and middle parts of the second century B.C.E.,¹¹ when the Jewish community appears to have become genuinely influential.¹² What is clear is that by the mid-second century B.C.E. the Jews constituted a significant part of the population of the city, occupying its north east section known as ‘Delta’, and other parts as well,¹³ and numbering, according to the most recent (admittedly tentative) estimate, some 180,000 people out of a total population of between 500,000 and 600,000.¹⁴ It is also clear that Jews were represented in most strata of society, from the richest to the poorest, and occupied a variety of professions, which involved them in day-to-day contact with non-Jews.¹⁵

¹¹ For the immigration of Jews into Alexandria, see Hecateus of Abdera in Josephus, *C. Ap.*, 1.186-9; Apion in Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.33; and Josephus, *A.J.* 12.9. For the view that the influx of Jews into the city was the result of the deportation of Jews from Jerusalem at the time of Ptolemy I Lagos, see *Let. Aris.* 4, 12-27, 35-7; and Josephus, *A.J.* 12.7 and *C. Ap.* 2.44-7. For the view that the Jewish presence in Alexandria should be accounted for by reference to immigration, see Méléze Modrzejewski 1993, 75-6.

¹² The reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor (180-145 B.C.E.), seems to have been an important period in this regard. We should note in particular that it is from this period onwards that we have the greatest evidence of Jewish literary activity and of political involvement in the city’s turbulent history. For this view, see Fraser 1972, 298.

¹³ For evidence of Jews living in other parts of the city, see Philo, *Flacc.* 55, and the distribution of Jewish epitaphs and synagogal dedications.

¹⁴ For this figure, see Delia 1988, 286-8. Philo’s assertion that there were one million Jews in Alexandria (*Flacc.* 43), is clearly an exaggeration.

¹⁵ For the various areas of life in which Jews were to be located, see Flacc. 57, and Tcherikover’s discussion in Tcherikover 1957, 48-50; and Barclay 1996, 115-16. These professions included the army, the police, building, agriculture and money lending.

Such a significant group enjoyed certain privileges, in particular the right to live in accordance with their ancestral traditions,¹⁶ and a degree of self-government.¹⁷ Modern scholars have been particularly concerned to determine the extent of their political autonomy. According to Strabo, in the Ptolemaic period Jews were governed by a Senate or *gerousia* over which an ethnarch presided.¹⁸ This man, according to Strabo, “governs the people, judges law-suits and supervises contracts and decrees as if he were the head of an independent state.”¹⁹ All this suggests a considerable measure of autonomy, and as one scholar has noted, implies “a community with powerful mechanisms of self-regulation and a strong sense of its own identity, almost a state within a state”,²⁰ though it is clear that Jews did subject themselves to the judgment of Greek courts.²¹ But while Jews may have enjoyed a degree of autonomy within the city, only a few of them, contrary to what we are told by Josephus,²² were full-fledged citizens of the city, and it is probable that in the Ptolemaic period Jews were considered Hellenes, “members of the group of immigrants who exercised control over the native Egyptians”,²³ towards whom there appears to have been considerable enmity. It was precisely the question of Jewish rights within the city, in particular their exclusion from Greek educational institutions and their liability to the special Roman tax known as *laographia*, which in the early period of Roman rule, under the governorship of Flaccus, was to cause so much tension, and lead to a breakdown in relations between Jew and Greek.²⁴ This in turn was to stoke the fires of discontent and hostility which eventually led to the Jewish revolt of 115-117 C.E., and the temporary stilling of Jewish influence in the city. The assertion of the Emperor

¹⁶ This right was confirmed by both Augustus and Claudius (*CPJ* 153), and finds incidental confirmation in at least one papyrus (*CPJ* 10) where it, seems that a Jew working on the estate of Apollonius is allowed to keep the Sabbath.

¹⁷ Josephus *C. Ap.* 2.37.

¹⁸ Josephus *A.J.* 14.117. Scholars now reject the thesis that the Jews formed a separate politeuma, as implied in *Let. Aris.* 310.

¹⁹ Strabo quoted in Josephus, *A.J.* 14.117.

²⁰ Barclay 1996, 43. This strong sense of identity was probably fostered by the fact that the majority of Jews, as stated above, lived in the same area of the city.

²¹ For a detailed discussion of this matter, see Méléze Modrzejewski 1997, 107-19.

²² *A.J.* 14.188. For other references to the rights of Jews in Josephus, see *B.J.* 2.487-8; *A.J.* 12.8, 121-4; 19.281-5, 286-92, 310; *C. Ap.* 2.37-8. For recent discussions of the constitutional status of Jews in Alexandria, see Delia 1991, 27; and Barclay 1996, 60-71.

²³ Sterling 1995, 11.

²⁴ The change in Jewish status in Alexandria after Roman occupation is discussed by amongst others Tcherikover 1957, 57-74, and Barclay 1996, 48-51.

Claudius, in his famous edict of 41 C.E., that the Jews were living in a city that was not their own (ἐν ἄλλοτρείῳ πόλει) had come true.²⁵

How then had Jews responded to the culture of this city that was not their own? Had they always regarded it as in some sense 'alien'? From the extant evidence, it appears, that some Jews were proud to be inhabitants of Alexandria. The author of the *Letter of Aristeas* (probably written in the second century B.C.E.) states that Alexandria "surpasses all cities in size and prosperity."²⁶ Philo himself commends the city for its beauty, and in his Platonised interpretation of the Genesis account of creation, appears to base his model for the creation of the world on the foundation story of Alexandria;²⁷ while the writer of the Eleventh Sibylline speaks of "revered Alexandria, celebrated nurse of cities, glistening with beauty ..."²⁸ For many Jews the city was their patris, or homeland,²⁹ even if a sense of affiliation to Palestine remained strong.³⁰ And from a relatively early date Jews adopted the language, and for those sufficiently wealthy, the education, of their Greek hosts.³¹ Significance should also be attached to what appears to have been a generally positive attitude towards the Ptolemaic monarchy,³² and indeed towards subsequent Roman government.³³ In relation to the former particular note should be taken of evidence that implies direct Jew-

²⁵ *CPJ* 153. See also Philo's claim that Flaccus and his supporters were trying to declare Jews aliens in their own city (*Flacc.* 54 and 172).

²⁶ *Let. Aris.* 109. 'Aristeas' is merely a pseudonym; the author's identity is not known.

²⁷ Philo, *Legat.* 150-1; *Opif.* 17.

²⁸ *Sib. Or.* 11.233-5.

²⁹ See *CPJ* 151.

³⁰ In this respect we should note the following: the continuing importance for Alexandrian Jews of the temple, and Jerusalem (expressed most obviously in the payment of the annual tax for the upkeep of the temple); the reality of pilgrimages to the city, although, interestingly, when Philo describes such a pilgrimage at *Spec.* 1.68, he uses the verb ξενιτεύειν ('go to a foreign land'), thus implying that Alexandria was his patris; the appearance of a Greek translation of the originally Palestinian Wisdom of Ben Sirach; what Josephus tells us about the entry of rebels from Palestine into Alexandria during the first Jewish revolt against Rome (*B.J.* 7.409-16); and the emphasis which the author of *Aristeas* places on contact between the Ptolemaic court in Alexandria and the High Priest in Jerusalem, implying close ties between the two cities.

³¹ For a helpful collection of relevant material pertaining to knowledge of Hebrew and Aramaic in Egypt amongst Jews, see Horbury 1994, 17-18. For evidence of the Greek education of Jews, in this case Philo, see Alexandre 1967.

³² Consider, for example, the warm attitude of *Aristeas* to Ptolemy Philadelphus II and Philo's praise of the same man in *Mos.* 2.29. The latter could be harsh about certain kings and their wives (see *Prob.* 125), as could other Jewish writers, notably the author of *3 Macc.*

³³ Note in particular Philo's paean to Augustus at *Legat.* 143f.

ish involvement with the court,³⁴ as well as some synagogal inscriptions which dedicate the building on behalf of various Ptolemaic kings and queens.³⁵ Such inscriptions betray a considerable degree of loyalty to the Ptolemaic monarchy, while at the same time avoiding any sense in which they might imply, as with similar pagan dedications, any perception of the king or queen as divine.³⁶

These inscriptions carry with them a metaphorical value precisely because they show a desire on the part of Jews to be both honourable citizens of their adopted city, but also to be so in a distinctive way that took account of their own beliefs and practices, which successive monarchs and emperors had sought to protect. Central to the forging of that sense of distinctiveness was the Greek translation of the Jewish Bible, and in particular of the Pentateuch.

This translation, later to be known as the Septuagint, had first been undertaken in Alexandria. According to a well-known tradition, King Ptolemy II Philadelphus, on the advice of his librarian, Demetrius of Phalerum, requested such a translation for his famous library in Alexandria. The High Priest in Jerusalem duly sent him seventy-two men equally learned in both Greek and Hebrew letters, whom he isolated on the island of Pharos. Collectively they came to agree upon a translation, and duly submitted it to the delighted king. This tale, found in the *Letter of Aristeas*, and repeated with

³⁴ See Fraser 1972, 699, who argues that the familiarity that the author of *Letter of Aristeas* shows with royal protocol implies that he was a Jew of high rank at the Ptolemaic court. See also Aristobulus who claims a close association with Ptolemy VI, as well as Onias IV who was granted leave by the same king to found a Jewish community with its own temple at Leontopolis. For a discussion of this and other evidence, see Barclay 1996, 35.

³⁵ For the relevant dedicatory inscriptions from Alexandria, see CPJ 1432, and Horbury and Noy 1992, 13 and 14. Other relevant dedications from other parts of Egypt are to be found in Horbury and Noy 1992, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 105, 117, 125, 126. Note also Josephus' statement that Onias IV promised Ptolemy Philometor that he would build a temple "for your sake, for your wife, and for your children." (*A.J.* 13.67); and Philo's assertion at *Legat.* 48 that the destruction of the synagogues which accompanied the riots against the Jews in the city in the late 30s of the first century C.E., was particularly heinous because it deprived the Jews of the "means of showing reverence to their benefactors, since they no longer had the sacred buildings where they could set forth their thankfulness." For a discussion of these dedications, see Fraser 1972, 282-3 and the commentary of Horbury and Noy 1992.

³⁶ See Philo, *Legat.* 134-149 for the exemption of Jews from ruler worship, and especially 138 for his hostile comments about the ruler cult, and the comment of Fraser that "it is noteworthy that while this formula survives unaltered in Jewish synagogal dedications until the end of the Ptolemaic period, only two of these record the cultic titles of the sovereigns (see Horbury and Noy 1992, 25, 125), and, even so, they omit the predicate 'God' ... " (Fraser 1972, 282).

some changes by Philo,³⁷ and Josephus,³⁸ has more to do with legend than historical reality, though we need not doubt that by the middle of the third century, a translation of the Pentateuch did exist.³⁹ While it would be helpful to know the precise context of its production, this is not of primary importance; what is important is the way in which some Alexandrian Jews sought to represent it. Here a number of points need to be made. First, the fact that the translation was explicitly associated with a Ptolemaic monarch, whether it contains a kernel of truth or not, points to the desire on the part of some Jews to see the operation as a truly Alexandrian endeavour, an undertaking whose primary stimulus came, not from the Jewish community (though it was probably from here that the primary motive in fact came), but from the king of Egypt.⁴⁰ This inference is supported by Philo's report that every year on the island of Pharos, there was a festival to celebrate the completion of the translation, in which not just Jews, but a multitude of non-Jews participated.⁴¹ A second point, related to the first, concerns the presentation of the perceived purpose of the translation. The author of the Letter of Aristeas notes that the translators were equally well-versed in Greek and Hebrew culture,⁴² and there is a sense in which he is attempting to legitimate the Septuagintal translation to a perhaps uncertain Jewish-Greek audience (a point which is clearer in Philo),⁴³ but also to make it clear that the translation opens up the wisdom of the Jews to the Greeks (an observation whose truth is implied by the assertion that the letter is written by a Greek, 'Aristeas', to another Greek, 'Philokrates'). Philo takes the point further when he attributes an almost proselytic purpose to the translation,⁴⁴ and picking up on the location of the translation on Pha-

³⁷ For a discussion of the passage as it appears in Philo (*Mos.* 2.28-42), see Amir 1988, 440-4.

³⁸ *A.J.* 12.2.

³⁹ This seems clear from the fact that Demetrios the chronographer, who wrote an important history of the Jews, and was probably active in the reign of Ptolemy IV (c. 221-204 B.C.E.), shows knowledge of the LXX. On the translation and its purpose, see, for example, Brock 1974; Sly 1996, 57-64; and Méléze Modrzejewski 1997, 99-106.

⁴⁰ Note the praise that Aristeas and Philo bestow upon Ptolemy (*Mos.* 2.29-30).

⁴¹ Philo *Mos.* 2.41.

⁴² *Letter of Aristeas* 122.

⁴³ It is Philo who emphasizes the almost miraculous character of the translation, stating that the translators agreed with each other independently, and likening them to hierophantic priestly figures (*Mos.* 2.40). At *Mos.* 2.26, he writes that "in ancient times the laws were written down in Chaldean [i.e. Hebrew]", implying through his use of the aorist tense, that the Greek translation has almost subverted the place of the Hebrew original.

⁴⁴ *Mos.* 2.36; 43-4.

ros with its famous lighthouse, he speaks about it as a light shining out to all.⁴⁵

This sense of the openness of Jewish culture, of its compatibility with the culture of its Greek hosts, receives further, and more detailed, emphasis in the writers mentioned above, and elsewhere. *Letter of Aristaeas*, for instance, gives us an account of Jewish-Greek relations in which the shared character of their values and beliefs is emphasized.⁴⁶ Indeed at one point the author states that “the God who guides your kingdom is the same as the one who has given them their law ...”, and goes on to identify the Jewish God with Zeus.⁴⁷ Similarly Philo, though here in relation to the philosophical tradition, notes that what comes to the adherents of the most esteemed philosophy, comes to the Jews through their laws and customs, “namely the knowledge of the highest and most ancient cause of all ...”⁴⁸ And Philo is keener than most to contradict the idea that Jews are misanthropic and separatist.

The view that Jews and Greeks shared in a common cultural heritage, particularly a common intellectual heritage, must have seemed very strange to those Jews – and perhaps Greeks and Egyptians – who were conversant with the Septuagint. How could the Greek philosophical tradition and Moses have anything in common? In this context Jews, from a relatively early stage, it seems, were able to make use of allegory, to argue that in order to do the divine scriptures justice, commentators could not tarry too long with the surface or literal meaning, but must dig beneath the surface for a deeper understanding of God’s words which was worthy of their provenance. This approach to scripture is first witnessed in the fragmentarily preserved work of Aristobulus, dedicated to Ptolemy VI Philometor,⁴⁹ and reaches a crescendo in the writings of Philo. In Philo’s construction the Pentateuch becomes a tale “of the moral education of the human soul or the order of the cosmos in which the soul’s progress from vice to virtue takes place.”⁵⁰ Biblical personalities become tropes of the condi-

⁴⁵ *Mos.* 2.41. On the role of the location in Philo’s account, see Sly 1996, 60.

⁴⁶ See especially Tcherikover 1958, 59-85; and Barclay 1996, 141-5.

⁴⁷ *Let. Aris.* 15-16.

⁴⁸ Philo, *Virt.* 65.

⁴⁹ The two major fragments of Aristobulus are preserved in Eusebius *Praep. ev.* 7.32.16-18 (*Fragment 1*, here gleaned from Eusebius’ older contemporary, Anatolius); 8.10 (*Fragment 2*); and 13.12 (*Fragment 3*). For the most recent discussion of these with relevant bibliography, see Barclay 1996, 150-8. Shorter citations are to be found in Clement of Alexandria but these are also in Eusebius.

⁵⁰ Dawson 1992, 98.

tion of the soul, and the Torah equates precisely with the law of nature.⁵¹ Such a construction can be taken as an attempt to deparicularise the Hebrew scriptures through the spectacles of middle Platonism. Moses, well-educated in matters Greek, spouts Stoic, Platonic, and Pythagorean truths, and does so before Zeno, Plato and Pythagoras, who are regarded as his followers.⁵²

Such apparent levels of acculturation are witnessed to in other Jewish writings. In this context one might point to the *Exagoge* of Ezekiel the Tragedian, which in Greek tragic poetic form, tells the tale of Moses' life and the exodus of the people of Israel from Egypt;⁵³ to the metrical epitaphs of Tell el-Yehoudieh;⁵⁴ to the writings of Demetrios the Chronographer, which seek to make sense of biblical chronology along the lines established by the chronographic work of the great Alexandrian polymath Eratosthenes;⁵⁵ and to the novelistic form of the work entitled *Joseph and Aseneth*.⁵⁶ The important thing to note in this context is the variety of forms of literature represented, and the fact that, aside from the metrical epitaphs, all of these works have as their major concern, or their inspiration, parts of the Pentateuch.

It is precisely this Hellenized Judaism, which some scholars regard as the unique product of Alexandria. While others might well blanch at the idea that Hellenized Jews were not to be found anywhere else in the Diaspora, or point out that our sources for Jews elsewhere are not as rich as they are in Alexandria, it still remains the case that the Jewish literature from that city is unique precisely in the extent to which it bears witness to a profound interaction between Judaism and what we have come to call Hellenistic culture. However, when we go on to state that it reflects the intellectual climate of the city, we are in a more difficult situation. Certainly it is true that in broad philosophical terms it is possible to place Philo's intellectual concerns in what we term the middle Platonist tradition which had come, after the fall of Athens to Sulla in 86 B.C.E. and the dissolution of the Athenian philosophical schools, to be associated with Alexandria,

⁵¹ Philo can argue this on the basis of the fact that the Jewish law book opens with an account of the creation of the world, and that therefore all who live in accord with its laws are citizens of the world (see *Opif.* 3).

⁵² There are numerous references in Philo's works, implicit and explicit, to the Greek philosophical tradition. Note should be taken of the way in which he describes Moses' education in *Mos.* 1.23.

⁵³ See Jacobson 1983, and in particular his emphasis on the way in which the author, though keen to point up the fact that the Jews are God's elected people, draws implicit parallels between the fate of the Jews and that of the Greeks.

⁵⁴ See Horbury and Noy 1992, 51-102.

⁵⁵ For the fragments of Demetrios, see Holladay 1983, 51-91 and van der Horst 1988.

⁵⁶ For the most recent discussion of this material, see Gruen 1998.

and that made the city, at least for a short time, a philosophical centre.⁵⁷ In this context we should note the names of Antiochus of Aschalon (to whose circle Cicero refers in his *Academicæ Quaestiones*), Eudoros, and Theon.⁵⁸ But because we know only a little about these figures (and in the case of Theon we possess nothing of what he wrote at all), and because Philo refers to no contemporary philosopher by name (or indeed any other contemporary philosopher at all), it becomes difficult to contextualise the works of Philo and the others. In some sense, then, they become, for lack of other evidence, the philosophical image of Alexandria.

In this context it is interesting to look at Jewish allegorical exegesis. While we know that in the Greek world allegorical expositions of Homer had existed for some time, it is strange to find that such an interpretative tradition was not associated with Alexandria, but rather with Stoics in Alexandria’s rival city Pergamum.⁵⁹ The Alexandrian scholarly tradition, associated with the Mouseion and encouraged by the existence of the great library – a tradition stretching back to the middle third century B.C.E. – was antagonistic to the allegorical exposition of Homer,⁶⁰ and it is odd that Jewish interpreters of the scriptures show only minimal interest in this primarily philological tradition.⁶¹ We should probably assume that when Aristobulus, Philo and their unnamed predecessors allegorized, they were following a pagan tradition of exegesis, which must have flourished in Alexandria. Here again Jews promise to become the principal source for understanding the intellectual climate of the city.

Jewish interaction with the Hellenistic culture of Alexandria should not be restricted to the specifically intellectual. Jews from the privileged background of Philo, whose nephew was to be a future governor of Egypt, had access to many of the more broadly cultural institutions of the city. Philo betrays knowledge of the theatre,⁶² the gymnasium,⁶³ of the games,⁶⁴ the

⁵⁷ On the first century B.C.E. revival of the city as a philosophical centre, see Fraser 1972, 485-93.

⁵⁸ On Antiochus, Eudoros and Philo and their relationship to the middle Platonist tradition, see Dillon 1977, 52-183.

⁵⁹ See Pfeiffer 1968, 234-51.

⁶⁰ See Pfeiffer’s lengthy discussion of this tradition in *ibid.* 88-234.

⁶¹ In this respect, see Siegert 1996, 135, “No Jewish author, even amongst those who lived at Alexandria, ever got infected by the critical spirit. Even though the text of the Septuagint was never uniform, no attempt to apply Alexandrian criticism to the Bible is known before Origen.” See also Dawson 1992, 74. Note should be taken of Fraser’s observation that the Alexandrian scholarly tradition had declined since the third century, a point which may receive partial confirmation from Dio Chrysostom’s mocking reference to the city in *Alex.* 32.100 as a place whose name is devoid of meaning. Fraser places particular emphasis upon the decision of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes to expel the intelligentsia from Alexandria.

⁶² *Ebr.* 177; *Congr.* 64-6; *Prob.* 141.

clubs of the city;⁶⁵ and appears to have been a frequenter of banquets.⁶⁶ Here, often concealed in the midst of obscure and involved exegetical discussion, we gain a glimpse into the wider culture of the city, a glimpse which at times accords with the image of the frivolous, fun-loving city found, above all, in Dio Chrysostom's *Oration 32*.

The signs of acculturation should not, however, obscure the strong sense of distinctiveness that even Hellenized Jews possessed, a distinctiveness located in the practices and traditions of their faith. The writer of the *Letter of Aristaeus*, who is often singled out as the extant Jewish writer most keen to present the convergence of Jewish and Greek culture, can still assert that the law had been given to the Jews as a 'fence' and 'iron wall' to "prevent [them] from mixing with the people of other nations, being preserved pure in body and soul, separated from false beliefs ..."; and while he is at pains to explain in an allegorical way the Jewish food laws, he does not regard their literal implementation as unnecessary.⁶⁷ Similarly, Philo condemns those who allegorise the law at the expense of its literal implementation,⁶⁸ and is, like other Jewish writers, sharp in his condemnation of apostates.⁶⁹ Moreover, like his predecessor Aristobulus,⁷⁰ Philo's attitude to Hellenistic culture was in some sense an aggressive one, for in his assertion that Moses was the source of all great philosophy, he was claiming that the truly Greek was the truly Jewish.⁷¹ It is quite clear that for Philo Judaism is the legitimate form of Hellenism. An attitude of cultural superiority is in the end a part of the Philonic vision. While Philo may in many ways reflect the intellectual and social milieu of a Hellenized aristocrat, he still locates the primary place for learning in the synagogue.⁷²

⁶³ *Cher.* 80-1; *Prob.* 26; *Spec.* 3.176.

⁶⁴ *Opif.* 78.

⁶⁵ *Ebr.* 20-30.

⁶⁶ *Opif.* 78; *Fug.* 31-2.

⁶⁷ *Let. Aris.* 139, 144. Barclay 1996, 147, notes that the writer's insistence on the literal observance of the food laws might appear to be compromised when the Jews share a meal with the king, but that the king in fact accommodates himself to Jewish dietary requirements, foregoes the usual religious practices before the meal (*Let. Aris.* 181-6). Barclay comments: "That suggests that if Jews and Gentiles are to mix in friendly and social intercourse, it has to be on the Jews' terms." For a helpful discussion of insistence on the superiority of Jewish culture, see Gruen 1998, 216-18.

⁶⁸ *Migr.* 88-94.

⁶⁹ See, for example, *Praem.* 138, and Philo's assertion in *Legat.* 117 and 210 that Jews would rather die than infringe their laws.

⁷⁰ See especially fragment 3 (*Praep. ev.* 13.12) where Aristobulus emphasises Greek dependence on the Jewish law.

⁷¹ *Migr.* 127.

⁷² *Spec.* 2.216.

Indeed on occasion a sense of alienation from, and hostility towards, the culture Philo and others like him inhabited is plain to see. Philo’s discussion of the proselyte to Judaism is, in this context, telling. Such people should be welcomed into the Jewish community, he asserts, for “they have left ... their country, their kinsfolk and their friends for the sake of virtue and religion”, and he goes on to characterise their previous state as “the vain imaginings of their ancestors.”⁷³ This sense of alienation from the wider culture is exemplified in other places in Philo, not least in his unveiled attacks upon aspects of Alexandrian social life,⁷⁴ and in his evident appreciation, viewed at first hand, of the city’s capacity to break out into violence.⁷⁵ Here the image of the city is a strongly negative one in which the frivolities of games, symposia and theatres predominate, where the religious customs of the city are an offence,⁷⁶ and where the threat of violence is ever-present.⁷⁷ For Philo it is quite understandable that Moses should have chosen to write down his holy law outside the city, for most cities, he contends, “are full of countless evils, both acts of impiety towards God and wrongdoing between man and man.” (*Decal.* 2).⁷⁸

The sense that Jews *qua* Jews could never be at home in their Alexandrian environment, that there was an essential incompatibility between their culture and the culture of their adopted city, was a prevailing opinion amongst a varied constituency of people, both Jews and non-Jews. On the Jewish side we know, on the one hand, of the existence of apostates – some named but the majority not – whose apostasy was motivated by social or intellectual factors, or both;⁷⁹ but equally of Jews who were unre-

⁷³ *Spec.* 1.52-3; *Virt.* 181.

⁷⁴ See his ridiculing of boxing and pancratist contests (*Agr.* 113-19), his attacks upon theatres (*Agr.* 35) and clubs (*Ebr.* 20-3), and upon the morals of Greek symposia (*Contempl.* 40-63).

⁷⁵ See in particular his account of the breakdown in relations between Jews and other inhabitants of the city in *Flacc.* and *Legat.*, and especially *Legat.* 120-41.

⁷⁶ See, for example, *Decal.* 66 and 78; *Cher.* 91f. and *Spec.* 1.319f.

⁷⁷ For a negative description of the Alexandrian character, see *Legat.* 162-5.

⁷⁸ This could simply be the repetition of a well known topos, but, given comments about the city we find elsewhere, probably contains at least an insight into an aspect of Philo’s thinking on the matter. For confirmation of aspects of Philo’s moral attacks upon the city (the role of the mob, sophists etc.), see Dio Chrysostom’s *Alex.* 32.

⁷⁹ Notable among named apostates, see in particular Tiberius Alexander, the nephew of Philo who was both Roman procurator of Judea (46 – 48 C.E.), and governor of Egypt (66-69 C.E.). The view that he was an apostate is confirmed by Josephus *A.J.* 20.100. And Dositheos who appears in a number of papyri (*CPJ* 127) both as the memorandum writer of 3rd century Ptolemaic king Euergetes II, and perhaps more significantly as the priest of Alexander and the Gods of Adelphoi and the Gods Euergetai. That such a position made him an apostate, seems clear from *3 Macc.* 1.3. For discussions of these individuals, see Barclay 1996, 104-6; and Méléze Modrzjewski 1993, 83-4. For unnamed

mittingly negative in their assessment of the pagan culture in which they lived. In the latter category one might place the Wisdom of Solomon, *3 Maccabees*,⁸⁰ the third *Sibylline Oracle*, and citizens of Alexandria who (Josephus implies) sympathized with some of those involved in the Jewish revolt of 66-70 against Rome in Palestine,⁸¹ and, at a slight remove perhaps, the opponents of Philo's attempts to bring together Greek *paideia* and Mosaic faith by means of allegory. On the pagan side, attention should be drawn to the mob violence directed against the Jews, witnessed in the late 30s of the first century C.E. (and whose causes we find delineated, no doubt tendentiously, in both Jewish and non-Jewish sources), and to the growth of anti-Jewish literature, some of which comes from the hands of Egyptians writing in Greek, and which often involves a polemical rereading of precisely those things which we have seen to be central to Jewish identity.⁸²

At least one such polemical work comes from the period of inter-communal strife during the governorship of Gaius. The problems which emerged from this time were not resolved, and may in part have contributed to an atmosphere of hostility⁸³ which eventually was to lead to the Trajanic revolt of 115-117 C.E., and the subsequent stilling of Jewish influence in the city.⁸⁴ The fact that the integrationist vision of *Letter of Aristeas*, and of Philo failed to prevail may have had something to do with a changed set of historical circumstances, which came into being at the advent of Roman rule.⁸⁵ But there may also have been an element of inevita-

apostates, see *3 Macc.* 7.10f., and for a more general discussion of different forms of apostasy, see Barclay 1996, 106-24.

⁸⁰ The case of *3 Macc.* is particularly instructive because, as Barclay 1996, 201, points out, it appears to offer a vision diametrically opposed to that of Aristeas. For a reassessment of these texts, in particular *3 Maccabees*, see Gruen 1998, especially 22-36, where he argues that they are less pessimistic and aggressive in tone than some have supposed.

⁸¹ Josephus *B.J.* 7.408-19.

⁸² Evidence for this polemical literature is mediated to us through Josephus in his *Contra Apionem* and something of its tone can also be heard in the so-called *Acts of the Pagan Martyrs*, especially the *Acta Isidori* and the *Acta Hermaisci*. For a discussion of these texts, see Musurillo 1954; and of 'judeophobia' in Egypt in general, see Schäfer 1997.

⁸³ We have almost no information about the Jewish community in Alexandria between the end of the 40s and the outbreak of the Trajanic revolt. Something of its tense and hostile character may be captured in *Sib. Or.* 5 and *Ps.-Clem. Hom.* 4-6. On the revolt more generally, see, for example, Méléze Modrzjewski 1997, 198-205 and 254 for relevant bibliography, as well as *CPJ* 436-50.

⁸⁴ For a summary of arguments relating to the relative importance of the Jewish community in Alexandria and Egypt after the revolt, see Haas 1997, 99-109.

⁸⁵ This is the view of Sterling 1995 who sees the exclusion of Jews from some of the city's institutions as the main grounds for conflict.

bility about it. In Alexandrian culture Jews in the main distinguished themselves from others, including native Egyptians, precisely by their persistent adherence to their distinctive traditions embodied in the Torah, and it was precisely the right to practice these which came under attack in the late 30s and early 40s. As Fraser stated, "Only the most unadulterated survival of racial integrity and Jewish customs into the Roman period will explain the rapid growth of anti-semitism in Roman Alexandria ..."⁸⁶ The story of Judaism in Alexandria is the story in part of a creative fusion between Jerusalem and Athens, but also about the overriding and remarkable persistence of Jerusalem, and an unwillingness on the part of non-Jews to accept this fact.

Christians in Alexandria

The history of Christianity in Egypt in the first two centuries of the common era are full of lacunae. How did Christianity emerge in the city?⁸⁷ And how is it that we move from its apparently raw beginnings, exemplified in *Barnabas*, to the altogether more sophisticated atmosphere of Clement and subsequently Origen? These are but two of a whole variety of questions to which there appear to be no clear answers.

It is now generally accepted that Christianity in Egypt had its origins in the Jewish synagogue. This cannot be proven but there are a number of indications which point in that direction. In this respect we might highlight the Acts of the Apostles' claim that Apollos, a Jew, had been introduced to Christianity in Alexandria;⁸⁸ to the existence of the possibly Alexandrian *Gospel according to the Hebrews*; to the strange silence concerning Alexandrian Christianity which might imply that, until 115 and the outbreak of the Jewish revolt in Egypt, Christianity remained a sect within Judaism and that it took some time to recover from the effects of that calamitous event;⁸⁹ indications that the parts of the city occupied by Christians were

⁸⁶ Fraser 1972, 57.

⁸⁷ The tradition found in Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 2.16.1) that Mark was the founder of Alexandrian Christianity is no longer accepted. For a discussion of other sources relating to the foundation of the Christian community in Alexandria, see Sangrador 1994, 43-68.

⁸⁸ See Acts 18:25 according to the Codex Bezae.

⁸⁹ This 'strange silence' had been famously explained by Bauer 1972, 44-60, in terms of heterodox origins. This was proven, he argued, by the fact that our earliest reliable evidence for Egyptian Christianity is Gnostic in character. A well-known refutation of Bauer is found in Roberts 1979. He points out that the early Christian papyri from Egypt consist mainly of fragments of the Bible, and only very rarely of Gnostic texts. For a discussion of these conflicting theories, see Sangrador 1994, 69-107, who remains skeptical about the Jewish origins of the community; and Löhr 1996, 332-3.

precisely those parts of the city occupied by Jews;⁹⁰ and finally by reference to the *Epistle of Barnabas* (possibly written in the first century C.E., perhaps in Alexandria), which shows clear signs of Jewish influence.⁹¹

Where *Barnabas* assumes an ongoing relationship between Christians and Jews in Alexandria, albeit a hostile one, it is much less easy to discern such a thing in those Christian writers who followed him, or in any way to reconstruct a history of Jewish-Christian relations in the city. Very little Jewish evidence from the period after the death of Philo is extant (indeed we have no Jewish references to Christianity in Jewish Alexandrian literature, papyri or inscriptions). Clement of Alexandria only refers to Jews intermittently in his surviving works, and while his famous successor Origen does refer to Jews, much of what he wrote comes from the time he was in Caesarea, and not in Alexandria, and it is therefore difficult to gauge the extent of interaction between Jews and Christians reflected in his works.⁹²

Absence of evidence for interaction – however explained (and reference is often made to the insignificant nature of the Jewish population in Alexandria as a result of the revolt of 115-117 C.E.) – should not, as I have already argued, detract from evidence for continuities in outlook and perspective between the two communities. It will be the aim of the last part of this paper to outline these and say something of the discontinuities. In the process I hope to say something further about the development of Christianity in Alexandria.

The first is the common biblical heritage in the shape of the Septuagint, shared by Jews and Christians.⁹³ Although its hegemony was to be questioned, at least implicitly, when Origen created the Hexapla, Christian attachment to it was to remain constant both here and elsewhere in the empire.⁹⁴

The second element, intimately related to our first, is the exegesis of the scriptures, which was the focal point of both Jewish and Christian intellectual activity (admittedly, in the case of Christians, exegesis of the New as

⁹⁰ See Pearson 1986, 151; and Sangrador 1994, 115-24.

⁹¹ See Horbury 1992, and my discussion in this volume on pp. 113-115.

⁹² For a discussion of this question, see in particular van den Broek 1990. Typical of those who see very little evidence for contact is van den Hoek 1997, 81.

⁹³ See Clement's repetition (*Strom.* 1.148-9), with some differences, of the story of the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek already referred to above.

⁹⁴ The Hexapla was an exegetical tool, which sought to take account of the differences between the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, the Septuagint and other Greek versions. For most of the OT it consisted of six columns: Hebrew text; transliteration of the Hebrew text, Aquila, Symmachus, Septuagint, Theodotion. There is considerable controversy over the purpose of the Hexapla as a whole. On this, see in particular Kamesar 1993, 5-10. For the continuing importance of the Old Testament to Alexandrian Christians, see Carleton Paget 1996.

well as the Old Testament). The so-called catechetical school, which Eusebius indicates was a significant feature of second and third century Christian Alexandria – however we understand its foundation and subsequent history – seems to have had exegesis as its main pursuit.⁹⁵ This is seen, perhaps dimly, in the shadowy figure of Pantaenus,⁹⁶ and more particularly in his pupil Clement, and Clement’s successor, Origen. This school would have appeared to some at least like a philosophical school, for as with most philosophical schools at this time, it had as its central focus the exegesis of texts.⁹⁷ The possibility that such a school followed synagogal models should not be excluded. Philo’s characterisation of the synagogue as a place where Jews on the Sabbath occupy themselves with “the philosophy of their fathers”, though idealised, no doubt reflects something of the truth.⁹⁸

A third element of continuity is seen in the interaction of Jews and Christians with the Greek intellectual background. It is in Alexandria that we see the first attempts by educated Jews to make sense of their biblical faith in relation to the intellectual environment in which some of them had been brought up, and the same may be said for Christians.⁹⁹ Moreover, it is clear that in attempting to forge the union between *paideia* and Christ, Christians were heavily dependent upon Jewish models. This is seen in a number of ways, not least in their adoption of allegorical methods of interpreting the scriptures, and their justification of the use of philosophical categories to understand Christian faith on the grounds that Plato and the rest were pupils of Moses. Biblical culture held primacy over philosophical

⁹⁵ See Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 5.10.1; 6.6.1. For the most recent discussions of the school and its origins, see Scholten 1995, and van den Hoek 1997.

⁹⁶ On the figure of Pantaenus, see Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 5.10; 6.6, 13, 19; and Clement *Strom.* 1.11.2 and *Ecl.* 56.

⁹⁷ This point is made by Scholten 1995, 25, following Hadot 1987. Scholten points out how the sorts of questions with which Origen appears to have been interested in his exegesis of scripture (canonisation, text criticism, an interest in the correct order in which to read biblical books), are all reflected in the contemporary pagan world’s approach to what pagan philosophers took to be seminal works.

⁹⁸ *Mos.* 2.216.

⁹⁹ The first extant attempt to justify the usage of philosophical categories to interpret Christian truth is found in Clement. See especially *Strom.* 1.28-32; 2.1.1; 5.10.1-2, and, see Lilla 1971. See also the account of Origen’s teaching methods in Gregory Thaumaturgus *Thanksgiving (Pan. Or.)* and Eusebius’ witness to Origen’s philosophical knowledge in *Hist. eccl.* 6.3, and his probably reliable claim that Origen’s skill as a philosopher was acknowledged by other writers, including Porphyry (6.19). See also Origen’s letter, recorded in Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 6.19.12-14, where he objects to the view that he is over-philosophical.

culture.¹⁰⁰ Here Philo in particular acted as the exegetical model, and it was, as we have noted, Christians who were responsible for his preservation in a perhaps early Christian library.¹⁰¹

Christianity in Alexandria was not a monolithic faith. The works of Clement and Origen give voice to the diverse strains of Christianity in the city. Both mention Christians who opposed their philosophical approach to the scriptures,¹⁰² some of whom may have belonged to millenarian groups who looked for salvation in a godly cataclysm in the future.¹⁰³ Gnostics, with their own philosophising theology appear to have been a strong presence within the community and most agree that in various ways they have influenced both Clement and Origen.¹⁰⁴ Indeed orthodoxy, as in most places, seems only to have developed gradually.¹⁰⁵ In this respect, it is notable that Origen's first patron supported not only Origen but a Gnostic named Paul.¹⁰⁶ To a certain extent this diversity reflected the diversity of the Jewish culture out of which Christianity emerged.

The sense in which the Christianity of Alexandria was the daughter of the Judaism of the same city may be reflected in Celsus' *True Word*, as recorded in Origen's *Contra Celsum*. Time and again the pagan critic feels that the way to attack Christianity is to attack the Old Testament and the practices of the Jewish nation. But more important, perhaps, for similarly

¹⁰⁰ On this, see Clement *Strom.* 1.101-50; 5.10.1-2, 89-141, and Lilla 1971, 31-3; and Gregory Thaumaturgus, *Thanksgiving*.

¹⁰¹ This is the thesis of van den Hoek 1997, 81. No explicit mention of a Christian library in Alexandria is found in the ancient sources, but van den Hoek argues that the very detailed citations of Philo found in Clement assume access to some sort of library. She also notes that Alexander, the founder of the first explicitly mentioned library in Jerusalem (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.20), was a pupil of Clement in Alexandria, and that "it, seems plausible that he found his model in that city." (ibid., 83). How Christians in Alexandria became acquainted with Philo is very difficult to know. Van den Hoek notes that one possibility is that Hellenized Jewish groups could have converted to Christianity, while keeping their 'ancestral' scrolls. Grant 1986 suggests that such a group might have been not dissimilar to the Therapeutae, an ascetical group, mentioned by Philo (*Contempl.*) who devoted themselves to the study of scripture. On this, see van den Hoek 1997, 84 n. 124.

¹⁰² See Clement, *Strom.* 1.29.6 and Origen *Princ.* 4.2.

¹⁰³ Something of these millenarian sentiments may be seen in *Barn.* 6.10-19 and 15, and the Christian additions to the *Apocalypse of Elijah* discussed by Frankfurter 1997, 159-298. See also *Hist. eccl.* 7.24 where Eusebius records a letter written by Bishop Dionysius objecting to literal readings of the Apocalypse of St. John. For more detailed discussion of this evidence, see in this volume pages 116-18.

¹⁰⁴ See especially the figures of Basilides and Valentinus, discussed respectively by Löhr 1996 and Marksches 1992.

¹⁰⁵ See Löhr 1996, 334-5.

¹⁰⁶ Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 6.3.

polemical purposes, Celsus is keen to use the fact that Christianity was a renegade sect which had separated from Judaism.¹⁰⁷

The most obvious manifestation of separateness was the non-observance by a majority of Alexandrian Christians of the distinctive Jewish laws which were central to the expression of Jewish identity.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, where Jews had apparently concentrated their interest and energies on exegesis of the Pentateuch, Christians concentrated on a broader distribution of Old Testament books, according particular value to the prophets, and adding the New Testament to their emerging canon. Reality was now seen through the prism of the arrival of the Messiah.

Christian abandonment of Jewish distinctiveness implied, as Celsus makes clear, the abandonment of an identifiable entity with accepted rights and privileges, and the creation of a secretive and potentially threatening society. Christianity in Alexandria in the period under discussion appears more of a fringe organisation than Judaism in the sense that it was not formally a part of the Alexandrian constitution; and the fact of persecution seems to have been a continuing reality.¹⁰⁹

This sense of alienation or isolation from the prevailing culture, which picks up on a theme we have already noted as present within Alexandrian Judaism, finds expression in a variety of ways, not least in an open hostility to the religious practices of the city, which, indirectly, appear to be the subject of Clement's hard-hitting *Protreptikos*. I say 'indirectly' because in our extant Alexandrian Christian literature, there is almost no explicit reference to the city and its environs, and we therefore gain much less of a sense of the specific location of Christian theological endeavour, than we do for that of the Jews from a writer like Philo.¹¹⁰ So, for instance, we find no equivalent to Philo's eulogising account of the Sebasteum,¹¹¹ nor do we encounter the view that Alexandria constituted the Christians' *patris*.

Such an observation should not, however, lead us to conclude that the Christianity of Alexandria was in no way distinctive, or remained un-

¹⁰⁷ See in this respect *Cels.* 5.24f., in particular the words at 5.26.

¹⁰⁸ For the beginnings of this separation, see *Barn.* 2; 3; 9; 10 and 15.

¹⁰⁹ On persecutions in Alexandria, see Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 6.1 and 5 (the latter reference is to the martyrdom of Potamiaena and Basilides, which is discussed in Musurillo 1972, 27-28, with the text on 132-5; and Clement *Strom.* 2.125.2-3. Clement's attitude to martyrdom is discussed by van den Hoek 1993, and the context of persecution by Frend 1974, who argues that Septimius Severus' decision to initiate a persecution against the Christians may have arisen at the same time as a decision to persecute the Jews.

¹¹⁰ It is interesting to note that Clement, whom as we will show below, has a greater sensitivity to the environment in which he moves, nevertheless fails to mention Alexandria explicitly. Marrou 1960, 89-90 n. 2, who argues that Clement is typically 'classical' in failing to attach much significance to the particular.

¹¹¹ *Legat.* 151-2.

affected by the environment in which it found itself. The fact of the continuities that we have noted between aspects of the Judaism of Alexandria and the Christianity which followed on from it is immediately suggestive of a 'local' dimension. And while we cannot speak in any detailed way about Christian interaction with pagan philosophers in the city – not least because we have only minimal information about pagan philosophy in the city – there can be little doubt that figures like Clement and Origen did interact with a wider philosophical culture.¹¹² Moreover, glimpses of the city's influence may be seen in other ways, too. Again remaining within the narrow confines of the specifically academic, we could argue, perhaps controversially, that it is no coincidence that the Hexapla, that problematic witness to early Christian efforts at textual criticism, was first conceived by Origen, who hailed from the very city that had given birth to the Greek philological tradition;¹¹³ or that in a city renowned for its love of poetry, we should witness one of the earliest extant manifestations of Christian verse, namely Clement's hymn to Christ the Saviour at the end of the third book of his *Paedagogus*. Indeed, it is the same Clement who seems to engage, much more than any other known Alexandrian author, with the broader social setting in which he lived.¹¹⁴ Not only do his works make occasional references to the institutions of the theatre, gymnasium and symposium but, writing for an apparently wealthy audience, he attempts to set out a specifically Christian guide to everyday living. In this context few stones are left unturned, and the aspiring Christian, both male and female, is presented with rulings on subjects as specific as the use of fine bowls, dress, footwear, deportment at table, and behaviour in the baths.¹¹⁵ In the pages of *Paedagogus*, Books 2 and 3, where we read about these matters, we are potentially in possession of one of the richest deposits of information on Alexandrian aristocratic life; and while Clement disapproves of many of the characteristics of that life, he encourages an admittedly mod-

¹¹² Particular note should be taken of Eusebius' account of Origen's life in *Hist. eccl.* 6 where Origen is presented as a philosopher in contact with, and educated by, pagan philosophers, including Plotinus' own teacher, the enigmatic Ammonius Saccas. On the problem associated with the identity of this figure, see Edwards 1993.

¹¹³ Such an argument is controversial because it does not perhaps take seriously enough the fact that work on the Hexapla only began when Origen arrived in Caesarea; and because, as Neuschäfer 1987, 330-1, notes, the high point of the philological tradition in Alexandria had been reached in the second and third centuries B.C.E., and that as early as the reign of Ptolemy VIII (145-116 B.C.E.) this tradition had begun to be disseminated more broadly through the ancient world so that places like Rhodes, Rome and Athens had become centres of excellence. This suggests that, by the time Origen flourished, the philological tradition and Alexandria were no longer synonymous.

¹¹⁴ See Tollinton 1914, 31-63; and Marrou 1960.

¹¹⁵ For a helpful contextualisation of this material within the wider pagan culture, see Procopé 1993.

ified form of integration within the wider society.¹¹⁶ In this context, interestingly, Clement appears less hostile to the environment in which he moved than Philo, even if, like Philo, the predominant tone is one of skeptical aloofness.

Conclusions: the Jewish and Christian image of Alexandria

In one sense the predominant image of Alexandria which emerges from the extant Jewish and Christian literature is of a city of learning and of philosophical endeavour. Indeed the adjective 'Alexandrian', when applied to Jewish and Christian texts, often carries with it the image of cool, philosophical discourse expounded through the medium of complex allegorical exegesis. This, of course, has something to do with the limited, and no doubt, unrepresentative, range of the texts that have survived: Philo dominates our Jewish collection, while Clement and Origen dominate the Christian one. It may also have something to do with the intellectual character of the city itself: it should not be regarded as purely coincidental that it is first in texts of an Alexandrian provenance that Jews and Christians are seen to make serious attempts to integrate Greek philosophy and biblical culture. And yet what we in fact know of that intellectual culture more generally, at least in the period with which we are concerned, is relatively minimal, and our Jewish and Christian sources do not furnish us with much direct information on this subject: for instance, we search in vain for any mention of the Mouseion, and the names of contemporary philosophers. We can only assume that Jewish and Christian writers simply reflect a vibrant intellectual culture, and yet, ironically perhaps, they appear to be that culture's most prolific representatives, at least until the time of Plotinus (who in any case spent his most important years in Rome).

But this philosophical image is only a part of the story. Our sources, although somewhat miserly in their attention to the wider locale in which they were written, give us on occasion glimpses of an altogether different image of the city. Dio Chrysostom, in his highly critical thirty-second oration, delivered some time in Trajan's reign, had criticised the Alexandrians, precisely for their failure to be serious-minded and sensible. Here the city, far from being a haven of cool and sober reflection, becomes a place whose disorderly and volatile inhabitants¹¹⁷ are more interested in

¹¹⁶ See Marrou 1960, 48-52, who argues against the claims of those who would, see Clement's description of aristocratic life in Alexandria as nothing but a series of well-known tropes unreflective of the environment in which he moved.

¹¹⁷ Dio Chrysostom, *Alex.* 32.70, 86.

games, horses, the theatre, and the good things of life,¹¹⁸ a place where serious philosophers have ceased to believe that they can continue to have any public role,¹¹⁹ and where the Mouseion has ceased to be the place it once was.¹²⁰ Philo and Clement in particular confirm aspects of this image and, more often than not, with the same polemical tone.

Viewed with hindsight, the images of Jewish and Christian Alexandria have – despite the significant literary products of both communities – a negative aspect. Philo's last years were to see the outbreak of mob violence against the Jews and a collapse of that integrationist policy which had been such an important characteristic of his and others' vision of Jewish life in the city; and following the Jewish revolt of 115-117 C.E. there was almost no significant Jewish influence within the city until at least the middle of the third century. Alexandria was to witness Christian martyrdoms, and with the exception of Clement, Christians were to be almost silent about the city in which they lived and theologised, a silence which may betray a contempt or even indifference. In the middle fourth and again in the early fifth century, Jews and Christians were to find themselves opponents in the battle of the mobs; and the Jews were eventually to be expelled from the city at the behest of a Christian bishop.¹²¹ Perhaps it was in this that Christians showed their more truly Alexandrian character, and not, as some would have it, in their attempts to harmonise the Bible and the traditions of Greek pagan *paideia*.

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¹¹⁸ Ibid., 32.31, 33, 41, 53, 77.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 32.20, 97.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 32.100. For a discussion of Dio's view of the city, see Trapp 2003.

¹²¹ For a general discussion of these events, see Haas 1997, 278-330.

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Chapter 7

Jewish proselytism at the time of Christian origins: chimera or reality?*

Introduction

“In accordance with the principles of my religion, I must not seek to convert anyone who was not born into our law. This spirit of conversion, whose origin some would wish to impute to Judaism, is completely contrary to it.” So wrote Moses Mendelssohn in 1770.¹ It is the aim of this paper to test Mendelssohn’s thesis as it applies to Judaism at the time of Christian origins. Were some Jews interested in converting Gentiles to their faith? Or putting the question in another way: is one of Christianity’s main distinguishing marks in relation to the Judaism from which it sprang the fact of its missionary consciousness?

The literature on Jewish proselytism is enormous.² In varying degrees, a large number of writers, both Jewish and Christian, have, at least since the late nineteenth century, spoken in favour of the idea that Judaism was a proselytic religion. As one scholar has written, “The general consensus of this literature is that ... individual Jews, and Judaism in general, endeavoured to reach out with the message of monotheism, national privilege, and spiritual morality to those who were not Jews, regardless of the manner of their outreach.”³ On the Jewish side one thinks particularly of I. Levi,⁴ J. Juster,⁵ B. J. Bamberger,⁶ W.G. Braude,⁷ M. Stern,⁸ and, most recently, L.H. Feldman,⁹ and on the Christian side of A. von Harnack,¹⁰ G. F.

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¹ From Mendelssohn’s *Ecrit à M. le Diacre Lavater*, quoted by Will and Orrioux 1992, 267. For a discussion of this correspondence see Schoeps 1965, 98-100.

² For a recent bibliography, see Feldman 1993, 555-6.

³ McKnight 1991, 2.

⁴ Levi 1905, 1-9; 51 1906, 1-31; 55 1907, 5-30.

⁵ Juster 1914.

⁶ Bamberger 1939.

⁷ Braude 1940.

⁸ Stern 1974-84.

⁹ Feldman 1993, 288-9.

¹⁰ Harnack 1904-1905 I, 1-18.

Moore,¹¹ A. D. Nock,¹² M. Simon,¹³ J. Jeremias,¹⁴ and D. Georgi.¹⁵ Justification for calling such a position a consensus is seen in a writer like Martin Hengel, who simply assumes that something called a Jewish mission existed without in fact deeming it necessary either to define what he might mean by such a term, or to discuss the evidence in favour of its existence.¹⁶ In addition a recent encyclopedia article makes the unsupported claim that “(Jewish) Proselytism was intense in the New Testament period.”¹⁷

However, there have always been voices opposed to this consensus, most notably perhaps Johannes Munck. In his well-known book, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*¹⁸ he states, “Judaism is not an evangelising religion, even in New Testament times” (264). And further on, “It is with Christianity that a mission to the Gentiles begins, because Christianity has a message that concerns the Gentiles as well as the Jews” (265);¹⁹ and in the last four years three books have appeared in which Munck’s thesis has been vigorously defended. I refer to monographs by S. McKnight,²⁰ E. Will and C. Orrieux,²¹ and M. Goodman.²² Here, with varying degrees of emphasis, and developing a number of Munck’s arguments, these scholars have argued that, while there is evidence for the existence of proselytes in the Judaism of the second temple period, there is no conclusive evidence for the existence of an aggressive proselytic mission to the Gentiles. In the conversionary process the forces were nearly always centripetal (the motivation for conversion nearly always came from Gentiles), rarely centrifugal (the motivation did not come from Jews themselves). Christianity, with its emphasis on the centrifugal, is to be seen as distinct from anything we find in Judaism.

¹¹ Moore 1927, 325-53.

¹² Nock 1933, 61-2.

¹³ Simon 1986, 271-305.

¹⁴ Jeremias 1958, 11-12.

¹⁵ Georgi 1987, 83-228.

¹⁶ “In the Hellenistic period, say from the second half of the second century BC, Judaism was well on the way to becoming a world religion as a result of the rapid expansion of the Diaspora *and a partially very active mission.*” (italics my own: from Hengel 1974, I, 313. See also 174, 250 and 307).

¹⁷ Cavalletti 1992, 716. See also *EncJud* XIII, cols. 1182-3, for the same assumption.

¹⁸ Munck 1959.

¹⁹ For an early response to Munck, who himself drew on the work of the Norwegian scholar, S. Aalen, see Simon 1986, 390-4.

²⁰ McKnight 1991.

²¹ Will and Orrieux 1992.

²² Goodman 1994. In Goodman 1992, 53-78, he sets out the bare bones of the argument contained in this book. One should also refer to Fredriksen 1991, 533-42; Cohen 1992, 14-23; and idem 1991, 162-9; and Kraabel 1994, 71-88. The same author had already questioned the idea of Jewish proselytism in Kraabel 1982, 445-64.

Opposition to the idea of Jewish proselytism

The scope of these books varies considerably. McKnight is principally interested in arguing his case for the period of Christian origins (his primary concern is with the roots of Christian evangelism) and he seems at times to flirt with the possibility that there is some evidence for Jewish missionary activity.²³ Goodman (whose assessment of the evidence is more negative than McKnight's) sets his book in the much broader context of a discussion of proselytizing in the religious history of the Roman empire, and explicitly opposes what he sees as a prevailing consensus among ancient historians, namely to see the ancient world as a market place of religions each competing for proselytes.²⁴ His book, therefore, contains a discussion (and negative assessment) of supposed evidence for pagan religious propaganda. The book has a greater chronological range than McKnight's, discussing evidence for a Jewish mission from the third and fourth centuries C.E. Goodman concedes that in this later period there is some evidence for Jewish missionary activity, but that such activity was principally a response to Christian missionary activity. Will and Orrieux range over a wider period than Goodman (they consider evidence from the medieval period, though they omit any discussion of patristic evidence) but argue strongly that there is *no evidence at all* for a Jewish mission. For them the thesis that there was *ever* anything called Jewish proselytism is simply an error, and their book seeks in part to trace the history of this error in the scholarly writing on the subject.

Despite the different emphases and scopes of these books, their authors are all united in opposing the idea that Judaism in the second temple period was aggressively proselytic. This paper has been written as a response to the challenge these books present. Scrutiny of their arguments will make us aware of some wider issues of significance.

Both Goodman and McKnight begin their respective studies by defining what they mean by a missionary religion. For McKnight, it is a "religion that self-consciously defines itself as a religion, one aspect of whose 'self-definition' is a mission to the rest of the world, or at least a large portion of that world. This religion at the same time practices its mission through behaviour that intends to evangelize nonmembers so that these nonmembers will convert to the religion."²⁵ Goodman's definition is similar.

²³ See esp. McKnight 1991, 57, which contains a contradiction: there is 'no evidence' for Jewish mission, and then there appears to be 'some evidence'; and his discussion of the evidence from Rome at *idem*, 74.

²⁴ See Goodman 1994, 1-2. For an excellent exposition of the market approach, see North 1992, 174-93.

²⁵ McKnight 1991, 4-5.

He stresses the universal character of the mission, the fact that the members of the missionary religion are members of a defined group, that they should approve of those within their number who seek to encourage outsiders not only to change their way of life, but also to be incorporated within their group.²⁶ Interestingly, Goodman distinguishes a 'proselytic' mission from three other types of mission: an informative mission marked by a desire to inform people about a general message without necessarily having any clear idea about the reaction they wish for from their auditors; an educational mission, which seeks to change the moral disposition of the audience while not requiring that the moral behaviour of the auditors be understood as part of the belief system espoused by the missionary; and an apologetic mission, which seeks to impress upon its audience the power of a particular deity without wishing the audience to devote itself to the worship of that deity.

With these strong definitions in mind Goodman²⁷ and McKnight²⁸ proceed to discuss Jewish attitudes to the Gentiles. It follows, so Goodman argues, that for a religion to be proselytic it must hold the view that the religious behaviour of those outside that religion is unsatisfactory: "Only if I believe that something is wrong with the present state of affairs can I persuade myself and others of the need to change."²⁹ And yet Goodman argues that in the literature we possess up to 100 C.E.,³⁰ we cannot discern a consistently negative attitude towards paganism: that is, Gentiles are not consistently regarded as sinners simply because they worship idols. Of course, the Bible contains many attacks upon idolatry, but all of these relate to idols in the land of Israel. Once this is understood, the potential negativity of the biblical tradition is softened. Indeed, according to Goodman, and McKnight follows him in this, Judaism of the second temple period was in general tolerant towards paganism as long as it did not encroach on Jewish life. This thesis accounts for such anti-pagan texts as *Sibylline Oracles* 3 and *Wisdom* 13-15 by claiming that they are the exceptions that prove the rule. Goodman concludes by noting that anti-Jewish Gentile writers, who have much that is polemical to say about Jews, almost never include in their polemic the observation that Jews object to pagans continuing their ancestral religious practices.

²⁶ McKnight 1991, 4 and 95.

²⁷ Goodman 1994, 38-59.

²⁸ McKnight 1991, 11-29.

²⁹ Goodman 1994, 38.

³⁰ This is an important date for Goodman because he believes that after this date changes in Rome's fiscal policy towards the Jews (instigated by Nerva) brought about a change in Jewish self-perception. On this, see Goodman, 1994, 46 and 122-4.

Then what of the evidence customarily cited in favour of Jewish proselytism? Here Goodman is more negative than McKnight, although their conclusions are very similar.

Population

In support of the idea of a proselytic Judaism, Louis Feldman, amongst others, has attributed much significance to the fact that between the exile and the first century C.E. the Jewish population increased considerably. According to S. W. Baron we move from a figure of 150,000 Jews at the time of the exile to one of eight million.³¹ Such an increase, so Feldman and others have argued, can only be accounted for if we assume a considerable amount of missionary activity on the part of Jews. But McKnight has argued that we can place little store by these figures. The study of ancient demography is more of an art form than a science, an observation that appears to be substantiated when we examine the foundations upon which Baron's statistics are based (a statement by the thirteenth-century chronographer Bar-Hebraeus about the number of Jews at the time of Claudius's census, a comment in Philo [*Flacc.* 43] about the Jewish population of Egypt being a million, and comments in Josephus about the population in Palestine).³² Goodman, on the other hand, accepts that there was a considerable increase in Jewish population in the Diaspora, but does not accept that this provides evidence for Jewish proselytizing. The increase in population can be accounted for by reference to the Jews "strange ideological opposition to abortion, infanticide, and contraception (cf. Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.5) and to the Jewish concept of charity which prevented children of the poor from dying in infancy."³³

Jewish literature in Greek

Both Goodman and McKnight reject the argument, put forward with much vigour by amongst many others, Dalbert,³⁴ that much Jewish literature in Greek has a proselytic/propagandistic character. Following Tcherikover,³⁵ they argue that much of this literature was written for internal con-

³¹ See Baron 1971, 866-903. See also Harnack 1904-5, 1-8; and the discussion in Feldman 1993, 293 and 55 n. 20.

³² McKnight (unpublished), 1-33. This article is as yet unpublished, but there is a summary of it in Feldman 1993, 555 n. 20. Baron, 1971, col. 866, had himself admitted that the study of ancient demography had a lot to do with guesswork.

³³ Goodman 1994, 84.

³⁴ Dalbert 1954.

³⁵ Tcherikover 1956.

sumption,³⁶ that the literature which appeared to be addressed to an external audience usually had an apologetic character, not a proselytic one; and that the use of literature as a propagandistic tool was of limited value, a fact supported not only by the obvious difficulty in producing multiple copies of a text and distributing them, but also by the fact that very few people in the ancient world read expressly apologetic literature. Here the comment of Tertullian at the beginning of his *de Testimonio Animae* seems pertinent: *ad nostras litteras nemo venit nisi iam Christianus*.³⁷ Finally, little store is placed by Philo's comment that the LXX was translated into Greek in order to bring the Gentile world to knowledge of the Bible. After all, with the exception of Pseudo-Longinus in the first century B.C.E., we hear of no pagan reading the LXX, and certainly of no pagan being converted to Judaism because of reading it.³⁸

Miscellaneous pieces of Jewish evidence

The same scholars discuss particular passages in certain Jewish writers that are often cited as evidence for Jewish mission. Texts in Josephus and Philo that point to the welcome accorded to proselytes (see *Legat.* 211; *C. Ap.* 2.210, 282) are proof that proselytes were welcomed into the community (although the evidence is not uniformly positive in attitude) but not that they were actively sought. Indeed, the somewhat ambiguous status accorded to proselytes, especially when compared with Christian attitudes to converts, points against a proselytic spirit. Evidence for the widespread popularity of Jewish practices (Philo, *Mos.* 2.21-3; Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.279-95), and the fact that Jews attracted people to the synagogue (*B.J.* 7.45) need not be attributed to aggressive missionary activity. When Philo speaks of producing the truths (of Judaism) in the midst of the market place so that they might be extended to every man (*Spec.* 1.320-3), or of the heralds of words and works (*Prob.* 74), he is not referring to missions, but to the cut and thrust of public debate.³⁹ Evidence for the synagogue as a propagandistic centre is slim.⁴⁰ The passage in *A.J.* 20.34-48, where Jo-

³⁶ See, McKnight 1991, 57-60; Will and Orrioux 1992, 81-3 (here with specific reference to Philo); Goodman 1994, 79. For an endorsement of this thesis with particular reference to Jewish parenetic literature in Greek see Niebuhr 1987, 66-72.

³⁷ Cited by McKnight 1991, 62.

³⁸ Momigliano 1978, 91. Goodman 1994, 80, notes that Tatian says that he was converted to Christianity as a result of reading the Bible (*Oratio ad Graecos* 29; note also a similar sentiment in Justin *Dial.* 8.1; and Theophilus *Autol.* 1.14), but argues that this in no way helps us to discern the intention behind the translation of that document.

³⁹ See McKnight 1991, 55. For the textual difficulties associated with the passage from *Prob.* 74, see Colson 1935, 52-3.

⁴⁰ This was the assertion of Georgi, which McKnight 1991, 62-3, especially opposes.

sephus records how, in the first part of the first century C.E., the royal house of Adiabene was converted to Judaism by the Jewish merchant Ananias is also discounted as evidence for Jewish mission.⁴¹ Ananias is primarily a merchant, and the passage does not indicate that he sought to convert, but rather that he himself was sought out.⁴² The insistence on the part of two Hasmonean kings that the Ituraeans and Idumaeans should convert to Judaism (Josephus, *A.J.* 13.319, 257) has a lot to do with location in the land of Israel, and little to do with a general missionary tendency in Judaism.⁴³

Pagan evidence

Evidence that the Jews in Rome were notably proselytic is accepted by McKnight,⁴⁴ but seen as exceptional, and dismissed by Will and Orrieux,⁴⁵ and Goodman.⁴⁶ The latter argues that the evidence relating to the expulsion of the Jews from Rome in 139 B.C.E. is too suspect textually to be taken as proof that the Jews were expelled for proselytizing activity (we rely upon fifth and sixth-century epitomators of the first-century C.E. historian Valerius Maximus);⁴⁷ and that, furthermore, their accounts appear confused. Both seem to agree that the Jews were expelled for proselytism, but Nepotianus states that their private altars were removed. This appears strange to Goodman, who notes that Jews were not known for setting up private altars, or for syncretistic forms of religion associated with Jupiter Sabazius, with whose cult Julius Paris (the other epitomator) claims, the Jews were trying to infect the Romans.⁴⁸ Goodman argues instead that the chief crime of the Jews lay in introducing a new cult into the city, and not in proselytism. Those scholars who attribute Tiberius's expulsion of the

⁴¹ Izates became king in 36 C.E., but we are told by Josephus that he became a proselyte before he became king, and that his mother, Helena, had become a proselyte before that.

⁴² "This text does not show that there were such things as Jewish missionaries or that these missionaries were zealous; rather it provides evidence for travelling merchants being involved in explaining Judaism to those that were interested in it." (McKnight 1991, 56).

⁴³ Goodman 1994, 75-7.

⁴⁴ McKnight 1991, 74. "I would like to hazard the suggestion that the evidence from Rome is perhaps only an exceptional and sporadic situation;" but he then continues, "This evidence ... comes by way of antagonists, who may well be exaggerating the behavior of Jews ..."

⁴⁵ Will and Orrieux 1993, 105-6.

⁴⁶ Goodman 1994, 82-3.

⁴⁷ These are Julius Paris (400 C.E.), and Nepotianus (c. 500 C.E.).

⁴⁸ For the possibility that Sabazius did not appear in the original manuscript of Paris, see Lane 1979, 35-8.

Jews from Rome in 19 C.E. to proselytic activity on the part of Jews, rely too heavily on the suspect evidence of Dio (57.18.5a),⁴⁹ who alone of the four witnesses to this event⁵⁰ speaks of missionary activity as the cause of the expulsion. Of the other three witnesses, Josephus attributes the expulsion to the activity of a Jewish scoundrel, who, with three accomplices, defrauds a Roman proselyte called Fulvia of a considerable sum of money; and Tacitus and Suetonius, while both associating the expulsion with the expulsion of Egyptian rites, give no reason for it at all.

Other pagan evidence, supporting the idea of a Jewish mission, is not, after all, evidence of such a thing. When Horace, for instance, states that the poets, like the Jews, will compel you to join these throng (*Sat.* 14.140-4), he is not referring to Jewish efforts to convert but rather to the Jewish crowd's tendency to use intimidation to get their own way (see Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 28.67). Juvenal's revulsion at the thought that the son of a God-fearer will inevitably fully convert to Judaism (*Satires* 14.96-106) is only proof that the son might be more zealous than the father.

Christian evidence

Christian evidence is also dismissed. The fact of Christian mission cannot be used to prove a Jewish mission; and the claim of Jesus at Matt 23:15, that the Pharisees will go over land and sea to make a single proselyte, can be interpreted in a number of ways, all of which contradict the interpretation of the verse as proof of a Jewish mission to the Gentiles. Goodman, for instance, understands προσήλυτον as referring to a Jewish convert to Pharisaism.⁵¹

More general evidence

Other more general objections to the idea of Jewish proselytism at the time of Christian origins are made. If Judaism was a missionary religion, why

⁴⁹ τῶν τε Ἰουδαίων πολλῶν ἐς τὴν Ῥώμην συνελθόντων καὶ συχνοῦς τῶν ἐπιχωρίων ἐς τὰ σφέτερα ἔθη μεθιάντων, τοὺς πλείονας ἐξήλασεν ("As the Jews had flocked to Rome in great numbers and were converting many of the natives to their ways, he banished most of them.") (57.18.5a). On the suspect character of the fragment see Williams 1989, 767-8. It appears as a fragment (cited by John of Antioch) without a context, and can only be assigned to the events in 19 C.E. because of an apparent similarity with the event as described by Tacitus. And yet the similarities are minimal, and the differences considerable.

⁵⁰ The others are Josephus (*A.J.* 18.81-4), Tacitus (*Ann.* 2.85.5), Suetonius (*Tiberius* 36.1), and possibly Seneca (*Ep.* 108.22, quoted by Stern 1974, 434).

⁵¹ For this interpretation, see Goodman 1994, 69-74. For much less convincing interpretations see McKnight 1991, 106-8; and Will and Orrioux 1993, 123-36. For a longer discussion of Goodman's argument, see below.

do we not have the name of a single Jewish missionary? Why is it that we cannot discover anything approximating to a Jewish missionary tract; or no detailed accounts of missionary activity (a fact which is surprising when we look at the detailed Christian evidence); or we cannot find a clear-cut position on the procedure for becoming a proselyte? Why, furthermore, do no pagan writers, at least in the first century, complain about Jewish proselytism? And if proselytism was so rampant in the cities of the Diaspora, why do we not hear of more riots against the Jews for precisely this reason?

The conclusion emerging from the above is inevitable. The evidence cited in favour of a Jewish proselytic mission can only be regarded as such if one at first assumes the existence of such a mission. Without this assumption, these scholars argue, all the evidence cited in favour of Jewish proselytism is rendered insubstantial. We have therefore to conclude that Christianity, with its aggressively proselytic tendency, introduces into the ancient world a concept that had simply not existed before. It was precisely this aspect of Christianity, which proved so shocking to the Roman world.

Here, then, are the bare bones of what is a well-constructed and detailed argument. In the case of my discussion of Goodman's and Will's and Orrieux's books, I have only presented a small part of what they in fact say. There is, in my opinion, much that is commendable in these works. Their insistence on defining the term mission; their reexamination of passages previously seen as indicating the missionary character of Judaism; and the skill with which they demonstrate how many of the pieces of evidence put forward by the pro-proselytic school are at best ambiguous.⁵² Advocates of the hypothesis that Judaism at the time of Christian origins was a missionary religion will overlook these works at their peril. What I wish to do in my response is to indicate some of the weaknesses in their argument and to suggest that the situation was more complex than it appears from their presentation, and to put forward, albeit tentatively, an interpretation which affirms that efforts were made to spread Judaism.

Critique of positions opposed to the idea of Jewish proselytism

I will begin with some general comments. The first relates to the sources available to us. These, as Goodman himself admits,⁵³ are not nearly as ex-

⁵² Even a scholar like Georgi, who gives the most detailed reconstruction of Jewish missionary activity, has on at least three occasions to admit that there is not much explicit support for his reconstructions. See Georgi 1987, 84, 91 and 100.

⁵³ Goodman 1994, 38-9.

tensive as we would like, and in no way allow us to create a complete and balanced picture of Judaism at the time of Christian origins. This means that any historian of second temple Judaism is forever filling in gaps or adding pieces to the fragmentary jigsaw. History writing becomes a series of informed acts of the imagination. As far as our subject is concerned this observation can cut both ways. It can certainly just as easily undercut the minimalist position of Goodman or McKnight, as it can the maximalist position of Georgi or Feldman.

The second general observation relates to our understanding of Judaism in this period. Most scholars now appear to accept, with varying degrees of differentiation, that Judaism was a diverse religious/social entity. Such an observation has at least two consequences for the present discussion. First, if we are to posit some proselytizing activity on the part of Jews we should not assume that this was an attitude entertained by all Jews. When McKnight talks about the apparent need for evidence of a centralized mission, or officials meeting to make decisions about the mission (McKnight 1992, 78), not only is he transposing Christian categories onto Jewish evidence (categories which are themselves based upon dubious evidence), but he is assuming a level of uniformity in Judaism, both bureaucratic and theological, which is simply unrealistic. Secondly, given this complex state of affairs, we should beware of giving priority too hastily to the opinion of one source over the opinion of another. Is it possible, for instance, to state with any confidence that the views of the writers of the third *Sibylline Oracle* and the Wisdom of Solomon are less representative than other Jewish texts outside the Hebrew canon?

A third general observation relates to the question of definition. As I noted earlier, both McKnight and Goodman have very strong definitions of a proselytic mission. But it is precisely the strength of their definition that may be seen to contribute to the minimal picture they create.⁵⁴ I would like to make two observations in this regard. First, on the basis of their strong definition, it is only with difficulty that one can hold Christianity to be a missionary religion, especially when we consider texts outside the New Testament.⁵⁵ Secondly, proselytic religions need not operate in an openly proselytic manner, at least as these are defined by the authors. That is, such religions need not send out missionaries, speak out violently against the prevailing culture, or give *self-conscious* expression to a desire to change and convert all others (the universal dimension) outside their religion. What I am implying is that it is possible for a proselytic missionary con-

⁵⁴ Goodman admits as much when he writes, "By imposing such conditions I have clearly stacked the odds against finding evidence of an attitude which can be described as universal proselytising mission." (Goodman 1994, 15).

⁵⁵ See below. This is precisely the point made by Georgi 1995, 50 n. 40.

sciousness to express itself in ways different from those described by McKnight and Goodman. This in part would seem to be the opinion of G. F. Moore. While he holds Judaism to be the first great missionary religion of the Mediterranean,⁵⁶ he explicitly denies that Jews sent missionaries out into the *partes infidelium*⁵⁷ preferring to see the synagogue as the major instrument of mission. But the problem with the position adopted by Moore and others is that, while they might show an awareness of the complex nature of the term 'mission', they never in fact define it themselves. While we might disagree with McKnight's and Goodman's definition of mission, their work has the virtue of providing us with some clarity on this point. I would seek to define a missionary religion as one, which in a variety of ways, makes it clear that conversion to that religion is a desirable thing. This need not show itself exclusively in the 'aggressive' forms outlined by McKnight and Goodman (polemic against other beliefs; the sending out of missionaries etc.), but could manifest itself in an openness to outsiders, expressed in a desire to publicize beliefs, engage in debate and so on. Indeed, it is precisely my contention that the types of mission that Goodman defines as apologetic, educational and informative can be seen as aspects of a proselytic mission.

And this brings me to my fourth observation. Goodman's distinction of a proselytic mission from an apologetic, educational, and an informative one is in my opinion too precise. Goodman himself admits that they are ideal, but then goes on to treat them as clearly distinguishable. But as John Barclay has suggested to me, "social reality is better represented by a sliding scale: Jews wanted Gentiles to understand their practices; that required that Gentiles learn to appreciate, respect and tolerate them; and if Jews portrayed their practices and beliefs as simply the best (as even the 'liberal' Philo consistently did) it was inevitable, and not unwelcome, that some Gentiles slipped from the 'worse' to the 'better' There was certainly some variety among Jews about how resolutely they expressed their sense of superiority and, because individuals and circumstances differ, there must have been variation in the extent to which Jews consciously and intentionally moved to the proselytising end of the scale, but one should not represent that as a wholly different mind-set from other elements on this scale."⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Moore 1927, 323-4.

⁵⁷ Moore 1927, 324. See also Lake, 1933, 74-5, who appears largely to follow the arguments of Moore; Nock 1933, 62, who can write about "an eager desire on the part of the Jews to proselytize", but locates the expression of this primarily within the synagogue; Jeremias 1958, 11 and 16, who follows Moore, almost exactly; and Segal 1990, who on the same page can state that Jews proselytized, and that "(o)ne may question whether Jews actively sought out proselytes in an aggressive way ..." (86).

⁵⁸ Personal communication.

Following on from this we might equally enquire after the necessary criteria for judging when a Jewish writer is just wanting to change the morals of his Gentile audience and not wanting to do something more proselytic (understood in relation to the strong definition); or when he is simply writing to impress upon his audience the excellence of the Jewish God and not wanting to convert them to the worship of that God. Such a question becomes particularly urgent when we read the following statement by Goodman: “Scraps of evidence can be found for active Jewish enthusiasm for Gentile recognition of the Jewish god, what I defined as apologetic mission.”⁵⁹ But is this really an apologetic mission? Does it not imply some effort on the part of some Jews to persuade Gentiles to follow their way of life? The examples that Goodman gives of such an apologetic mission – the conversion of the royal household of Adiabene (Josephus, *A.J.* 20.34, 40-2), Solomon’s building of the temple to persuade men to worship God (Josephus, *A.J.* 8.1-17), and the presence in Antioch of people who have some sort of alignment to Judaism (Josephus, *B.J.* 7.45) – can certainly be interpreted as something more than simply evidence of apologetic mission.⁶⁰ Indeed, when Goodman goes on to claim that there is some evidence for a Jewish mission to win Gentile sympathizers, it is strange to me why this should not be regarded as evidence of proselytic mission in the sense that it may have been hoped by those conducting the mission that the God-fearer would eventually convert. And in any case there may have been different perceptions amongst Jews as to what conversion involved.⁶¹

A final general observation relates to the way in which these scholars argue their case. It has all the trappings of a *divide et impera* method. Each piece of evidence put forward by the pro-proselytic school is examined against the strong definition of mission discussed above, and accordingly found wanting. And yet in the end the strength of the pro-proselytic case might be said to lie in its cumulative character. To this, we shall return below.

With these general observations in mind, let us proceed to a scrutiny of the essentially negative case I have just described. First, let us turn to the question of Jewish attitudes to the Gentiles. As I noted above, it was one of Goodman’s contentions that, in order for a religion to be termed proselytic, it must be shown to regard those who are not part of its religion as in some

⁵⁹ Goodman 1994, 86.

⁶⁰ For our comments on the conversion of the royal house of Adiabene see below. The reference at *B.J.* 7.45, which refers to the Jews’ capacity to attract Gentiles in Antioch, seems to imply proselytic activity on the part of the Jews. We should note that Josephus explicitly states that “they always drew (προσαγόμενοι) a great multitude of Greeks whom they made (πεποίητο) in some way a part of their community.”

⁶¹ See Segal 1990, 86.

sense inadequate. Judaism does not show a consistent attitude in this regard, and if anything shows itself to be generally tolerant. That is, Jews did not regard Gentiles as inherently evil because they practiced idolatry. Biblical polemic against idolatry is often aimed at rooting it out from within the midst of Israel (Deut 12:1-3), and even though some biblical writers seem to point to the inherently evil qualities of idolatry, this is often done more to reinforce a sense of separation. The construction of what Goodman sees as a generally tolerant attitude can be seen in Philo's (*Spec.* 1.53; *Mos.* 2.205; *QE* 2.5) and Josephus's (*C. Ap.* 2.237; *A.J.* 4.207) interpretation of the LXX of Exod 22:27. But Goodman argues that the lack of a coherent attitude allowed views to develop which deviated from the tolerant norm, views that can be seen in Wisdom 13-15 and *Sibylline Oracles* 3, especially 545-9 and 601-7. Final proof of the fact that a hostile attitude to Gentile religious practice was not a feature of Jewish thinking is found in the absence from anti-Jewish pagan writers of any reference to such an attitude. Goodman's argument is supported by a broader contention, namely that a clear definition of Judaism at the time of Christian origins does not appear to have existed. Lack of such a definition also tells against Judaism as a proselytic religion.

Goodman's arguments can be modified or refuted at every point. First, it need not follow that a negative attitude to other religions is a necessary part of a proselytic religion. The writer of the *Letter of Aristeas* states that when debating with an opponent one should avoid being antagonistic, but rather seek to commend (266). The art of persuasion functions in all sorts of ways. But secondly, and much more importantly, Goodman's assessment of Jewish attitudes to Gentiles in the period before 100 C.E. does not do full justice to the available evidence. While it is certainly true that many of the passages in the Hebrew Bible dealing with Gentile practices relate specifically to their presence in the land of Israel, it is debatable whether they would always have been read as such.⁶² To argue that Philo's and Josephus's interpretation of Exod 22:28 (27) are in some sense typical seems to go beyond the evidence. What is perhaps of primary interest is the fact that Josephus and Philo feel it necessary to interpret the passage at all. Of extant Jewish writers, it is only these two who in fact cite this passage.⁶³ Could Philo and Josephus have been responding to people who were in fact reviling the gods, or to pagans who claimed that Jews were hostile to the gods?⁶⁴ And could the Septuagintal translation of the passage be itself a

⁶² Feldman 1993, makes the perfectly reasonable point that there was no effort made by the LXX translators to modify such hostile texts as Deut 7:25 and 12:2-3.

⁶³ A point made by van der Horst 1994, 113.

⁶⁴ See Origen's use of this text in response to the same accusation made by Celsus (*Cels.* 8.38).

response to a generally perceived hostile attitude on the part of Jews to pagan idols? If so, the passage can be used to argue precisely the opposite thesis from that advocated by Goodman.⁶⁵

When we come to Goodman's assessment of extra-biblical material he is too minimalist. Why should we assume that texts like Wisdom 13-15 and *Sibylline Oracles* 3 are somehow exceptional voices on the periphery? What of the contempt of the writer of the *Letter of Aristeas* for pagan worship and practices (see esp. 138-9), of Philo's hostile attitude to Egyptian worship (*Decal.* 76-7) and pagan worship generally (*Decal.* 52-6)?⁶⁶ What of the sharp attacks upon pagan practice in *Sibylline Oracles* 5, and the writer of the book of *Jubilees*' gleeful description of Abraham as a destroyer of idols (*Jub.* 12.12)? What of the tradition of zeal, very much associated with hostility to idolatry, which is witnessed in a wide variety of Jewish sources?⁶⁷ Are we to regard Rom 2:18-19 as specifically Christian, and devoid of Jewish concerns? And how are we to estimate the obvious contempt of the writer of *Joseph and Aseneth* for the idolatrous past of Aseneth (7.5; 8.5-6; 10.8-9)? All these references, with the possible exception of *Joseph and Aseneth*, come from a period before 100 C.E., a date that is important for Goodman because it is then that he thinks that a more hostile attitude among Jews towards their pagan environment began to develop.⁶⁸ Also significant in this regard are the very negative attitudes adopted towards apostates, which are witnessed to in such apparently disparate sources as Philo (*Virt.* 34; 182), *3 Macc.* 7.11; *The Amidah* or *Eighteen Benedictions* (no. 12), and *2 Bar.* 41.3 and 42.3-4.

⁶⁵ For the most recent discussion of the passage, see van der Horst 1994, 112-21. He argues that the Septuagintal translation is precisely a response to Gentile understandings of Judaism as hostile to other gods. He lays particular emphasis in this respect upon Egyptian depictions of Moses and his followers as destroyers of idols. See in this regard Josephus's discussion of Manetho's and Lysimachus's accounts of Jewish origins (*C. Ap.* 1.249, 264, 269, and 309-10). Both writers accuse the Jews of desecrating and plundering pagan temples. Such acts of desecration were witnessed in the Trajanic revolt of 115-117 C.E. For a survey of the archaeological evidence see Smallwood 1976, 397-8. It is also interesting to note that at one of the places where Josephus cites Exod 22:27 (*A.J.* 4.207), in the same passage he mentions the non-biblical command to respect pagan temples. See also *C. Ap.* 2.121, where Josephus states that Apion attributed to the Jews an oath in which they swore to show no good will to a single alien.

⁶⁶ See also *Decal.* 62-3; and the characterization of conversion to Judaism as an abandoning of "customs (πατρία) packed with false inventions and vanity." (*Spec.* 1.309).

⁶⁷ I refer the reader to Hengel 1989, esp. 146-228.

⁶⁸ On this see Goodman 1994, 45-6, 120-2; and Goodman 1989, 40-4. Goodman's contention that Nerva's decision to make only practising Jews liable to pay the *fiscus* led to a change in Jewish understanding of Jewish identity is unconvincing, not least because of the evidence cited above.

Goodman's final point, namely that in extant anti-Jewish Gentile literature we find no criticisms relating to Jewish hatred of others' ancestral religion is only partially convincing. For instance, Tacitus, in his lengthy assault on Judaism in the fifth book of his *Histories* (5.5), states that the Jews "only feel hate and enmity towards other people." And he states that one of the earliest lessons proselytes learn is to despise the gods, to disown their country, and to regard their parents, children and brothers as of little account.⁶⁹ Tacitus is one of the bitterer pagan commentators on the Jews, but his criticisms, which cohere with the general accusation of misanthropia which we find pagans often leveling at the Jews,⁷⁰ show Goodman's thesis to be wide of the mark.

It might follow from this that the conviction held on the part of some Jews,⁷¹ that Gentiles were inherently wicked because of their religious practices, created a condition in which proselytism seems, in psychological terms, natural. When we couple with this the fact that many Jews believed their religion to be inherently superior to those around them, the urge to proselytize becomes still more believable,⁷² especially when we note that some believed that non-Jews would be punished at the end time.⁷³

Let me now turn to a re-examination of the positive evidence cited for a mission amongst the Jews.

Population increase

McKnight is surely right to call into question Baron's study of Jewish demography between the Exile and the first century C.E. This means that any conclusions we draw from this statistic must be very tentative. We should, however, note that most scholars do agree that there was a large increase in Jewish population in this period,⁷⁴ and even McKnight places the first-century population of the Jews at six million. The question then arises as to

⁶⁹ This last statement in part accords with a passage in Philo where the Alexandrian begs his fellow Jews to treat proselytes with respect and kindness on the grounds that they have given up so much (see *Virt.* 102-3). See also Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.209-10, 257-61.

⁷⁰ See Lysimachus, as reported in Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.309; Manetho, as reported in the same, 1.238; and Diodorus, quoted in Stern 1974, 181-2.

⁷¹ My discussion above has only very superficially dealt with Jewish attitudes to the Gentiles. My aim has been to correct what I see as Goodman's exaggeration of the tolerant aspect, and his softening of the negative especially where this relates to religious practices.

⁷² The belief in the superiority of the Jewish religion is widely evidenced in writers as diverse as Philo, Josephus, and works such as *The Sibylline Oracles*, *2 Baruch*, *Joseph and Aseneth* etc.

⁷³ See n. 86 below.

⁷⁴ See Schürer 1986, 4-5.

how we are to account for this increase. Goodman's explanation of this increase in terms of Jewish opposition to the exposure of children, abortion and infanticide is unconvincing. An increase in the number of proselytes does seem the most likely explanation. But this technically, of course, tells us nothing about whether Jews were aggressively proselytic. It simply indicates that Judaism was very attractive, a point which Feldman is, ironically perhaps, at pains to emphasize.

Arguments from the abundance of Jewish literature in Greek

The claim of McKnight, Will and Orrieux, and Goodman, following Tcherikover, that the mass of extant Jewish Greek literature cannot be called propagandistic literature is, in my opinion, only partially justified. While it is true that a writer like P. Dalbert, for instance, is too quick in concluding that much of this literature had an external audience, this should not lead us to exclude that possibility for nearly all this literature. What, in the end, are the criteria for establishing whether the writer of a specific text has an inner or outer group as his intended readership? Why should we assume that the *Letter of Aristeas* was only intended for a Jewish audience, when its setting assumes some form of Jewish-pagan dialogue, and so much of it is devoted to answering specific queries about Judaism? Why should we in any case have an 'either/or' approach to this literature? And even if we believe that most of it is directed to an internal audience, why should we not maintain that it may be providing Jewish readers with fodder for their conversations with curious or skeptical pagans. Of course, such literature, whatever its intended audience, might only have an apologetic function (one thinks particularly in this respect of Josephus' *Contra Apionem*), but a strict distinction between apologetic and proselytic literature is not, in my opinion, always possible (as I have indicated above). The *Contra Apionem*, for instance, is not just defensive, but contains many passages extolling the great virtues of the Jews and their law (see especially, 2.151-2). Furthermore, the third *Sibylline Oracle* does seem to provide us with more explicit evidence for a propagandistic text directed to Gentiles.⁷⁵ Even if we might doubt the effectiveness of such documents in bringing people to convert, they still give voice to a desire on the part of some Jews to use literature for such propagandistic purposes.⁷⁶ This would accord with a tendency to emphasize Jewish responsibility towards the world. This can be seen in the view, found in Isaiah and elsewhere, that the Jews are a light of the nations

⁷⁵ In this respect see 5-10, 545-72, 624-34, 732-40.

⁷⁶ McKnight 1991, 49-50, who believes that propagandistic literature is not evidence of a missionary consciousness, but then can apparently state that it is! See Feldman 1993, 305-6, for a refutation of Tcherikover's contention about the ineffective nature of literature as a tool of propaganda in the ancient world.

(Isa 42:6; 49:6);⁷⁷ and in the belief that Jews are guides to the blind Gentiles (*Sib. Or.* 3.195; *I En.* 105.1; Rom 2:17-18); and that the guidance they give is present within the Torah (Wis 18.4; Sir 24.27-28). This last point seems to be well expressed in Philo's contention (*Mos.* 2.27; 2.44) that the translation of the Torah into Greek had a quasi-missionary purpose,⁷⁸ and gives meaning to his anger with those who would restrict knowledge of the law to three or four instead of proceeding to the midst of the market place (*Leg.* 1.320-3), and to his statement that on the Sabbath the synagogue stands wide open.⁷⁹

This sense of missionary consciousness, as R. Hvalvik has argued,⁸⁰ may be seen to be reflected in some theological explanations for the existence of the Diaspora. While Jews initially saw the Diaspora in purely negative terms, there later developed amongst them a more positive interpretation of their apparently exiled state.⁸¹ One aspect of this more positive interpretation was to see the Diaspora as created in order to facilitate proselytizing. In this respect, we might point to such passages as *b. Pesah* 87b where it is stated that "The Holy One, blessed be he, did not exile Israel among the nations save in order that proselytes might join them"; or to the passage where Origen referred to a discussion he had had with a Jew about the interpretation of Isa 52:13-53:18. His Jewish interlocutor argued that the biblical passage referred to the people as though they were a person, since they were scattered in the Diaspora and smitten, and that as a result of the scattering of the Jews among the nations many might become prose-

⁷⁷ See Acts 13:47 where Paul and Barnabas, in justifying their decision to turn to the Gentiles, cite Isa 49:6. At Luke 2:32 the same text is used to refer to Jesus, and so the use in Acts may in fact bear witness to a Jewish interpretation of the text. This contention appears more convincing when we note that the admittedly later Justin quotes from Isa 49:6 (and 42:6, as well as other texts) (*Dial.* 121-2), and makes his Jewish interlocutors state that this text refers to the Jewish law and to proselytes (122.3).

⁷⁸ In 2.44 the reference is particularly striking. Philo begins by stating that it is quite natural that when people are not flourishing, their belongings (in this case the Torah) are under a cloud (ἐπισκιάζεσθαι). But then continues by stating that if the Jews' fortunes changed "each nation would abandon its peculiar ways (καταλιπόντας ... τὰ ἴδια), and, throwing overboard their customs, and turn to honouring our laws alone (μεταβαλεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν τούτων μόνων τιμὴν)." This, of course, does not explicitly mention a centrifugal mission, but it does express the hope that the Torah will attract people to Judaism.

⁷⁹ McKnight 1991, 62-3, is right to criticize Georgi's theory that the synagogue was a missionary institution. The texts on which this is based will not sustain the theory. However, this should not exclude the fact that the activity in the synagogue could have been used by Jews to attract attention to themselves and their religion. This is not only made clear by the statement of Philo, cited above, but also by the admittedly later evidence of, *inter alia*, John Chrysostom and Jerome.

⁸⁰ Hvalvik 1997, 300.

⁸¹ See van Unnik 1993.

lytes (*Cels.* 1.55). These passages both come from later sources, but may well reflect an earlier understanding of the Diaspora. In support of this contention we might point to a text like *Spec.* 2.163 or *Mos.* 1.149 where Philo argues that the Jewish nation is to the whole inhabited world what the priest is to the state.

Wisdom literature may provide us with further evidence of a missionary consciousness amongst some Jews. This genre of literature, which we know to have been a persistent presence in Jewish literary culture for many centuries, has within it an inbuilt kerygmatic character. This kerygmatic character, manifested in the repeatedly expressed desire that people become disciples of wisdom,⁸² could be regarded as possessing a dynamic which itself goes beyond the communal boundaries. While we might find it difficult to discover explicit references to an interest in an outside audience, the universal dimension of wisdom, so often emphasized, makes that thrust not an unnatural one. Even in a document like *Wisdom*, where there are repeated attacks launched upon idolatry and there appears to be a strong nationalist streak, there still seem to be pleas made to Gentiles to change their ways.⁸³

This emphasis on the duty of the Jews to the world and on the public nature of Judaism, implied in these texts, should be combined with evidence for the welcome afforded the proselyte. At *Legat.* 211, Petronius, the governor of Syria, speaks of how Jews welcome outsiders, and at *Spec.* 1.52, Philo says that because proselytes have given up so much to become Jews, they should be shown special friendship (see also 102-3);⁸⁴ and Josephus states that those who want to conduct their lives in accordance with Jewish laws are gracefully welcome because "it is not family ties alone which constitute relationship, but agreement in the principles of conduct" (*C. Ap.* 2.210. See also 2.261). Note should also be taken of the warmth of sentiment expressed towards proselytes in the *Amidah* or *Eighteen Benedictions* (no. 13), and *2 Baruch* (41.4-6 and 42.3).⁸⁵ All this does not constitute evidence for a proselytic mission, in the sense in which this is understood by

⁸² See especially *Prov* 9 and *Sir* 51.23, 24, and the prologue, 14.

⁸³ See especially in this regard *Wis* 13.3, 4. For some discussion of wisdom literature in this context, see Georgi 1987, 70 n. 81 and 394-5.

⁸⁴ See also *Praem.* 152 where the proselyte (referred to as an ἑπὶ ἄλλοις) will at the end time be exalted aloft by his happy lot for two reasons. The first lies in the fact that he has come over to the camp of God; and the second in the fact that he has won a place in Heaven. This accords well with statements found in *2 Baruch* about the fate of the proselyte at the end time.

⁸⁵ For a more detailed presentation of evidence pointing towards a positive attitude to proselytes, see McKnight 1991, 34-5.

Goodman and McKnight,⁸⁶ but it is enough, when combined with evidence for an interest amongst Jews for publicizing their religion to point to something nearing a missionary consciousness, or the conditions in which such a thing becomes believable.

Another observation needs to be made. The oft-found promise in Jewish texts that at the endtime the Gentiles would align themselves with the Jews (Isa 2:2-4; 9:1-2; Zech 8:23; 4 Ezra 6:26; 2 Bar. 68.5; 1 En. 90.30-3; T. Sim. 7.2; T. Levi 18.2-9; T. Jud. 24.6; T. Dan 5.11; T. Zeb. 9.8), a promise that can be seen as in some way complementary to the idea of Jews as the light of the world, need not be taken to refer exclusively to a future promise. While it is expressed as a hope, we must ask whether there is always a disjunction between eschatological conviction and present practice.⁸⁷

This last point in part concerns the psychology of missionary activity. Let us now turn to more direct evidence for mission. First, we examine the evidence from Rome.

It should at once be noted that an understanding of Horace, *Satire* 1.142-3, in terms of proselytic activity on the part of Roman Jews seems unwarranted; that Juvenal's account of the son going further than his 'God-fearing' father and becoming circumcised is not strictly speaking evidence for Jewish proselytism; that the same equally applies to Seneca's claim, quoted in Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* 6.11,⁸⁸ that the "customs of this accursed race (the Jews) have gained such influence that they are now received throughout the world. The conquered have given laws to their victors." But these pieces of evidence (Horace excluded), in which a writer disapproves of the spread of Judaism, at least imply proselytic activity, of whatever sort. In part, however, they need to be assessed in the light of our understanding of the two recorded expulsions of the Jews from Rome in 139 B.C.E. and 19 C.E.

The expulsion of the Jews in 139 B.C.E.

Goodman is right to emphasize that if we are to interpret the motivations for this expulsion in terms of Jewish missionary activity, we have to rely upon two late Byzantine epitomators of the first-century C.E. writer Valerius Maximus. But why must we *de facto* dismiss the evidence they provide? Both epitomators seemingly independently of each other, are in basic

⁸⁶ "... an enthusiastic openness to Gentile conversion is hardly evidence for missionary activity." (McKnight 1991, 41).

⁸⁷ We should also note that negative assessments of the treatment of the Gentiles at the endtime abound. See 1 En. 91.1; Sib. Or. 3.517-40; Pss. Sol. 7.30; 1QM 12.10-13. But I am not trying to argue that all Jews had the particular convictions referred to above, but that there is evidence that some did.

⁸⁸ Stern 1974, 431-2.

agreement in attributing the Jewish expulsion to missionary activity.⁸⁹ That they disagree on other points (one mentions the worship of Jubiter Sabazius, and the other the setting up of private altars) could serve to enhance the significance of the point at which they do in fact agree (namely in the reason they give for the expulsion). But, partly because of the textual difficulties associated with it, we should not place too much weight on this piece of evidence.

The expulsion of the Jews in 19 C.E.

The historical difficulties connected with Tiberius's expulsion of the Jews from Rome in 19 C.E. are well known,⁹⁰ and have been briefly alluded to above. In essence, these amount to a series of discrepancies between the sources,⁹¹ and the difficulty in reconstructing the grounds for the expulsion. The latest of these sources, Cassius Dio (57.18.5a), who explicitly states that the grounds lay in Jewish proselytic activity, is apparently at this point suspect, and Josephus (*A.J.* 18.81-4), who attributes the grounds to fraudulent activity on the part of a small group of Jews, gives us a novelistic story whose historicity seems doubtful.⁹² Neither Tacitus (*Ann.* 2.85) nor Suetonius (*Tiberius* 36) provide any reasons for the expulsion, and seem only interested in relating the decision itself. But if all the available evidence is unhelpful in explaining the grounds for the expulsion, what other solutions lie at hand? M. H. Williams has argued that the real grounds for the Jewish expulsion lie in Jewish involvement in unrest stimulated by the price of corn. We know that in 19 C.E. problems with the corn supply or *annona* arose (Tacitus, *Ann.* 2.87.1). Jews of Rome were in the main poor, and were known for their capacity to cause social unrest.⁹³ These facts make it likely, M. H. Williams argues, that they would have been party to the unrest caused in 19 C.E.

⁸⁹ Nepotianus speaks about the Jews being expelled *qui Romanis tradere sacra sua conati erant*; and Paris of *qui Sabazi lovis cultu Romanos inficere mores conati erant*.

⁹⁰ For a fine summary of these, see Williams 1989.

⁹¹ Suetonius and Josephus state that all the Jews were expelled, but Tacitus only mentions 4000 freedmen (*libertini*). Tacitus and Suetonius speak of the expelled being shipped to Sardinia; Tacitus mentions a decision of the Senate (influenced by Tiberius), while Josephus and Suetonius speak of the direct intervention of Tiberius, and make no mention of the Senate.

⁹² See Williams 1989, 775-6, who claims that here we are dealing with human over-reaction to the chicanery of four petty criminals, and describes the whole incident as quite unbelievable. In the end the account has more to do with a desire to exculpate the Jews from any responsibility for their expulsion, rather than with the facts of the case. This seems to be suggested by the conclusion of the story: "And so because of the four men the Jews were expelled from the city."

⁹³ Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 28.66-7.

But such a solution is not convincing. First, Williams posits grounds for the expulsion that are not alluded to by *any* of our witnesses (indeed, not even hinted at). One would have thought that Tacitus, who records both the unrest connected with the *annona* and the expulsion of the Jews in close proximity to each other, would have lost nothing in connecting the events in the manner suggested by Williams. Secondly, Williams nowhere explains how her own solution accounts for the association of the expulsion in three of the four witnesses (Josephus, Tacitus and Suetonius) with the expulsion of adherents of the Isis cult (the immediately preceding passage in Josephus [*A.J.* 18.65-80] concerns the expulsion of the priests of Isis). Thirdly, her dismissal of the argument in favour of proselytism is weak, for it is based almost exclusively on her conviction that there were very few proselytes in Rome, an argument, which is itself based on the rarity with which we find the term proselyte in the extant inscriptional evidence (the term only occurs seven times in approximately 500 inscriptions). But this is a weak argument because most of these inscriptions are from a substantially later period (all are from the third or fourth centuries C.E.),⁹⁴ and it is in any case unclear that a tombstone would have always stated, where it was relevant, that the dead person it commemorated was a proselyte.⁹⁵

But all we have succeeded in doing here is dismissing yet another theory. Why might there still be compelling grounds to think of proselytism as a cause for the expulsion? In essence the advantage of the proselytic argument is that it succeeds in accounting for some of the things stated by our extant sources. So, Tacitus polemically refers to those who were expelled as *ea superstitione infecta generis libertini* (“freedmen tainted with the superstition of that race”),⁹⁶ implying that they were proselytes; and of the three groups described by Suetonius he refers to one as *similia sectantes* (‘adopting similar beliefs’), which could be taken as a reference to proselytes. When we add to this the fact that admittedly later sources do refer to an increase in the number of proselytes (see the references to Juvenal, Seneca and Tacitus above), then the proselytic argument begins to look more convincing, and Dio’s explanation begins to look less unlikely.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ For the most recent edition of these inscriptions, see Noy 1995, nos. 62, 218, 224, 392, 489, 491, 577.

⁹⁵ Hvalvik 1997, 300, notes that proselytes may well have referred to themselves as Jews. In support of this thesis he draws attention to Cassius Dio’s statement to the effect that the term Ἰουδαῖοι is also born by those persons, who, though of another ethnicity, observe their laws (Dio 37.17.1).

⁹⁶ Williams 1989, 771-2, argues that Tacitus’s account is deceptive and simply gives vent to his prejudice against Jews, freedmen and proselytes.

⁹⁷ Stern 1974, 365, states that Dio’s account can be seen to agree with that of Josephus. Josephus does at least mention that Fulvia was a proselyte, and the charge of frau-

Rome: An exception?

We noted above that while Goodman, and Will and Orrieux, wanted to dismiss the evidence from Rome as in any way indicating missionary activity on the part of Jews, McKnight accepted that it might be evidence in favour of missionary activity. He did not, however, regard his conclusion as jeopardizing his overall thesis for he regards the Roman evidence as exceptional. This may well be true, but such a conclusion is largely reliant upon a negative interpretation of other evidence from other parts of the empire.

The conversion of the Ituraeans and Idumeans to Judaism, regarded by Josephus as enforced, by Strabo as voluntary, should perhaps be accorded more value than Goodman and others accord it. Goodman regards it as understandable in the light of the biblical commandment to purify the land of Israel – both peoples inhabit territories in biblical Israel.⁹⁸ However, even he must admit that Idumea cannot easily be placed within that region.⁹⁹

The story of the conversion of the royal house of Adiabene, found in Josephus (*A.J.* 20.34-48) and in some Talmudic sources, is the only detailed piece of evidence we possess for the conversion of a Gentile to Judaism. It tells the story of how a Jewish merchant called Ananias visits the royal house of Adiabene, and teaches a number of royal women how to worship God after the tradition of the Jews. He eventually converts Izates, the king, but does not insist that he be circumcised, a decision which seems principally to have been influenced by the fact that to circumcise Izates may have put him in some danger. Another Jew called Eleazar visits the court and does insist that Izates be circumcised. In the context of our present discussion, the focus of interest in this story lies in establishing what it tells us about Jewish proselytism. Here again Goodman *et al.*, as we have noted above, adopt the minimalist interpretation, in part dictated by their strong definition of proselytism. Goodman writes, “In describing the two Jewish teachers of Adiabene, Ananias and Eleazar, Josephus made no sug-

dulence could have been trumped up. Interestingly, and following on from this, Georgi 1987, 92-3, argues that Josephus wishes to conceal the fact that the Jews were dismissed for proselytizing. Goodman dismisses such reasoning on the grounds that everyone would have known the real reasons, and Josephus would have done better to defend the activity of the Jews rather than cover it up. However, as Cohen 1987, esp. 425-6, has shown, with the exception of his account of the Adiabene episode, Josephus is keen to denigrate conversions to Judaism, and this arises from apologetic concerns related to the harsh attacks on conversion to Judaism found in Tacitus and Juvenal. In *Contra Apionem* we note a change in Josephus’s attitude, precisely because he has decided to go on the offensive.

⁹⁸ See *Geogr.* 16.2.34 for the conversion of the Idumeans. See Cohen 1992, 423, for the argument that Strabo implicitly regarded the conversion of the Itureans as voluntary.

⁹⁹ Goodman 1994, 77.

gestion that any such teachers travelled abroad specifically in order to convert or even to provide instruction.”¹⁰⁰ Strictly speaking, this is true. But are we to assume that Ananias the merchant had no perception of himself as Ananias the missionary? We know that Paul the tentmaker did. Was it simply curiosity on the part of the king’s wives, and subsequently of Izates, that led them to seek out Ananias? Was nothing volunteered initially by Ananias? After all, Josephus talks about Ananias giving instruction (ἐδίδασκεν αὐτὰς τὸν θεὸν σέβειν), and this would seem to imply something specific which itself might indicate that Ananias was something more than a merchant. And what of Eleazar who seems to have no profession, but appears on the scene to urge Izates to be circumcised? And what of the nameless Jew, referred to at 20.35, who had converted Helena, the mother of Izates? Any interpretation of this famous passage must assume that the likes of Ananias and Eleazar had some perceptions of themselves as Jewish missionaries.

Let us now turn to the question of Judaisers and God-fearers. How are we to make sense of the existence of these two groups of people for our understanding for the possibly proselytic character of Judaism?

It is a contention of Josephus, admittedly couched in exaggerated terms, that there is not a single city or nation in which Jewish practices cannot be found (*C. Ap.* 2.282).¹⁰¹ Philo also takes pride in the spread of Judaism (*Mos.* 2.17). That the adoption of Jewish practices in the ancient world was popular is confirmed by the anti-Jewish pagan writers referred to above. Again, strictly speaking, the spread of these practices proves nothing about Jewish proselytism – it simply shows that the adoption of such practices was popular. But what is interesting to observe (and this is connected to the evidence cited above) is that the Jews appeared consciously to allow a certain amount of activity on the boundaries of their religion. Here one immediately enters the complex area of the status and position of ‘God-fearers’ at the time of Christian origins. Did such a group exist?¹⁰² In favour, of the view is the discovery of the Aphrodisias inscription, which appears to give conclusive evidence that such a group did exist, at least in

¹⁰⁰ Goodman 1994, 84.

¹⁰¹ “The masses have long since shown a keen desire to adopt our religious practices; and there is not one city, Greek or barbarian, nor a single nation, to which our custom of abstaining from work on the seventh day has not spread (διοπεθοίτηκεν), and where the fasts and the lighting of the lamps and many of our prohibitions in the matter of food are not observed.”

¹⁰² See Reynolds and Tannenbaum 1987, 20. A date in the early third century is not assured, and some have argued for a fourth-century date. In this respect see Botermann 1993, 184-94.

the third century;¹⁰³ the references in Acts to God-fearers;¹⁰⁴ the evidence of the title being applied to certain Gentiles;¹⁰⁵ the evidence in Josephus for half – converts (*B.J.* 2.463, 560; 7.45; also *A.J.* 20.34, 41);¹⁰⁶ and the quotation from Juvenal, cited above, which refers to the father of the young man who becomes a proselyte as a ‘metuens’. Against this view is the relatively late date of the Aphrodisias inscription; the rather inconsistent terminology of Luke in Acts;¹⁰⁷ and the fact that Josephus, for instance, can use the term ‘God-fearer’ to refer to Jews as well as Gentiles.¹⁰⁸ In the end, absolute certainty with regard to this question is not attainable. The evidence would, however, seem to point towards the idea that the term was an official designation at the time of Christian origins. But however we assess this evidence, it would still seem to show that Jews were willing to sanction a multiplex form of association with Judaism on the part of Gentiles.¹⁰⁹ Such evidence could be used to show Jewish readiness to accommodate people in different ways.¹¹⁰ Such an ‘accommodat-

¹⁰³ For the evidence in favour of such a position, see Millar 1986, 165-6; and for the contrary position, see Feldman 1990, 200-9. For Feldman’s most recent discussion see Feldman 1993, 342-3, and an updated bibliography in *ibid.*, 569 n. 1.

¹⁰⁴ See Acts 10:1-2, 22, 35; 13:16, 26, 43, 50; 16:14; 17:4, 17; 18:7.

¹⁰⁵ See in this regard Josephus, *A.J.* 20.195 and the description of Nero’s wife, Pop-paea.

¹⁰⁶ The princes of Adiabene, already referred to above, are said to have venerated God before practising the Jewish law.

¹⁰⁷ In the references in Acts 10 and up to Acts 13:26 the word used is God-fearer (τὸν θεὸν φοβούμενοι); from then on the term used is God-worshipper (σεβομένοι). Many attribute this different terminology to the fact that Luke was using different sources. For the view that the references have more to do with Lukan theology than actual historical reality, see Kraabel 1981, 113-14. But Kraabel’s observations are not convincing. Even if he regards the account of Paul’s missionary activity in Acts as largely fictional, the fiction requires verisimilitude to establish plausibility. On this see Collins 1985, 183.

¹⁰⁸ See *A.J.* 7.130, 153; 12.285; *C. Ap.* 2.140.

¹⁰⁹ It is not clear what Jewish observances, if any, were adopted by God-fearers. Millar 1986, drawing on evidence in Josephus, Juvenal and Tertullian, mentions the Sabbath and food laws. Others, such as Murphy-O’Connor 1992, 418-24, have argued that the term could be applied to those who had made some financial contribution to the Jewish community as well as those who adopted Jewish practices as a result of their reverence for the Jewish god. Many of these questions are implicitly tackled in Cohen 1987. Cohen is, however, not so much interested in arguing about what made a person a God-fearer, or with any of the related technical questions, but rather with highlighting the variety of associations Gentiles could have with Jews before in fact becoming a Jew. See also Collins 1985, 184, who argues that the available evidence presents us with a broad range of degrees of attachment, not a class with specific requirements or with a clearly defined status in the synagogue.

¹¹⁰ I am assuming that this multiplex form of association was in large part sanctioned by Jews. In this respect, see *B.J.* 7.45 where the Jews of Antioch are said to have made a great multitude of the Greeks in some way (τρόπῳ τινί) part of them (μοῖραν αὐτῶν).

ing' attitude to association with the Jewish people, particularly understandable in the light of the obvious sacrifices a Gentile would have to make on becoming a proselyte, could indicate a subtle proselytic tendency. Better a half association than none at all.¹¹¹

What then of the Christian evidence in favour of Jewish proselytism? Some have taken the fact of Christian proselytism amongst Gentiles as sufficient proof of the existence of Jewish proselytism. After all, Paul was a Jew. Stated in such a bald form, this argument is weak, and simply assumes a neat transition from Jewish to Christian proselytism. The same argument, however, has slightly more force if we note that in the New Testament, we are never told that Christians argued about the legitimacy of a mission to the Gentiles, only about the way in which the Gentiles should enter the messianic community. This is particularly notable in the Epistle to the Galatians, where the apparently conservative Judaisers seem perfectly willing to participate in a mission, but not the sort of 'law-free' mission advocated by Paul.¹¹² The absence of any dispute over this point, and indeed any discussion of it, within the pages of the New Testament would appear strange if proselytism was quite as radical a break with Jewish and pagan practice as Goodman implies.¹¹³ This observation gains in strength when we note, along with Goodman, that all scholarly attempts to explain the motivation for Christian proselytism are in one way or another unsatisfactory.¹¹⁴ The view that Christian practice was in some way in continuity with Jewish practice must be at least a part of the answer.

The piece of Christian evidence which has traditionally been seen to most clearly supporting the idea of Jewish proselytism in the second tem-

¹¹¹ This observation equally applies to Goodman's argument, drawing on Cohen 1989, that the multiplicity of activity on the boundaries of Judaism shows a non-proselytic tendency because in a proselytic religion one would expect much clearer distinctions.

¹¹² The affair at Galatia and the dispute between Paul and the so-called Judaisers could be seen as parallel to the implied dispute between Ananias and Eleazar over whether Izates should be circumcised (see my discussion of *A.J.* 20.34-5).

¹¹³ "It is actually rather striking that early Christian literature lacks explicit references to the purposes of mission apart from a few statements by St Paul ... Such lack of explicit theological justification lends support to the theory that the real reason for mission was something that the participants did not wish openly to state." (Goodman 1994, 166). Goodman's observation can equally be explained by reference to the fact that there was no need to justify a relatively common practice.

¹¹⁴ Goodman 1994, 163-4. Amongst failed theories used to explain the origins of Christian missionary activity, we should include Goodman's. Taking up a suggestion made by J. Gager (Gager 1975), he argues that Christian mission as a dogma arose as a reaction to hostility inside Christian ranks to the indiscriminate acceptance of Gentiles. Those reacting to the hostility argued that the acceptance of Gentiles was not only permitted but desirable. But this solution seems to raise more questions than it solves.

ple period is Matt 23:15.¹¹⁵ While the verse appears to exaggerate the efforts to which a Pharisee will go to make a single proselyte¹¹⁶ and contains an obviously polemical note in the statement that the proselyte becomes a son of ‘Gehinnom’, this need not lead to the assumption that there is no substance behind the claim of the verse, namely (at least on the most obvious reading) that some Pharisees proselytized Gentiles. And yet the attempts to avoid this ‘simple’ reading of the passage multiply.¹¹⁷ The most convincing of these belongs to Goodman. As we noted above, he argued that the verse is best understood if we take ‘proselyte’ to refer not to a Gentile convert to Judaism, but rather to a Jewish convert to the Jewish sect of the Pharisees. In favour of his thesis Goodman notes the rarity with which the term appears in the first century (it is never found in Josephus, very rarely in Philo, and only in Acts [2:11; 6:5; 13:43] with the sense of a Gentile who has become a Jew); and he then goes on to argue that in the first century the term was only *becoming* a technical one for a Gentile convert to Judaism. When referring to a Gentile convert, Philo preferred to use the term ἕπληλυς, and though the translators of the LXX usually used προσήλυτος with the sense of Gentile convert when translating the Hebrew גר sometimes they used the term where resident alien appears to be the meaning of גר.¹¹⁸ Goodman notes that a particularly striking example of the latter is the translation of גרים as προσήλυτοι at Exod 22:20, for there the term refers to Israelites and not Gentiles. Philo found such a usage strange, but indicates the flexibility of the term by understanding it not to refer to someone who circumcises his uncircumcision (the meaning one might expect), but rather, allegorically, to refer to someone who circumcises his sensual desires, as someone who turns to God for salvation (*QE* 2.2). Goodman concludes his argument by stating, “What I suggest, therefore, is that in the first century προσήλυτος had both a technical and a non-technical sense, and in the latter sense it could quite easily be applied to Jews.”¹¹⁹

Goodman’s interpretation might be supported by what we know of the sectarian nature of second temple Judaism. Against such a background the adoption by a Jew of a particular sect’s ideology might well have been

¹¹⁵ Οὐαὶ ὑμῖν, γραμματεῖς καὶ φαρισαῖοι ὑποκριταί, ὅτι περιάγετε τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ ξηρὰν ποιῆσαι ἓνα προσήλυτον καὶ ὅταν γένηται ποιεῖτε αὐτὸν υἱὸν γεέννης διπλότερον ὑμῶν.

¹¹⁶ I understand ‘one proselyte’ to assume a καί (even one proselyte), and not to refer to a specific proselyte. For this interpretation see Munck 1959, 266. Such an interpretation would seem to be excluded by the indefinite ὅταν.

¹¹⁷ Bamberger 1939, 267-73, lists a variety of other non-missionary interpretations of this text.

¹¹⁸ See Exod 12:48; Lev 25:23, 35; and Deut 1:16.

¹¹⁹ Goodman 1994, 73.

seen as a conversion, and in this respect one might make reference to the community at Qumran, or indeed Paul's description of his 'conversion' from Pharisaism to the messianic sect at Gal 1:9-10. But in the end Goodman's interpretation does not seem the natural one. First, we have no evidence of the use of προσήλυτος to refer to a Jewish convert to a Jewish sect; and indeed on Goodman's own admission, we have no evidence for proselytizing on the part of members of Jewish sects. Secondly, while it is certainly true that the term προσήλυτος is not found very often in first-century Jewish literature, in the places where it does occur, it overwhelmingly has the sense of a Gentile convert to Judaism. This is the case both with the usage of the term in the LXX,¹²⁰ Acts, and Philo.¹²¹ Interestingly, Philo's statement in *QE* 2.2, a passage which is important for Goodman's case, can be used in support of the opposite case. In this regard, we should note that the very reason why Philo is led to discuss Exod 22:20 (the verse under discussion) is (as Goodman himself notes) because of the use of προσήλυτος to refer to Israelites, and not, as might usually be expected, to refer to Gentile converts. Philo's allegorical interpretation of the term is an answer to the exegetical problem posed, and need not be taken to refer to another generally acknowledged usage of the term. Thirdly, Philo's preference for the term ἔπηλυς over προσήλυτος to refer to a proselyte tells us nothing about the usage of προσήλυτος at the time of Christian origins. Fourthly, even if Goodman's claim is correct, that in the first century C.E. the term was only becoming a technical term to refer to a Gentile convert to Judaism, he has not shown that his constructed alternative meaning is in fact the meaning of the term as it appears at Matt 23:15. The phrase 'over land and sea' seems to imply the sense of a Gentile convert to Judaism. In the end the argument of Goodman, and more explicitly, McKnight,¹²² has a circular feel to it. Matt 23:15 cannot refer to Jewish proselytic activity because evidence for such activity has not been found elsewhere.

In a discussion of Matt 23:15, it is worth drawing attention to another verse in the Gospel. At Matt 10:5-6 Jesus instructs his disciples not to go

¹²⁰ While Goodman is right to point to the fact that the LXX's translation of גר as προσήλυτος with the meaning Gentile convert is not always accurate, it is nearly always appropriate. See in this respect the article of Allen 1894, 264-75, who notes that translators of the LXX use προσήλυτος 75 times, and on 60 of those occasions the term constitutes an appropriate translation of the Hebrew גר. A distinction between πάροικος and προσήλυτος is also to be found in the rendering of גר and the participle גור.

¹²¹ See *Spec.* 1.51 where προσήλυτος is used in the sense of convert to Judaism (τούτους δὲ καλεῖ προσηλύτους ἀπὸ τοῦ προσηλυθῆναι καινῇ καὶ θιλοθέῳ πολιτείᾳ) and *Spec.* 1.308-9 where the biblical term προσήλυτος (found, in this instance, in Deut 10:18) is understood as ἔπηλυς. See also the fact that in the passage we have just discussed (*QE* 2.2) ἔπηλυδας appears to be an alternative translation for προσήλυτος.

¹²² McKnight 1991, 107.

to the Gentiles or the Samaritans, but rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.¹²³ For our purposes what is striking about this verse is the fact that in an apparently missionary context, Jesus forbids his disciples to go to the Gentiles, almost as if this might be the normal response of a 'missionary'. But for this observation to be of any significance we must attempt to show that the verse goes back to Jesus himself. If we can show this, then we may have additional proof from the Gospel of a Jewish mission to the Gentiles. First, we should note that it seems very unlikely that the verse is redactional. Not only does it appear to contradict the last verses of the Gospel where a Gentile mission is wholeheartedly endorsed by Jesus (Matt 28:16-20),¹²⁴ but the term εἰς ὁδόν is not characteristic of Matthew, and Samaritans do not appear elsewhere in the Gospel.¹²⁵ If we accept that the verse is not redactional we still have to take account of the contention that the verse goes back to a Jewish Christian source which was hostile to the Gentile mission.¹²⁶ But such a thesis fails to convince, for (1) it assumes that there was a dispute in the early church about whether the mission should concern itself with Gentiles as well as Jews. This cannot be proven; and (2) it exaggerates the supposed discrepancy between these verses and Luke 9:51-6, 10:29-37 and 17:11-19, which seem to show a positive attitude on the part of Jesus towards the Samaritans. But as Davies and Allison have noted, "The texts from Luke involve only incidental contact with Samaritans. They have nothing to do with a missionary enterprise."¹²⁷ The likeliest solution seems therefore to be that the words do go back to Jesus, and that consequently they could be taken as additional evidence for proselytic activity on the part of Jews at the time of Christian origins.

What then of the so-called positive pieces of evidence against proselytism? That we lack the name of a single Jewish missionary (except Ananias and perhaps Eleazar, mentioned in *A.J.* 20.34-48) is not a powerful point. Apart from Paul, we hear of the names of very few Christian missionaries at the time of Christian origins, and the name of only one Christian missionary in the second century, Pantaenus, who was apparently sent off to

¹²³ Εἰς ὁδὸν ἐθνῶν μὴ ἀπέλθῃτε καὶ εἰς πόλιν Σαμαριτῶν μὴ εἰσέλθῃτε πορεύεσθε δὲ μᾶλλον πρὸς τὰ ἀπολωλότα οἴκου Ἰσραὴλ.

¹²⁴ Those who hold the verse to fit into a clear salvation-historical schema (Jews first and then the Gentiles) still have to contend with the fact that Matthew makes no attempt to do this.

¹²⁵ For some additional reasons for rejecting the view that 10:5-6 is redactional, see Davies and Allison 1991, 169.

¹²⁶ See Hahn, 1965, 54-5.

¹²⁷ Davies and Allison 1991, 168 n. 16.

missionize India (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.10-11).¹²⁸ The lack of Jewish missionary tracts is a problem we also face when we examine Christian literature.¹²⁹ The lack of references to Jewish missionary activity in pagan anti-Jewish writings might appear a powerful observation. But many of these writers do speak of the spread of Judaism; and furthermore, with the exception of Celsus, very few pagan anti-Christian writers mention Christian missionary activity; and there is no mention of them in Christian apologetic literature. Failure in Jewish writers, especially Philo and Josephus, to refer to Jewish missionary activity should not be accorded too much significance.¹³⁰ While Christian writers might refer to the spread of Christianity, rarely do we find reference made to Christian missionary activity except perhaps in the New Testament, and here we are dealing with significant foundational events. Ignorance concerning rites of initiation is equally a problem in the study of early Christianity.

This leads me to a final point. One of the perceived strengths of the argument constructed by Goodman against a proselytic mission amongst Jews at the time of Christian origins is that it has a comparative character, that is, it seeks to show how the characteristics associated with a proselytic mission are more obviously present in Christianity than in Judaism. These are to be located in Christianity's strong opposition to paganism over against Judaism's more 'liberal' attitude, the warmth of the reception accorded to proselytes, and the existence of Christian texts (particularly texts from the Pauline corpus) which possess an obviously proselytic content. Two points emerge from Goodman's discussion, both of which I have alluded to above. While it seems beyond dispute that in general terms early Christianity had a more obviously proselytic character than that found in Judaism, this does not serve to demonstrate that no Jews were interested in proselytizing Gentiles.¹³¹ As I have attempted to argue above, a proselytic

¹²⁸ See Lane Fox 1986, 282; and Schäferdick 1991, 69. It is significant to note that in the period after the New Testament, we hear of very few missionaries. In this respect see *Cels.* 3.9 where Origen mentions some nameless missionaries almost as if they are characters of the past; and Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.37 and 5.10.2-3. See also in the third century Gregory Thaumaturgus, whose missionary activity is described in the historically problematic account of his life by Gregory of Nyssa. For a discussion of the evidence pertaining to Gregory, see Lane Fox 1986, 528-9.

¹²⁹ No book in the New Testament can be construed as having a missionary purpose, and it is by no means clear that Christian apologetic writings could be conceived of as missionary. Probably the first piece of unambiguously protreptic Christian literature is Clement of Alexandria's aptly named *Protreptikos*.

¹³⁰ For a possible explanation of the lack of mention in Josephus, see Cohen 1987, 424-5.

¹³¹ On this note Simon's concession to Munck at Simon 1986, 392: "In the first place, Judaism, being an established body, national and religious at the same time, indissolubly bound up with Israel and founded on the concept of the chosen people, was less sponta-

mission can operate in many different ways. Goodman runs the risk of throwing the baby out with the bath water. The second point I wish to make is perhaps more significant. Goodman's discussion of the evidence for early Christian proselytism, for the presence within Christianity of a demonstrable proselytic spirit, is interesting insofar as he is unable to show on the basis of his own definition that Christianity was as strongly proselytic as one might imagine.¹³² After all, we lack information on how people were converted, to what precisely they were converted, and what precisely the content of missionary preaching was. And yet we know that Christianity was proselytic. Goodman seems to be aware of this fact when he states, "It is not impossible that the church conquered the Roman empire in part simply because among Christians, in contrast to the adherents of most of the religions of the empire, could be found some, *even if only a few*, enthusiasts that took it for granted that an increase in their number was a matter for rejoicing ..."¹³³

According to Goodman there were only a few missionaries and this may explain the lack of evidence. Two points need to be made here. First, it is quite likely, as Harnack believed and Lane Fox has in some sense substantiated, that missionaries were probably not responsible for the majority of conversions to Christianity.¹³⁴ The same equally applies to Judaism. Furthermore, we may lack the names of Christian (and perhaps Jewish) missionaries because much of their missionary work probably took place in rather a haphazard way. This might be the implication of the story about Ananias and the royal house of Adiabene.¹³⁵

neously and less unanimously inclined than post-Pauline Christianity ever was to gather in the nations to hear its Gospel. For early Christianity was not an existing body, but one that was still growing and coming into being. Doubtless Judaism as a whole possessed no *Missionstheorie*."

¹³² Goodman 1994, 99-108.

¹³³ Goodman 1994, 160.

¹³⁴ This view has most recently been endorsed by Hvalvik 1997, 307: "Considering the enormous expansion of Christianity in relation to the few Christian missionaries we hear about, it seems clear that the role of missionaries is often exaggerated."

¹³⁵ In this respect we might note that in his discussion of the conversion of the royal household of Adiabene, Josephus states that Helena had been brought over to the Jewish laws (ἐἰς τοὺς ἐκείνων μετακεκομίσθαι νόμους) by a certain Jew (ὑφ' ἑτέρου τινὸς Ἰουδαίου). The conversion of Helena to Judaism must have been regarded as a significant event in the history of the conversion of the household of Adiabene, and yet the person who converted her remains anonymous.

Conclusion

I wish to conclude this paper with a brief summary of its findings and some tentative observations.

i. It has often been asserted that the idea of a Jewish mission was thought to have existed at the time of Christian origins. In some books this thesis appears simply as an assumption.

ii. This assumption has been called into question in a few recent books. These proceed in similar ways. They begin with a strong definition of mission and then on the basis of that definition examine previous bits of evidence put forward in favour of the assumption which they are challenging. At a theoretical level their argument has two basic weaknesses. First, the definitions of mission provided are too strong. Religions which are consciously proselytic do not have to express their missionary character in accordance with the definition provided by these writers. Secondly, the form of their argument has something of a *divide et impera* quality, and in my opinion discounts the main strength of the case being opposed, namely its cumulative character.¹³⁶

iii. These cumulative observations can be summarized thus: (a) there was a considerable increase in Jewish population between the exile in the late sixth century B.C.E. and the first century. This demographic fact would imply the influx of large numbers of proselytes, though it need not imply that such people were sought out. (b) There is a strong Jewish tradition at the time of Christian origins of hostility to idolatrous practices. This itself sets up one condition that makes proselytism appear natural. (c) There is a good deal of evidence from within Judaism to support the view that Jews thought the propagation of their way of life among Gentiles to be a duty. This, together with other motives (apologetic etc.), led some Jews to lay open their way of life to Gentiles, a way of life they often presented as superior to that of the Gentiles. This may have led some Gentiles to adopt certain Jewish practices, or to make the decision to become proselytes, a decision which was welcomed by Jews from a variety of traditions (just as the opposite decision, the decision of a Jew to apostatise, was condemned). The extent to which Jews actively encouraged Gentiles to become proselytes must have varied, but the distinction between active encouragement (however that manifested itself) and what Goodman has termed educational, informative and apologetic mission, is not so very clear. For instance, if I condemn idolatrous practices and give expression to the superiority of my god and beliefs, I am implying a good deal that

¹³⁶ See Feldman 1993, 293 (italics my own): "However, though there is, in truth, *no single item of conclusive evidence* (for an aggressive mission) ... the cumulative evidence ... for such activity is considerable." 'Considerable' is probably too strong.

might be understood as proselytic. Certain traditions such as the wisdom tradition may have possessed a proselytic dynamic, which led to proselytism. (d) There still remain bits of evidence (the conversion of the royal house of Adiabene; the expulsions of Jews from Rome; and Matt 10:6-7; 23:15), which can be read as empirical evidence for the existence of 'aggressive mission' (as understood by the above discussed scholars) among certain Jews.

The evidence cited above cannot be used to produce an all-consuming picture of the missionary character of second temple Judaism. It is not my claim that every Jew was a potential missionary, or that the synagogue was a carefully organized missionary centre sending people out to spread the good news of philosophical monotheism. That could not be supported with reference to the fragmentary evidence we possess. What I am simply attempting to do is to argue that *tertium datur*, that there is a medial position between the maximalism of Georgi and Feldman, and the minimalism I have been arguing against. In a sense my position is less satisfying than the other two because it is less precise, and in some sense more suggestive. But because one is less precise, it does not mean that one is wrong. The dictum 'If not x therefore y' is rather a crude one to apply to evidence which is quite so fragmentary and complex.

What might the significance of my conclusion be for the study of Christian origins? First, if I am right to think that the existence of Christian proselytism can in part at least be explained by reference to the existence of Jewish proselytism, this raises the question of the difference between Jewish and Christian methods of missionizing. This in turn bears upon the question of Christian and Jewish self-definition. Secondly, it is necessary to address the whole question of missionary rivalry between Christians and Jews. Could not early Jewish opposition to members of the messianic sect have been inspired not only by an opposition to the view that Jesus was the Messiah, but also by the fact that Christians sought to propagate their message among a group of people whom they say (the Jews) saw as their natural constituency? As R. Hvalvik has pointed out,¹³⁷ it is possible that we have evidence for such rivalry in Acts. So in Luke's account of Paul's preaching in Thessalonica, he states that as a result of Paul's and Silas's success in converting a number of proselytes to their cause, the Jews became jealous and set the city in uproar (Acts 17:4-5). It is possible that the verb translated as jealous (ζηλώσαντες) could refer to the zeal of those Jews opposed to Paul. But a translation as jealous seems more likely if we take seriously the context of Luke's statement, namely one in which Jews

¹³⁷ Hvalvik 1997, 220-4.

react badly to successful Christian missionizing of those who were probably God-fearers.¹³⁸

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¹³⁸ In this context note should also be taken of 1 Thess 2:16, where Paul speaks of those Jews who persecuted Christians as trying to prevent Paul and his companions from speaking to the Gentiles.

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Chapter 8

Some observations on Josephus and Christianity^{*1}

Introduction

The works of Flavius Josephus concern themselves with the history and culture of the Jews, and were probably written for a pagan and Jewish audience. And yet it is Christians whom we have to thank for their preservation, and it is only Christian interpretations of these works of which we have any evidence, at least from the ancient period.² Of course, this need not imply that Josephus' works were unread by non-Christian Jews and pagans in antiquity. Jewish literary evidence in Greek is almost non-existent after the end of the first century C.E., and yet some Jews, as inscriptions show, continued to write in a sometimes elaborate Greek, and no doubt read Greek authors, some of whom were probably Jewish. Although rabbinic sources do not refer explicitly to Josephus³ (unambiguous evidence for Jewish reengagement with his works is first evidenced with the *Josippon* in the tenth century⁴), some material, apparently based upon Josephus, found its way into the Talmudic tradition;⁵ and some Christian authors speak of Josephus' popularity amongst Jews,⁶ although this was

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² On this see in particular Sanford 1935; Grant 1979; and Schreckenberg 1984; and Schreckenberg/Schubert 1991.

³ See Schreckenberg 1977, 48-53, who notes: "In der Tat scheinen für Talmud und Midrasch Josephus und Philo nicht einmal existiert zu haben".

⁴ See Flusser 1987.

⁵ See Yassif 1989.

⁶ See, *inter alia*, Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 3.9 (quoted below in n. 8); the fourth century Pseudo-Hegesippus' *De Excidio*, an adaptation of Josephus' *B.J.* in Latin (it in fact blends passages from *A.J.* and *B.J.* and non-Josephan sources. On this work see Bell 1987), whose author states that Josephus is a person *quem ipsi* (the Jews) *maximum putant* (2.12.1); Sozomen, writing in the fifth century, who notes that Josephus was a very famous (ἐπιδοξότατος) man amongst both Jews (and Romans) (*Hist. eccl.* 1.1.5); and Chrysostom, *Adversus Judaeos* 5.8, who states that Josephus is thought to be very reliable (μάλιστα ἀξιόπιστον) by Jews.

probably for apologetic reasons.⁷ On the pagan side, it is the case that some pagans did not cease to have an interest in Jews after the first century, and Josephus' writings, the product of a Jew who was friendly towards Rome and who had in part written for a Roman audience,⁸ were a potential source of information for them. According to a tradition found in Eusebius, Josephus' writings were located in a library at Rome and a statue of him had been erected in the city.⁹ But it should be noted that this tradition is found in no source, which is independent of Eusebius, and that the two surviving references to Josephus in pagan writers do not mention his literary activities.¹⁰

Whatever we make of the above, it remains the case that what evidence we do possess for the reading of Josephus from the second century to the tenth is exclusively Christian and that the works of the Jewish general are known to us only through the endeavours of Christian scribes and theologians.

Understanding why Christians paid such close attention to Josephus' writings is not difficult. His works were seen as elucidating and confirming aspects of the Old and the New Testaments,¹¹ and as aiding and abet-

⁷ In all of the examples cited in n. 6, the context is clearly apologetic. See Schreckenberg 1984, 1157, who insists upon their unreliability.

⁸ See *C. Ap.* 1.2; and Minucius Felix's clear view that Josephus should be included amongst Roman writers (*Oct.* 33.4).

⁹ "Of the Jews of that time he was the most famous (ἐπιδοξότατος), not only among his fellow countrymen, but among the Romans too, so that he was honoured with the erection of a statue in the city of Rome, and the labours of his pen found a place in the Library." (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.9). See also Jerome, who is probably reliant upon Eusebius, at *Vir. ill.* 13: ... *qui et bibliothecae publicae traditi sunt, et ob ingenii gloriam statuam quoque Romae meruit.*

¹⁰ Suetonius at *Vespasian* 5 describes Josephus as "a distinguished Jewish prisoner (*et unus ex nobiles captivis Josephus, cum coieceretur in vincula*)", and notes that he was one of those who predicted that Vespasian would become emperor. Cassius Dio at *Hist.* 65.1 similarly mentions Josephus in the context of his prediction that Vespasian would become emperor. Mueller 1890, 26-8; Harnack 1913, 1058-9; and Dornseiff 1955, 143-55, have argued for possible allusions to Josephus at Tacitus *Hist.* 5.6 (here alluding to *B.J.* 4.483-84); *Hist.* 5.13 (here alluding to *B.J.* 6.312); and most controversially at *Annales* 15.44 (here alluding to *A.J.* 18.63-4). For a contrary opinion see Norden 1913, 650f.; Goetz 1913, 292f.; and Corssen 1914, 115f. Note the comment of Sanford 1935, 131: "It is impossible to say how much influence it (the *B.J.*) had among Roman pagans outside the official imperial Roman group, but it left no demonstrable impression on Roman writers." See also Mason 1998, 74f., who plays down the importance of Josephus' status at the Roman court and his subsequent reputation.

¹¹ This is first explicitly the case in the writings of Origen (note in particular *Fr. Lam.* 105 on Lam 4:10 [*GCS* 3.273]; *Fr. Lam.* 109 on Lam 4:14 [*GCS* 3.274]; *Fr. Jer.* 14 on Jer 22:24-6 [*GCS* 3.204-5]); and is continued in particular by Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 2.10,

ting the attempts of Christian apologists to create a history of Christianity that proved its antiquity and therefore its respectability.¹² In a more polemical context, and here with particular reference to the use of *B.J.*, they were taken as giving evidence of the fallen state of the Jewish nation, a state, which Christian writers often directly attributed to the ‘Jewish’ decision to kill Christ, and, which was to become a significant element in Christian salvation-history.¹³ Aspects of the transmission history of Josephus’ works

11, 12); and Theodoret (*In Exod. quaest.* 24 [PG 80.252]; *In Exod. quaest.* 64 [PG 80.289]; *In Deut. quaest.* 13 [PG 80.424].

¹² In this context particular attention was paid to the *Contra Apionem*. See especially Theophilus, *Autol.* 3.20-9, where, interestingly, Josephus is never explicitly referred to, but is evidently used (see Schreckenberg 1972, 70); Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 1.21.2-3; Origen, where the *Contra Apionem* receives the title Περὶ τῆς τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀρχαιότητος ἐν δυσίῳ (cf. *Cels.* 1.16 and 4.11); Tertullian who describes Josephus as the *antiquitatum judaicarum vernaculus vindex* (*Apol.* 19.6), here without making explicit reference to any text from Josephus; and Eusebius *Praep. ev.* 9.42.4; 10.7; *Dem. ev.* 8.2.91-6. Hardwick 1996, who discusses the Christian use of the *Contra Apionem*, notes that following Eusebius, Christian interest in this work waned, not least because after this period the church had won the battle with its pagan critics and it was precisely in this context, that is, apologetic discussion of Christianity with pagans, that *Contra Apionem* proved useful.

¹³ Something of the polemical character of early Christian usage of Josephus may be glimpsed in Melito’s reference to the cannibalism of the Jews (Melito, *Peri Pascha* 52), which Schreckenberg/Schubert 1991, 53, takes as a possible allusion to *B.J.* 6.201-13, where the *teknophagia* of Maria (she is forced by hunger to eat her own child) in the besieged Jerusalem is described at some length; and in Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 33.4-5 (“By reading the writings of Flavius Josephus and Antoninus Julius, you shall know that by their wickedness they deserved this fortune, and that nothing happened to them, which had not before been predicted”). In Origen, and in particular in Eusebius and later patristic writers, this polemical usage is developed further, particularly in relation to the *B.J.* Here Josephus’ description of the destruction of Jerusalem, of the wrongs attending that destruction, in particular the so-called *teknophagia*, and the Josephan idea that the Jews, and especially the revolutionary parties, had brought about their own fate, were all used in an anti-Jewish manner, which inevitably led to distortions of what Josephus had in fact written. Something of this process of distortion can be seen in the tradition, first found in Origen, and attributed falsely to Josephus, that Jerusalem was destroyed because of the murder of James, the brother of Jesus (on this see further below, and more generally on Origen’s use of Josephus, Mizugaki 1987, esp. 331-4). Eusebius goes further, asserting, misleadingly, that Josephus supported the view that “the calamities, which overtook the nation began with the time of Pilate and the crimes against the saviour.” (*Hist. eccl.* 2.6). Note also *Hist. eccl.* 3.5 where we find the claim that the destruction of Jerusalem took place during passover, an appropriate time given that that was when Jesus was killed; and Eusebius’ statement that Josephus supported the view that the whole Jewish nation stood responsible for the fall of Jerusalem (see in particular *Hist. eccl.* 3.6.1-28, where after citing a number of passages on the fall of Jerusalem [*B.J.* 5.424-38; 512-19; 566; and 6.193-213], he notes that this was just punishment for the Jews’ opposition to Christ. For further examples of distortions see Ulrich 1999, 100f., who goes on to note that we

are also thought to illustrate this final point. *B.J.* was referred to as ἄλωσις¹⁴ (in Latin *excidium*), and the works were usually ordered so that *B.J.*, the earliest of Josephus' works, followed *A.J.*, possibly implying that the horrors of the first Jewish revolt appeared as the appropriate endpoint of Jewish history.¹⁵ This final observation, however, might appear too suspicious a reading, and the ordering of the books be better explained by reference to chronology. In such an explanation one begins with creation (*A.J.*) and ends with the destruction of Jerusalem (*B.J.*).

Nevertheless, absorption into the burgeoning Christian literary tradition,¹⁶ something which was to continue well into modern times,¹⁷ did not, in the main, lead to the claim that Josephus had converted to Christianity, even if he appeared on occasion to occupy the position of an honorary Christian.¹⁸ For Origen, the earliest Christian we know of to make detailed

should not see Eusebius' use of Josephus as exclusively polemical, in particular highlighting the former's use of the *Contra Apionem*). For further polemical uses of Josephus along these lines see also Pseudo-Hegesippus' *De Excidio*, especially his comment at 2.12.1 that "the Jews paid the penalty for their crimes because after they had crucified Jesus, they persecuted his disciples." (Cf. 5.32); Basil of Caesarea (PG 31.324: *Homilia dicta tempore famis et siccitatis*); Chrysostom *Hom. Matt.* 75.3; and many others.

¹⁴ Origen is the first person we know of to refer to *B.J.* in this manner (*Fragmenta et Selecta in Psalmos* 73.5-6 = PG 12.1529. See Schreckenberg 1972, 177-8). For the view that the title was originally a Christian one, and not the title of Josephus' Greek version of *B.J.*, as, for instance, Thackeray had argued, see Schreckenberg/Schubert 1991, 61-2.

¹⁵ On this see Schreckenberg/Schubert 1991, 62, who note that such a view is inadvertently reflected in the order in which Josephus' works appear in Niese's Berlin edition of Josephus, published between 1885 and 1895.

¹⁶ Such absorption is at its most extreme in the Syriac vulgate where *B.J.* 6 appears as 5 *Maccabees*, and therefore as part of the Syriac Old Testament.

¹⁷ The evidence for this is helpfully set out in Schreckenberg/Schubert 1991, 8-10. They note that in the nineteenth century some theologians spoke of Josephus' works as "the fifth Gospel", or "the little Bible". It is interesting to discover that the edition of the Greek text of the New Testament by Richter (1826-7) appeared as *Pars I* of the *Bibliotheca Sacra Patrum Ecclesiae Graecorum*, and that the edition of the Latin Josephus, which was never completed, appeared in the *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*. Josephus' works were copiously referred to in annotated editions of the New Testament (see, for instance, Wettstein's edition of 1751-2), and such use of Josephus came to clearest expression in E. W. Grinfield's *Scholia Hellenistica in Novum Testamentum Philone et Josepho Patribus Apostolicis ... maxime deprompta* (London, 1848). Note should also be taken of the existence from the sixteenth century onwards of Bibles with portions of Josephus printed in parallel to relevant biblical texts. For a modern book, reflecting the same concerns, if differently conceived, see Mason 1992.

¹⁸ Note the appearance of Josephus in Jerome's *Vir. ill.* 13 with no unambiguous indication that he was a Jew; and the sixth century Cassiodorus' description of him as amongst the *patres nostri* (*Expos. in Ps.* 132.2). The first significant authority to claim Josephus unambiguously for the Christian church was William Whiston in his translation of Josephus published in 1737. There, in his appendix on the *Testimonium Flavianum*

use of Josephus, he was still the Jewish historian who, “although not far from the truth (οὐ μακρὰν τῆς ἀληθείας)”, “did not believe in Jesus as the Christ (ἀπιστῶν τῷ Ἰησοῦ ὡς χριστῷ)” (*Cels.* 1.47).¹⁹ For Minucius Felix and for Tertullian, he was straightforwardly a Jew, *judaeus Josephus antiquitatum judaeicarum vernaculus vindex*, as the latter put it (*Apol.* 19.6). Even for Eusebius who, after Origen, was the first Christian to make extensive use of his works, he was clearly a Jewish historian, or as he states at one point, “one of the more intelligent of the Jews”,²⁰ and for Pseudo-Hegesippus, his attachment to the *perfidia* of the Jews was something worth emphasising.²¹ But this should perhaps not surprise us. It was precisely in his Jewish identity that the strength of Josephus’ testimony lay. Here was no Christian writer whose biases were self-evident, but one who, like the biblical Balaam before him, in spite of his identity, spoke the truth about Jewish history (and about Jesus, at least according to those writers who mention the *Testimonium*), a truth, which, in Christian eyes, helpfully condemned the people whom he had intended to support and defend, and bore testimony, in a variety of ways, to Christian truth.²²

(originally published as a separate ‘dissertation’ along with five other ‘dissertations’, in 1734), Whiston notes “that Josephus was no other in his own mind than a Nazarite or Ebionite Jewish Christian.” He goes on to remark that it is in his opinion ‘remarkable’ that no one with the exception of the Jew Galatinus has made “such a natural observation.”

¹⁹ See *Comm. Matt.* 10.17 where it is stated that Josephus did not accept (καταδεξάμενος) Jesus as the Christ. See also *Cels.* 2.13.

²⁰ *Hist. eccl.* 2.23. Note also *Hist. eccl.* 1.5 where Eusebius refers to Josephus as “the most famous (ἐπισημώτατος) of Hebrew historians.”

²¹ *Consortem se enim perfidiae Judaeorum exhibuit (De Excidio, Prologus p. 3)*. Note also that when he discusses the *Testimonium* (2.12.1), Pseudo-Hegesippus introduces the section with the words: *Si nobis non credunt Iudaei, vel suis credant*. Amongst other witnesses who emphasize Josephus’ Jewishness see Chrysostom who states that Josephus was a Jew καὶ σφόδρα Ἰουδαῖος, καὶ ζηλωτής, καὶ τῶν μετὰ τὴν Χριστοῦ παρουσίαν (*Comm. Matt.* 76.1). Chrysostom makes this statement in the midst of a defence of Josephus as a reliable witness. See also the fifth century Isidore of Pelusium who notes that Josephus was Ἰουδαῖος ἄκρος καὶ τοῦ νόμου ζηλωτής (*Ep.* 4.225 [PG 78.1320]) and then goes on to quote the *Testimonium*.

²² Such a view is already found as early as Eusebius, is hinted at in Pseudo-Hegesippus and becomes explicit in later tradition where we find Josephus referred to as the ‘lover of the truth’, or φιλαλήθης. Note in particular the fifth century Isidore of Pelusium’s statement (here appended to a citation of the *Testimonium*): ἐγὼ δὲ λίαν θαυμάζω τὰνδρὸς ἐν πολλοῖς μὲν τὸ φιλαλήθης (Isidore, *Ep.* 4.225); and Theodoret (*In Dan.* 12.14 [PG 81.1544b]), not here treating the *Testimonium*, who combines the fact that Josephus was not a Christian with the fact that he did not seek to conceal the truth (μάρτυς ἀξιόχρεως Ἰωσηππος ὁ Ἑβραῖος, τὸ μὲν Χριστιανικὸν οὐ δεξάμενος κήρυγμα, τὴν δὲ ἀλήθειαν κρύπτειν οὐκ ἀνεχόμενος). Note also the statement of the sixth century Oikumenios who, while introducing the *Testimonium*, describes Josephus as a man “constrained by the truth (ὑπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας βιαζόμενος)”. See Hoskier’s edition of his commentary on

It is perhaps ironic, therefore, that the religion, which should have been responsible for the preservation of Josephus' writings, namely Christianity, should be so little referred to in the pages of those writings. Whether this is surprising from an historical perspective, will be examined later on in this paper. What needs to be emphasized is that Josephus' writings were not just preserved because they made reference to Christianity's founder, his brother, and his supposed precursor. Certainly the fact that there is some sort of reference to these seminal characters, however minimal, may have acted as a catalyst in the preservation of his works by Christians,²³ but it was by no means the sole and overriding reason for this phenomenon, as even the briefest examination of Josephus' *Wirkungsgeschichte* in the Christian church will show. That is precisely why in my opening remarks about the importance of Josephus for the Christian church I did not refer to these famous 'Christian' references. If Josephus' writings had been preserved by Christians simply because he referred to Jesus, James and John the Baptist, it would have involved scribes and others in what might have seemed like a great deal of work for perhaps only minimal return.

But it is to Josephus' 'Christian' references that I wish to turn my attention. By 'Christian' references, I mean the so-called *Testimonium Flavianum* (from now on *TF*) found at *A.J.* 18.63-4, and the brief account of the death of James found at *A.J.* 20.199f. The reference to John the Baptist (*A.J.* 18.116-19), although of considerable significance for students of Christian origins, is not strictly speaking a Christian reference, for Josephus does not connect John with Jesus or any other Christian character. Insofar as I shall pay attention to this reference, it will be to elucidate points made about the other two.

A Russian academic once, rather cynically, characterised research in the humanities as consisting in nothing more than going into a library, selecting a book and blowing away the dust from it. It is certainly true that in deciding to investigate these passages yet again, I am moving along a road much travelled, and by many great scholars stretching back at least to the sixteenth century. My aim is not to reexamine what these passages might tell us about the characters they purport to describe,²⁴ nor to use them to

Revelation, p. 88. On the subject of the presentation of Josephus as φιλάληθης see Schreckenberg 1984, 1164f., who points out that the title takes up a theme already present in Josephus' works (see *B.J.* 1.16 and *A.J.* 4.3).

²³ "At all events the reports of John the Baptist and James in *A.J.* 18.116-19 and 20.200, and perhaps the genuine kernel of the *Testimonium* in *A.J.* 18.63-4, were sufficient to generate a process of Christian interpretation." (Schreckenberg/Schubert 1991, 40).

²⁴ This is quite obviously the case with Eisler 1929, and more recently, Meier 1990 and 1992, and Flusser 1998. Nodet 1985, 341, perhaps exaggerates when he states that what Josephus ostensibly tells us about Jesus is really an account of the Christians and

enter into some sterile debate about whether Jesus existed or not (we should note in this respect the role the *TF* played in the debate about Jesus' existence at the end of the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth century).²⁵ My aims are perhaps more various and less easily defined than that. They consist largely in showing how complex are the problems presented by these passages, and how in fact a proper and thorough examination of them requires erudition and time beyond the present writer's dreams. No one solution to the problem seems straightforwardly better than a number of other solutions offered; and so many of the discussions of the component parts, which make up the 'problem', will seem unduly tentative, in particular as these relate to the *TF* (the subject is still one worthy of a number of doctoral dissertations and certainly a long book!).²⁶ At one point the divergent opinions on this matter and the sheer complexity of the issues raised inclined me to a type of post-modern agnosticism. I thought the better of this and decided upon a solution, which itself threw up a mound of additional difficulties, difficulties, which touched upon the very pertinent question of the role of presupposition in the investigation of this whole subject. The final section of the paper is, therefore, devoted to seeing how believable my own tentative solution really is, given the context out of which Josephus operated when he wrote his *A.J.*, and given the character of Christianity and Jewish-Christian relations at the end of the first century C.E. This paper's contention is that it is in part because we cannot be certain on these points that we shall never be certain about what Josephus wrote or did not write in his *A.J.* about Christianity. If my solution (also favoured by others) is correct, however, Josephus becomes a witness to an attitude towards Christianity rather different from what we might *apparently* expect.²⁷

their beliefs, and has, therefore, no really important bearing upon the facts of the Gospels.

²⁵ See Windisch 1931 for an illustration of this with relevant bibliography. See also Barnes 1920, 22; and Meier 1990, 98. Harnack 1913, 1064, makes the point that the passage could be reliant upon the Gospels (or any other mediated source) and so has no bearing on the question of whether Jesus existed or not.

²⁶ Eisler's magnificent work of 1929-30, which famously deals with the Slavonic Josephus, is justly long. It is worth noting that two books devoted to an examination of the *Testimonium* have appeared since the writing of this article, Bardet 2002 and Whealey 2003. Whealey has also penned at least two substantial articles on aspects of the problem. Interestingly, neither author really addresses the issue of the role of presupposition in the study of the subject.

²⁷ See Wilson 1995, 184-5.

A.J. 20.200

In book 20 of *A.J.*, as part of his general account of the breakdown of ordered society in Judea, Josephus notes that on the death of the procurator, Festus, there was a brief interregnum while the new procurator, Albinus, made his way to the province. Josephus tells us how the newly appointed High Priest, Ananus, a rash man (θρασύς) and a Sadducee, sought to exploit this power vacuum, by executing James, the brother τοῦ λεγομένου χριστοῦ and “some others (τινας ἑτέρους).”

In general scholars have not doubted the authenticity of this passage.²⁸ Stylistically there are no difficulties. James’ death is announced in summary form with no comment passed by Josephus, at least explicitly, upon the justice of the decision to have him or “some others” (the relationship of τινας ἑτέρους to James is never made clear) put to death, that is, whether James and those with him were in fact guilty of the charge of ‘lawlessness’ (παρανομησάντων), here perhaps connected with a charge of blasphemy.²⁹ In this respect we should note that what motivated those who seemed the most fair-minded (ἐπιεικέστατοι), were strict in the interpretation of the law (περὶ τοὺς νόμους ἀκριβεῖς) and objected to the actions of Ananus (probably Pharisees),³⁰ remains ambiguous as the passage stands.³¹ Indeed the passage contrasts strongly with known Christian accounts of James’ death, found, for instance, in Hegesippus (as recorded in Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 2.23), *Clem. Rec.* 1.66-70 (the so-called *Ascents of James*), Clement of Alexandria’s *Hypotyposesis* (as reported in Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 2.23, but with no direct citation of Clement) and the *Second Apocalypse of James*

²⁸ For a recent defence of its authenticity see Meier 1990, 79-81. Exceptions to this consensus include Schürer 1964, 548; Juster 1914, 140-1; Rajak 1983, 131, n. 33; and Olson 1999, 314-19.

²⁹ See Bauckham 1999, 223f., for the most recent defence of the idea of a blasphemy charge.

³⁰ For descriptions in Josephus of the Pharisees, which seem to fit what we read here see *B.J.* 1.110; 2.162; *A.J.* 13.294; 17.41; *Vita* 38; 191. Identification with the Pharisees would appear further to be supported by the contrast Josephus draws, implicitly at least, between them and the Sadducees, critically referred to in 20.199. For objections to such an identification see McLaren 2001.

³¹ Hengel 1985, 232-3, tentatively endorses the view that those who objected to the High Priest’s decision were motivated by politics, that is, by a desire to have the High Priest replaced, and not by a genuine feeling of warmth for James. Bernheim 1996, 326-7 (ET 1997, 248-9), argues the contrary position on the grounds that those who were strict in the interpretation of the law would hardly have supported the cause of someone thought to have acted illegally. Pratscher 1987, 232-3, adopts a not dissimilar position. Bauckham 1999, 218-32, argues that the Pharisees genuinely objected, on legal grounds, to the decision to have James executed as a blasphemer. This would accord with what appears to have been their narrower understanding of blasphemy.

5.44.11-63.2, all of which contain strong hagiographic elements.³² The description of James as the brother of Ἰησοῦ τοῦ λεγομένου Χριστοῦ is not found in the New Testament or in other extant early Christian literature,³³ and is both sufficiently sparse and ambiguous (either the reference is neutral or skeptical) to conjure up no suspicion of being a Christian interpolation, or at least one to which any clear motive could be attached.

Olson has objected to the last two observations.³⁴ He argues that the Christian accounts of James' death and that recorded in Josephus in *A.J.* 20.200 do not refer to the death of the same James (the accounts are too different and the implication of the passage in Hegesippus is that the death of Jesus' brother took place just before Vespasian besieged Jerusalem, a date some six years after the date of the death of James ascribed to Josephus);³⁵ and that the description of James as the brother Ἰησοῦ τοῦ λεγομένου Χριστοῦ is clearly a Christian interpolation – it does in fact accord with some references to Jesus found in Christian texts (e.g. Matt 1:16; 27:17; John 4:25; Justin *I Apol.* 30.1; Origen *Cels.* 4.28), and it would have been odd for Josephus suddenly to have introduced into his account the term Χριστός without explanation, particularly if it is accepted that the term probably did not appear in the *TF*. For Olson there was a reference to James in *A.J.* 20.199-200, but it was to a different James who came to be associated with James the brother of Jesus only through Christian, and specifically Eusebian, interpolation. However, Olson's arguments are not convincing. The idea that the Christian accounts of James' death and that found in Josephus do not refer to the same person is weak. While the accounts are very different, they do at least agree that James was stoned, even if in Hegesippus' account he is finished off with a fuller's club. Putting so much store by the apparent discrepancy in dating seems unjustified. It is probable that Hegesippus' statement that Vespasian's siege of Jerusalem followed immediately after James' death had more to do with a developing Christian view that the siege and James' death were directly connected than with any kind of historical reality. The so-called sudden introduction of 'Christ' as a term for Jesus need not be regarded as odd even if we accept that there was no reference to the term in the *TF*, which on our view is unlikely. By the time Josephus was writing the term had become a name for Jesus, not just a title, a point implied by the references to

³² Burkitt 1913, 142, has described the difference neatly: "Nothing about the fuller's club or the pinnacle of the Temple, nothing about the door of Jesus, or the Son of Man."

³³ See Gal 1:19, and Hegesippus in Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 2.23.4, where he is described as "the Lord's brother".

³⁴ Olson 1999, 314-19.

³⁵ The passage from Hegesippus as recorded by Eusebius ends abruptly with the Greek words: καὶ εὐθύς Οὐεσπασιανὸς πολιορκεῖ αὐτούς.

Jesus in Suetonius and Tacitus. The description of James as the brother Ἰησοῦ τοῦ λεγομένου Χριστοῦ seems an unlikely Christian interpolation. The words are never used in Christian literature to describe James, and as they stand, they are ambiguous. The view that Eusebius has somehow created the phrase τοῦ λεγομένου Χριστοῦ and added it to a passage, which spoke about another James, seems improbable. While there is evidence that Eusebius could distort the message of Josephus, this is always distortion with a specifically Christian tendency. Claiming that Josephus referred to James in an at best ambiguous way is not in line with such a tendency. When Olson points to Eusebius' uncritical repetition of a tradition, supposedly found in Josephus and first recorded in Origen, which attributed the fall of Jerusalem to the decision to put James to death, as a possible explanation for the interpolation, his hypothesising seems only to highlight the problem of the motive of such an interpolation. Why not produce an interpolation of a more brazenly Christian kind, as Origen or his predecessors had done?³⁶ Let us turn to these passages in Origen.

In his *Comm. Matt.* 10.17, written in the 240s, Origen, in a passage devoted to the discussion of Jesus' family, states: "James was so famous amongst the people for his sanctity, that the author of the Antiquities in twenty books (ἐν εἴκοσι βιβλίοις),³⁷ wishing to establish the cause of the sufferings, which the Jews experienced and, which led to the destruction of the temple, said that all this happened because God, in his anger (κατὰ τὴν μῆνιν), was punishing them because they had dared to kill James the broth-

³⁶ For other attacks upon the authenticity of this passage, see Rajak 1983, 131 n. 33. Part of her argument is dependent upon her view that the *TF* is inauthentic, but the other part of the argument relates to the passage's negative portrayal of Ananus, which contrasts strongly with what we read of the same man in *B.J.* 4.319-25. But as Goodman 1987, 145 n. 8, has pointed out, the contrast between the two presentations of Ananus can be explained by reference to the different aims of Josephus in *B.J.* and *A.J.* In *B.J.*, with its apologetic aims, "he needed to portray Ananus as a statesman because he had himself been in political alliance with the man earlier in the revolt and praise of him made easier the denigration of his murderers, the zealots and the followers of John of Gischala." Such a view would chime in with the positive presentation of Ananus in *Vita* 192-4. See also Thackeray 1929, 135, who points to other instances of Josephus' inconsistent attitude to individuals in his earlier and later books (note in particular his attitude to Herod), and the fact that it seems that Ananus was responsible for removing Josephus from his command in Galilee (*Vita* 193f.). For an earlier attempt to demonstrate the inauthentic character of this passage see Juster 1914, 140-1, who argues his case mainly on the grounds that the claim of the passage that Ananus had acted illegally in putting James to death is not justified for this period, and seems too easily to conform with the similar claim made at John 18:31. But both of these authors leave aside the question of motive, although Juster points to an undocumented need on the part of Christians to prove the existence of Jesus.

³⁷ Baras 1977, 309, is unjustified in translating these words as "in the twentieth book".

er of Jesus, the so-called Christ (τοῦ λεγομένου Χριστοῦ). And what is extraordinary is that although Josephus did not hold Jesus to be the Christ (οὐ καταδεξάμενος εἶναι Χριστόν), he nonetheless witnessed to the righteousness of James; and that he said that he thought the people had suffered on account of James (διὰ τὸν Ἰάκωβον πεπονηθέναι).” A similar statement occurs in *Cels.* 1.47, also written in the 240s, (here in the context of a discussion of Josephus’ account of the death of John the Baptist) and 2.13 (in the context of a discussion of the fall of Jerusalem), in both of which, in contrast to the reference in *Comm. Matt.*, Origen, explicitly or implicitly, criticises Josephus’ view that Jerusalem fell on account of James’ rather than Jesus’ death.³⁸ As we have noted, Eusebius also refers to this passage in Josephus (*Hist. eccl.* 2.23), in this instance sandwiched between a summary of the account of James’ martyrdom found in Clement of Alexandria and Hegesippus, and the received text of *A.J.*, and here quoted in *oratio recta*, in contrast to the passages in Origen where it occurs in *oratio obliqua*, as if a summary of a more extensive passage.

R. Girod³⁹ and, more recently, P. A. Bernheim,⁴⁰ have argued that the passage was part of the original version of *A.J.* The former has sought to show how the implicitly positive assessment of James in our extant received text and the warm-hearted account of John the Baptist at *A.J.* 18.116-18, where the destruction of Herod Antipas’ army is attributed to the murder of John, prove that such a passage need not be taken as pseudo-Josephan. Bernheim has supported his case by emphasising in particular Origen’s criticism of Josephus’ decision to attribute the fall of Jerusalem to the murder of James. But their defence of the passage is unsustainable. Neither the received text about James nor the passage about John the Baptist bear a close relationship to the passage Origen mentions, and neither has sufficiently explained why this passage was ever expunged from Josephus by Christian scribes.⁴¹ Was it simply because James’ murder is seen

³⁸ Note the words δέον αὐτὸν εἰπεῖν at 1.47, and Origen’s apparent contrast between what truth (ἀλήθεια) says and what Josephus says at 2.13 (in the later passage the criticism is implicit), and the difference in tone between this and τὸ θαυμαστόν ἐστὶν in *Comm. Matt.* At *Cels.* 4.22 Origen explicitly states that Jerusalem’s destruction was just retribution for the mistreatment of Jesus. In this context Origen does not quote from any writer, but both Schreckenberg and Schubert, and Baras are convinced that the formulation of this view was arrived at through reflection upon Josephus. Cf. in particular the words of Baras: “It seems, therefore, that Josephus served Origen not so much for explicit documentation and direct quotation as for supporting his own Christian theosophy.” (Baras 1987, 343).

³⁹ Girod 1970, 115-16.

⁴⁰ Bernheim 1996, 328-32.

⁴¹ If the passage was genuine, one has to wonder why the *Testimonium* retained its place in the received text and this passage did not.

as the grounds for the destruction of Jerusalem? This fact did not appear to bother Eusebius or any later Christian author who reports the passage.⁴² Moreover, both fail to note that Origen and Eusebius do not give a precise reference for the passage, and this in spite of the fact that it occurs in paragraphs of their own writings where precise references to other passages in Josephus are given.⁴³ They would be right to respond by asking how the passage got there in the first place and scholars have suggested a number of potentially plausible explanations. In some of these, Origen is responsible for the passage, either on account of a mistake of memory or attribution,⁴⁴ or by design,⁴⁵ while in others the passage is thought to have been

⁴² *Inter alia*, see Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 13. The author of the perhaps seventh century *Chronicon Paschale* (PG 92.596) refers to Josephus' account of the death of James, but places it in the fifth book of *B.J.*; and the *Suda* briefly refers to it in its entry under Ἰώσηπος.

⁴³ So in *Cels.* 1.47 Origen refers to the eighteenth book of Josephus' *A.J.*, in which he correctly notes that Josephus' account of the death of John the Baptist occurs. At *Hist. eccl.* 2.23 Eusebius follows his quotation of the passage in which Josephus is made to ascribe the fall of Jerusalem to the death of James with a reference to the vulgate account of the death, correctly placed in book 20 of *A.J.* Baras 1977, 312, is probably correct when he explains the quotation form in which the first of the two passages occurs by reference to Eusebius' unquestioning adherence to Origen.

⁴⁴ Burkitt 1913, 143, suggests that Origen simply mixed up the account of Ananus' murder of James (our present passage) with Josephus' own ruminations in *B.J.* 4.319-25 on the death of Ananus, although in this context it should be noted that Josephus does not explicitly ascribe the destruction of Jerusalem to the death of Ananus. Others, notably Thackeray 1929, 135, argue that there is some sort of misattribution at work resulting from Origen's misreading of Hegesippus as Josephus (note the appearance of the fourth century Latin paraphrase of Josephus attributed to Hegesippus, an attribution, which may have arisen from a corruption of the word Josephus. On this see Schreckenberg 1972, 56, who notes that in some Syriac texts Josephus is confused with Aesop). In such a theory, it is thought that the passage about James from the second century Christian Hegesippus (quoted by Eusebius at *Hist. eccl.* 2.23) implies a connection between the death of James and the fall of Jerusalem, not least because the passage ends with a clipped reference to Vespasian's devastation of the city. The 'mistake' hypothesis has some strength. Elsewhere Origen misquotes or misattributes passages to Josephus. See, for instance, *Comm. Matt.* 17.25, where he states that Pilate placed effigies of the Emperor not only in Jerusalem (cf. *B.J.* 2.169f. and *A.J.* 18.55f.), but also in the temple, an assertion to be found nowhere in our vulgate text. See also the somewhat vague and condensed form of his reference to John the Baptist at *Cels.* 1.47, where he appears to summarise what is in Josephus, and to do so rather inaccurately without betraying a direct knowledge of the passage at *A.J.* 18.116 (On Origen's misuse of Josephus see Schreckenberg 1972, 74-6; and Hardwick 1989, 59-64). But would he make the kind of mistake he is accused of here, a mistake, which is of a type not witnessed elsewhere in his use of Josephus?

⁴⁵ Baras 1977, 310-12, dismisses the idea of "a blunder" on the part of Origen on the grounds that such a mistake would not fit easily with the church father's acknowledged meticulousness, a point, which loses its force once one has observed the way in which Origen in fact does make mistakes in his use of Josephus (see n. 44 above). Baras argues instead that the juxtaposition of James' martyrdom and the siege in Hegesippus, the pres-

inherited by Origen.⁴⁶ This final explanation, which raises intriguing questions about a possibly early christianisation of Josephus, has a certain ap-

ence in *A.J.* 20.258 of a statement, which implied a relationship between the ‘miseries’ of the Jews and the rebellion (this point is perhaps clearer at *A.J.* 20.210 and 214) led Origen to an inductive conclusion, “in other words, sequential events, or *post hoc*, became for Origen causal events, or *propter hoc*.” In this theory there is a subtle interaction between what Josephus actually does state, the implications of the Hegesippus passage, the passage about John the Baptist at *A.J.* 18.116 where Herod’s military defeat is attributed to his murder of John, and Origen’s own theological inclinations. More recently Baras 1987, 344, has added another text from *A.J.* relating to Josephus’ assertion that Joannes’ murder of another Jesus led to the destruction of the temple by the Persians (*A.J.* 11.297-305). Nodet 1985, 339-40, comes to a not dissimilar conclusion. Others (see Schreckenberg/Schubert 1991, 58) suggest that the passage can best be explained by reference to *A.J.* 18.116. According to this theory, such a sentiment could have been “the seed crystal or catalyst for the creation of a specimen of Pseudo-Josephus (i.e. the passage about James’ death and the fall of Jerusalem).” Such a thesis does possess some appeal. Interestingly, John Chrysostom, writing over one hundred years later, states that Josephus claimed that the cause of the Jewish war lay in the decision to kill John the Baptist (*Hom. Jo.* 13.1), indicating the presence, admittedly in a later writer, of a christianised reading of the Baptist passage along similar lines. Moreover, this passage (*A.J.* 18.116) certainly is closest to the sentiments of the pseudo-Josephan passage, although verbal proximity cannot really be defended (the only real parallel lies in the terms *κατὰ ποιήν* and *κατὰ μῆνιν* in *Comm. Matt.*). But one wonders whether Origen would have attributed to Josephus opinions of which he, Origen, was critical, and whether the apparently vague character of Origen’s knowledge of Josephus’ passage about the Baptist is consistent with the kind of knowledge of *A.J.* 18.116 implied by the theory.

⁴⁶ See Zeitlin 1927/28, 233, although he provides no explanation for this assertion. As noted above, a number of scholars attribute the passage to Origen himself, either as the result of a mistaken reference, or some creative reworking. Schreckenberg 1972, 75, suggests the possibility that a ‘Zwischenquelle’, in part based upon Josephus, may have been the source upon which Origen relied. This is not quite the same as talking about the ‘christianisation’ of Josephus’ writings, implying something less direct (Schreckenberg is somewhat vague on the precise character of the ‘Zwischenquelle’, describing it as a source “die ihrerseits bereits Josephus sehr frei benutzte, d.h. in einer Weise, die Zitat und Deutung, Vorlage und eigene Argumentation nicht immer deutlich trennte, spätere Benutzer also leicht irreführen.”[74]). Burkitt 1913, 143, was keen to reject the idea of a christianised Josephus, asserting that we would have more knowledge of such a document if it had in fact existed. This is certainly true, but the fact of the existence of the passage about James and its attribution to Josephus has to be explained in some way. Even if we cannot speak about a wholesale christianisation of Josephus’ writings (here Burkitt certainly has a point, in part supported by the Christian ‘Wirkungsgeschichte’ of Josephus), we may be able to speak about a Christian manipulation of some passages in Josephus, one, which may have started in a Jewish Christian context (whence the claim that it was the death of James, which led to the fall of Jerusalem, which was already implicit in the passage from Hegesippus). Certainly we should not exclude the possibility of a Christian gloss becoming a part of the text, a point not incompatible with Schreckenberg’s suggestion of a “Zwischenquelle”. The idea of a “Zwischenquelle” might be said to be supported by the fact that Origen’s and Eusebius’ use of the pseudo-Josephan pas-

peal, if only because Origen in *Cels.* criticises Josephus for attributing the fall of the city to James' murder. But in the face of such minimal evidence, certitude cannot be attained. What is clear is that there are a variety of plausible explanations for the evolution of this pseudo-Josephan passage.

I have already hinted at what can be deduced from this passage about Josephus' attitude to Christianity, or at least to the brand of it, which James represents. He appears to be interested in describing James' death only insofar as it was a contributory factor in the downfall of Ananus. Apart from that fact, very little can be said to interest Josephus. As noted above, he does not explicitly identify those executed with James, nor does he inform his reader on what charge James and the others were put to death, contenting himself with a reference to them as παρανομησάντων, a very general designation in his writings, although reference to stoning may hint at a charge of blasphemy. He does not discuss in any detail the motivation for the probably Pharisaic opposition to the actions of Ananus, and he does not indicate what he felt about the matter. Perhaps three things should be noted. First, Josephus seems not to have seen James and his ilk as part of a separate movement outside Judaism. Secondly, the fact that Josephus fails conspicuously to comment on whether James and those executed with him should be numbered among the lawless (παρανομησάντων) could be taken to imply that he was not overtly opposed to these people – after all, there clearly was an opportunity for him to speak in a negative way; and the fact that he portrays those whom he apparently respects as opposing Ananus' actions might imply a more positive attitude (is there not some relationship between the fact that those περί τοὺς νόμους ἀκριβεῖς object to a decision about law-breaking?). But it could also imply, although this seems less likely, a general unwillingness to discuss Christianity at all.⁴⁷ Such an interpretation might involve playing up the possi-

sage appear to betray knowledge of the received text. So, in the three passages where Origen refers to the tradition, he mentions on each occasion a form of the words τὸν ἀδελφὸν Ἰησοῦ τοῦ λεγομένου χριστοῦ. Such an observation could equally be said to support the idea of a conscious manipulation of the passage by Origen. Note Schreckenberg's more non-committal approach to the problem in 1977, 15: "... wohl offenbleiben müssen, ob Origenes hier aus dem Gedächtnis falsch zitierte beziehungsweise seine eigenen Notizen kontaminierend benutzte, oder guten Glaubens einen von christlicher Hand und in christlichem Sinne veränderten Josephuskodex verwendete oder ob er bereits mit Josephuszitaten argumentierende theologische Texte vor sich hatte und somit nur einen verfremdeten Josephus aus zweiter Hand ... übernahm."

⁴⁷ Bauckham 1999, 223, seems to favour a form of this argument. Perhaps two points make his case unconvincing. In this passage it would be extraneous to Josephus' purposes to discuss James' beliefs at any length (he is principally interested in the crimes of Ananus); and he at least leaves open the possibility of a positive understanding of James and his followers, something which would seem unlikely if he was self-evidently an opponent.

bly negative implications of the description of Jesus as λεγόμενος Χριστός. Thirdly, the very fact that Josephus feels it sufficient simply to describe James as the the brother of the “so-called” or “the one called” Christ, may point to his readership’s familiarity with Christianity in general, or it may indicate that Josephus had already referred to Jesus elsewhere.⁴⁸ It could also indicate the opposite of this, namely that he had not already referred to Jesus. Zeitlin argued this point, noting that when Josephus has reason to refer to someone he has previously mentioned in his narrative, he indicates this.⁴⁹ Such an observation is illustrated in the passage under discussion where Josephus states that he had previously mentioned the heartlessness of the Sadducees (A.J. 20.199). However, we should note that there are occasions where he does not do such a thing.⁵⁰ What is clear is that there is *no demonstrable* attempt to link James to the TF.

The Testimonium Flavianum (A.J. 18.63-4)

In his account of the procuratorship of Pilate in Judea, Josephus begins by telling us of two incidents in which Pilate provoked the Jews to anger. The first relates to the procurator’s decision to allow his soldiers to enter Jerusalem with images on their shields, thus contravening Jewish law. And the second relates to his decision to have an aqueduct built with money taken from the temple treasury, again in breach of the law. Both end in an ignominious stand-down by Pilate in the face of Jewish opposition. It is, then, in contrast to his account in *B.J.* (2.169-177),⁵¹ that he introduces his readers to Jesus. Below I give the Greek text as it appears in the Loeb edition of Josephus:

Γίνεται δὲ κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον Ἰησοῦς σοφὸς ἀνὴρ, εἶγε ἄνδρα αὐτὸν λέγειν χρῆ· ἦν γὰρ παραδόξων ἔργων ποιητής, διδάσκαλος ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἡδονῆ τάληθῆ δεχομένων, καὶ πολλοὺς μὲν Ἰουδαίους, πολλοὺς δὲ καὶ τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ ἐπηγάγετο· ὁ χριστὸς οὗτος ἦν. καὶ αὐτὸν ἐνδείξει τῶν πρώτων ἀνδρῶν παρ’ ἡμῖν σταυρῶ ἐπιτιμηκός· Πιλάτου οὐκ ἐπαύσαντο οἱ τὸ πρῶτον ἀγαπήσαντες· ἐφάνη γὰρ αὐτοῖς τρίτην ἔχων ἡμέραν πάλιν ζῶν τῶν θείων προφητῶν ταῦτά τε καὶ ἄλλα μυρία περὶ αὐτοῦ θαυμάσια εἰρηκότων. εἰς ἔτι τε νῦν τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἀπὸ τοῦδε ὀνομασμένον οὐκ ἐπέλιπε τὸ φύλον.

⁴⁸ See Reinach 1897, 5; and Eisler 1929, 34.

⁴⁹ See *B.J.* 2.423; 7.253; *A.J.* 15.3.

⁵⁰ See *A.J.* 20.102.

⁵¹ I have decided not to discuss the problem of the account of Jesus found in the Slavonic Josephus. This partly arises from a belief that the passage does not go back to Josephus, however it is emended, and in part from a lack of competence in the relevant languages. Helpful discussions of the passage, whose genuineness was famously championed by Eisler 1929, can be found in Bouquet, Thackeray, Zeitlin and Winter.

Ever since the sixteenth century there have been scholars who have thought that the *TF* was a forgery.⁵² Others have attempted to defend it as it stands, while the majority of scholars have gone for what Eisler dubbed the palimpsestic approach, a solution in which the existence of the *TF* is accepted, but in an emended form. Let us review some of the difficulties with the passage.

External references

Louis Feldman has noted that one of the strongest arguments against the authenticity of the *TF* lies in the fact that, despite its obvious value to the burgeoning church, both as a weapon in its polemic against non-Christian Jews and in its apologetic entreaties to the pagan world, “it is not cited until Eusebius⁵³ in the fourth century.”⁵⁴ Notable amongst those who do not cite the *TF* are Justin Martyr, Theophilus of Antioch, Minucius Felix, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Cyprian, Tertullian, Hippolytus, John Chrysostom, Basil of Caesarea, Augustine, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret,⁵⁵ and slipping the centuries a little, Photius. Its absence from almost all well-known patristic *adversus Judaeos* literature should also be noted. It would, for a variety of reasons, one might argue, have suited any one of the writers of these works to refer to the *TF* if they knew of its existence, at least in the form it comes to us in the received text of Josephus. Such an observation grows in significance when we note that the majority of these authorities appear to have been acquainted with Josephus’ writings,⁵⁶ and to have used them in polemical and apologetic contexts. Of the writers

⁵² Eisler 1929, 19f., in his detailed account of the historiography of the problem, states that the first scholar to doubt the authenticity of *TF* was Hubert von Giffen in a letter to Severin of Ertzberg, dated 24.ii.1559. Soon afterwards Osiander followed suit with the words: *Si enim Josephus ita sensisset ..., Josephus fuisset Christianus*. For older bibliography see Schürer 1964, 544-5, who refers to Havercamp’s edition of Josephus (Amsterdam, 1726), Folioband II, 187-285, where earlier bibliography is to be found.

⁵³ Eusebius cites the passage on three occasions (*Dem. ev.* 3.5.125; *Hist. eccl.* 1.11.7f.; *Theoph.* 5.44).

⁵⁴ Feldman 1984, 822-5. The claim, made by Harris 1931, 29-31, and Bienert 1936, 198-201, that Justin refers to the *TF* at *I Apol.* 30.1, is groundless and depends heavily upon their own emendations of Josephus.

⁵⁵ Schreckenberg 1972, 98, is clear that Theodoret refers to the *TF*, citing PG 81.1544b. This passage to which reference has already been made (see n. 22), may in its description of Josephus imply knowledge of the *TF*. But these words introduce a citation from *A.J.* 10.266-9.

⁵⁶ It is important to note that these writers do not always mention Josephus by name, as Feldman appears to imply (“Yet an examination of the Christian writers ... who mention Josephus ...”). A case in point is Theophilus of Antioch who, as we have noted above, makes extensive use of *C. Ap.*, without in fact mentioning his source and its author by name.

mentioned above, particular attention should be drawn to John Chrysostom, who refers to Josephus quite frequently and, one might think, had good reason to cite the *TF*;⁵⁷ the ninth century Photius who was probably in possession of a complete copy of Josephus;⁵⁸ and to the previously un-

⁵⁷ Schrekenberg 1972, 90-1, notes that Chrysostom “beruft sich auf keinen anderen antiken Autor – ausgenommen Platon – so oft wie auf Josephus.” The use to which Chrysostom put Josephus was usually polemical (accounts of the fall of Jerusalem and so on); and there are three examples of allusions to *A.J.* 18, one of which specifically refers to the passage on John the Baptist (*Hom. Jo.* 13.1), making a failure to allude to or cite the *TF* even odder. Various explanations for this omission could be suggested. Nodet 1985, 330-1, argues that Chrysostom was only interested in Jewish witnesses to Jesus, and the *TF*, at least in the form preserved in Eusebius, with whose writings Chrysostom was familiar, made Josephus appear to be a Christian. A variant on this explanation would be to point to Chrysostom’s emphasis on Josephus’ Jewish identity, an observation to which I have already referred. Moreover, it is not clear that Chrysostom possessed a very good knowledge of Josephus. In his reference to Josephus’ description of John the Baptist, referred to above, he makes Josephus attribute the fall of Jerusalem to the Baptist’s execution by Herod Antipas. For further discussion of Chrysostom’s perhaps vague knowledge of Josephus, see Coleman-Norton 1931, 85-9. But even if he possessed an inadequate knowledge of the Flavian oeuvres, some knowledge of the *TF* might be expected, especially if he knew of a christianised version of Josephus’ account of the Baptist.

⁵⁸ Photius refers to Josephus at *Bibliothèque* 33, 47, 48, 76 and 238. By far the most extensive reference occurs in 238 in which he uses Josephus’ *A.J.* 14-20 to give an account of the history of the Jews from Herod the Great to the outbreak of the Jewish war against Rome. Photius’ use of Josephus in this section of his work is not strictly sequential and is obviously summary (see Hägg 1975). Photius claims to have composed the work from memory (on this see Reynolds and Wilson 1968, 451-5), but he does allude to the passages on John the Baptist (316a) and James, the brother of the Lord (317b), making his failure to allude to the *TF* striking (interestingly, he does not refer to the governorship of Pilate at all). Twice, however, in the same section, Photius does refer to Jesus, at 314a (an allusion to Jesus’ virginal conception and the slaughtering of the innocents) and at 316a (here to note that Jesus’ passion took place in the reign of Herod Antipas). Henry 1967, 149, takes both of these statements, none of which occur in any version of Josephus’ oeuvres, to imply Photius’ knowledge of a copy of *A.J.* with Christian glosses, and appears to indicate that Photius took these statements to be part of Josephus’ text. However we explain them, their presence in *Bibliothèque* 238 make the omission of any reference to the *TF* even more striking. Elsewhere at *Bibliothèque* 48, Photius notes that a philosophical work he entitles Περὶ τοῦ παντός is attributed by some to Josephus, and in the midst of describing its contents, he refers to a passage in which the author explicitly refers to Jesus (“He attributes to him formally the same name of Christ and gives a faultless account of his ineffable procession from the father”). Photius states that stylistically the passage is close to Josephus, but its contents make an attribution to him unlikely. He then goes on to discuss at greater length the question of attribution. Whiston 1737, 646, thought that Photius’ refusal to think of this passage as Josephan implies knowledge of another passage about Jesus by Josephus (Bardy 1948, 190-1, argues that the very fact that a work like this could have been attributed to Josephus implied that he was known to have written something about Jesus). But if that was the case would it not have been appropriate to have cited the *TF* at precisely this point? On the other hand it is interesting

mentioned hypotheses, dating from the tenth century, which appear at the end of our copies of Josephus and constitute a summary in Greek of the contents of each volume.⁵⁹ These three authorities are post-Eusebius, but their failure to mention the *TF* may indicate either the existence of some suspicion about it, or the existence of manuscripts, of unknown age, without it.

One person who precedes Eusebius and is the first to betray some significant knowledge of Josephus is Origen. I have left discussion of him to the end because there is a dispute about whether he did in fact have knowledge of the *TF*. On two occasions he makes specific, though undeveloped, reference to Josephus' attitude to Jesus, stating that Josephus did not hold or did not believe Jesus to be Christ (*Comm. Matt.* 10.17; *Cels.* 1.47 respectively).

The importance of Origen's potential witness lies in:

(a) the fact that it pre-dates Eusebius.

(b) the probability that it witnesses to a form of the *TF* apparently different in content from our own, that is, it witnesses to a more neutral sounding *TF* than the one in our received text.

The real problem lies in determining to what extent the words from *Comm. Matt.* and *Cels.* imply knowledge of something like our *TF*. Those who think that they do, put forward a number of arguments. Origen's claim that Josephus did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah implies knowledge of a more substantial passage about Jesus than the simple statement that we find in *A.J.* 20.200. How could the terse and ambiguous reference to the brother τοῦ λεγομένου χριστοῦ lead Origen to assume that Josephus did not believe in Christ?⁶⁰ Knowledge of the *TF* may be implied at *Cels.*

that Photius, in referring to Justus of Tiberias' work on the Jewish kings from Moses to Agrippa II (*Bibliothèque* 33), draws attention to the succinct style of Justus, citing as a particular example of this his failure to mention Jesus. He goes on to note that Justus was an enemy of Josephus, but nowhere accuses Josephus of the same failing, namely not mentioning Jesus. Henry 1967, 216, sees this remark as support for Photius' knowledge of the *TF*, but his argument is perhaps a little weakened by his earlier contention, referred to above, that Photius possessed a copy of *A.J.*, which itself possessed Christian glosses concerning Jesus whose Christian origin Photius did not recognise (on the difficulties relating to Justus' writing(s), see Rajak 1973). On Photius and Josephus see Linck 1913, 10-11; Schreckenberg/Schubert 1991, 31; and Bouquet 1935, 290, who notes the importance of the absence of any reference to the *TF*, but goes on instead to comment upon Photius' failure to refer to any form of the traditions concerning Jesus and John the Baptist in the Slavonic Josephus.

⁵⁹ On the *Epitoma* see Schreckenberg/Schubert 1991, 83. It should be noted in passing that the *Epitoma* do not refer to the passages on John the Baptist or the death of James.

⁶⁰ Typical in this regard is Reinach 1897, 8: "Il n'est pas sérieux de prétendre, avec quelques hypercritiques, que les mots par lesquels Josèphe désigne Jacques ... suffisaient, aux yeux d'Origène à établir l'incrédulité de l'historien juif." For other scholars who

1.48 where Origen states that “the Jews do not connect John with Jesus, nor the punishment of John with that of Jesus.” Such a positive statement is at least compatible with what we find in our received text of Josephus.⁶¹ To explain why in neither reference Origen quotes the *TF*, scholars point to the context of both passages. The passage from *Cels.* appears to be related in a rather obscure way to comments of Celsus on John the Baptist, and the passage from *Comm. Matt.* relates specifically to the figure of James. Neither context demands a full quotation of the *TF*, and in any case what Origen tells us about John in the passage from *Cels.* constitutes a skeletal summary of what we find in *A.J.* 18. Others add that Origen might well at some other point in his works have quoted the *TF* but so much of what he wrote is lost.⁶²

These arguments have some force, but they can be countered. First, we have to note that it might have been helpful for Origen to quote the *TF*, not least in his attempts to rebut Celsus’ charge that Jesus’ miracles proved him to be a magician.⁶³ Eusebius, who is the first writer to quote the *TF* in full, appears to use the passage precisely in such a context.⁶⁴ Secondly, we should note that if Origen saw something like our *TF*, he does not quote anything from it or indicate in which book it appeared in Josephus. This is striking because in *Cels.* 1.47 where Origen notes that Josephus did not believe Jesus to be the Christ, this statement follows Origen’s ‘*précis*’ of Josephus’ account of John the Baptist, which Origen clearly states comes from the eighteenth book of the *A.J.* (interestingly, he gives us no reference for the probably pseudo-Josephan passage about James, previously discussed, and occurring in the same passage from *Cels.*). Thirdly, while Origen admits that Josephus is not far from the truth insofar as he asserts that the cause of the destruction of Jerusalem lay in the killing of James, it is in the passage in which he states this (*Cels.* 1.47) that he talks about Josephus not believing in Christ. Could not such an assertion have arisen precisely from Josephus’ failure to attribute the cause of the fall to Jesus rather than to James? Finally, could not Origen have come to the conclusion that Josephus was not a Christian because it was generally known that

favour this argument see Eisler 1929, 7-8; Martin 1941, 418-21; Pharr 1927, 140-1; Thackeray 1929, 139; Pines 1971, 65-6. It is interesting to note that in a specifically New Testament context τοῦ λεγομένου χριστοῦ would have carried affirmative overtones (see Matt 1:16, already referred to above).

⁶¹ Whealey 1995, 289.

⁶² Barnes 1920, 16: “The ‘silence of Origen’ is not a fact, but an unverified assumption.”

⁶³ See *Cels.* 1.28; 1.49.

⁶⁴ See *Dem Ev.* 3.5.105f.

he had remained a Jew?⁶⁵ In such an argument Origen could have interpreted the ambiguous τοῦ λεγομένου χριστοῦ of *A.J.* 20.200, in the face of the lack of evidence to the contrary, in a negative manner.

It is difficult to assess the power of these responses. Origen's failure to cite the *TF* may have arisen from a sense that the passage was negative in tone.⁶⁶ His failure to refer to a specific book of the *A.J.* may have been because he was making the reference in passing, although the same could be said of the reference to John. It is not self-evident from either *Cels.* 1.47 or *Cels.* 2.13 that the reference to James' death as the cause of the fall of Jerusalem would have led Origen to assert that Josephus did not believe that Jesus was the Christ. In fact precisely the opposite could be argued – *Cels.* 1.47 and *Comm. Matt.* 10.17 appear to express surprise that the unbelieving Josephus could speak in the way he did about James. We should note that nowhere else in the extant works of Origen does he use the precise phrases found in *Comm. Matt.* and *Cels.* to refer to Jews in general. Interestingly, the closest we get to either statement in Christian literature is in the fifth century Theodoret, who describes Josephus as a person who τὸ μὲν Χριστιανικὸν οὐ δεξάμενος⁶⁷ κήρυγμα (*In Dan.* 12.14 [PG 81.1544b]). But here also we cannot be certain that the writer had access to a version of the *TF*!⁶⁸

How should we assess the evidence presented above? Any argument based upon silence is precarious, and there may be ways of explaining it away. Alice Whealey has sought to account for the silence at least until Origen.⁶⁹ She notes that up until that time Josephus was normally used to explain things Jewish, that there is little or no evidence for much familiarity with *A.J.*, and certainly no unambiguous evidence for familiarity with

⁶⁵ See our introductory remarks on the reception of Josephus in the church. For this opinion, though without reference to the “Wirkungsgeschichte” of Josephus, see Bilde 1981, 113: “Det (Origen's assertion that Josephus did not believe Jesus to be the Messiah) behøver ikke at forudsætte andet end den selvindlysende viden om, at Josefus var jøde og ikke kristen, hvorfor han selvfølgelig ikke anerkendte Jesus som Messias.” A similar point had already been made by Bauer 1930, 561: “Bei einem notorischen Juden ist sein Schweigen allerdings völlig ausreichend – nicht, ihn zu den Bekämpfern des Christentums zu rechnen, aber das tut Origenes ja gar nicht, wohl aber, seinen Glauben an Jesus als den Messias zu bestreiten.” See also Wohleb 1927, 154-5: “Nur Voreingenommenheit kann behaupten, diese Worte bezogen sich auf eine andere Stelle (sic) als die von Origenes jeweils angeführte in der Jakobus als Bruder Jesu, des sogenannten Christus, bezeichnet wird.”

⁶⁶ Our discussion of Eusebius' use of the *TF* will show that he does not use it to defend Jesus from the charge of being a magician.

⁶⁷ Note the similarity with Origen's οὐ καταδεξάμενος at *Comm. Matt.* 10.17.

⁶⁸ See n. 55 above.

⁶⁹ Whealey 1995, 285-9.

the later books.⁷⁰ She continues: “Christians do not cite Josephus for anything in the New Testament: not only do they not cite him on James the brother of Jesus or John the Baptist ... Perhaps most surprisingly they do not name Josephus as an authority on King Herod ...”.⁷¹ This, she argues, is compatible with the fact that “Christians paid relatively little attention to their history in the second and third centuries.”⁷² Josephus was used as a resource for their interpretation of the Old Testament,⁷³ and in their development of a specifically Christian apologetic.⁷⁴ Anti-Jewish usage of Josephus, usage to which some feel the *TF* could have been put, is not evidenced for this period and would not perhaps be expected. Would Jews have regarded the quisling Josephus, in whose works they appear to have had little interest, as a reliable witness against themselves? To these arguments we might add the observation that Christian writers up to Clement of Alexandria do not customarily quote from non-biblical Jewish sources.⁷⁵

Whealey’s is a bold attempt to make the silence of the pre-Origenist age less surprising than it might at first appear. Her case is built upon a thin sample of material but that point can equally be made against those who would exploit the ‘silence’ in a quite different way. Some of her arguments can be countered. Minucius Felix may hint at an early polemical use of Josephus on the part of Christians, although this relates specifically to the *B.J.*⁷⁶ I have tentatively suggested that the pseudo-Josephan passage on James may give evidence of an early christianising interpretation of Josephus on the part of Jewish Christians who were self-evidently concerned with Christian history. But this remains no more than an unsubstantiated suggestion. One could, of course, argue that the silence of these earlier writers implies an originally negative, or at least ambivalent form of the *TF*, known throughout the second and third centuries and somehow transformed into something more positive between the time of the writing of Origen’s *Comm. Matt.* and *Contra Celsum*, and Eusebius’ *Ecclesiastical History*. If Origen knew of a form of the *TF*, and certainty on this cannot be arrived at one way or another, he must have known of a form of it that

⁷⁰ Whealey concedes that Africanus may show evidence of the use of *A.J.* 12-15, “but it does not follow that he was, therefore, familiar with *Antiquitates* 18.” (ibid., 286).

⁷¹ Ibid., 287.

⁷² Ibid., 288.

⁷³ Note Irenaeus’ use of *A.J.* 2.238-55 in a preserved fragment of his work (PG 7.1245-8); and Clement’s use of *A.J.* 8.61 at *Strom.* 1.147.

⁷⁴ In this respect note the importance of *C. Ap.* for such writers as Theophilus, and implicitly, Tertullian, already referred to above.

⁷⁵ Mueller 1890, 9-10.

⁷⁶ *Oct.* 33.4-5.

was ambivalent, or mildly negative.⁷⁷ The existence of such an account may be hinted at further in some of the variants we find in indirect witnesses to the text.⁷⁸

The silence of some post-Eusebian writers poses a stranger problem, particularly if we assume, which in most instances we must, knowledge of the existence of a more positive form of the *TF*. Perhaps these writers knew of the existence of other versions of the *TF*, which cast doubts on the validity of the version of the received text. To this, we will return in our discussion of the text.⁷⁹

The fact that Eusebius is the first to quote the *TF* (in fact of extant patristic sources, he is the only one to quote the passage more than once); and that he is the first Christian to demonstrate an apparently good knowledge of Josephus, has led some to assume that he is the perpetrator of a mooted forgery. This was first proposed by Zeitlin,⁸⁰ and has been followed up more recently by Olson.⁸¹ The latter builds upon the linguistic observations of the former, but adds new, ideological, arguments to them. I will reserve my comments on the linguistic arguments to a later point in the article, and concentrate on the ideological observations Olson makes.

Olson notes that the earliest citation of the *TF* appears in Eusebius' *Demonstratio*, in the context of a defence of Jesus as a genuine miracle worker against the charge that he was a wizard and deceiver (3.5.102f.). With this context in mind, he argues that much of the *TF* can be seen as created to refute precisely this accusation. In this vein he places particular empha-

⁷⁷ Some might argue that even if we accept that Origen knew a version of the *TF*, this only proves that it was known to exist some 150 years after Josephus had supposedly penned it. That it could have come into existence in the intervening period is not beyond the bounds of possibility, for as we have observed at an earlier point in our discussion, Origen clearly knew of a section of Josephus about James that most probably was not a part of the original text of Josephus, and most probably was not his own creation. But this section is hagiographic in tone and it is very difficult to imagine Origen's ἀπιστῶν concealing an account of the *TF*, which could be described in such a way.

⁷⁸ See our discussion of the text below.

⁷⁹ Note should be taken of Garnet 1989, who argues that in his first edition of the *A.J.* Josephus included a copy of the *TF*, probably not dissimilar to the received version, and one that reflected his close relationship with the possibly Christian Flavius Clemens. In a mooted second edition of the *A.J.*, when Domitian had begun to move against Flavius Clemens and other prominent Christians, Josephus did not include any version of the *TF*. Garnet tentatively suggests that some of the failures of Christian writers to refer to the *TF* may be explained by arguing that they had access to this second edition (Garnet only refers to pre-Constantinian writers, although the argument could be applied to post-Constantinian ones as well). The argument is difficult to disprove because it is based upon a number of unverifiable hypotheses, and raises the problem as to how the first edition returned into circulation.

⁸⁰ Zeitlin 1927/8.

⁸¹ Olson 1999, esp. 310-12.

sis on the references in the *TF* to Jesus as a wise man,⁸² to the reception of his true message with pleasure, and to the stalwart persistence of the disciples' belief in him after his death.⁸³ But Olson's observations in this regard are not powerful. While it is true that Eusebius' citation of the *TF* occurs in the context of an attempt to argue for the genuineness of Jesus' miracles, it is notable that what he chooses to emphasize from the *TF* are not the phrases, which Olson seems to put so much store by. Rather Eusebius picks up on the *TF*'s statement that Jesus attracted to himself many Jews and many Greeks to prove that "he must evidently have had some extraordinary power beyond that of other men." In fact Eusebius appears to realise that such an assertion about Jesus is problematical, not least because it points to a reality, which did not pertain either at the time Eusebius was writing or in Jesus' ministry. Hence he seeks to support the assertion by reference to the Acts of the Apostles and what was known about Christianity up to the outbreak of the Bar Kokhba revolt. Moreover, although the passage appears in an almost identical context in the *Theophania* to that of *Demonstratio*, the same words are emphasized. If Eusebius was the forger of the *TF* why would he have chosen not to emphasize those parts of the passage, which Olson highlights as central to his concerns, emphasizing instead a part of the *TF*, which appeared historically problematic? The citation of the passage in *Hist. eccl.* (1.11.7-8) is more obscure⁸⁴ and appears in the midst of a defence of the Gospel chronology against the contradictory claims of the so-called *Memoranda*, an early fourth century anti-Christian work, attributed to the Caesar Maximin Daia (*Hist. eccl.* 9.5.1). Strikingly, Eusebius does not seek to emphasize any particular part of it.⁸⁵ That he quotes it as if it followed the passage on John the Baptist in Josephus is not evidence of a forgery on his part, but rather of a strong attachment to canonical order, or a desire to refute the chronology of the *Memoranda*.⁸⁶ That Eusebius nowhere emphasizes Josephus' apparent endorse-

⁸² Olson points to a passage in Eusebius' *Contra Hieroclem* 4 where Eusebius contrasts the view of Apollonius of Tyana as a σοφός with that of him as a γόης.

⁸³ Emphasis on the disciples is placed here to refute the view that they were deceivers (see *Dem. ev.* 3.5.111).

⁸⁴ It is obscure because while the passage appears in the midst of a defence of the Gospel chronology, Eusebius appears, however succinctly, to emphasize the fact that the *Memoranda* "blackened them (αὐτῶν πλασσάμενους)", i.e. John and Jesus.

⁸⁵ Note his almost flippant introduction to the passage: "ὧδε πῶς μέμνηται Ἰώσηπος." ("an astonishingly casual admission in view of the importance of the quotation" [Wallace-Hadrill 1974, 358]).

⁸⁶ See Whealey 1995, 293, who argues that if Eusebius was such a keen tamperer with texts, one wonders why he did not rearrange *A.J.* better to reflect New Testament chronology and so better to refute the chronology of the *Acta Pilati*.

ment of the messianic status of Jesus also seems odd if he is its “fons et origo”.⁸⁷

Eusebius’ use of the *TF* could be seen as apologetic rather than polemical, and broadly speaking as modest (he does not expatiate upon those parts of the *TF*, which have caused so many commentators difficulties, in particular the implicit Christology of the passage). Some subsequent references to the passage are polemical. Pseudo-Hegesippus, who is the first to use the passage in an anti-Jewish context, in the midst of a paraphrase of the *TF*, states that if the Jews will not believe the Christians then perhaps they will believe one of their fellow Jews.⁸⁸ Sozomen begins his church history by expressing astonishment at the fact that the Jews have not believed in Christ in spite of possessing the scriptures, which speak of Christ. After citing some relevant biblical passages, he refers to Josephus as a notable witness to the truth concerning Christ and gives a paraphrase of the *TF*.⁸⁹ A similar reference occurs in Cassiodorus who is dependent upon Sozomen.⁹⁰ Other polemical references are found in a possibly fifth century Donatist martyr act,⁹¹ Isidore of Pelusium,⁹² and Anastasius of Sinai,⁹³ and the ninth century correspondence of Bodo and Alvarus of Cordova.⁹⁴ Others such as Jerome,⁹⁵ Malalas,⁹⁶ Cedrenos⁹⁷ and Michael Glykas⁹⁸ mention it in passing without comment of any kind.

⁸⁷ For another refutation of the idea that Eusebius is the originator of the *TF* see Eisler 1929, 134f.

⁸⁸ *De Excidio* 2.12.1.

⁸⁹ *Hist. eccl.* 1.1.5

⁹⁰ Cassiodorus, *Hist. eccl.* 1.2.4-6.

⁹¹ See Schreckenberg 1972, 98. The martyr quotes from the passage claiming that Josephus witnesses to Christ as the true God, and ends by stating that the fact that Josephus had written these things down so long ago means that there is no excuse left for unbelievers.

⁹² *Ep.* 4.225.

⁹³ PG 89.1248.

⁹⁴ On this, see Sanford 1935, 136-7, and for further bibliography, Krauss/Horbury 1996, 71 n. 10. During the course of the correspondence, Alvarus cited the *TF*. Bodo’s side of the correspondence is very difficult to reconstruct, but on the basis of a letter from Alvarus, it seems clear that Bodo pointed out that Alvarus was reliant for his citation on the work of *Pseudo-Hegesippus*, and not on Josephus himself.

⁹⁵ *Vir. ill.* 13.

⁹⁶ *Chron.* 10.26. Malalas hints at knowledge of a possibly polemical interpretation when he states that Josephus asserted that on account of the crucifixion of Christ, sorrow did not cease from the land of Judea.

⁹⁷ *Comp. Hist.* PG 121.381.

⁹⁸ *Annales* 3 PG 158.444. This applies also to chronographers from the Syriac (Michael the Syrian); and Arabic (Agapius) traditions, who similarly mention it in passing as part of a chronicle.

This very brief review of the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the *TF* shows a number of things:

(i) There is no developed and traditional interpretation of the *TF*. It is true that a post-Eusebian anti-Jewish interpretation is witnessed in a variety of writers, in particular Pseudo-Hegesippus, Isidore of Pelusium, Alvarus of Cordova and Anastasius of Sinai, and in a less rebarbative way, in Sozomen and Cassiodorus. But with the exceptions of the last two writers, where literary dependency is clear, these writers use the passage in slightly different ways, and never at great length (it is striking that the passage never occurs in a pre-Eusebian *adversus Judaeos* text, and only once in a post-Eusebian one). The fact that others cite the passage with no polemical intent may imply a certain indifference to its contents.

(ii) Although some of those who refer to the *TF* cite it in a different form from that found in our received version (see below on the text), many do not, and none of these claim that Josephus was a Christian. This need not mean, as some have ingeniously claimed,⁹⁹ that they understood the received version as non-affirmative, and that, therefore, they can become indirect witnesses to the retention of the received version, but simply that they knew that Josephus had remained a Jew, and that in spite of this, he witnessed to Christian truth. This had some apologetic value, just as the Jewish Josephus' witness to the fall of Jerusalem had similarly apologetic value.¹⁰⁰

(iii) In some instances the passage appears in a list of testimonies about Christ where knowledge of the wider context in Josephus in which it appears is not witnessed.¹⁰¹ In fact Christian authors never betray any knowledge of this matter.

(iv) The lack of evidence of a developed tradition of use of the *TF*, together with evidence for the relatively modest use to which it was put, may be reflective of its lack of importance. It is modern scholarship, which, for a variety of reasons, has attributed so much importance to it.

The text

There exists no manuscript of Josephus' *A.J.* in any language without the *TF*. Assessing the value of such an observation is difficult because we do not possess a manuscript of *A.J.* 18-20 before the eleventh century.¹⁰² However, while variants in the manuscript tradition are negligible, variants

⁹⁹ See Vicent 1997, 379-84; and our discussion below.

¹⁰⁰ See in particular Pseudo-Hegesippus, Sozomen and Isidore of Pelusium.

¹⁰¹ See Sozomen and Anastasius of Sinai.

¹⁰² The majority of manuscripts date from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. On this, see Schreckenberg 1972, 13-47.

within the so-called indirect tradition (that is, citations of the *TF* found in exclusively Christian writers) do exist.¹⁰³

The earliest of these variants occur in Eusebius' three citations of the *TF* to which Eisler in particular drew attention,¹⁰⁴ and, which he used to argue that since Eusebius, and probably before, changes had been made to an originally negative version of the *TF*.¹⁰⁵ One of these variants relates to a reading of the opening of the *TF* as Ἰησοῦς τις instead of the simple Ἰησοῦς of the received text. The variant is found only in a single ms. (Codex A) of the *Hist. eccl.* but may have some claim to being the original reading. It seems unlikely that a Christian scribe would have added τις if it was not already there, not least because the word could be construed as carrying a potentially contemptuous, or at least disrespectful, meaning.¹⁰⁶ The other major variant comes in the *Demonstratio's* version. Here the words τῶν ἡδονῆ τάληθῆ δεχομένων appear as τάληθῆ σεβομένων, a change, which could be construed as an attempt to soften the potentially negative implications of the received text, particularly as these relate to ἡδονῆ.¹⁰⁷ But this change is not evidenced in either *Hist. eccl.* or *Theophania*, which in the latter case is particularly odd because the citation of the *TF* occurs in the same context as in *Dem. ev.*, and shares a number of unimportant variants in common, implying that the former was being used in the writing of the latter.¹⁰⁸ Assessing such evidence is very difficult, but the presence of the τις variant in particular may imply that Eusebius had access to various mss. of the *TF* representing various stages of assimila-

¹⁰³ On this, see in particular Eisler 1929; Pines 1971; Dubarle 1973; and Whealey 1995.

¹⁰⁴ Eisler 1929, 38-41.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 40-1.

¹⁰⁶ See Josephus' own usage of τις when describing rebels of various kinds, especially at *A.J.* 17.433 (Menahem); 19.273 (Simon); and *B.J.* 2.60 (Athronges). Interestingly, of those people named Jesus to whom Josephus refers, only Jesus, the son of Sapphias, a rabble rouser at the time of Josephus' generalship in Galilee, is described with τις (*B.J.* 2.599; 3.450). Eusebius' retention of the potentially negative τις could be explained by the fact that in his possibly doctored copy of the *TF* the word appeared to be innocent. See Wallace-Hadrill 1974, 359: "... it could have been read by Eusebius as no more than an indication that Josephus was not very familiar with the figure of Jesus, or that though he was obliged to mention Jesus, he was a little embarrassed at having to do so and wished to indicate to his reader some degree of detachment ..."

¹⁰⁷ Again note should be taken of the largely negative usage in Josephus of the phrase ἡδονῆ δεχόμεναι. See n. 244.

¹⁰⁸ Both read κατ' τὸν ἐκείνον χρόνον both omit to refer to θαυμάσια; both read ὅθεν εἰς ἔτι in the final sentence, also omitting any reference to ὠνομασμένον. But the *Theophania*, in addition to not sharing "honour the truth" with *Dem.*, also appears to conflate the versions of *Hist. eccl.* and *Dem.* by reading ἀνδρῶν ἀρχόντων πρώτων παρ' ἡμῖν. For a variety of explanations of this matter see Wallace-Hadrill 1974, 358-9.

tion, rather than that he was responsible for the changes himself.¹⁰⁹ Whether such a passage was originally negative in content is another question. Much of the argument depends on how one construes the implications of τῆς, the other variant being understandable as an emendation of the received text.¹¹⁰

The next potentially significant variant occurs in Pseudo-Hegesippus' version of the *TF* found in his *De Excidio* 2.12.¹¹¹ This constitutes a paraphrase of the *TF*, which in broad terms refers to all aspects of the received text except the statements that "Jesus was the Messiah"; and that "Pilate sentenced Jesus to death."¹¹² The importance of this reference lies in the fact that Pseudo-Hegesippus writes independently of Eusebius. This is made clear by the fact that he refers to Josephus' account of John the Baptist after the *TF*, following the Josephan order and not the Eusebian order as we find it in *Hist. eccl.*, and at an earlier point in the same book (2.4) refers to the Paulina incident, which Eusebius never mentions. Discussing the omissions, Whealey argues that it is clear why Hegesippus might have omitted reference to Pilate's part in the decision to put Jesus to death (Pseudo-Hegesippus is the first Christian writer to use the *TF* in an anti-Jewish context),¹¹³ but conversely it is not easy to see why he should have omitted any reference to Jesus as the Messiah if it was in his version of the received text. After all, he appears to exaggerate the significance of the *TF*, most blatantly in his claim that even the leaders of the synagogue acknowledged Jesus to be God. Whealey goes on to argue that there is

¹⁰⁹ See Wallace-Hadrill *ibid.*, 359. Olson 1999, 313, following Feldman, argued that the Eusebian textual variants could be explained away by attributing them to subsequent scribes (regarding the *TF* as a forgery written by Eusebius, he must argue such a case). This, I think, can possibly be argued for the reading τᾶληθῆ ἁεβόμενων, but is less easy to argue in the case of τῆς.

¹¹⁰ Eisler thought that there was at least one other variant which supported his case, ἀπηγάγετο for ἐπηγάγετο, arguing that the latter could be translated as 'seduced'. But he gives no reference for the variant and it does not appear in Schwartz's discussion of the relevant manuscript evidence.

¹¹¹ This is discussed by Whealey 1995, 297f.

¹¹² The Latin text reads: *Plerique tamen Iudaeorum, gentilium plurimi crediderunt in eum, cum praeceptis moralibus, operibus ultra humanam possibilitatem profluentibus invitarentur* (gap of 8 lines) ... *quod fuerat illo in tempore vir sapiens, si tamen oportet, inquit, virum dici mirabilium creatorem operum, qui apparaverit discipulis suis post tri-duum mortis suae vivens secundum prophetarum scripta, qui et haec et alia innumerabilia de eo plena miraculi prophetaverunt. ex quo coepit congregatio Christianorum et in omne hominum genus, nec ulla natio Romani orbis remansit, quae cultus eius expers relinquerentur.*

¹¹³ Note in particular the words: *si nobis non credunt Iudaei, vel suis credunt*; and further on: *non tamen veritati praeiudicat, quia non credidit sed plus addidit testimonio, quia nec incredulus et invitus negavit.*

some evidence in the Latin tradition, which renders indirect support to Pseudo-Hegesippus' account of the *TF*. At *Vir. ill.* 13, in his brief account of Josephus, Jerome gives a rendition of part of the *TF* as *plurimos quoque tamen de Iudaeis quam de gentilibus sui habuit sectatores et credebatur esse Christus*, a statement, which is quite close to Pseudo-Hegesippus' *plerique tamen Iudaeorum, gentilium plurimi crediderunt in eum*, and explains the latter's omission of any reference to Jesus' messianic identity, indicating that both Latin writers knew "a Testimonium" reading that "he was believed to be the Messiah."¹¹⁴ This more skeptical rendition of the *TF* was lost in the Latin tradition because the sixth century translator of the *A.J.*, Cassiodorus, decided to reproduce Rufinus' rendition of the *TF* as found in the latter's translation of Eusebius' *Hist. eccl.*¹¹⁵ Whealey goes on to argue that the more neutral rendering lingered on in the Greek tradition as seen, for instance, in Theodoret's claim that Josephus did not accept the Christian preaching (τὸ μὲν Χριστιανικὸν οὐ δεξάμενος κήρυγμα),¹¹⁶ an interesting claim given that Theodoret probably had at his disposal copies of Eusebius' *Demonstratio evangelica*, *Hist. eccl.*, and Josephus' *A.J.*, evidence, which might imply that he retained a copy of Eusebius' works, as well as perhaps the *A.J.*, with a statement to the effect that "he was believed to be the Messiah." Further support for this view seems to be found in the sixth-century Malalas, not referred to by Whealey, whose rendition of the *TF* omits to refer to Jesus' messianic identity,¹¹⁷ and the tenth-century Pseudo-Simon the Logothete and the twelfth-century Cedrenos,¹¹⁸ who render the *TF* similarly, making Christ the subject of the sentence

¹¹⁴ Whealey 1995, 299.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 300. She notes that Cassiodorus also copies out Rufinus' translation of the passage about John the Baptist, suggesting that this further supports her thesis because both the *TF* and the passage about John appear side by side in Eusebius' *Hist. eccl.*

¹¹⁶ *In Dan.* 12.14 [PG 81.1544b], already referred to above.

¹¹⁷ Καθὼς Ἰώσηπος ὁ Ἑβραίων φιλόσοφος ταῦτα συνεγράψατο, εἰρηκῶς καὶ τοῦτο, ὅτι ἔξοτε Ἰουδαῖοι ἐσταύρωσαν Ἰησοῦν, ὃς ἦν ἄνθρωπος ἀγαθὸς καὶ δίκαιος, εἴπερ ἄρα τὸν τοιοῦτον ἄνθρωπον δεῖ λέγειν καὶ μὴ Θεόν, οὐκ ἐξέλειπεν ὀδύνη ἐκ τῆς Ἰουδαίας χώρας (*Chronicle* 10.26 [PG 97.377]). For a not dissimilar text see also Bratke's discussion (1899, 223-7) of what appears to be a summary of the *TF* found in a Greek work purporting to report a discussion at the Sassanian court. The summary talks about Jesus as a just and good man who performed miracles and did a great deal of good amongst the people. The eighth century Anastasius of Sinai in his *Adversus Iudaeos* (PG 89.1248) has an almost identical version of the *TF* reading: Ἰώσηπος ὁ συγγραφεὺς περὶ Χριστοῦ λέγων, ἀνδρὸς δικαίου καὶ ἀγαθοῦ ἐκ θείας χάριτος ἀνάδειχθέντος, σημείοις καὶ τέρασιν εὐεργητοῦντος πολλούς. Could this imply a tendency, in some places, to shorten the *TF* to accommodate its apparent essentials?

¹¹⁸ For this thesis Whealey is reliant upon Dubarle 1973, 487-92. I have not seen Pseudo-Simon's version but according to Dubarle 1973, 489, it appears in an ms. of the fourteenth century, found in the Bibliothèque Nationale with the title *Parisinus* 1712.

about attracting many of the Jews and the Greek world (πολλοὺς γὰρ καὶ ἀπὸ Ἑλλήνων ἠγάγετο Χριστός) and omitting ὁ Χριστὸς οὗτος ἦν.¹¹⁹ Dubarle had already argued that these last two witnesses were ultimately dependent for their version of the *TF* upon Eusebius,¹²⁰ adding further support to the idea that there existed a copy of Eusebius with a more neutral version of the *TF*.

Perhaps the greatest stir with regard to the text of the *TF* was caused by S. Pines' publication of a translation and discussion of the tenth century Christian Arabic writer, Agapius', rendering of the *TF*. Here the neutrality, which had been hinted at in some Latin and Greek traditions, seemed to reach its clearest expression. In Agapius' version, which is more like a paraphrase (it does not follow the normal ordering of the passage) the phrase "if indeed he was a man" is omitted, and there is no reference either to Jesus' miracles, or to the role of the Jewish leaders in the decision to have Jesus put to death. In addition, it is explicitly stated that Jesus died, that his disciples *reported* that Jesus rose on the third day, and that Jesus was "perhaps" the Messiah. There is also no reference to the Christians being "with us" to the present day. Pines went on to draw attention to a version of the *TF* found in the twelfth-century Michael the Syrian, which witnesses to some, but not all, of Agapius' variants.¹²¹ Both shared in common a neutral reference to Jesus' messiahship, omitted any reference to Jewish participation in the decision to have Jesus put to death, and explicitly stated that he died. Arguing that Michael was not dependent upon Agapius for his version of the *TF*, Pines sought to explain their similarities by asserting that both writers were ultimately dependent upon a Syriac version of the passage, which may itself have been dependent upon a Syriac version of Eu-

¹¹⁹ Κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον Ἰησοῦς ὁ σοφὸς ἀνὴρ ἦν, εἶγε ἄνδρα λέγειν αὐτὸν ἐχρῆν. ἦν γὰρ παραδόξων ἔργων ποιητὴς καὶ διδάσκαλος ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἐν ἡδονῇ τάληθῆ δεχομένων. Πολλοὺς γὰρ καὶ ἀπὸ Ἑλλήνων ἠγάγετο Χριστός. ὃν Πιλάτου σταυρώσαντος οὐκ ἐπάυσαντο κηρύσσοντες περὶ αὐτοῦ ... (continues as in received text but omitting final sentence).

¹²⁰ Dubarle 1973, 486-92. Dubarle argued this on the grounds that the context in which Pseudo-Simon and Cedrenos quoted the *TF* was clearly Eusebian.

¹²¹ Michael Syrus in 4 volumes with a French translation, ed. J. B. Chabot (Paris, 1899-1910), vol. IV, 91 (tr. vol. 1, 144f.). Pines *ibid.*, 26, translates the passage as follows: "The writer Josephus also says in his work on the institutions of the Jews: In these times there was a wise man named Jesus, if it is fitting for us to call him a man. For he was a worker of glorious deeds and a teacher of truth. Many among the Jews and the nations became his disciples. He was thought to be the Messiah. But not according to the testimony of the principal [men] of [our] nation. Because of this, Pilate condemned him to the cross, and he died. For those who had loved him did not cease to love him. He appeared to them alive after three days. For the prophets of God had spoken with regard to him of such marvellous deeds [as these]. And the people of the Christians, named after him, has not disappeared to [this] day."

sebius' *Hist. eccl.*¹²² Pines drew on some of the Latin and Greek sources we have referred to above, to defend further the possible antiquity of Agapius' version; and Dubarle, in an attempt to give more credibility to Agapius' version, drew particular attention to the accounts of Cedrenos and Pseudo-Simon the Logothete, already referred to, highlighting their similarities with Agapius.¹²³

Assessing this evidence is difficult. While we have a diversity of witnesses who hint at a more neutral, even negative, original of the *TF*, their versions never precisely chime in with each other.¹²⁴ Agapius' consistently neutral reading is not witnessed to in any great detail in earlier authors,¹²⁵ and has been regarded by some as unsafe,¹²⁶ possibly reflecting the historical circumstances in which he was writing.¹²⁷ The role of Eusebius in all of

¹²² Whealey *ibid.*, 303-4, argued that Pines was wrong to attribute more significance to Agapius than Michael, not least because Michael's version was not a paraphrase. She accepted Pines' view that the two writers wrote independently of each other and went on to claim that ultimately both accounts derive from the work of the seventh-century Syriac chronicler, Jacob of Edessa, who was himself reliant upon Eusebius for his version of the *TF*.

¹²³ Both have a neutral reference to Jesus' messiahship, if quite differently stated. Both omit reference to the Jewish authorities in their account of Jesus' death, and both omit the last sentence. Dubarle is perhaps keener than Pines to come out positively in favour of Agapius as witnessing to something close to the original *TF*. Pines notes that it is not clear whether Agapius' version "is the product of Christian censorship applied to the original text in a less thoroughgoing form than in the case of the vulgate recension, or whether it did not undergo censorship at all." (*ibid.* 1971, 70).

¹²⁴ Michael, Cedrenos, Simon and Agapius agree that Josephus made Pilate solely responsible for Jesus' death, but they do not all refer to the fact that he died, and they do not all omit to refer to the final sentence about the Christians. Disagreement amongst these witnesses is perhaps most notable in their rendering of the sentence about the Messiah. Jerome has 'credebatur', a reading, which is close to that of Michael. Hegeppus does not refer to the sentence at all, and neither do Simon and Cedrenos, although they both make Josephus place Χριστός as the subject of the preceding sentence. Agapius has the strange and unlikely "perhaps he was the messiah"; and Theodoret, who does not explicitly refer to the *TF*, has nothing about the Messiah at all, preferring to refer to Josephus' attitude to the Christian proclamation. These observations call into question Dubarle's method of reconstruction, which picks and chooses from different manuscripts.

¹²⁵ In this regard note the tenth-century Simon the Logothete, and the twelfth-century Michael the Syrian and Cedrenos.

¹²⁶ On this, see Feldman 1984, 833-4; and at greater length Olson 1999, 319-21. The latter in particular points up the fact that the passage is a paraphrase, not a quotation, and in that respect typifies Agapius' generally inaccurate way of citing other authorities. Interestingly, he points to two other occasions in Agapius' work where he appears to water down a Eusebian quotation. Both examples are taken directly from Pines' own discussion.

¹²⁷ See Bammel 1973/4. He argues that the failure to refer to Jewish participation in the decision to put Jesus to death is compatible with the creed (and that in any case in the

this is complex. We noted that in the mss. of Eusebius' rendition of the *TF*, there is evidence of variants, two of which are possibly significant. But, interestingly, none of these variants are the same as those evidenced in the non-Eusebian indirect tradition, so heavily emphasized by Pines, Dubarle, and Whealey. This is an important observation, because these scholars argue that the later Greek, Latin and Semitic 'neutral' versions of the *TF*, which they choose to highlight, nearly all derive from a version of the *TF* found in Eusebius' *Hist. eccl.*

But before dismissing the case for supporting certain textual emendations witnessed in the indirect tradition, we still have to ask why a variety of Latin, Greek and Semitic sources, many of whose authors wrote independently of each other, do hint at a possibly more neutral version of the *TF* than the one which stands in our received text, particularly as this relates to Jesus' messianic identity, while other witnesses, often contemporary with the 'neutral' versions, produce the received version. As we have already noted, there are ways of explaining away Agapius' version on the grounds of historical context. But can we do this for Cedrenos, for instance? Could he have been dependent upon a version of the *TF*, which derived from the same type of milieu as Agapius'? One might explain Jerome's *credebatur* by arguing that he was adding a degree of verisimilitude to the account.¹²⁸ And yet in the section of his *de Viris illustribus* devoted to Josephus, he does not choose to emphasize Josephus' Jewish origin, and he reproduces the pseudo-Josephan passage in which the claim is made that the murder of James was the cause of the destruction of Jerusalem. Do these two facts hint at an interest in verisimilitude, or rather at an uncritical reproduction of what Jerome may have read in his text of Eusebius?¹²⁹ Moreover, it seems odd that Jerome should agree in his statement that Je-

passages surrounding Agapius' account of the *TF* their participation has already been mentioned); that the reference to his death is also credal and was important in Islamic times when Christians were faced with the idea that someone had died in Jesus' place; that the omission of "if indeed he was a man" may imply an ironic understanding of the original; and that "perhaps he was the messiah" is odd and certainly not compatible with what Origen says about Josephus' beliefs. The more neutral tone of the passage may be explained by reference to the context in which Agapius wrote, namely a three-way religious debate between Jew, Christian and Arab, such as was the custom in the Sassanian empire. As Bammel points out, in such a context, "qualified support given by the representative of one religion could be used as an argument *vis à vis* the other religion ...". For another view on the potential origin of the Agapius text, assuming it does not witness to what Josephus may originally have written, see Schreckenberg 1977, 11.

¹²⁸ For those who have put forward this type of argument see Eisler 1929, 68 n. 2. He quotes Thackeray: "Even Jerome found this last phrase (ὁ Χριστὸς οὗτος ἦν) incomprehensible on such lips and altered it in his translation."

¹²⁹ Note also how Jerome adds a reference to the *invidia* of the Jewish leaders. This does not seem to be compatible with a consistent attempt to add verisimilitude to the *TF*.

sus was thought to be the Messiah with a much later Syriac witness, Michael, who clearly wrote independently of him. Pseudo-Hegesippus' omission of the 'Christ' sentence may be explained by arguing that all he saw in his Latin version of the *TF* was the sentence *hic erat Christus*, which he simply thought referred to Jesus' name, rather than to his status as Messiah. And in any case neither the context in which the passage appears, one in which Pseudo-Hegesippus wishes to emphasize the fact that Josephus is a Jew, nor the kind of Christology at which the passage hints (the strange reference following the *TF* in which Pseudo-Hegesippus claims that the leaders of the Jews acclaimed Jesus as God), makes the reproduction of such a sentence likely. These are ripostes but not knock-down arguments – no Latin rendering of the *TF*, for instance, hints at such a neutral understanding of the received text's "he was the Messiah". And how are we to explain Theodoret's statement about Josephus, particularly when it seems clear that he probably knew Josephus and Eusebius reasonably well?¹³⁰ While it is true, as has been noted, that other writers who refer to a version of the *TF* very similar to that of the received version endorse Josephus' Jewish identity, they do not, aside from Origen, whose knowledge of the *TF* is in any case disputed, make such clear statements about Josephus' rejection of Christian teaching. And in all of this, we should highlight the inconsistency of the witness to these more 'neutral' versions (that is, we cannot point to a consistently neutralising tendency in Christian readings of the *TF*); and to the fact that, apart from Agapius (and even here there are questions), we cannot identify a consistent attempt to neutralise the *TF* amongst the witnesses we have chosen to highlight, that is, all the so-called neutralising witnesses retain elements of the *TF*, which do not appear to be neutral.

The matter is clearly complex and arriving at an assured solution, which accounts for all of the complexities outlined above is impossible. Nevertheless, some of the so-called indirect evidence does at least hint, however disjointedly, at the unsafe character of the received text, just as Origen's possible reference to the *TF* does. Indeed it is precisely the more neutral renderings of the *TF*, which make more sense of Origen's statement about Josephus ἀπιστῶν τῷ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ.

¹³⁰ The possibility that Eusebius' version of the *TF* was originally more neutral in tone and could therefore have been the source of these later neutral renderings is, as noted above, made problematic by the lack of any evidence of such a reading in the manuscript tradition of Eusebius. It is nevertheless interesting that Eusebius never exploits the received version's "He was the messiah", and introduces the *TF* in an almost nonchalant manner in *Hist. eccl.* Nodet 1985, 335-6, argues the contrary case, stating that Eusebius' introduction to the *TF* demands something non-neutral. But the words: "He goes on to speak about our saviour in the following way, as far as I can remember", seem perfectly neutral.

Style

The question of the style of the passage has elicited diametrically opposed positions. While scholars such as Niese, Linck, Norden, Bilde and Birdsall have regarded the style as not that of Josephus, others such as van Liempt, T. Reinach, Thackeray, Martin, Vermes and Meier have, to varying degrees, argued the opposite.

The matter is a complex one and is made more difficult by the fact that the passage is short. Let us begin by taking those phrases, which have caused particular difficulty.

Γίνεται δέ While it is undisputed that Josephus uses this phrase (see *B.J.* 1.648 and *A.J.* 18.310), he never uses it to mean “there lived” or “flourished”. It could technically be rendered as either “is born” or “becomes”. On chronological grounds “is born” seems an unlikely translation (Jesus was not born in the procuratorship of Pilate). “Becomes” seems easier, not least because on many occasions the phrase is used to introduce events, and in particular tumultuous events (*A.J.* 18.310; 20.118; 20.173), or people connected with tumultuous events (*B.J.* 1.99;¹³¹ 4.208). This has led some to retain the reading γίνεται δέ but to add the words στάσις or θόρυβος.¹³²

ποιητής (παραδόξων ἔργων) Josephus always uses this word to refer to poets,¹³³ but never with the meaning we find here. Van Liempt¹³⁴ points to *A.J.* 18.55 where we read εἰκόνων ποιήσις, but this could not be described as a genuine parallel. Thackeray,¹³⁵ who attributes this part of Josephus to a secretary who aped the style of Thucydides, notes that the said secretary has a tendency “for resolving a simple verb into two, a noun expressing the agent and the auxiliary verb.” So at *A.J.* 19.217 we read κριτής εἶναι instead of κρίνειν.

διδάσκαλος ἀνθρώπων ... Although διδάσκαλος is a common enough word in Josephus (it is used 17 times),¹³⁶ Birdsall has pointed out that “in all but one case when a genitive is found following the word, it defines the

¹³¹ Γίνεται δὲ αὐτῷ πάλιν ἀρχὴ θορύβων Ἀντιόχου ...

¹³² See, *inter alia*, Thackeray 1929, 141; and Eisler 1929, 50f. Vicent 1997, 359, suggests the retention of γίνεται with the translation “come to be” in the sense that at this time Jesus came to be (“viene a ser”) a wise man. This overcomes the chronological problem but seems somewhat artificial.

¹³³ See *A.J.* 1.16; 12.38, 110, 113; *C. Ap.* 1.172; 2.14, 239, 251, 256.

¹³⁴ van Liempt 1927, 110.

¹³⁵ Thackeray 1929, 144.

¹³⁶ See *inter alia* *A.J.* 3.49; 13.115; 15.373; 17.325; 19.172.

content of the teaching and not the *recipients*, as the phrase ‘teacher of those who receive the truth ‘gladly’ demands.’”¹³⁷ The only exception is *B.J.* 7.444 where we read διδάσκαλος τῶν σικαρίων τῆς ψευδολογίας. But is not one parallel enough? Or should we argue that *B.J.* 7.444 is an interpolation?¹³⁸

τάληθῆ The *crasis* form is found five times in Josephus and once with the sense of abstract truth at *A.J.* 8.23, here in the context of a plea by Solomon to God for sound understanding. Various emendations have been suggested, most notably τὰθηθῆ, meaning in this context ‘bizarre things’.¹³⁹

καὶ τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Often Josephus uses the word Ἑλληνικός for a Greek but only on one occasion does he use τὸ Ἑλληνικόν as we find it used here (see *B.J.* 2.268). But again one might argue that one parallel is enough.

Χριστός This word is only found in one other place in Josephus and that is the passage concerning James (*A.J.* 20.200). On these grounds we could argue that the reference to Χριστός there is not Josephus’, but as I have argued earlier, I do not think that is the case.

αὐτὸν ... σταυρῷ ἐπιτιμηκός Normally in Josephus the object of ἐπιτιμᾶω appears in the dative and the object condemned occurs in the accusative (*A.J.* 18.68), but an exception might be found at *B.J.* 2.183.

ἐπάσσαντο The verb is almost never used in Josephus without some reference being made to the action from, which the subject or subjects desisted,¹⁴⁰ and the construction is a little odd.

ἀγαπήσαντες Josephus almost never uses this with the apparently Christian sounding connotations it is thought to carry here. A possible parallel may, however, be found at *A.J.* 11.339, although here the object of the verb is not a person, in this case Alexander the Great, but the noun στρατεία.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ Birdsall 1984/85, 617.

¹³⁸ The same point is made by Garnet 1989, 61. Eisler’s proposed emendation to διδάσκαλος παραδόξων ἔργων for which he saw a parallel in *A.J.* 20.41, is unjustified (1929, 56).

¹³⁹ For a skeptical assessment of this suggested emendation, see Birdsall 1984/85, 619-20, and our discussion below.

¹⁴⁰ The parallels that Martin 1941, 438, adduces (*A.J.* 14.490; 15.80; 20.113), are not strictly parallels. Garnet 1989, 61, argues that the verb anticipates the final sentence in which the author expresses surprise at the continuing existence of the Christians.

¹⁴¹ Meier’s suggestion of a parallel at *B.J.* 1.30 is less convincing (Meier 1990, 102).

τρίτην ἔχων ἡμέραν The apparent strangeness of this construction can be overplayed. See *A.J.* 7.1; 10.1, 57, 84.

εἰς ἔτι τε νῦν Norden, amongst others, correctly noted that such a phrase is never found in Josephus.¹⁴² Normally we would expect to read ἔτι καὶ νῦν¹⁴³ or ἔτι νῦν.¹⁴⁴ Other possible alternatives would be μέχρι τοῦ νῦν (*A.J.* 3.322) or ἄχρι δεῦρο (*A.J.* 12.277). Interestingly, Meier notes that the combination of words is unusual but makes no attempt to explain their oddity.¹⁴⁵

ἐπέλιπε When following the above phrase, verbs are elsewhere in Josephus always to be found in the present,¹⁴⁶ not the rather curious aorist,¹⁴⁷ as we find here.¹⁴⁸

Of those phrases, which seem to have a strong Josephan ring to them, I would in particular draw attention to:

σοφὸς ἀνὴρ The word ἀνὴρ is often used in Josephus with an adjective. The phrase σοφὸς ἀνὴρ appears at *A.J.* 8.53 (there as a description of Solomon) and *A.J.* 10.237 (there as a description of Daniel).

παραδόξων ἔργων This combination of words occurs at *A.J.* 9.182 in a description of Elisha (cf. also *A.J.* 12.63). The adjective παραδόξος is very often used by Josephus.

ἡδονῆ ... δεχομένων This phrase is quite frequently used in the latter part of the *A.J.* (see 17.329; 18.6, 59, 70, 236, 333; 19.127, 185. See also the simi-

¹⁴² Norden 1913, 645 n. 1.

¹⁴³ *A.J.* 1.160, 203, 212; 9.290; 10.267; 12.119; 14.188. See in particular *A.J.* 3.3, 299 where the phrase is used in a passage in which the derivation of a particular place name is given.

¹⁴⁴ *A.J.* 8.154, 174.

¹⁴⁵ Meier 1990, 102. We have already had reason to note that a number of authorities omit this sentence altogether, and Eusebius in *Dem. ev.* and *Theoph.* reads ὅθεν εἰς ἔτι.

¹⁴⁶ *A.J.* 1.160, 203.

¹⁴⁷ Schreckenberg/Schubert 1991, 40, argues that the use of the aorist in this context would appear to date matters under discussion to the relatively remote past. But this seems odd, not least because Josephus can speak about the Jewish war as only recently having ended (*C. Ap.* 1.46).

¹⁴⁸ van Liempt's comment (van Liempt 1927, 115) that the addition of τε in the phrase εἰς ἔτι τε νῦν can be explained by the presence of the aorist tense is unjustified.

lar phrase πρὸς ἡδονῆν at *B.J.* 1.30; *A.J.* 8.236, 418, although here without δεχόμεναι).

Πολλοὺς μὲν ... πολλοὺς δέ Such a phrase is often found in Josephus. Note in particular *B.J.* 1.246, 322, 383; 2.49, 177, 341; 4.643; 5.562; *A.J.* 7.194; 20.98.

πρωτῶν ἀνδρῶν This is clearly a Josephan phrase (see *A.J.* 17.81; 18.7, 98 *passim*), although we do not find it in combination with παρ' ἡμῖν¹⁴⁹.

τῶν θεϊῶν προφήτων See *A.J.* 8.243; 10.35.

ἀπὸ τοῦδε ὀνομασμένον It is clear that Josephus attributed importance to the derivation of certain names, especially place names. See in particular *B.J.* 4.5; 5.162, 166; 7.99; *A.J.* 1.212; 3.3, 299; 7.67.

The data referred to above do not point unambiguously in one direction rather than another. Those who have argued that the passage is a forgery have sometimes exaggerated their case as some of the comments above should have made clear. Certainly some proponents of the forgery thesis would agree that it is a good forgery,¹⁵⁰ that is, it reflects Josephan usage, particularly as exemplified in the latter part of the *A.J.* But it does have to be conceded that there are some oddities in the passage; that some of the phrases are not commonly attested in Josephus; and that there is such a thing as a good forger. A number of points may be made in relation to these three observations. Would a forger who evidently had a reasonable knowledge of Josephan style have chosen sometimes obscure Josephan phrases to carry out his aim? Are the oddities sufficiently odd to point to forgery? Certainly the passage has an agitated quality to it, but this may point to the fact that it has been tampered with rather than that it is a forgery. Concerning the last of the three points, that relating to the existence of good forgeries, we might draw attention to the phrase ὁ χριστὸς οὗτος ἦν. It accords well with Josephan style¹⁵¹ but its content seems to fit poorly with what we might have expected Josephus to have written. Would a forger, intent upon aping Josephan style and at the same time avoiding bib-

¹⁴⁹ For this phrase, see *C. Ap.* 2.136.

¹⁵⁰ If one accepted it as a forgery it would, according to Burkitt 1912, 138, be "an artistic literary" one. For a similar judgement, see Birdsall 1984, 621. Thackeray 1929, 130, notes the relative rarity in antiquity of the good forgery. As an example of such a rarity he cites Anaximenes' attempt to palm off the *Tripoliticus* as the work of his enemy Theopompus.

¹⁵¹ See *A.J.* 14.490 and 20.179 (other parallels listed by van Liempt 1920, 113).

lical-sounding language,¹⁵² have produced such a Christian-sounding sentence? Does it not have more of the quality of a gloss of an already existing passage,¹⁵³ an observation, which is perhaps encouraged by the asyndetic character of the phrase?¹⁵⁴ This suggestion may be said to chime in with what we have already said in the preceding section where we argued for the possibility that in a mooted original *TF* we may have found a more neutral reference to Jesus' messiahship.

In the end a decision in favour or against the genuineness of the passage on the basis of its style and language is always going to be tenuous, not least because, as we noted above, the passage is so short, and may possibly reflect the use of a source. One route forward would be to take a number of passages from Josephus at random and see to what extent they accord with an assumed Josephan style. This remains a desideratum.

It has often been noted that the language of the *TF* does not obviously reflect either biblical language about Christ or the language of other Christian writers known to us. Recently Olson has attempted to show that the *TF* reflects Eusebian language. *Prima facie* this is a not unreasonable thesis. Eusebius knew Josephus' works quite well and he is the first to quote the *TF*. Olson's case is by no means a paltry one but it is not as powerful as he thinks.¹⁵⁵ Let us begin with some apparently genuine parallels.

ποιητής (παραδόξων ἔργων) It should be recalled that this is thought by many scholars to be a problematic phrase, particularly in relation to the use of ποιητής. Interestingly, we find this phrase, ποιητής combined with παραδόξων ἔργων, in a number of places in Eusebius.¹⁵⁶ It could be argued that some of these references cluster around Eusebius' first reference to the *TF* in *Demonstratio*, and that therefore Eusebius is affected by language he has already found in Josephus. This is possible but becomes less easy to argue if we note the appearances of the phrase, admittedly in a slightly different form, in a much later book of *Demonstratio* (book 9), and in particular its appearance in the later *Vit. Const.* and *Comm. Isa.*, where interestingly Eusebius uses it to refer not to Jesus but to God. This (the fact

¹⁵² On this, see below, and Meier 1990, 91 n. 41.

¹⁵³ See the gloss to A.J. 14.121 in *Cod. Laur.*: οὗτος ἐστὶν Ἡρώδης ὁ ἀντιπάτρου υἱὸς ὁ ἰδουμαῖος ὃν καὶ ἡ ἑρὰ τῶν εὐαγγελίων μαρτυρεῖ βίβλος τὰ νηπία σφαγιάσαι. For the full gloss see Niese Vol. 1, 15.

¹⁵⁴ Pelletier 1964, 191. For a defence of the asyndetic phrase see Vicent 1997, 376-7, who quite correctly points out that similar asyndetic sentences are witnessed in Josephus. See A.J. 14.490; and 20.179.

¹⁵⁵ Olson 1999, 310-12.

¹⁵⁶ *Dem. ev.* 3.4.107; 3.5.115; 3.5.123; 3.7.134; 9.13.448 (here παραδόξων ποιητής θαυμάτων); *Hist. eccl.* 1.2.23; *Comm. Isa.* 2.57.62 (cf. also *Comm. Isa.* 2.35.83 for παραδόξα ἔργα without ποιητής); *Vit. Const.* 1.18.2.

that God may be described as the “doer of paradoxical deeds”) may explain why in the received text of the *TF* reference to the apparent divinity of Jesus, implied in the words εἶγε ἄνδρα αὐτὸν λέγειν χρῆ is followed by a reference to him as the doer of paradoxical deeds.

τῶν Χριστιανῶν ... τὸ φύλον This phrase is not in fact a problematic one from a stylistic perspective, save for the fact that Josephus refers nowhere else to “the tribe of the Christians”. Its importance in the immediate context of our discussion lies in the fact, which Zeitlin¹⁵⁷ noticed, that Eusebius is the first person to describe Christians as a τῶν Χριστιανῶν φύλον, doing so twice at Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 3.33.2 and 3.33.3. This observation seems to me less powerful than the previous one. Eusebius’ description of the Christians as a ‘tribe’ is restricted to two consecutive paragraphs in his large corpus of work. Moreover, the passage concerned is part of Eusebius’ summary of the correspondence between Pliny and the Emperor Trajan (Pliny, *Ep.* 10.96-7) about the Christians. The first appearance of the phrase τῶν Χριστιανῶν φύλον appears in Eusebius’ précis of Pliny’s letter to the Emperor (*Ep.* 10.96) and the second reference occurs in the historian’s citation of Tertullian’s description of Pliny’s letter and Trajan’s reply (*Ep.* 10.97). If we look at the Latin of Pliny’s or Trajan’s letters, there is no reference to the Christians as a tribe (they are simply referred to as *Christiani*). It is only Tertullian’s summary of Trajan’s response, found in Tertullian, *Apol.* 2.6-8, where we find a description of the Christians, in this instance as *hoc genus*. While *genus* is not the same as *tribus*, it might suggest that Eusebius is simply lifting the description from the translation of the Latin available to him, mediated through Tertullian or a source that Tertullian was using.¹⁵⁸ And yet why should Eusebius attribute to Josephus a phrase for the Christians, which was not his own, but one gleaned from a translation of a pagan corresponding about Christianity, especially when such a phrase could be taken to have potentially negative overtones?¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ Zeitlin 1927/28, 238-40.

¹⁵⁸ This view is supported by Eisler 1929, 135 n. 4. Zeitlin 1929/30, 45f., responded to Eisler by noting that the term *hoc genus* is not the same as *tribus*; that Rufinus translates τῶν Χριστιανῶν φύλον at *Hist. eccl.* 3.33.2 and 3 with *Christiani*, possibly indicating an awareness of Tertullian’s original, a fact, which may in turn imply that the term was Eusebius’ own. But the fact that Rufinus renders the phrase in the same way in his translation of *Hist. eccl.* may indicate that he was motivated by embarrassment about the phrase rather than because he read something different in Tertullian. Whatever the solution, we are still left asking why Eusebius uses this phrase nowhere else in his oeuvre.

¹⁵⁹ See n. 202 below.

εἰς ἔτι τε νῦν Olson notes that Eusebius uses the phrase εἰς ἔτι νῦν quite frequently,¹⁶⁰ although the phrase is not precisely witnessed in this form in Josephus. Two points need to be made. First, nowhere in Eusebius' works do we witness the phrase εἰς ἔτι τε νῦν. Secondly, like Josephus before him, whenever Eusebius uses the phrase εἰς ἔτι νῦν, he does not use a verb in the aorist, preferring, logically, a verb in the present. In other words, Olson's reference to Eusebius will not explain all of the oddities of this phrase or the sentence in which it appears.

I can find no further apparently striking linguistic parallels with Eusebian language. The other points Olson makes relate to what he perceives to be the compatibility of the statements of the *TF* with Eusebius' own theology. As I have tried to show above, his attempts to describe the motive for the forgery are unconvincing. In the face of this, his linguistic observations are suggestive, but nothing else.

The context

The *TF* appears as part of Josephus' account of the governorship of Pilate. It is preceded by two incidents in which the governor is portrayed as offending the religious sensibilities of the Jews, namely the so-called incidents of the shields and of the aqueduct. It is followed by an account of the expulsions of the Isis cult and of the Jews from Rome, and finally by an account of the activities of a Samaritan pseudo-prophet.

It was E. Norden who added erudite weight to the relatively old view that the *TF* sat uneasily in such a context,¹⁶¹ and should, principally on these grounds, be dismissed as an interpolation into the text. Norden noted that the section running from *A.J.* 18.55-90 was united not by chronology – the two events reported after the *TF*, the expulsions of the Isis cult and of the Jews from Rome, concern events traditionally held to have taken place in 19 C.E. (Tacitus *Annales* 2.85), some time before Pilate's tenureship of office in Judea. Rather they are united by the fact that they all conform to disturbances or θόρυβοι, that is disturbances of a particular kind (either the noun θόρυβος or the verb θορυβεῖν is found in the description of each incident).¹⁶² Such a bunching together of θόρυβοι was, Norden noted, a well-

¹⁶⁰ *Hist. eccl.* 1.13.5; 2.1.7; 2.1.12; 3.37.4; 4.24.1; 4.25.1; 4.29.6; 5.5.6 passim.

¹⁶¹ Norden 1913, 644, who noted that the view that the *TF* interrupts the context in which it is placed goes back to the Calvinist Tanneguy Lefèbvre. Eisler 1929, 20, asserted that the first to use this argument was a seventeenth century Rabbi called Lusitanus.

¹⁶² Pilate threatens to punish those protesting against the legionary standards "unless they ceased to cause a disturbance (θορυβεῖν)" (*A.J.* 18.58); those who participate in what Josephus calls an insurrection (στάσις) connected with Pilate's use of temple revenues

known ancient historical ploy,¹⁶³ and it is possible that Josephus had access to a source, which characterised Pilate's tenure of office as a succession of θόρυβοι. The incident described in the *TF* is not a θόρυβος (the passage contains no reference to the relevant verb or the noun). Its intrusiveness is further supported by the fact that the Paulina story, which dominates the section and follows directly after the *TF*, is introduced as a ἕτερον τι δεινόν, and yet these words can surely only refer to the incident concerning the aqueduct, reported in sections 60-2, which ends with the words και οὕτω παύεται ἡ στάσις, and not to the report about Jesus. In this context Norden noted the association of θόρυβος and δεινός at *A.J.* 4.59 and 5.35. Hence his description of the *TF* as "ein Fremdkörper ohne Verknüpfung nach rückwärts oder vorwärts."¹⁶⁴

Norden's arguments are good ones,¹⁶⁵ but they are not impregnable. As Thackeray argued, the whole section of the *A.J.* in which the *TF* appears is somewhat of a patchwork, and so the presence of the *TF* should not be seen as entirely surprising;¹⁶⁶ and Wohleb went further in describing other places in Josephus where similar kinds of 'intrusions' were to be noted.¹⁶⁷ Even if we did not hold these arguments to weaken Norden's position (however piecemeal the section, the argument still holds that the incidents recorded have in common their θόρυβος-like character. What we have in the *TF* is distinctive in not being described in any way as a θόρυβος), we could still argue that the *TF* is best understood as a disturbance, particularly if one was willing to adopt a less narrow understanding of θόρυβος than Norden in fact adopts.¹⁶⁸ Martin makes this point,¹⁶⁹ noting that the execution by crucifixion of a man who attracted to himself many Jews and many Greeks, could, if we define θόρυβος simply in terms of a disturbance of the peace, be taken as a disturbance, and therefore compatible with the context in which it appears (in what sense are the incidents of the shields, in which no person died, and the romance-like Paulina story to be regarded as θορύβοι in the precise sense given the term by Norden?). Taylor makes a similar point when he argues on the basis of the probable

are referred to as θοροβοῦντας (18.62); Tiberius' suppression of the cult of Isis and expulsion of the Jews from Rome is introduced with the words: "About the same time another evil disturbed (ἐθορύβει) the Jews." (18.65); and the uprising connected with a Samaritan and, which brings Pilate's tenureship to an end is introduced with the words: "Meanwhile not even the Samaritans were without unrest (θόρυβος)." (18.85).

¹⁶³ He finds other examples in Josephus, *B.J.* 2.223f; and 2.252f; and Livy 3.22-4.

¹⁶⁴ Norden 1913, 645.

¹⁶⁵ See Meyer 1921, 207-8.

¹⁶⁶ Thackeray 1929, 141.

¹⁶⁷ Wohleb 1927, 167-9. He points in particular to *A.J.* 8.26f.; 10.24f.; and 13.171f.

¹⁶⁸ Note Martin 1941, 429: "... il (Norden) donne au mot ... un sens trop sérieux."

¹⁶⁹ Martin 1941, 429.

reference to Christ at Suetonius, *Claudius* 25, and the association of the name ‘Christian’ with *flagitia*,¹⁷⁰ that “Josephus had no need to use the word θόρυβος: it was implicit ... in the mention of Χριστιανοί.”¹⁷¹ Martin’s and Taylor’s point can be made more powerfully if one adopts the view entertained, amongst others, by Thackeray and Eisler, that in the original account of the *TF* the word θόρυβος¹⁷² did in fact appear. Such an observation would also serve to counter Norden’s point about the implication of the phrase ἔτερον τι δεινόν, although interestingly, Winter has suggested that the words may actually imply that Josephus did believe the execution of Jesus to be a wrong-headed thing.¹⁷³

Per Bilde, while rejecting the arguments of Norden, still sees the text as a foreign body in its present context, but he understands the context differently.¹⁷⁴ For him the section is united by the theme of the breakdown in good relations between the Jews and the Romans, and a sort of implicit defence of the Jews.¹⁷⁵ In such a context, the *TF* has no place and must therefore be omitted.

What is clear from the above is that the placement of the *TF* may at first appear a little clumsy. But this need not *de facto* prove its interpolatory character. Norden appeared to exclude arguments that assumed some tampering with an originally more negative passage, which would have fitted more easily into the ‘thorubic’ context he outlined.¹⁷⁶ Martin has made a good case for seeing Norden’s categorisation of the events in the section as θορύβοι as loose, implying, therefore, that the *TF* has a place in the section. In any case the section as it stands is more of a hotch-potch than Norden is perhaps willing to concede. Moreover, we should not reject out of hand the possibility that the *TF* is in some sense an intrusion into the context, though on the part of Josephus. In this respect we should remember that the *TF*, along with the passage on James and John the Baptist, does not

¹⁷⁰ Tacitus, *Annales* 15.44; Pliny the Younger *Ep.* 10.96; and the attempt of early Christian apologetes to dissassociate the name ‘Christian’ from criminal activity.

¹⁷¹ Taylor 1994, 86.

¹⁷² Note Eisler’s emendation of the beginning of the *TF* to read: γίνεται δὲ κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον ἀρχὴ νέων θορύβων. For our discussion of this suggestion see below.

¹⁷³ Winter 1973, 440.

¹⁷⁴ Bilde 1981, 119-24.

¹⁷⁵ Bilde is in part adopting the position of Moehring 1959, who argued that in narrating the Paulina and Fulvia stories Josephus has subtly worked in some apologetic themes, which precisely contrast Judaism with eastern cultic religion (in this instance, represented by the Isis cult).

¹⁷⁶ Norden 1913, 649: “Auf die transzendenten Fragen, ob der interpolierte Abschnitt einen echten verdrängt ... gehe ich nicht näher ein ...”

appear in the *B.J.*,¹⁷⁷ and Josephus therefore needed somewhere to include it.¹⁷⁸ In the midst of his discussion of Pilate's tenure of office might have seemed as appropriate a place as any.

Content

A first point to make about the passage, as it stands in the received text, relates to its clipped and condensed form. Jesus' appearance on the scene is referred to only in the vaguest of terms with the typically Josephan κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον, and questions of location are similarly vague, and this in contrast to the description of the events, which precede it. While Josephus gives us a relatively full description of who Jesus was (he was a miracle worker, a teacher of true things who attracted to himself many Jews and Greeks, and he was the Christ), he does not describe the substance of Jesus' teaching, as he does, for instance, in the case of both Solomon and Daniel,¹⁷⁹ the only other people he describes as 'wise men', or of John the Baptist (*A.J.* 18.116-9), Judas the Galilean (*B.J.* 2.118; *A.J.* 18.23f.), and Jesus' namesake, the son of Ananias (*B.J.* 6.300), to name but a few. He does not describe the character of his miracles, as he does, for instance, in the case of Honi (*A.J.* 14.22-5 where he appears as Onias in the Greek). In his description of Jesus' death, while he gives us some insight into the processes by which Jesus was condemned to be crucified, he does not tell us on what charge he was brought before Pilate,¹⁸⁰ the presentation of whom is also somewhat tepid, at least in relation to what has preceded. The lack of detail on this point appears particularly striking given the apparently positive character of his description of Jesus in the preceding section. This observation becomes more powerful when we note that in his presentation of John the Baptist, Josephus clearly states what motivated Herod Antipas to kill him.¹⁸¹ His reference to Jesus' resurrection is again

¹⁷⁷ This point has too often been overlooked. Some explanations for this omission are provided by Feldman 1984, 826, including the thesis, to which we shall return, that the Christians had by the time of the writing of *A.J.* become a significant force.

¹⁷⁸ The substance of this comment is captured in Thackeray's words: "The Christ-passage may have been an after-thought: something had to be said on a thorny subject, which had at first been passed over." (Thackeray 1929, 141).

¹⁷⁹ See Martin 1941, 449-50.

¹⁸⁰ Something of this inadequacy is hinted at in Jerome's Latin rendition of the *TF* at this point: *Cumque invidia nostrorum principium cruci eum Pilatus addixisset ... (Vir. ill. 13)* where *invidia* looks like an addition.

¹⁸¹ See also the presentation of Honi the rainmaker at *A.J.* 14.22-5. The substance of these observations are captured by Eisler 1929, 42: "Kein Wort darüber, wessen sich Jesus denn eigentlich in den Augen seiner Gegner schuldig gemacht hat ... Kein Wort der Erklärung über ihre Beweggründe, die Josephus in einem ähnlichen gelagerten Fall ganz verständig auseinander zusetzen weiss (he cites the decision of the elders to try the Sica-

rily in a succinct manner, and the passage ends with an almost surprised comment upon the fact that his followers are still a presence in the world. All of this seems rather too brief, and may suggest the possibility of omission from, as well as addition to an original source.

A second point that raises suspicions about the passage is the presence within it of apparently affirmative comments about Jesus, which seem to stand in an uneasy relationship with the generally succinct character of the passage, and would appear to be incompatible with the acknowledged fact that Josephus remained a Jew. The substance of this point is well captured in the words of Norden: “Und nun gar: der Jude spricht nicht wie man erwarten sollte, von dem Hingerichteten als einen Verbrecher, sondern sein Zeugnis klingt fast wie ein Praeconium.”¹⁸² So, for instance, what are we to make of the statement that Jesus was a “wise man, if indeed he was a man”? Or the claim that Jesus was the Christ, and that he rose on the third day in accordance with the claims of the prophets? Do these not read too easily as Christian additions to the *TF*? Might they not also suggest that the whole passage is an interpolation? Would a Jew like Josephus have accepted that a crucified messianic pretender like Jesus was a wise man, that he was a doer of miracles, and a teacher of the truth? Of course, our answer to these particular questions will to a certain extent be predicated upon what we believe it would be possible for a Jew like Josephus to say about a figure like Jesus. To this point I hope to return in the third part of the paper.

In the face of these difficulties scholars have approached the *TF* in three different ways. Some have wanted to keep the passage as it stands in our received text.¹⁸³ Others have wanted to accept its authenticity, but in a minimally or more extensively revised form, which either turns the original into the first known Jewish denunciation of Christianity,¹⁸⁴ or a passage, which, while being less positive than the received text, demonstrates a per-

rii recorded at *B.J.* 7.412-13), – kurz nicht ein Schimmer jenes lebendigen Spiels menschlicher Leidenschaften, das sonst den Reiz der parteischen und verlogenen, aber eben deshalb stets stark dramatischen Darstellung des Josephus bildet”; and by Flusser 1987, 218: “Geht man davon aus, dass Josephus einen Abschnitt über Jesus schrieb, dann ist kaum anzunehmen, dass er einerseits lobend von ihm spricht und andererseits gleichzeitig schreibt, dass Jesus aufgrund einer Denunziation der jüdischen Machthaber zum Tod verurteilt wurde.”

¹⁸² Norden 1913, 648.

¹⁸³ Whiston 1737; Burkitt 1913; Harnack 1913; Barnes 1920; Laqueur 1920; van Liempt 1927; Dornseiff 1955; Préchac 1969; Nodet 1985; Vicent 1997.

¹⁸⁴ Reinach 1897 (but he is probably a marginal case); Pharr 1927; Bienert 1936; Eisler 1929; Bammel 1973/74; Poetscher 1975; Bell 1976.

haps neutral or ambivalent attitude to Jesus.¹⁸⁵ Another body of scholars have simply rejected the passage *in toto*.¹⁸⁶

Some may be surprised to note how many scholars have sought to defend the authenticity of the received text. For some, such as Whiston, it is perfectly reasonable to argue that Josephus had some kind of an affiliation with Christianity, and so the passage's Christian tone ceases to be a problem. But the argument is circular, depending almost exclusively upon the *TF* for its claim that Jesus was a Christian, and contradicts the almost universal *Christian* tradition that Josephus was a Jew. An eccentric variant on this comes from Laqueur.¹⁸⁷ He postulates a situation in which a mooted first edition of Josephus' *A.J.* has come under sharp and effective attack from his literary competitor, Justus of Tiberias. In desperation, Josephus turns to the Christians, hoping that they might preserve his *A.J.* To this end, and in a mooted second edition of that work, Josephus pens the *TF*, a statement of basic Christian beliefs about Jesus given to him by Christians but written in his own words. Such a thesis, which accounts for the *TF*'s Christian tone by assuming Christian participation in its writing, fails not only for lack of evidence, but also because it cannot explain why, if Josephus was currying favour with Christians, he wrote two such paltry little pieces about Jesus and his brother.

But most scholars who defend the received version assume that Josephus was not a Christian, and have as their principal aim to demonstrate that it would not be inappropriate to attribute the contents of the *TF* to the Jew Josephus.¹⁸⁸ So some have argued that the tone of the received text is detached, even cool and ironical.¹⁸⁹ The most sustained defence of this line of argument comes from A. Vicent Cernuda, here with the emphasis falling squarely on the ironic character of what is written. For Vicent, every phrase of the *TF* is capable of both a positive and a negative understanding, depending upon the context of the reader. Josephus, who took a nega-

¹⁸⁵ Mueller 1890; Wohleb 1927; Martin 1941; Pines 1971, although very tentatively; Pelletier 1964 and 1965; Dubarle 1973 and 1977; Vermes 1987; Flusser 1987; Meier 1990; Whealey 1995. For earlier attestations of these views, see Schürer 1964, 544-5.

¹⁸⁶ Niese 1894; Schürer 1964; Norden 1913; Goetz 1913; Corssen 1914; Juster 1914 (vol. II), 139-41; Meyer 1921, 206-11; Zeitlin 1927/28; Bauer 1930; Schreckenberg 1972, 173; Bilde 1981; more tentatively, Schreckenberg/Schubert 1991, 38-41; Olson 1999.

¹⁸⁷ Laqueur 1920, 272-8.

¹⁸⁸ "It is not necessary to prove that the sentiments expressed in the paragraph are the ultimate convictions of Josephus, but it is necessary to show they are not inappropriate for him to utter." (Burkitt 1913, 139).

¹⁸⁹ See Burkitt 1913, 138: "... the tone of the paragraph is itself cool and patronising"; Harnack 1913, 1048: "... das ganze Stück ist gönnerhaft patronisierend, und es ist trotz aller hochgegriffenen Prädikate Jesus gegenüber kühl"; and Barnes 1920, 11 and 12. See Wohleb 1927, 165, for earlier interpretations of this kind.

tive view of Jesus, is, according to Vicent, compelled to take such a convoluted route because he is both a friend of the anti-Christian Emperor, Domitian, and his pro-Christian relative, Flavius Clemens.¹⁹⁰

Vicent's thesis is argued at length. He goes through each sentence of the *TF*, phrase by phrase, attempting to show how each sits with a positive and negative interpretation. He does accept one emendation, namely Eusebius' τις, already discussed above, accepting that this could have been understood negatively, at least by someone ill-disposed to Christianity. He shows how the term σοφὸς ἀνὴρ, while obviously possessing positive overtones (its application to Daniel and Solomon), can also be taken negatively as, for instance, we see at *C. Ap.* 1.236, 256 and *A.J.* 8.53. Taken in a negative way the term has the sense of "un hombre sagaz, diestro, habil", a skilled manipulator.¹⁹¹ If, claims Vicent, such a view of the phrase is adopted, then it becomes easy to see how the phrase "if it is necessary to call him a man" becomes ironic.¹⁹² Ποιητής, in the phrase, "doer of paradoxical deeds" could, he argues, be said to imply that Jesus was a "fabricator", a kind of magician, a point supported by Vicent's interpretation of σοφὸς ἀνὴρ. Διδάσκαλος is a word, which can be applied to bad as well as good characters (see the description of Cain at *A.J.* 1.61 and the royal pretender, Alexander, at *A.J.* 17.325).¹⁹³ The description of those who were the object of Jesus' teaching as ἡδονῆ τάληθῆ δεχομένων, can, of course, be understood positively, but if the passage is a Christian forgery, it is odd that the forger should use a phrase, which in Josephus nearly always appears with a negative meaning,¹⁹⁴ and a word, ἡδονῆ, which in early Christianity nearly always carries a negative meaning. Vicent argues that a perception of such oddity is possibly reflected in the Eusebian variant, already discussed, which simply reads τάληθῆ σεβομένων. Moved to making sense of the phrase in a negative way, Vicent argues that τάληθῆ is a notably vague phrase in Josephus, to be distinguished from ἀληθεία and probably refers to the certainty in which the disciples rejoice, a certainty in salvation, which quickly leads to a feeling of pleasure.¹⁹⁵ Discussing the next sen-

¹⁹⁰ Note the similarities between Vicent's understanding of the context and that of Garnet 1989 referred to at n. 79.

¹⁹¹ Vicent 1997, 363. See also Reinach 1897, 10. He translates σοφός similarly as "savant, habile", and comments: "il est ici à peu près synonyme avec σοφιστής ...", noting that this term was used by Josephus to describe agitators.

¹⁹² See Vermes 1987, 4, for a similar point. Malalas, *Chron.* 10.26, after the phrase, adds μὴ Θεόν, perhaps implying that it needed some supplementation.

¹⁹³ For other negative examples see *B.J.* 7.442, 444; *A.J.* 17.334; 19.172; 20.41; *C. Ap.* 2.145.

¹⁹⁴ See its negative use at *A.J.* 17.329; 18.6; 18.70; 18.236; 19.127; 19.185, and its only positive use at *A.J.* 18.59.

¹⁹⁵ Vicent 1997, 371.

tence Vicent argues that ἐπηγάγετο could be translated as ‘seduce’, a reading, which does not simply arise from the negative depiction of Jesus, which Vicent has already discerned, but from actual Josephan usage of the verb.¹⁹⁶ The phrase ὁ Χριστὸς οὗτος ἦν, appears as the natural conclusion to what has preceded, complies with Josephan usage, and seems, at least in terms of its use of the imperfect tense, strangely unlike a Christian gloss. Vicent draws attention to the fact that there is no obvious subject for the phrase,¹⁹⁷ arguing that on one reading the subject “son los judíos y helenos que habían sido ganados por el mismo Jesús”,¹⁹⁸ precisely those whom, according to him, Josephus implicitly criticises in the passage. Read in relation to the negativity of what has preceded, it appears as a pompous crescendo. The affirmative Christian reading, which, of course, Josephus does at one level promote, is not supported by subsequent Christian citations of the passage (note, in particular, Origen and Eusebius), where Josephus is almost never presented as a Christian. Here the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the passage, indirectly at least, is seen to support Vicent’s interpretation.¹⁹⁹ The rest of the passage is interpreted in the same vein. Notable is Vicent’s understanding of the disciples “who did not cease to love” as simply those who lived in a world of illusion, admiring a Messiah who had died an ignominious death on the cross; his understanding of the words ἐφάνη γὰρ αὐτοῖς as at one level reflecting the deluded state of Jesus’ followers;²⁰⁰ his ironic interpretation of μυρία in the sentence about the prophets;²⁰¹ and his belief that the final sentence, with its potentially negative reference to the

¹⁹⁶ *A.J.* 1.207; 6.196; 11.199; 17.327.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 379-80: “Josefo no dice: *creo* que éste era el Mesías; ni tampoco: *no creo* que éste era el Mesías. Es una afirmación sin duda inequívoca, pero sin sujeto explícito al que endosársela.”

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 379-80.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1995, 380f.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 488, points in particular to the context in which these words occur and to the subjective character of ἐφάνη. Pelletier 1964, 194-6, who argues that the reference to the resurrection of Jesus in no way contradicts a generally held belief, and one specifically held by Josephus, that the dead person could appear to the living (see in particular *Vita* 208-11 and *B.J.* 2.114-16, although in these two passages the reference is to people appearing in dreams, not quite the same thing as described in the *TF*), also notes that the word ἐφάνη is not a normal N.T. term used to refer to the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus, and that the general tone of the piece is too sober and reserved to be the work of a Christian hand. Whealey 1995, 304, emphasize the presence of the word αὐτοῖς, which can be seen as giving the entire sentence “a subjective cast.”

²⁰¹ Barnes 1920, 11, makes a similar point about this word, and also defends the retention of the whole phrase. It is interesting to note that the mid second-century writer Lucian refers in a clearly ironical way to “the wondrous lore (θαυμαστίην σοφίαν)” of the Christians (*Peregrinus* 11), although he is much clearer about his negative attitude to the same people.

Christians as φῦλον,²⁰² can, on one reading, be seen as the expression of a wish that the church cease to exist.²⁰³

The advantage of Vicent's defence of the received text, which picks up on previous theories, lies in the consistency with which he presents his thesis,²⁰⁴ in the fact that even while retaining the received text, he manages at one and the same time to attribute to Josephus a negative understanding of Jesus and Christianity (in fact in various ways he utilises the arguments of some of those who would emend the *TF* in a polemical direction without, of course, endorsing their emendations), and yet to endorse a potentially positive interpretation,²⁰⁵ that he seeks to do this on the basis of a reconstructed context against which Josephus writes,²⁰⁶ and that he draws attention to the unembellished character of the *TF*'s phrases, which makes an ironic interpretation possible. Moreover, his thesis appears to explain the brevity of the *TF* by highlighting the precarious character of the political situation in which Josephus supposedly found himself – in such a situation it was better to be brief; and to make sense of the haphazard character of its reception in the church.

²⁰² He points out that the term can both refer to the Jews (*A.J.* 2.397; 3.354; 14.115); a swarm of locusts (2.306); and to the race of women (*A.J.* 13.430). See also *B.J.* 2.366 (tribe of bulls); 2.374 (tribe of Lusitanians and Cantabrians); *C. Ap.* 2.127 (races in general). Harnack 1913, 1048, and quoting Minucius Felix's description of the Christians as a *latebrosa et lucifuga natio* (*Oct.* 8.4), had already made the point that potentially, at least, the term appeared to go counter to the universalist tendencies of Christianity. Interestingly, the only other place where a Christian writer comes close to calling Christians a tribe prior to Eusebius is Justin at *Dial.* 119 where he explicitly denies that Christians might be perceived as a barbarous φῦλον, possibly implying an embarrassing meaning for the word (note our previous comments on Rufinus' failure to translate the term literally in his Latin rendering of Eusebius' version of the *TF*). Birdsall 1984, 620-1, states that the term carries the sense of Christians as a specific tribe or nation, which reminds one of the idea found in some apologetic writings of Christians as a third race. He cites in particular *Diognetus*, *Aristides' Apology*, and *Kerygma Petrou*. Birdsall cites these examples to support the idea that the passage is a forgery, but has he really provided us with genuine parallels to φῦλον? Or taken account of its potentially embarrassing meaning?

²⁰³ In this respect Vicent makes much of the hapax εἰς ἔτι τε καὶ νῦν, which can be translated to mean both "even up to this very day" (negative meaning); and "indeed up to this day" (positive meaning).

²⁰⁴ Neither Burkitt nor Harnack, who might be said to be closest to Vicent, demonstrate that the coolness is consistent. Both, for instance, appear to accept a straightforward reading of "wise man" and Harnack even suggests that "true things" may imply a certain admiration on the part of Josephus for the Sermon on the Mount.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 505, for his negative and positive reading of the passage.

²⁰⁶ This is precisely what Laqueur 1920 and Garnet 1989 attempted to do. Both of their theses in different ways also succeed in explaining the positive and potentially negative understanding of the *TF*.

And yet we have to ask whether Vicent's thesis is not too ingenious. It is possible to see irony on occasion, but is it consistently a part of the text in the way Vicent imagines? In a sense irony is only apprehended, and indeed understandable (why should Josephus choose to be so peculiarly ironic at this point in his *A.J.*?), if we assume the mooted context Vicent begins his article by outlining²⁰⁷ – indeed much of his discussion of the text, in particular his discussion of the more negative interpretation of certain phrases, is introduced by reminding his reader of the context Josephus, according to Vicent, is addressing. But is the mooted context, whose validity depends on a number of unverifiable assumptions,²⁰⁸ dictating the interpretation, or does Vicent's understanding of the context emerge from the text? For instance, there is nothing *self-evidently* ironic in the term σοφὸς ἀνὴρ (it is, as previously noted, a term used by Josephus, apparently uncritically, to describe Solomon and Daniel), nor is there anything *self-evidently* ironic about calling Jesus a “doer of paradoxical deeds”,²⁰⁹ or describing him as “a teacher of those who receive the truth with pleasure”.²¹⁰ These phrases remain undeveloped, that is true, but irony is in the eye of the beholder. Nowhere does the subjectivity of Vicent's position become clearer than in his interpretation of what some have taken to be the more obviously Christian sounding phrases. It is true that “if indeed he was a man” could be meant ironically, and that the statements about Jesus' resurrection and the prophetic forecasting of that event and his μυρία θαυμάσια, are in the for-

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 492-504, for a longer description.

²⁰⁸ Amongst other things, it assumes: a relationship between Josephus and Flavius Clemens; that Flavius Clemens was a Christian and that he asked Josephus to write something about Jesus; that Domitian was a persecutor of the church; and that the different audiences would have understood the passage as Vicent assumes. See n. 305 below for difficulties with these assumptions.

²⁰⁹ Vicent's attempt to show that ποιητής can mean a fabricator is open to question, not only on lexicographical grounds (Liddell and Scott does not witness to such a meaning, and Josephus never uses it in such a way), but also on the grounds that a writer like Eusebius can use precisely the phrase (παραδόξων ἔργων ποιητής) to describe Jesus' miraculous activity in a passage in which he is trying to argue against the view that Jesus was in some sense a wizard or deceiver. He can also use the expression to describe God! For references see above.

²¹⁰ When διδάσκαλος is used negatively in Josephus, this is made explicit. τάληθῆ is a positive term in Josephus and is usually used to refer to truth as this relates to history (cf. *B.J.* 1.16; *A.J.* 14.3), accounts of certain events (*B.J.* 4.438; *Vita* 262), people (*A.J.* 3.308), or systems (*A.J.* 3.74). It is not the same as ἀληθεία, the term one might have expected a Christian to write, although on one occasion it is used in conjunction with justice, interestingly in a prayer in which Solomon pleads for such qualities, the same Solomon who is described by Josephus as a wise man. While Josephus normally uses ἰδονῆ δεχόμεναι negatively, he can also use it positively. Note Isidore of Pelusium (*Ep.* 4.225), who after quoting the *TF* and commenting upon Josephus' truthfulness draws particular attention to these words.

mer case possibly non-committal, and in the latter possibly ironic. However, difficulties really emerge in Vicent's interpretation of ὁ Χριστὸς οὗτος ἦν. Here, in particular, he is dependent upon the cumulative character of his case for irony. But even if we accept irony up to this point, we may, in the light of the description of Jesus at A.J. 20.200 as τοῦ λεγομένου Χριστοῦ, wonder why Josephus did not use this more obviously ambivalent phrase in his *TF*. The use of ἦν may be striking but the phrase remains strangely affirmative and the verb appears in the imperfect in a similarly 'credal' context in Mark 15:39 and its parallel in Matt 27:54. Vicent's claim that his case for the retention of the phrase is in some sense supported by the history of the reception of the passage is intriguing. But the fact that almost no early Christians who cite the passage claim Josephus for the church may simply arise from the fact that they knew him to be a Jew, not that they understood the phrase like Vicent. In this respect it is notable how a good number of those who cite the passage affirm Josephus' love of the truth, a love, which manifests itself in spite of the fact that he is a Jew.²¹¹ Moreover, those like Jerome, who present more neutral versions of the phrase, need not be seen as correct interpreters of the phrase as it stands, but as witnesses either to suspicion about its import (it was taken to be too Christian-sounding a phrase for a Jew), or to an original reading (see discussion of text above).

There can be little doubt that the confessional-sounding ὁ Χριστὸς οὗτος ἦν is the phrase whose authenticity is most difficult to defend, although, dependent upon one's own presuppositions, each phrase presents its own difficulties. Defences other than that of Vicent are possible but each one carries its own problems.²¹² If we accept this phrase, and perhaps

²¹¹ See in this respect Pseudo-Hegesippus, Sozomen (here Jesus is explicitly regarded as a witness to the truth concerning Christ), Cassiodorus, Isidore of Pelusium, Oikumenios and others.

²¹² Burkitt 1913, argued that the simple declaration that Jesus was the Christ was easy for Josephus to make. He had long since abandoned any messianic hopes he had had, and was quite willing therefore to assert that the Messiah had come in the form of Jesus but that he was now dead. Harnack 1913, 1054, defends the sentence by attributing to Josephus the following thoughts: "Dieser weise Jesus war der Christus, nicht nur der sogenannte Christus, sondern wirklich der Christus. Aber hinzudenken muss man: mit dem Christus qua Christus ist es überhaupt nichts; das ist eine religionspolitische Figur, die sich in unsern Tagen, durch den Untergang des jüdischen Staates, als ein grosser Irrtum enthüllt." A not dissimilar position is adopted by Nodet and Taylor 1998, 6-7, summarising and extending Nodet 1985. They argue that Josephus' contention that Jesus made disciples for himself amongst Jews and Greeks does not go well with the idea of the Messiah as a national liberator. "Therefore, the name of *Christos* ... does not seem to have any identifiable messianic meaning." On this reading 'Christos' could pass for a name for Christ without carrying any particular meaning beyond that (on this see especially Nodet 1985, 341); and in any case Josephus had no place for any idea of royal messianism. But

others as ‘Christian’, then we are forced to ask whether they are in some sense intrusive as they stand, or just the confessional parts of an integrated whole.

Those who wish to retain the *TF*, but in an emended form, divide themselves broadly into two camps. For some, what Josephus wrote was ambivalent about Jesus, neutral, even skeptical, but not harshly negative. Normally scholars who adopt this position take the view that “if indeed he was a man” should be omitted, as well as the reference to Jesus’ messianic status and his resurrection and fulfillment of prophecies.²¹³ They sometimes support their contention by noting that the supposed additions sound very like the New Testament in contrast to the language of their reconstructed core,²¹⁴ and by arguing that their omissions allow the passage to flow more easily.²¹⁵ Others, who follow a broadly similar pattern, sometimes retain a watered down reference to the messianic status of Jesus,²¹⁶ and the reference to Jesus’ resurrection and his fulfillment of prophecies,²¹⁷ while at least one scholar suggests a tentative emendation of τὰληθῆ to something more neutral.²¹⁸ Others suggest that originally there was a reference to some sort of disturbance caused by Jesus.²¹⁹ At least one scholar has argued that in a mooted original *TF* Josephus did not implicate the Jewish authorities in the decision to put Jesus to death.²²⁰

Such a solution, which manifests itself in a variety of reconstructions, is appealing because its supporters can call upon the best arguments of those who plead for the integrity of the received text without apparently attribut-

is ‘Christos’ in this passage really a name (note the presence of the definite article)? And while it might be true that Josephus had no real interest in royal messianism, many other Jews did, making the phrase a little odd. On all of this see Wohleb 1927, 162-4.

²¹³ Representatives of this approach are Martin 1941, who argues that the three major additions are all glosses originally penned by Origen; Wohleb 1927; Meier 1990; and Wilson 1995, 184-5.

²¹⁴ Meier 1990, 91 n. 41.

²¹⁵ Meier 1990, 87.

²¹⁶ Dubarle 1973; Whealey 1995.

²¹⁷ Often this involves turning some phrases into reported speech, but Pelletier 1964, 194-6, takes a different line.

²¹⁸ Whealey 1995, 299, who emends to μετ’ ἄλλ’ ἴθη on the basis of Pseudo-Hegesippus’ *cum praeceptis moralibus*; and Eusebius *Dem. ev.* 3.5.124 where in close proximity to his quotation of the *TF*, he talks about Jesus attracting people to him by his unheard of teaching. But Whealey does add that ‘truth’ is independently transmitted by Rufinus, Jerome and others and so any alteration of this reading must derive from a fourth century copyist of Eusebius.

²¹⁹ See Winter 1973.

²²⁰ Dubarle 1973, 497-8, on the basis of the omission of reference to the Jewish authorities in Agapius, Cedrenos, Simon the Logothete, and Michael the Syrian and this against what would seem to be the tendency of Christian authors to attribute guilt exclusively to the Jews.

ing anything unreasonable to the Jewish Josephus. So, for instance, Vermes presents as good a case as any for the retention of the reference to Jesus as “a doer of paradoxical deeds”, demonstrating how this potentially problematic description of Jesus can be taken to show an air of detachedness;²²¹ and the same scholar can present good arguments for the retention of the term ‘wise man’,²²² which similarly could be viewed as problematic. It can explain the silence of some patristic authors; it makes the Christian motive for the interpolation less easy to understand;²²³ it conforms with the tone of some textual variants witnessed in the indirect tradition; and it can be said to retain an attitude to Christianity not incompatible with that found in Josephus’ passage on James. On the other hand the emendations are largely subjective, based upon what it is acceptable to believe that Josephus could have written,²²⁴ and inevitably there is disagreement on this

²²¹ Vermes 1987, 3-8. In particular Vermes notes how when Josephus refers to Elisha’s παραδόξα ἔργα (*A.J.* 9.182), he qualifies the term with the words διὰ τῆς προφητείας. Similarly Moses’ miracles (Moses is the only other person in Josephus who performs a paradoxical deed. See *A.J.* 2.266-7) arise from the “power and foreknowledge of God” (*A.J.* 2.284-6). The lack of any such positive qualification in the *TF* gives it an element of verisimilitude. For this same point see Pelletier 1964, 189. Vermes supports his argument further by noting that the term παραδόξα only appears once in the N.T. at Luke 5:26 and that “Instead of παραδόξα ἔργα a Christian forger would have selected a N.T. term such as ‘mighty deeds (δυναμείζ)’ or ‘signs (σημεῖα)’”, a term, which, interestingly, Josephus does use to refer to a sign, which authenticates the claim of a prophet that he was from God (*A.J.* 10.28) (some versions of the *TF* do in fact read σημεῖα. See Michael Glykas PG 158.444; and Bratke’s text of the anonymous Byzantine debate). Bilde 1981, 125, who follows Linck 1913, 21-2, argues that the combination of ποιητής and ἔργον has a strongly Jacobean (James 1:22, 25) and Johannine ring (John 5:20, 36; 7:3; 10:38; 14:12; 15:24). But in all of these passages the verb ποιεῖν is used rather than its substantive equivalent and it is never followed by a reference to παραδόξα. Given the fastidious character of Bilde’s own discussion of the style of the *TF*, I would have thought that these were important differences.

²²² Vermes 1987, 3-8. These relate to the lack of any reference to Jesus as a wise man in the N.T., to the fact that where there is a reference to the wise in the NT, it is often negative (1 Cor 1:18-31; Matt 11:25; Luke 10:21), and to the possibility that the phrase “if indeed he was a man” has a gloss-like feel to it, operating precisely as a response to the claim that Jesus was “merely a man.”

²²³ Meier 1990, 93. He notes how few Christians of the third or fourth centuries, a likely time for the interpolation, would have found any of his (Meier’s) emended *TF* helpful to their cause.

²²⁴ Of the writers mentioned only Dubarle 1973 and 1977, and Whealey 1995 seek with any seriousness to substantiate their changes with reference to textual variants. Whealey only makes two changes but Dubarle makes quite a number, producing a text, which seems an odd amalgam of a variety of variants, witnessing to no one version of the *TF*. Meier’s and others’ position is not supported by any textual witness. Martin’s view 1941, 460-2, that one can justify the changes that he (and subsequently Meier et al.) have made on the grounds that they appear from Origen’s comments upon the *TF* to comport

point. Most of the reconstructions still leave a passage, which is too positive about Jesus, and his followers and seems incompatible with Josephus and what we know about non-Christian Jewish reactions to Christianity.²²⁵ The terseness of the account, which we have identified as a problem for those who would retain the received text of the *TF*, remains a problem. Would Josephus have felt it appropriate to pass notably brief comment upon a man who attracted to himself many Jews and Greeks and could be compared with Solomon and Daniel?²²⁶ Would he feel it unnecessary even to hint at why such a man was put to death, as he had done in the cases of the “good men” Honi (*A.J.* 14.22-4) and John the Baptist (*A.J.* 18.117-19)?²²⁷ Moreover, if we follow what seems to be a growing consensus and accept that we can arrive at Josephus’ original text simply by omitting certain Christian sounding phrases, whatever they may be, are we not left with a passage of such brevity that it appears to lose its coherence? How, for instance, do we explain the connective γάρ in the sentence “(f)or he was a doer of paradoxical deeds” if we omit the preceding phrase “if indeed he was a man”?²²⁸ Should we omit all reference to Jesus as the Messiah in a passage that goes on to mention Christians? And is it right to omit any reference to Jesus’ resurrection in seeking to explain why the Christians continued to remain attached to Jesus? If we have to retain these passages, are we not left with a passage like the received text, which begins to look more and more like a complete interpolation? And to what extent is the policy of omission methodologically safe? Could we not do the same to some other

with his criticisms of the Josephan passage as we find those in *Cels.* 1.47 and *Comm. Matt.* 10.17, is only partially convincing. Certainly it is true that the phrase ὁ Χριστὸς οὗτος ἦν could be related to Origen’s description of Josephus as ἀπιστῶν τῷ Ἰησοῦ ὡς Χριστῷ. But it is difficult to see how any of Origen’s comments upon Josephus and Jesus could be demonstrated to have led to the phrase “if indeed he was a man”, or “on the third day he appeared to them”, etc.

²²⁵ Can we, for instance, really believe that it is likely, as Vermes 1987, 10, appears to think it is, that Josephus would have given us a portrait of the Galilean master that is in a true sense *sine ira et studio*; and that he would have written something about Jesus, which contradicted a well-attested Jewish view that he was a sorcerer who had led Israel astray (*Sanh.* 43a)?

²²⁶ Note how Solomon is described as “a wise man possessing every virtue” (*A.J.* 8.53) and Daniel as a “wise man and skilful in discovering everything beyond man’s power”. (*A.J.* 10.237). Goldberg 1995, accepts the affirmative aspect of the passage but explains this away by arguing that Josephus’ informants may have been Christians.

²²⁷ See our discussion of the question of brevity below.

²²⁸ This argument can be overplayed. As Martin 1941, 442-4, has shown, Josephus does on occasion imply a relationship between someone who is a wise man and performs miracles, in particular at *A.J.* 2.285. However, on the two occasions where he uses the term σοφὸς ἀνὴρ it is not the miraculous aspect of the activity of those so designated (Solomon and Daniel), which is highlighted.

credal texts in the New Testament and come out with the same result, i.e. omit Christian-sounding phrases and retain the apparently neutral ones in order to come out with a neutral statement about Jesus?²²⁹ Meier and others would reply that the passages they omit are, from a linguistic perspective, much more obviously scriptural, i.e. New Testament-like, in tone. But this is not obviously the case.²³⁰

The second camp of emenders suggest that the original passage presented Jesus negatively either as a revolutionary or the equivalent of a religious fraud or deceiver. At a number of levels this might seem a reasonable solution. As we have noted above, Origen is clear in his assertion that Josephus did not believe in Christ, and the *TF* occurs in a section of *A.J.*, which, broadly speaking, concerns itself with outbreaks of discontent amongst Jews. Ernst Bammel, who takes the question of the passage's context very seriously, argues for a number of small emendations. He suggests that for ἐπηγάγετο (translated as perhaps 'won over' or 'attracted') we

²²⁹ Olson 1999, 308-9, carries out such an experiment on Acts 2:22-4.

²³⁰ That the language of the assumed glosses is Christian *in tone* may be true. But so might every other phrase in the passage be taken to be Christian *in tone*. That its vocabulary is strongly New Testament in its character is less easy to demonstrate. Meier 1990, 91 n. 41, tries to justify this assertion but does not really succeed. Partly this is because he cannot bring forward *phrases* from the N.T., which conform to phrases found in the supposed glosses, partly because those words, which do occur regularly in the N.T. and are found in the *TF* are, apart from Χριστός (which in any case occurs in a phrase with an imperfect, not something we find in comparable phrases in the N.T.), not strikingly N.T. in their association (see πάλιν and προφήτης, which are words frequently used by Josephus), and there are a number of words and phrases, which one could not describe as notably New Testament in character e.g. φαίνω to refer to Jesus' resurrection appearances (the verb is only used in this form in Mark 16:7), θαυμάσια (only used once in the New Testament, but many times in Josephus), and the phrase τρίτην ἔχων ἡμέραν. This last phrase has caught the attention of Goldberg 1995. He draws attention to the presence of a not dissimilarly difficult phrase at Luke 24:21 where the companions of Jesus on the road to Emmaus refer to the fact that it is three days since Jesus' crucifixion with the words τρίτην ταυτήν ἡμέραν ἄγει, a similarly difficult phrase to understand because the verb appears to have no obvious subject. Goldberg goes on to note that the same passage, Luke 24:18-27, shares with the *TF* a reference to 'our leaders', admittedly expressed slightly differently (with ἡμῶν and not παρ' ἡμῶν), a significant fact because Josephus never uses such a phrase, and New Testament writers usually distance themselves from any direct association with those who put Jesus to death. The fact that the *TF* and Luke 24:18-27 share in common a basic structure in their account of Jesus and a similar terseness (for example, there is no reference to why Jesus was put to death in the Lukan passage either), points to the possibility that Josephus may have been dependent upon a Christian passage like Luke 24:18-27 for his *TF*. Such a passage may have originated in the early Jewish Christian community. In this thesis, a Christian passage with which Josephus shares some things in common forms part of an argument to defend an originally neutral form of the *TF*.

should read ἀπηγάγετο (translated as ‘abducted’);²³¹ for ἀγαπήσαντες (‘those who loved’) αὐτοὺς ἀπατησάντες (‘those who deceived themselves’)²³², and for τᾶ ἀληθῆ (‘truth’) τὰ ἀήθη (‘unusual’).²³³ He then omits ἦν from the phrase ὁ Χριστὸς οὗτος ἦν, thus retaining the ironic overtones the phrase originally had with Josephus. Bammel argues that the sentence about the resurrection, emended to begin with the words φάσκοντες ὅτι,²³⁴ should immediately follow Πιλάτου with the emended sentence referring to the self-deception of the disciples immediately following it. This, according to Bammel, makes the idea of the self-deception of the disciples and the illusion of the resurrection (ἐφάνη) clearer. In the light of such a reconstruction potentially positive expressions like σοφὸς ἀνὴρ become negative or ironic. Such a reconstruction of the text, justified with reference to known anti-Christian Jewish polemic,²³⁵ brings it more into line with its context, and brings out very clearly its parallels with, in particular, the story of the nameless Samaritan at the end of the section on Pilate’s tenure (*A.J.* 18.85f.).²³⁶ Bammel similarly highlights the potentially polemical character of the *TF*’s context by arguing that the account of Mundus’s seduction of Paulina in the passage immediately following the *TF* may

²³¹ Bammel 1974, 179-80. He tentatively justifies this emendation on the basis of a textual variant already found in a Eusebian manuscript, and previously referred to by Mueller 1890, 17; and Eisler 1929, 39. But as previously noted, this variant does not appear to exist.

²³² Such an emendation had already been tentatively suggested by Gutschmid 1894, 353; and Reinach 1897, 13. Bammel argues that the change from ἀγαπ- to ἀπατ- is well known from biblical manuscripts.

²³³ This emendation had already been suggested by Eisler 1929, 62, and accepted by Thackeray 1929, 145, not least because it conformed with scribal errors witnessed in the Josephan manuscript tradition e.g. *B.J.* 6.403 where ἀλήθως in some manuscripts is read as ἀήθως in others. For problems with this emendation see n. 273.

²³⁴ At *ibid.*, 188, Bammel does not seem to think such an emendation strictly necessary.

²³⁵ Bammel emphasizes the common currency of arguments concerning deception. In the Gospels Jesus is called a πλάνος (*Matt* 27:63; *John* 7:12); and at *Cels.* 2.12 he is seen as deceiving (ἀπατήσας) his disciples, an accusation, which is further witnessed in the same book with the description of Jesus as a charlatan (γοήης) at 1.68 and 69.

²³⁶ In particular Bammel highlights the description of the Samaritan as an ἀνὴρ ἐν ὀλιγῷ τὸ ψεῦδος; and the assertion that all his designs “catered to the mob” (κάφ’ ἥδονῆ τῆς πληθύος τεχνάζων). Maier 1978, 279-80, refers to Hammer 1913, who maintained the improbable thesis that this passage did in fact refer to Jesus. Note might also be taken of parallels (highlighted by Laqueur 1920, 277), which exist between the *TF* and Josephus’ account of the activity of the Jewish pretender who masquerades as Alexander, the son of Herod (*A.J.* 17.328-9). Describing his arrival at Puteoli near Rome, Josephus writes: “He was lucky enough to win over (προσαγαγέσθαι) the Jews living there by the same kind of fraud (ἀφ’ ὁμοίας ἀπάτης) ... The reason (for his success) was that they willingly believed his stories (τὸ ἥδονῆ δεχόμενον τὸς λόγους).”

well have taken up Jewish claims that Mary was the “unschuldige Opfer eines Übergriffes”,²³⁷ and could have been a concealed attempt to bring Christianity “in die Nähe der ägyptischen Religion.”

Those who argue for a polemically orientated emendation of the *TF* indulge, like Bammel, either in minor emendations of the text as it stands,²³⁸ or in more dramatic emendations, based either on other textual witnesses to the Josephan tradition and some intriguing conjectures,²³⁹ or on altogether more fanciful conjectures involving considerable additions to the text, arising in part from the immediate context in which the *TF* appears.²⁴⁰ This is famously the case with Eisler who constructs a text in which Jesus is a σοφιστής ἀνὴρ, who is described as the cause of a new disturbance (ἀρχὴ νέων θορύβων) and as the “most terrible of men (τὸν ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἐξαισιώτατον)”,²⁴¹ and whose disciples are also revolutionaries.²⁴² Eisler’s reconstructed text assumes at least four lacunae²⁴³, which can no longer be reconstructed.

An understanding of the *TF* as originally negative has a variety of things to commend it. There are indications in the original of some negativity, in particular in the use of the phrase ἡδονῆ δεχόμεναι.²⁴⁴ Such a reconstruction may be said to conform more easily with what we might hold to be a non-Christian Jew’s attitude towards Jesus and Christianity,²⁴⁵ and to

²³⁷ See in particular to *Cels.* 1.69.

²³⁸ See Thackeray 1929; Bienert 1936; and Poetscher 1975.

²³⁹ In this respect see Eisler 1929.

²⁴⁰ Note in particular Bell 1976, who taking up an earlier suggestion of Pharr 1927, sees the passage as originally containing an attack upon the annunciation story, a thesis which he claims to be supported by changes to the story of Mundus and Paulina found in Pseudo-Hegesippus’ version of the story, which he has removed from its context in *A.J.* Bell becomes still more fanciful in his assertion that the story of the deception of Fulvia is a covert spoof on Paul’s missionary activity, which was marked by the prominence given to women, by the collection, and by the role of co-workers.

²⁴¹ This begins the most extensive of Eisler’s emendations, encouraged in part by sentences found in the *Letter of Lentulus* and *The Acts of Pilate*. Here Joseph of Arimathea says of Jesus: ἐξ ἀνθρώπων φίλε ἐξαισιώτατε εἰ χρὴ μὲν καὶ ἀνθρώπων ὀνομάζειν. Bauer 1930, 560, argues that the reference here need not be seen as negative and the sentiment could be attributed to a Christian.

²⁴² After ἐπαύσαντο Eisler adds θορυβεῖν.

²⁴³ Poetscher 1975 produces a similarly political reconstruction of the *TF*. Aspects of Eisler’s reconstruction can also be seen in Thackeray 1929.

²⁴⁴ It refers to the welcome given to an impostor (*A.J.* 18.329), to Judas the Galilean in revolt (*A.J.* 18.6), to a plot for the seduction of a Roman matron (*A.J.* 18.70), and to the gloating pleasure stimulated by the news of the deaths of two Roman emperors (*A.J.* 18.236; 19.127). See also our discussion of Vicent’s theory above.

²⁴⁵ Eisler 1929, 187, maintains that Josephus could only have spoken polemically of Jesus and so “Die Textherstellung wird also ganz einfach so verfahren, dass alles Antichristlich-Polemische für echt, alles Jesus- und Christenfreundliche für eingeschoben be-

sit more comfortably in its present context. But it suffers from a number of weaknesses. The first concerns the subjectivity of the emendations offered.²⁴⁶ These are rarely supported by any known version of the *TF*,²⁴⁷ and are based upon the overarching assumption, which inspires them, namely that a Jew would have only negative things to say about Jesus and, for example, that he would have seen Jesus and his followers as revolutionaries.²⁴⁸ We cannot prejudge Josephus' views of Jesus and his followers so easily. Moreover, some of these reconstructions, as Bammel has noted, seem to assume too long a text in the light of what Josephus himself tells us about the length of the *A.J.*²⁴⁹ Secondly, and perhaps more significantly, if the mooted original *TF* had in fact consisted of a denunciation of Jesus, it is odd that (a) Josephus is at best ambivalent about associating James and his followers with lawlessness at *A.J.* 20.201-3; and that (b) Origen did not make it his business to denounce Josephus' opinions about Christ, particularly if the denunciation was as brazen as some have argued. After all, we know that Origen did not shy away from rebuking those who attacked Christianity, whether Jew or pagan,²⁵⁰ and the assertion that Josephus did

trachtet wird." See also Bell 1976-77, 18: "This solution has the advantage of letting Josephus remain a Jew in his attitude towards Jesus"; Zeitlin 1927/28, 235: "Being an aristocrat, of a family of priests, and under the influence of the might of Rome, he could look upon the Christians only as wicked and as madmen"; Poetscher 1975, 33: "Für den pharisäischen Iosephus war es von vornherein klar. Dieser Jesus ist ein ἀνὴρ σοφιστής und sonst nichts"; and Stanton 1994.

²⁴⁶ Note the words of Poetscher 1975, 41, here describing one of his emendations, but equally applicable to all of them: "All dies ist ein Spiel von Vermutungen und nichts mehr." And Bauer 1930, 560 (here writing about Eisler 1929, and commenting on the frequent occurrence in this work of such statements as "Josephus kann nicht wohl" and "es ist undenkbar, dass"): "Dies alles heisst nicht mehr, einen überlieferten Text analysieren und interpretieren, sondern ihn von einer vorgefassten Meinung aus zurechtbiegen und vergewaltigen."

²⁴⁷ The only real sign of a potentially hostile version of the *TF* in the textual evidence comes with the one manuscript of Eusebius' version at *Hist. eccl.* where we read Ἰησοῦς τις. But, as we hinted in an earlier part of our discussion, it is probably unsafe to extract too much from just one word. There might be irony there, but is there really negativity? Eisler 1929, 138-41, who is one of the most liberal emenders of the *TF*, puts little store by this objection, drawing attention to an order on the part of Theodosius and Valentinian, dated to 449 and found in the Justinian Codex, for the destruction of anti-Christian material. For Eisler, this was the event at which any mss. of Josephus containing a polemical account of Jesus' ministry would have been lost. Such an argument is possible, but it is not evidentially based.

²⁴⁸ There are some reasonable contextual arguments to favour the presence of at least some reference to a 'thorubos' or 'stasis', but it need not follow from this that Josephus thought of Jesus and his followers as revolutionaries, consciously engaged in the creation of a disturbance.

²⁴⁹ *A.J.* 20.267 where Josephus states that his *A.J.* is sixty thousand lines long.

²⁵⁰ See Dubarle 1977, 40-1, who makes this point in particular in relation to *Cels.*

not believe in Jesus, but was not far from the truth, is incompatible with the idea that Josephus polemized against Jesus and his followers.²⁵¹ In fact we know of no Christian, Jewish or pagan writer who ever attributed negative opinions about Christianity to Josephus.²⁵² It is, of course, possible to suggest that the text of the *TF*, which Origen may have possessed was already corrupt. But then, given the unlikelihood that Origen's text of the *TF* agreed with the received text, we would have to assume a second yet more positive redaction of the passage. This is not impossible given what was stated when discussing the Eusebian textual witness. But the case for a gradual change from negative to apparently more positive is not proven by that witness.²⁵³ Furthermore, we need to ask whether Christians would have taken it upon themselves to change the text of the *TF* if it was unambiguously negative.²⁵⁴ It is significant, for instance, that Tacitus' reference to the Christians, which is quite clearly negative in tone, was never changed by Christian scribes so as to make it more positive.²⁵⁵ Some might argue that given the fact that Josephus was much more important for Christians than Tacitus, such a drastic measure might be believable. But that importance does not appear so great before the time of Origen, and in any case an examination of the history of Christian use of Josephus, gives plenty of examples of a willingness to use his writings without citing the *TF*. Bammel, in particular, is wise to this kind of criticism, and this explains

²⁵¹ Wallace-Hadrill 1974, 354, takes a different view, arguing that the evidence of *Cels.* 1.47 and *Comm. Matt.* 10.17, implies that Josephus held views about Jesus, which were "positively hostile: καταδεξάμενος and ἀπιστῶν are statements of disbelief, not of doubt." But the context in which Origen refers to these views does not obviously support his interpretation.

²⁵² Note Scheidweiler 1954, 243: "Überhaupt haben wir keinen Anlass, an eine gehässige Berichterstattung über Jesus und seine Anhänger zu denken. Er enthält sich ja in seinen Berichten über Johannes den Täufer wie über den Herrenbrudern Jakobus jedes abfälligen Urteils, und weder Origenes ... noch irgendein anderer der älteren christlichen Schriftsteller macht ihm irgendwelche Gehässigkeit zum Vorwurf." Bauer 1930, 561-2, makes the same point.

²⁵³ Prigent 1978, argues for a gradual change. He points to a not dissimilar phenomenon in the Christian usage of Thallos and Phlegon's witness to an eclipse at an apparently similar time to Jesus' crucifixion. He shows how gradually over time the witness attributed to, in particular, Phlegon became more Christian in tone. But in this argument we are moving from an apparently neutral reference to a positive one. My thanks to Prof. M. N. A. Bockmuehl for referring me to this article.

²⁵⁴ Note Vermes 1987, 10 n. 46: "In my opinion if Josephus had included a genuine anti-Christian statement in *Antiquities*, it would simply have been deleted and not emended." More controversially, he continues: "More likely in that case, not only would we be without a *Testimonium Flavianum*, but also without the *Antiquities*."

²⁵⁵ This point is made by Dubarle 1977, 47, in response to an argument of Bell 1976, 18, which sees the failure to change Tacitus' text precisely as favouring his own view that the *TF* was originally negative.

why he restricts himself to minor emendations, emendations, which make a Christian skewing of the original Josephus in their favour believable, and conversely, an anti-Christian exploitation of the passage less likely.²⁵⁶ But even on Bammel's reading it remains, on his own admission, a denunciation of Christianity. Perhaps one final point needs to be made. If Josephus had chosen to denounce Jesus and his followers, would he not have done it at greater length? We will return to this point.

The view that the whole of the *TF* is a forgery has the same appeal as the opposite thesis that sees the whole passage as original to Josephus, for it does not involve us in any hypothetical emendations of the received text. We have already noted some of the arguments in its favour, whether tradition-historical, stylistic or contextual. From the point of view of content, the major strength of the forgery thesis lies in the fact that most scholars concede some degree of interpolation. Once the existence of such evidence has been conceded, then the whole passage comes under suspicion. For W. Bauer, for instance, unless it can be shown that a phrase could not have been written by a Christian or had to have been written by a non-Christian Jew, then the whole passage must be taken as an interpolation.²⁵⁷ For Bauer no such phrase exists. Schürer follows a not dissimilar method and finds that when his work is finished so few words of any substance remain that it is probably more advisable simply to accept that the passage is a forgery;²⁵⁸ and Olson argues that to denude the passage of its obviously Christian-sounding elements is to make of it something altogether incoherent.²⁵⁹ Conzelmann, following Norden, seeks more positively to argue that the passage reflects the structure of the Christian kerygma, as enunciated in Luke 4:16f. and Acts 10:37f.²⁶⁰

The kerygmatic point seems only to be partially confirmed by the contents of the *TF*, and in any case is hardly a powerful one if the widespread dissemination of the Christian kerygma is assumed.²⁶¹ Bauer's observa-

²⁵⁶ Something of this is captured in Bammel's concluding observation: "Die Christliche Fassung, mag sie nun durch einen Schreibfehler angeregt und dann weitergeführt oder mit voller Überlegung in den Text hineingetragen sein, wurde mit Betonung aufrecht erhalten und der Verteidigung des Christentums dienstbar gemacht." (Bammel 1974, 189).

²⁵⁷ "Da die Hand des Christen im Testimonium gar nicht zu verkennen ... kann der zweckmässige und erfolgversprechende Ansatz für mich nur so lauten: lässt sich das Ganze als Aussage eines Christen begreifen, oder sind wir irgendwo genötigt, eine jüdische, speziell josephische Grundlage anzunehmen." (Bauer 1930, 588-9).

²⁵⁸ Schürer 1964, 547-8.

²⁵⁹ Olson 1999, 308.

²⁶⁰ Conzelmann 1959, 622.

²⁶¹ See Poetscher 1975, 27-8. He also makes the interesting observation that the *TF* may be said to comport with the way in which accounts are given of individuals in so-called paradoxographic literature, attributed to such figures as Phlegon of Tralles.

tions, on the other hand, are more difficult to dismiss. But what criteria should we apply to determine whether a statement in the *TF* could not have been written by a Christian, and therefore would have to be attributed to a Jew? Bauer does not enlighten his reader on this point but we can surely assume that negativity about Jesus is the main criterion. And yet this is a presupposition, admittedly a not unreasonable one, but a presupposition nevertheless and one that assumes very precise boundaries between Christian and non-Christian Jewish understandings of Jesus. For Bauer either the *TF* was originally polemical, which it cannot have been, or it must be dismissed as an interpolation.

Six observations, which broadly relate to the content of the *TF* could be seen as possible defences of its existence in an emended form:

(1) The asyndetic ὁ Χριστὸς οὗτος ἦν appears as a somewhat intrusive phrase in the passage (nothing, which precedes it clearly leads us to believe that Jesus was the Messiah and its confessional tone seems distinct), implying, potentially at least, that it was added to an already existing original by a Christian scribe. But this point can only be made tentatively. If the passage is a gloss the imperfect ἦν appears odd, especially when one considers that not dissimilar phrases in the New Testament (Luke 23:25; John 7:26; Acts 9:22, although see Mark 15:39; Matt 27:54) where the present is used, and the fact that a scribe writing a gloss would be expected to use the present tense. Perhaps what we have here is a scribal ‘correction’ of an originally more neutral verb in the imperfect as we find, for instance, in Jerome, who witnesses to the neutral reading *credebatur*.

(2) Where we can be certain of the existence of Christian additions to Josephus as well as glosses, they strike a more aggressively Christian note. In this respect I would draw attention to the pseudo-Josephan passage about James, the Slavonic Josephan passage about Jesus, and some Christian glosses of Josephan manuscripts.

(3) Would an interpolator intent upon constructing the *TF* have left the story of John the Baptist in the form in which we find it and in the order in which we find it, that is, following the account of Jesus? We can already see Eusebius assuming a Christian order,²⁶² and yet the order in which this passage appears in all of our extant manuscripts of the *A.J.* does not vary.²⁶³ A similar point can be made in relation to *B.J.* 6.312f. where Jose-

²⁶² *Hist. eccl.* 1.11.4-6.

²⁶³ Something of this process seems to be witnessed in Malalas’ compressed version of the *TF* (PG 97.377), perhaps also reflected in the summary of the passage in the seventh century Anastasius of Sinai (PG 89.1248), where he makes Josephus refer to Jesus as ἄνθρωπος ἀγαθὸς καὶ δίκαιος, a description, which appears to pick up Josephus’ description of John as ἀγαθὸν and the preacher of a message of the mutual extension of righteousness to one another (πρὸς ἀλλήλους δικαιοσύνη).

phus describes an oracle, which spoke of a ruler of the world emerging from Judea and states that it was a reference to Vespasian. Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 3.8) rebukes Josephus for not seeing the oracle as referring to Christ, but there is no evidence of a manuscript of Josephus in which the original reference to the Emperor is changed.²⁶⁴ This point can be extended by noting plenty of other places where Josephus' account of matters has been manipulated by Christian interpretations, but where such 'misrepresentations' have never found their way into known mss. of Josephus.

(4) The context in which the passage is located carries with it potentially negative implications, as Norden and others have demonstrated.

(5) There are oddities in the content of the received text, which make it difficult to imagine that all of it is an interpolation. Why would someone who knew the language of Josephus sufficiently well to create a half-convincing forgery have used the phrase ἡδονῆ δεχόμενοι to describe those who followed Jesus, when in nearly all of the places where this expression occurs in Josephus (and it occurs in places in Josephus' *A.J.* not so distant from the *TF*)²⁶⁵ it is used negatively? Why would such a person have talked about Jesus attracting to himself many of the Greek world and the Jews, when such a reality does not appear to be reflected in the Gospels and probably was not the case at the time when a mooted forgery was written, a point Eusebius appears to recognise? Why would such a person have called the Christians a 'tribe' with its potentially negative connotations?²⁶⁶ Indeed, as I have indicated, apart from the reference to Jesus' messianic status, the language is not obviously Christian, even at those places where the sentiments would appear to be positive, such as the description of Jesus as a wise man and the doer of paradoxical deeds,²⁶⁷ elliptical descriptions, which can in any case be shown to have an air of detachedness about them, or even negativity,²⁶⁸ reinforced by the final sentence of the passage. Such

²⁶⁴ For similar rebukes see the gloss on the eleventh century Codex Urbinas gr. fol. 256 (Schreckenberg 1972, 114); and the thirteenth century Zonaras, *Epit.* II.16 (Schreckenberg 1972, 142).

²⁶⁵ A possible rebuttal of this point is found above at n. 210.

²⁶⁶ The fact that Bammel can with only minor emendations get back to a polemical version of the *TF* is suggestive in this context.

²⁶⁷ Different forms of this argument are found in Thackeray 1929, 277: "... any Christian interpolation is likely to betray itself by its style and content"; and Vermes 1987, 4: "It would have been meaningless to *invent* a testimony that did not support the belief of the interpolator."

²⁶⁸ The fact that there are some similarities between Josephus' description of pseudo-Alexander and Jesus, and the nameless Samaritan and Jesus, as shown in our discussion of negative reconstructions of the *TF*, is significant. Would a forger, with a good knowledge of Josephus, allow for such parallels?

an ‘air’ (of detachedness) is compatible with the reference to James in *A.J.* 20.200.

(6) It is difficult to find any obvious context in which such an interpolation would have arisen. Olson’s attempt to construct a context in which a Eusebian interpolation seems plausible is unconvincing. Feldman’s view that a forgery may have been useful in arguments about whether Jesus existed is anachronistic.²⁶⁹ A more likely scenario would be a polemical or apologetic one in which Christians were seeking independent witnesses for their claims about Christ. But a brief survey of the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the *TF* does not clearly support such a thesis. There is evidence, as noted above, of anti-Jewish and apologetic uses, but these are intermittent, and rarely highly developed. Indeed, in contrast to Christian interpolations of the LXX, it is difficult to see within an ancient context to what obvious use the *TF* could have been put. Any suggestions that the passage could be used to support a particular doctrinal position are unconvincing.²⁷⁰

Of course, none of these arguments is decisive. Point 2, for instance, is possibly circular in its reasoning, and there does not appear to be anything in the received text of the *TF* that a Christian could not have written, even if some of it might appear a little reserved. We should also note that making judgements about what a supposed Christian interpolator could or could not have written is dependent upon fragmentary evidence. To state, for instance, that a Christian scribe could not have spoken about Jesus as attracting to himself both Jews and Greeks is to exclude the possibility that the kind of mistake attributed to Josephus in this instance could not also be attributed to a Christian, and possibly to fly in the face of the evidence of John 12:20. Point 6 is also subject to objections. Second-guessing the context in which such an interpolation may have been made is an impossible task – we expect certain things, but those ‘certain things’ are based upon presuppositions, which cannot conceive of the very precise set of circumstances, which led to the interpolation and for which we no longer have evidence.²⁷¹ Moreover, the supposedly reserved character of the passage is dependent upon how we understand certain phrases and/or what we seek to include and exclude from a mooted original *TF*. We should not exclude the

²⁶⁹ Feldman’s attempt to argue that *Dial.* 8 witnesses to such an argument is a misreading of the passage.

²⁷⁰ Scheidweiler 1954, 242, suggested that the description of Jesus as σοφὸς ἀνὴρ could go back to a follower of Paul of Samosata. But to eke out of these two words an allusion to Paul’s not easily reconstructable Christology goes well beyond the evidence. In any case why would a follower of John have wanted to interpolate this description of Jesus into a passage from Josephus?

²⁷¹ It is possible, for instance, that the passage may have emerged in a pagan environment – for instance, the characterisation of Jesus as “a doer of paradoxical deeds” may have suited such an environment.

possibility that a Christian operating in the mid-third century with some knowledge of Josephus, at a time when, for instance, Jesus' role as miracle worker was much emphasized, could have penned something like our *TF*.²⁷² But would we expect an interpolation that appears agitated, possibly inconsistent in tone, and short, shorter in fact than the passage devoted to John the Baptist?

Conclusion

There remain many unresolved conundra in the study of the *TF* whether we are dealing with the history of its reception, its language, its text, its precise relationship to its positioning in *A.J.*, or its content. It has in part been the aim of this article to show up something of that complexity without necessarily arriving at some new solution. On balance I am in favour of retaining the passage in some emended form, although I am as clear as anyone about the weaknesses of such a position. Two broad alternatives present themselves in that case. Reconstructing an originally polemical passage, although perhaps from a contextual and historical perspective appealing, has to contend with (a) the absence of any indication in the *Wirkungsgeschichte* or textual reception of the *TF* of such a tradition, except in the fact that it is absent from certain writers' oeuvres, and the reading of Codex A of *Hist. eccl.* 1.11.7 as Ἰησοῦς τις; (b) the character of Origen's disputed reference to the *TF*; and (c) the fact of the Christian reception of Josephus. This last observation becomes more powerful the more extensive the reconstructed text. An ambivalent, neutral, or quietly skeptical, account seems more likely, in part by dint of elimination (the other alternative seems less inviting), in part with reference to the tone of the passage in which Josephus mentions James (*A.J.* 20.197-203), and perhaps also John the Baptist (*A.J.* 18.116-18) and Honi (*A.J.* 14.22-4), in part because it may explain some peculiarities in the history of its reception.

My reconstruction would be tentative. I would probably read Ἰησοῦς τις at the beginning; γίνεται is odd and there may have been a reference to a θορύβος but this may not have been negative. From there I would retain the wording of the received text up to τᾶληθῆ, accepting that ποιητής is odd in relation to Josephan usage and that if one accepts it one has to regard it as unique, at best a problematic concession; and including the words "if indeed he was a man" (they are ironically meant and serve to explain the γάρ of the next sentence); τᾶληθῆ is stylistically unproblematic, but may appear too positive. Some emendation such as τᾶθη or τ' ἄλλ '

²⁷² An interpolation at this time would explain why Eusebius is the first to refer to the passage, and why some later writers do not refer to it – it was absent from some manuscripts of Josephus.

ἦθη might prove helpful but neither is compelling,²⁷³ and τὰληθῆ could be retained on the grounds that a Christian might have been expected to write τὴν ἀληθείαν, itself a perfectly good Josephan word. I would retain a reference to the Messiah, although in reported speech, akin perhaps to Jerome's *credebatur esse Christus*, which interestingly, as noted above, mimics the tense of the received text's ἦν,²⁷⁴ although such an emendation carries the

²⁷³ In Josephus the adjective ἀθήης refers on two occasions to food eaten during a famine (*B.J.* 1.64 and *A.J.* 13.276: these are parallel accounts of John Hyrcanus' siege of Samaria), and on three occasions to people in a state of surprise or distress (*B.J.* 4.587; 6.403; *A.J.* 3.81). It, therefore, never refers to bizarre things, as it must do in the proposed emendation. While the phrase τ' ἄλλ' ἦθη is not witnessed in Josephus, the reading may be implied in Pseudo-Hegesippus' version of the *TF*.

²⁷⁴ Those scholars who object to the presence of any reference to Jesus' messianic status in the *TF* refer to, amongst other things: (a) the odd position of the relevant sentence, arguing that it would have been more natural to have placed it after either 'Jesus', or 'wise man'; (b) the fact that a knowledge of Josephus and other ancient writers shows that it would not have been necessary to explain the derivation of the word 'Christian' – writers often refrained from making explicit the place or person after which something was named; (c) the appropriateness of a glancing reference to Christians or Christ on the grounds of Josephus' dislike of messianism; and (d) the oddity of introducing a sudden and unexplained reference to the word Χριστός, which Josephus had not previously mentioned. In response to (a) one might argue that it is not unreasonable to see a reference to Jesus' messianic status as the natural endpoint of his description of Jesus and as potentially forming a link with the sentence about the decision to put him to death. In response to (b) one might note that Josephus is perfectly capable of explaining the derivation of individual place names, although it is not always the case that he does proceed in such a way (it is interesting that Meier 1990, 86, n. 27, following Pelletier 1964, cites as an example of Josephus' unwillingness to explain the derivation of a name *A.J.* 17.87 where Josephus notes that the port of Caesarea was named Sebastos after Augustus but fails to translate the Greek 'Sebastos'. But the problem with this example is that Josephus does in fact explain the derivation. All he assumes is a knowledge of Greek and Latin on the part of his audience). Interestingly, Tacitus *Annales* 15.44, a passage, which of extant ancient references to Christianity comes closest to that of Josephus, does refer explicitly to the derivation of the term Christian, as, at least implicitly, does Pliny the Younger (*Ep.* 10.96). Suetonius does not, although he may know of both the term 'Christian' and 'Christ'. (c) is not really an argument at all; and (d) is perhaps questionable on the grounds of the sudden way in which Josephus apparently refers to Jesus as the 'so-called Christ' at *A.J.* 20.200. But it is two positive arguments, which incline me to the view that there was some kind of an allusion to 'Christ' in a mooted original version of the *TF*. First, those who support the presence of a genuine *TF* often refer to *A.J.* 20.200 as assuming some previous reference to Jesus. If that is the case the reference to Jesus, the so-called Messiah, would appear to assume a mention of Jesus and the word Messiah (here Meier 1990, 89, seems to contradict himself when he says that no Gentile reader would have understood the reference to Jesus as the so-called Christ. Previously, *ibid.*, 86, he stated that every Gentile reader would have understood the equivalence of Jesus and Messiah). Secondly, it is difficult to read Origen's reference to Josephus as not believing or holding Jesus to be the Messiah, assuming that he knew of a version of the *TF*, without

weakness of allowing Josephus to appear neutral about a matter upon which he must have had an opinion.²⁷⁵ Retention of a reference to the disciples' love of Jesus (it complements "receiving with pleasure") and to the resurrection is appealing (it explains the Christians' ongoing affection for Jesus and it can be seen as subjectivist, and the passage can appear more neutral with the addition of ὡς between ζῶν and τῶν in the next line), although the lack of comment is odd.²⁷⁶ The passage about the prophets predicting his resurrection and countless other marvellous things is more complicated (its similarity, in sentiment, if not vocabulary, to a passage like 1 Cor 15:4 is notable), although there could be a hint of irony in the use of μυρία; and matters might be made easier if we follow Eusebius in his *Dem. ev.* and *Theoph.* and omit θαυμασία. The last sentence should be retained, whatever we think of ὡς ἔτι τε νῦν, and perhaps reflects the author's near surprise, contemptuous or otherwise, at the ongoing existence of such a strange group of people.

Such a reconstruction, however tentative, inevitably suffers from the hypothetical character of the emendations; the brevity of the reconstructed passage, which seems unsuited to the subject under discussion (the reconstruction offers no comment on the reasons for the decision to put Jesus to death, for instance); and from attributing opinions to Josephus that to some may seem incompatible with what we know about him and earliest Christianity. Could Josephus have chosen so succinctly to be ambivalent or neutral, or even quietly skeptical about Christianity?

imagining that such a version referred to Jesus' messianic status. For attempts to retain a reference to Χριστός in a form other than that in the received version see Eisler 1929, 68, who emends the phrase to καὶ (ὑπὸ τούτων) Χριστὸς εἶναι ἐνομιζέτο, an emendation endorsed by Dubarle 1973, 495; and Poetscher 1975, 30, who assumes that ἐπιηγάγετο refers to the substance of the claim that Jesus is the Messiah and therefore reads ὅτι ὁ Χριστός οὗτος εἶη. Reinach 1897, 13, omits the phrase altogether, but includes a reference to it in the words ὁ λεγόμενος Χριστός (recalling *A.J.* 20.200) after Ἰησοῦς in line 1.

²⁷⁵ See Nodet 1985, 337. The point is a good one but equally applies to *A.J.* 20.200.

²⁷⁶ φαίνω appears with a variety of meanings in Josephus, one of which is to refer to the appearance of God to prophets (see *A.J.* 7.92, 147), here in self-evidently positive contexts. A possibly negative usage, such as may be implied by the *TF*, is found in *C. Ap.* 1.289 where Josephus repeats Chaeremon's story of the appearance of Isis to Amenophis. But in this context Josephus explicitly states that the story is untrue (1.294), perhaps indicating that if he held the Christian story of the resurrection to be untrue, he would have been clear about it.

Postscript

It is my intention to finish this paper by answering the two questions contained in the last sentence of the previous paragraph. I shall first deal with the question of brevity and secondly with content.

The fact that Josephus appears to deal so succinctly with Jesus and his followers may at first sight seem surprising. Josephus devoted a good deal of discussion to other sects within Judaism²⁷⁷ – sects, which, bar one, were probably, though not certainly, no longer a reality at the time he was writing, unlike Christianity.²⁷⁸ He devoted as much or more space to the discussion of such figures as Athronges,²⁷⁹ Theudas,²⁸⁰ Judas,²⁸¹ and the Egyptian,²⁸² all of whom ceased to have any following after their death, not to mention John the Baptist. Josephus had lived in Palestine for almost forty years before he settled in Rome in about 75 C.E., and he continued to own estates in Palestine, given to him by Domitian as a tax-free gift.²⁸³ Christian presence in Palestine must have been something meriting discussion, since it is implied by 1 Thess 2:14, the persecutory activities of Paul, the executions of James the apostle (Acts 12) and James the brother of Jesus, the trial of Paul before the Sanhedrin (Acts 23:1f.), and subsequently before Festus and Agrippa (Acts 25:23f.) of whom Josephus was a good friend,²⁸⁴ and the general references in Acts to disturbances caused by Paul in the synagogue. Josephus states that he was in Rome in 64, defending some of his priestly friends against certain unnamed charges.²⁸⁵ That, according to Tacitus, was the year in which Christians were persecuted on a charge of arson.²⁸⁶ Josephus was a resident of Rome, a city, which had

²⁷⁷ See *B.J.* 2.162-4; *A.J.* 13.292-8; 18.12-15 for the Pharisees; *B.J.* 2.120-61; *A.J.* 18.18-22 for the Essenes; *B.J.* 2.119; *A.J.* 13.292-8; 18.16-17; *B.J.* 2.117-18; *A.J.* 18.23-5 for the Fourth Philosophy; *B.J.* 2.254-7; 4.400-5; *A.J.* 20.186 for the Sicarii.

²⁷⁸ Goodman 1994b, disputes this thesis on the grounds that we have no clear indication that these groups were destroyed, and that there is some evidence for their continuing existence. If he is right, we might be still more expectant of a reference to Christianity.

²⁷⁹ *B.J.* 2.60-5; *A.J.* 17.278-84.

²⁸⁰ *A.J.* 20.97-8.

²⁸¹ *B.J.* 2.118, 433; 7.253; *A.J.* 18.4-10; 20.102.

²⁸² *A.J.* 20.169-71.

²⁸³ *Vita* 429f.

²⁸⁴ *Vita* 363-7.

²⁸⁵ *Vita* 13-16

²⁸⁶ Corssen 1914, 136-40, argued, admittedly in a tentative way, that Josephus, through Poppaea, the wife of Nero, had been responsible for bringing the charge of arson against the Christians. He bases his thesis on a number of observations: the apparent lack of knowledge about Christianity on the part of the pagan authorities (hence the need for a non-pagan informant); the failure of Josephus to mention the fire at Rome (it brought

seen not only the persecution of Nero, but an earlier expulsion of Christians under Nero's predecessor Claudius, *impulsore Chresto*, as Suetonius elusively has it, an expulsion, which seemed to be an intra-Jewish affair.²⁸⁷ Josephus was probably a client of the Emperor Domitian who is generally believed to have been another ecclesiastical persecutor.²⁸⁸ And could Josephus possibly have passed up commenting at any length upon a religion, which apparently had a vision of biblical faith at some remove from his own, at least as that is envisaged in the *A.J.* and *C. Ap.*?²⁸⁹ Surely these observations support J. B. Lightfoot's view that Josephus is 'stolidly' silent about Christianity because he knew much more than he was willing to let on?²⁹⁰

Below I shall give a variety of explanations for Josephus' apparent brevity about Jesus and Christianity. Some of these will necessarily call into question elements of what has been stated in the previous paragraph.

(i) One approach to this problem is to argue that Josephus is in fact more concerned with Christianity than might at first appear to be the case. A. Paul,²⁹¹ in a brief discussion of *A.J.* 1, has argued that various features of Josephus' retelling of the Genesis narrative, in particular his avoidance of the term *διαθήκη*, can be seen as direct responses to emphases within Christian theology. Josephus' *A.J.* is seen as a reply to the propagandistic and burgeoning Christian community, and one much needed in the face of a "flagging and culturally deprived" Roman Jewish community. Indeed for Paul the whole of the *A.J.* is seen as a piece of anti-Christian propaganda. More modestly, but in a similar vein, A. Fornaro²⁹² has suggested that Josephus' account of the death of Moses at *A.J.* 4.326, in which Moses is enveloped in a cloud and disappears, can be seen as a veiled polemic against the Christian idea of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. Such arguments, however, carry little weight because they beg too many questions, not least why allusion and not direct attack should be the means of subvert-

back embarrassing memories); his presence in Rome at the time of the fire; and his friendship, through the Jewish actor, Alyturus, with Poppaea, the emperor's wife. It should be noted that the view that Jews may have been involved in the persecution of Nero is one supported by Simon 1986, 117; and mutedly by Walters 1998, 180.

²⁸⁷ Claudius 25.

²⁸⁸ *Vita* 369f; 429f. Mason 1998, 77f., has sought to revise Josephus' account of his close relationship to Domitian.

²⁸⁹ For the substance of some of these questions, see Pelletier 1964, 181. See also Schreckenberg/Schubert 1991, 37.

²⁹⁰ Lightfoot 1876, 366.

²⁹¹ Paul 1985, 475-80.

²⁹² Fornaro 1979, 431-46.

ing Christian claims,²⁹³ and why, in particular in the case of Paul's thesis, the *C. Ap.* is a work directed against pagans and not Christians.²⁹⁴

(ii) A second answer would take into account Josephus' purpose in writing his *B.J.* and *A.J.*, the texts in which one would expect him to mention Christianity. In the former, Josephus was intent in part upon writing an account of the war with Rome, which corrected what he saw as the faults in non-Jewish accounts. He was also keen perhaps to mend the relationship between the Jewish upper class and the Romans by allocating blame for the war to the group of revolutionaries; and to give a kind of theodicy to his readers, that is, explaining in theological terms why the war had happened and why it had been as disastrous as it in fact had been. Mention of a possibly still obscure sect, which had probably played no part in the war was not a necessary part of his undertaking. In the *A.J.* his aims are different. On the one hand, he is intent upon presenting Epaphroditus, his patron, and other pagans with a clear and apologetic account of the history of the Jews in which their antiquity and the excellence of their practices are made clear. On the other hand, he has a moral reason for writing what he does, namely in making clear that those who do the will of God are vindicated and those who do not are not. Again it appears difficult to see what role a description of Christianity may have played in such a presentation. His possible mention of Jesus may simply have arisen from the fact that, between the writing of *B.J.* and *A.J.*, Christianity had grown sufficiently in importance, whatever that might mean, to make a mention of Jesus and the Christians, however minimal, necessary.²⁹⁵ But this solution perhaps raises more problems than it solves. If Christianity had grown in importance was there not some need to comment upon it at greater length, whatever the aims of *A.J.*

(iii) Another answer may lie in examining Josephus' situation in Rome at the time of the writing of *A.J.* To some he appears as a remote figure, under attack from individuals like Justus of Tiberias, and at some distance from the Jewish population at large. What is clear is that we would perhaps

²⁹³ Something of the substance of this criticism is contained in Schreckenberg's observation: "Even a rebus fails of its purpose if it is too strongly encoded." (Schreckenberg/Schubert 1991, 38).

²⁹⁴ As Spilsbury 1998, 175, notes, Paul's thesis is not susceptible to proof. Spilsbury also shows that there are far better explanations to account for Josephus' avoidance of the term *διαθήκη*. He cites Amaru's view that Josephus avoided the term because of its association with the land and, therefore, zealous and messianic ideology, before going on to argue that the idea of the covenant is present in *A.J.* but it is expressed in terms of a client/patron relationship to make the idea more intelligible to his essentially non-Jewish audience.

²⁹⁵ Thackeray 1929, 127-8, who notes Christian writings, which had come into being since the writing of *B.J.*

like to have known much more about the Roman Jewish community in Josephus' own time, but in fact Josephus spares us almost any reference to it.²⁹⁶ The absence in Josephus' writings of any detailed reference to the synagogue as an institution and to the apocalyptic mindset, coupled with his idealised presentation of Judaism, in particular in the *C. Ap.*, have served to encourage this view of the isolated Josephus. As Momigliano wrote: "Josephus' Judaism was colorless, not false and not trivial, but rhetorical, generic, and rather unreal."²⁹⁷ Would such a man really have known much about Christianity? And would not the rather distant and reserved character of his reference make that point clear?²⁹⁸

In recent times there has been some attempt to question the thesis of the isolated Josephus. So, for instance, Goodman has argued that the *C. Ap.* shows clear signs of engagement with Roman society (the picture of Judaism, which is presented tends precisely to portray Judaism in a way, which would appeal to the values of Roman society) and concern for the wider Roman Jewish community (the very fact of writing such a work at a time when Jews were suffering difficulties shows considerable commitment to the cause, and certainly a resolve, which could not be described as abstract).²⁹⁹ A similar view of Josephus, arising from different observations, is made by Seth Schwartz. For him Josephus "was a public figure, interested in and informed about political developments in Rome and Judea at the time he was writing."³⁰⁰

(iv) Another explanation may lie in noting that Josephus appears singularly uninformed about a number of apparently significant Jews who flourished in the period covered by his writings. Here one might mention Hillel and Shammai, and Jehohanan ben Zakkai, as well as some groups such as the Herodians (Mark 3:6). In the same vein we might also note that even when Josephus does choose to tell us something about Jewish groups, it is never very detailed and can appear a little stylised. This argument might be thought by some better to support the idea that Josephus wrote nothing about Jesus, rather than that he would have written briefly about the subject,³⁰¹ but it could be used in such a way. Josephus is not as well informed about all aspects of Judaism as we might imagine and it is against that

²⁹⁶ For instance, he tells us nothing of the reaction of Roman Jews to the outbreak of the Jewish revolt and yet elsewhere he is only too keen to discuss the reaction of other parts of the Diaspora (*B.J.* 2.477-98).

²⁹⁷ Schwartz 1990, 119.

²⁹⁸ Note Martin 1941, 450, who sees the *TF* as entirely mediated to Josephus.

²⁹⁹ Goodman 1994a.

³⁰⁰ Schwartz 1990, 210f.

³⁰¹ This is precisely the use to which Windisch 1931, 278, puts it, although in this context to show that even if Josephus had not mentioned Jesus this would not be evidence that he did not exist.

background that we must understand his brief comments on Christianity, a brevity possibly supported by what he tells us about James at *A.J.* 20.200.

(v) Related to this explanation is the thesis that at the time Josephus wrote, Christianity was not a movement of any significance. It is perhaps the tendency of some Christian historians, keen to focus upon references to Christianity in the ancient sources, to lose sight of the fact that non-Christian authors of the first two centuries rarely refer to it, and when they do, their accounts are relatively brief. Tacitus only deems it fit to refer to the movement in the context of the fire of Rome in 64 (*Annales* 15.44), and then at hardly any length; and in his earlier *Histories*, in the section devoted to a discussion of Judaism, while reviewing the governance of Judea, he notes that *omnis quies sub Tiberio*, omitting any reference to the origins of the Christian religion. Suetonius refers to the Christians only in the most allusive manner, and not in the context of his discussion of the fire of Rome.³⁰² In a wider context we should also note that Pliny is unclear how to treat Christians, and appears unacquainted with them before his arrival in Bithynia, and Trajan shows very little knowledge of their beliefs in his reply to the governor.³⁰³ Lucian, who writes at slightly greater length, is still parsimonious in what he tells us about both Jesus and his followers.³⁰⁴ Interestingly, none of these writers, save Lucian, says anything explicit about the substance of Jesus' teaching or grounds for his death, difficulties which we noted when discussing the brevity of the *TF*. When some people reply that at the time Josephus was writing, Christianity was the victim of a Domitian-inspired persecution, and, therefore, in some sense, notorious, we should note that the evidence adduced in favour of such a persecution is at best tenuous.³⁰⁵ In this explanation, Josephus' brief reference to Jesus

³⁰² See *Claudius* 25 and the controversial reference to riots started at the behest of Chrestus; and *Nero* 16 where actions against the Christians, described as members of a "new and mischievous religion", by the Emperor are briefly alluded to. Juvenal, who one might have expected to have mentioned Christianity (it was, after all, a nasty imported eastern religion with strange beliefs and practices, and bearing some sort of a relationship to Judaism), has nothing to say about it.

³⁰³ In respect of this point note Burkitt 1913, 136: "The genuine Josephus ... lets us clearly see that to ordinary observers the events related in the Gospels and Acts appeared as a mere ripple on the surface"; and further on: "The day of Celsus and Porphyry had not yet arrived; it was not yet an anachronism to represent the Christian movement as harmless, though of slight importance." (139).

³⁰⁴ *Peregrinus* 11 and 13. Lucian refers to Jesus as a crucified sophist (his death is attributed to his introduction into the world of a new cult) and a lawgiver, and highlights his followers' belief in immortality, their contempt for death, and their general credulity.

³⁰⁵ The evidence normally adduced in support of a Domitianic persecution of Christianity centres principally on references found in Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 3.14-20) generally to persecutions of Christians, and specifically to the banishment of John to Patmos, and Flavia Domitilla, the niece of Flavius Clemens, to Pontia (also referred to in *Chron.*, year

and his followers simply reflects their obscurity at the time, which itself is reflected in the brevity of other non-Christian/Roman accounts of Christianity.³⁰⁶

This explanation can be extended by arguing that Jews and Christians in the Rome of the early 90s were not in close contact with each other. Such a view is often supported by arguing that the Claudian edict expelling Jews from Rome “*impulsore Chresto*” created a division between Christian and non-Christian Jews, hastening a separation, which seems to be apparent in the fact that Nero was able, at a strikingly early point in history, to differentiate between Christian and Jews in his persecution of 64 C.E. The substance of this observation may be seen to be confirmed by the fact that *I Clement* and *Hermas*, although strongly influenced by Judaism, betray no signs of any interaction with a wider Jewish community; Judaism is no longer an issue for these writers.³⁰⁷ This is particularly surprising in the case of a writing like *I Clement*, which shows a developed interest in the Hebrew scriptures, the interpretation of which was often the focus of Jewish-Christian disputation. In such a thesis Josephus’ brief reference to Christianity is more generally reflective of the lack of relations between the two communities in the city of Rome, a point which may already be

98), and to a trial of Jesus’ relatives; to a reference in *I Clement* 1.1, usually dated to the time of Domitian to “sudden and repeated disasters and hindrances, which have visited us”; to a reference in Cassius Dio (*Hist.* 67.14.1f.) to the execution of Flavius Clemens and banishment of his wife to Pandeteria on a charge of atheism; in Suetonius (*Domitian* 15) to the execution of the same man on an altogether vaguer charge; and references in later patristic authors to a persecution by Domitian. We should note that the Christian identity of Flavius Clemens is by no means certain, and even if we accept that his wife or niece, Flavia Domitilla, may have been Christian, we cannot be certain that her banishment had anything to do with her Christianity, and that in any case Eusebius is unable to point to a single execution of a named Christian during Domitian’s reign (the relatives of Jesus are, interestingly, released after their trial); that the translation of συμφοραί and περιπτώσεις at *I Clem.* 1.1 as “misfortunes and calamities”, appears unjustified and in any case does not find itself reflected in the rest of the epistle; and that the later patristic reference to a persecution of Domitian, which appear to date from the time of Melito (*Hist. eccl.* 4.26; Tertullian, *Apol.* 5.3f.), are probably based upon nothing more than the old adage that a bad Emperor persecutes (see *Hist. eccl.* 2.25.4; 3.20.7; 3.33.3). For a clear presentation of the whole question with an excellent bibliography see Welborn 1984; and Ulrich 1996.

³⁰⁶ See Martin 1941, 450, who may be said to embellish upon this idea: “Le *Testimonium* est peut-être plus encore le *Testimonium* du grand public judéo-gréco-romain des environs de l’an 100, que celui de Josèphe. Et ce caractère même est pour nous une garantie de son authenticité.” Feldman’s view that Josephus would have gained his information from a Roman archive is without foundation.

³⁰⁷ Note the absence of any reference to Jewish-Christian issues in Ignatius’ epistle to the Romans.

implied in his description of Christians as a $\phi\tilde{\upsilon}\lambda\omicron\nu$ quite separate from the Jews.³⁰⁸

But, inevitably, such explanations are subject to certain objections. The weaker of these relates to the implications of the fire of Rome and subsequent persecution of Christians. Would that not have brought some degree of notoriety to Christians in the city? And had not Josephus been in Rome at that time? Perhaps, but that notoriety does not appear to be reflected in pagan sources known to us (Suetonius does not even link the persecution to the fire), and Josephus makes no reference to a fire during his stay. Greater difficulty may be said to emerge from Josephus' statement about Jesus attracting to himself many Jews and Greeks. Most agree that such a statement is original to the *TF* and that it reflects subsequent activity on the part of Christians, rather than activity associated with Jesus. But if this is the case, then is not our claim about the obscurity of Christianity challenged?³⁰⁹ Moreover, we should emphasize that it is perhaps wrong to assume an exclusively Roman perspective on the part of Josephus, something which might be implied, for instance, by what appear to be broad similarities between the *TF* and Tacitus *Annale* 15.44.³¹⁰ He had ongoing concerns in Palestine, where Christianity could perhaps not be so easily dismissed as an obscure sect,³¹¹ just as apparently it could not be so easily dismissed in Pliny's Bithynia. This last point also shows up the potential weakness of our comment on the state of Jewish-Christian relations in Rome. The same relations in Palestine, whether we call them Jewish-Christian or something

³⁰⁸ In this respect it is notable that Josephus does not refer to Christianity as a sect, or $\alpha\tilde{\iota}\rho\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$, a term, which he does use to describe groups that he sees as a part of Judaism, such as the Pharisees or Sadducees.

³⁰⁹ Thackeray 1929, took this sentence to be clear evidence of the popularity of Christianity at the time Josephus was writing.

³¹⁰ The similarities between what Tacitus (*Annales* 15.44) and Josephus tell us about Christianity have been highlighted in particular by Harnack 1913, 1058-9. He argued that both writers, implicitly or explicitly, explain the origin of the term 'Christian' by reference to the name Christ; that both note that Jesus was put to death by Pilate; and that Tacitus' reference to the superstition breaking out again after being checked, corresponds to a certain extent to Josephus' statement about the continuing love of the disciples for Jesus and the continuing existence of Christians to his day. Harnack's claim that Tacitus was dependent for his reference to the Christians upon Josephus is unjustified (Josephus is more specific about the form of death that Jesus suffered; Tacitus mentions the office and forename of Pilate; Josephus' reference to the continuing existence of the Christians is friendlier than that of Tacitus; and Tacitus shows no real interest in Jesus), and even broad similarities between the two references seem minimal. The fact that they speak about Christianity in few words is perhaps all that really binds them together.

³¹¹ Flusser 1987, 222, appears to assume an essentially Roman perspective when he states that Josephus probably had not heard of the separation that was beginning to occur between Christian and Jew in Palestine, probably best exemplified for the Domitianic period in John's Gospel.

which more clearly reflects an intra-Jewish relationship, were, according to the New Testament, more involved.

(vi) Another explanation lies in arguing that Josephus may have been reliant for his information about Christianity upon information, which had been mediated to him, indirectly, by Christians. Christians in Rome, in particular writers such as *I Clement* and *Hermas*, show little or no interest in facts relating to Jesus' life. Knowing almost nothing about the movement, he wrote down with some modifications what he had heard from such people, which was in itself minimal.³¹²

But what can we be certain about the extent of Christian interest in Jesus' life amongst Roman Christians? (what about Mark's Gospel?). And is Rome the context against which to understand Josephus' knowledge of Christianity? And would Josephus have taken upon himself the task of mediating, in a possibly modified form, the to him probably, strange ideas of the Christians?

(vii) A final explanation picks up on aspects of what we have said in point (iii). As I noted earlier, Josephus had little time for the politically motivated messianism of his fellow Jews. He did not want to see Judaism as in any way compromised by such people. He had to make mention of some of them in his account of the Jewish war, particularly those associated with the fourth philosophy. In fact their role in the revolt was useful to him, for it distanced what Josephus saw as real Judaism, or Judaism properly conceived, from any association with the disastrous conflict with Rome. But the zealots and others had now died out. The difference between them and Christianity was that it remained an ongoing reality, which was at best an embarrassment to Jews, in particular Jews of Josephus' social and ideological background who wished to distance themselves from the messianic tendencies of some of their co-religionists.³¹³ Too much attention to the Christian movement "would have placed too high a value on it", and drawn too much attention to its association with Judaism, an association, which may have served as ammunition to non-Jewish critics of Judaism. John the Baptist is mentioned because he is still a Jewish figure

³¹² A Christian connection for the *TF* has been argued in various forms by Laqueur 1920, 276-8; and with greater subtlety, Garnet 1989 and Vicent 1997. The most detailed presentation of the view that *TF* is ultimately Christian in origin comes from Goldberg 1995, especially 76-7. Arguing for strong similarities between Luke 24:13-27 (see n. 230 above), he suggests that the best way of explaining these similarities is to argue for dependence upon a similar, probably Jewish Christian, source. Nodet and Taylor 1998, 4f., make much of this minimal interest in Jesus amongst post-apostolic authors, highlighting *I Clement* and indicating that it may have been from such circles that Josephus received his information about Christianity.

³¹³ See Eisler 1929, 35 n. 1, quoting Battifol.

who fits into Josephus' idealised Judaism,³¹⁴ and he is not a messianic figure.

Such a thesis, which explains Josephus' reluctance to mention Christianity by reference to his perceived dislike of Christian beliefs and his embarrassment at their association with Judaism, may be further supported by four observations. The first of these relates to the notably allusive way in which he reports the death of James. His failure to say anything specific about this character, the justice or injustice of the charge against him, about his followers (if indeed he implies that he had any), or the beliefs he entertained, may seem to some negligent to a peculiar degree. Secondly, we know from subsequent history that Jewish writers were in the main unwilling to engage polemically with Christianity in their extant writings, a point exemplified not only in later rabbinic writings,³¹⁵ but also, if we are to believe Photius, in the one writing he attributes to Josephus' contemporary and enemy, Justus of Tiberias.³¹⁶ It would be wrong to assume that such people simply knew nothing about Christianity, or that they were unacquainted with Christians. Their silence could have been illustrative of their contempt for, or embarrassment about, Christianity, rather than their ignorance.³¹⁷ Thirdly, and against those who would argue that such a thesis seems unrealistic because it assumes that at this early stage in Christian history Christian association with Judaism was too obvious and indelible a feature to deal with by silence, one might note that Josephus seems to have been writing at a time when pagan writers of whom we have evidence, seem no longer to associate Christianity with Judaism. Here we should note, for instance, that Pliny and Trajan appear to have no inkling that Christianity emerged out of Judaism,³¹⁸ and Tacitus, while he knows of Christianity's origins in Judea, does not assume any ongoing relationship with Jews.³¹⁹ A fourth, and more fragile, supporting observation might lie in noting that when it did not suit him Josephus did not give much account of the teachings of a particular group, a case in point being the Sicarii.

³¹⁴ Schürer 1964, 548; and Schreckenberg/Schubert 1991, 37-8.

³¹⁵ For a particularly skeptical reading of this material, see Maier 1978.

³¹⁶ "A victim of the evils of the Jews (Ὁς δὲ τὰ Ἰουδαίων νοσῶν), he himself being a Jew, he made not the slightest mention (οὐδὲν ὅλως μνήμην ἐποιήσατο) of the birth of Christ, nor of the events, which concern him, nor of the miracles, which he performed." (*Bibliothèque* 33).

³¹⁷ The same point, though with a slightly different emphasis, is made by Goodman 1994b, in his attempt to explain why the rabbis and others failed to mention Jewish sects, which, in his opinion, probably went on existing after 70.

³¹⁸ *Ep.* 10.96 and 97.

³¹⁹ See also the passage, referred to as Tacitus, Fragment 2, and cited in Sulpicius Severus, *Chronica* 2.30.7, where the fact of Christianity's origin within Judaism is affirmed. For a defence of an attribution of the passage to Tacitus, see Lauport 2000.

Such a thesis, which recognizes an assumed negative response of Josephus to Christianity, does not appear to allow for even a brief allusion to Christianity such as has been proposed here. Some might argue that it works only if there is absolute silence, that is, there is no mention of Christ and his followers at all. The fact that Josephus mentions the death of James, and associates James explicitly with Jesus, implying at the same time a positive attitude to him on the part of some individuals he evidently respects, may prove difficult for this thesis.³²⁰ Furthermore, it assumes as given that Josephus was operating in an anti-Christian environment (a not unreasonable assumption given the character of *known* Roman and Jewish responses to Christianity), that he reflected that hostile mood, and that he would have perceived silence as the best way of distancing himself from Christians and their claims.³²¹ As those claims involved a reorientation of the Jewish tradition, and in the case of Paul a reorientation in a direction, which Josephus would have found uncongenial, one cannot be certain of the reasonableness of the last claim.

Explaining the brevity of the *TF* is difficult (the final sentence of the preceding paragraph raises the question again), and some may feel that my failure to present a fool-proof explanation is evidence of the precariousness of any defence of its authenticity, however one emends it. I am quite prepared to accept this judgement, but on the condition that it is also accepted that there are possible defences, and that even though these defences are based upon certain challengeable presuppositions, so are the attacks, which people will launch upon them, since these are, in the end, based upon more general judgements about Josephus, the context in which he would have judged Christianity (Rome or Palestine), the state of relations between Jews and Christians in either of these places and so on.³²²

The problem of presupposition is also central to our understanding of the content of the *TF*. For example, on purely stylistic grounds Josephus'

³²⁰ Eisler 1929, 34. Meyer 1921, 206-11, who assumes that the *TF* is an interpolation, partially responds to this point by arguing that Josephus would have distinguished between Gentile Christianity, which he would have seen as separate from Judaism and to which he was self-evidently hostile, and Jewish Christianity, represented by James, for which he (and other pharisees) had some sympathy. But the view assumes that it was possible to make such simple distinctions between different types of Christianity, and that those distinctions would have been appreciated by others.

³²¹ In arguing against this thesis Eisler 1929, 33-6, emphasizes the fact that Josephus was at pains to denounce other Jewish messianic movements, in particular those associated with the zealots; that members of the Flavian family had an association with Christianity and that they had been persecuted for such an association; and that Christian messianic belief appeared to run counter to Josephus' own belief in the messianic status of Vespasian.

³²² The centrality of context as an issue in the interpretation is rightly appreciated by Laqueur 1920, 274-5; and Vicent 1997.

description of Jesus, as σοφὸς ἀνὴρ and διδάσκαλος ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἡδονῆ τὰληθῆ δεχομένων presents no real problem. The real problem lies in believing that a person like Josephus could have said such a thing about a person like Jesus, the central figure of a movement like Christianity. Eisler, for instance, believes it to be self-evident that Josephus would have perceived of Jesus as a zealot-like figure akin to Athronges, Judas, and Theudas precisely because, *pace* Eisler, Jesus was in fact such a figure, and that Josephus would have perceived of Christianity as a dangerous apocalyptic movement. These are not unreasonable assumptions, but they are assumptions nonetheless, which are dependent, amongst a number of things, on a particular understanding of the context in which Josephus would have heard about Jesus and Christianity (and of the ministry and aims of Jesus). And yet about that context we cannot be certain, for what we know about it is at best fragmentary. This is why in the end arguments like those of Laqueur, and most recently Vicent, are possible, if problematic, and helpful, since indirectly they remind us of our ignorance on precisely this vital point. Of course, we can present an argument in favour of a position like Eisler's, which would involve emphasizing evidence for Jewish responses to Christianity in the New Testament, in particular John's Gospel and Revelation, early patristic literature, some rabbinic sources, and roughly contemporaneous pagan comments (Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny), which, though short, are broadly negative. We can emphasize Josephus' dislike of apocalyptic movements, and the apparently apocalyptic profile of early Christianity.

We can, however, present an argument in support of a more ambivalent and quietly skeptical response to Christianity on the part of Josephus. This would involve emphasizing the ambivalent account of James' death at *A.J.* 20.200, the only apparently independent evidence we have about Josephus' reaction to Christianity, where the historian depicts those he apparently respects defending James and his followers. We could emphasize Josephus' positive response to John the Baptist and Honi, figures who, on one reading of the available evidence, could be seen as similar to Jesus (rather than the zealot-like figures to which Eisler and others refer).³²³ We could go on to emphasize the evidence in the New Testament for a divided response on the part of Jews to Christianity, noting in particular the response of Gamaliel (*Acts* 5:37f.) and Agrippa II (*Acts* 25), both of whom are mentioned by Josephus and evidently respected by him, and both, in particular the former, reacting with a certain unflustered coolness, but not anger, to

³²³ *A.J.* 18.22-5. See Flusser 1987, 222. Others point to Josephus' apparent sympathy for religious ascetical types, like his own teacher, Bannus; and Pelletier 1965, 21, points to his respect for those who follow their masters, just as he had followed Bannus (*Vita* 10-12).

the new phenomenon.³²⁴ More speculatively, we could go on to imagine a meeting between Josephus and the author of *1 Clement*, a letter written in Rome and traditionally dated to 96 C.E., a date very close to the time of the writing of Josephus' *A.J.* We could argue that such a meeting would not necessarily have led to an open dispute or the exchange of abuse. Both writers had a strong respect for scripture, a loathing of 'stasis', and a developed sense of the need for political order. Josephus might have left such a meeting thinking that Clement and his ilk were slightly cranky (the possibly ironic sense of the phrase "if indeed he was a man"),³²⁵ but not necessarily believing that they were dangerous, or even merited a *lengthy* refutation,³²⁶ a reaction supported by their possibly paltry presence in Rome. Such a view of matters allows us to move closer to a position in which the *TF* becomes witness to a more neutral, detached, perhaps even slightly skeptical, view of Christianity on the part of a Jew.³²⁷ To some this may be to presuppose too much that is unlikely, and it is certainly understandable why scholars like Vermes, Flusser and Meier, with their distinctive views of Jesus, prefer a reconstruction of the *TF*, which is supported by such a set of presuppositions.³²⁸ True, but perhaps the end of this paper, with its *necessary* indulgence in a form of 'virtual history', is simply an attempt to make clear the role of presupposition in any assessment of the problem of Josephus and Christianity. Conscious of the truth of this observation, it tentatively presents the possibility that a Jew living at the end of the first century C.E. could have been almost indifferent to Christianity, an indifference, which implies a variety of things about Jews and Christians and their interaction in that period.³²⁹

³²⁴ Also worth mentioning are the two stories about Jacob of Sakhnin, recorded in the *Tosefta* (*t. Hul.* 2.22-4), and some later midrashic texts (*Eccl. Rab.* I, on 1.8) where we have evidence of Jewish use of Jesus' name by a non-Christian Jew in healing, and some of his sayings, here in the context of strict prohibitions against any dealings with *minim*.

³²⁵ This, of course, raises questions about the sort of people who would have spoken to Josephus about Christianity.

³²⁶ Flusser 1987, 223.

³²⁷ Dubarle 1977, 55.

³²⁸ In particular note Vermes 1987, 10, who argues that Josephus achieved something that very few early witnesses to Jesus achieved, a portrait of him *sine ira et studio*.

³²⁹ Professor Allen Brent has presented another explanation broadly favourable to this more neutral reconstruction. He accepts the view that Jewish-Christian relations at the time of Domitian were poor but argues that Josephus would have formed his views about Christianity in what Brent terms his formative years before 70. The key, then, to understanding his attitude to Christianity lies in his understanding of James to whom he was basically favourable – "he respected James who had not been a zealot despite his messianism, (and) who had been unjustly and illegally stoned by a Sadducean High Priest."

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Chapter 9

The Four among the Jews^{*}

The difficulties of the task

Any attempt to reconstruct Jewish opinion about Christianity in antiquity is dogged by a number of problems. Most of these arise from the character and nature of the available sources. On the one hand, we lack any substantial Jewish source on Christianity, and the fragmentary extant material is not without difficulty. On the other hand, the Christian sources, which purport to give us Jewish opinion about Christians, are polemical, and the manner in which they represent the opinions of that community is repetitive and stereotypical. It has long been noted that to read Jewish opinion from such texts is either misguided¹ or at best a complex and nuanced task, involving the realisation that such sources contain a difficult-to-decipher mixture of image and reality.²

These remarks are relevant to the subject of this chapter, Jewish knowledge of and interaction with the canonical Gospels. In this more limited context there are grounds both for pessimism and for optimism. Pessimism emerges in particular from the limited character of the source material available. Interestingly, if we examine the Christian material which we can term *adversus Judaeos*, it is striking that it concerns itself much more with arguments about the scriptural (in Christian language, Old Testament) justification for Christian claims,³ rather than with a defence of *ad hominem* assertions against the figure of Jesus as he is recorded in the canonical Gospels. Why this might have been the case will be examined briefly below. Nevertheless, there are grounds for some optimism. First, insofar as we have any Jewish material from antiquity, which concerns itself *explicitly* with Christianity, it relates to Jesus. Although fragmentary and contested, at least such material exists. Secondly, in the Christian sources we are better served than might at first seem the case. Some of the relevant

^{*} First published in M. N. A. Bockmuehl and D. Hagner (eds.), *The Written Gospel* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2005), 205-21.

¹ See Taylor 1995. Her work reflects the opinions of scholars stretching back to Harnack.

² See Lieu 1996.

³ See Bammel 1966-67, 221-2.

texts have a high claim to reflect actual Jewish comment on Christianity. In addition to Celsus' Jew there are potentially helpful sources elsewhere, and it is precisely the limited and exceptional character of this material which means that we must take it seriously as a source of information for genuinely Jewish opinion. Yet none of this optimism should disguise the difficulties we face in addressing the question set, and so what follows will be necessarily tentative in the claims it makes.

The genre, audience and language of the Gospels

To some, questions relating to the genre, audience and language of the Gospels may appear irrelevant to the task, which lies before us. But a *prima facie* case in favour of a known Jewish genre, an intended Jewish audience on the part of one or more of the evangelists, and a possibly Semitic *Vorlage* for a Gospel, would present the beginnings of an argument for Jewish knowledge of the Gospels.

For the longest time there has been an ongoing debate about the genre of the Gospels. For some they should be considered *sui generis*; for others, it is clear that they bear a close relationship to certain known literary genres. Recently there has been a tendency to see their closest literary parallel in the form of the 'bios', or life, which begins to emerge in the third century B.C.E in the Greek world.⁴ For Gerd Theissen such a generic definition of the Gospels renders them in some sense "alien to Jewish literature",⁵ for in Judaism the only comparable parallel lies in Philo's *De Vita Mosi*, which is itself addressed to Gentiles.⁶ In Theissen's view, then, the very fact of the existence of the Gospel form indicates a desire to demarcate the evolving religious community from its Jewish root.

Theissen's point is overplayed. The decision to write a *bios*-like account of Jesus' life may have arisen as a consequence of the early Christian conviction of the centrality of the figure of Jesus, of the incarnation as a soteriological principle, rather than as the result of any desire on the part of the authors concerned to participate in an act of religious demarcation.⁷ Moreover, it is quite wrong to set up as strict a distinction as Theissen does between the Gospels and any known genre of writing engaged in by Jews, Philo, for instance, does not present his decision to write a life of Moses as

⁴ See Stanton 2002, 13-18.

⁵ Theissen 1999, 169.

⁶ See *Mos.* 1.1f.

⁷ It is striking that we have no Gospel-like account of an individual rabbi. This may have arisen from the fact that rabbis were regarded principally as teachers, and not as individuals whose lives carried essential significance (unlike Jesus).

eccentric and requiring justification. And Josephus' *Vita*, while not straightforwardly a *bios*, is close enough to render Theissen's comments too absolutist.

Theissen's observation, by implication, raises the old problem of Gospel audiences. In this context, we can only be brief. At the most general level we should note that the world the Gospels describe is a Jewish one and that they assume knowledge and an acknowledgement of the Jewish scriptures. Moreover, all of the Gospels give evidence of what could be construed as Jewish objections to Jesus and his preaching (see, for instance, Matt 28:15), and in the case of the Fourth Gospel, they do this in an intense and highly polemical manner (e. g. John 9:22). None of these observations proves a Jewish audience and other evidence may serve to count against such a conclusion, not least places in the Gospels where distinctive Jewish practices are explained, or where an apparent separation from the non-Christian Jewish community is assumed. A good argument can, however, be made in favour of a Jewish audience for Matthew's Gospel.⁸ In arguing in such a way, we might combine the external testimony of Origen that the Gospel of Matthew was written for Jews who had come to believe (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.4), which itself may reflect an old tradition possibly based upon the view that Matthew was originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic (of which more below),⁹ as well as the fact that, in whatever form, Jewish Christian groups possessed copies of Matthew. Reference in this context might also be made to Matthew's apparently more conservative attitude to the Jewish law. Such a case assumes Christian, rather than non-Christian, Jewish readers, but we should not hold to such a clear division between the two in the first century and even beyond. If Jewish Christians were the intended audience of some Gospels, then we should assume that they would have spoken to unconverted Jews about them.

Any case for a Jewish audience for the Gospels would be stronger if we were able to prove the existence of a Hebrew or Aramaic Matthew. Reference to the existence of the former is found in Papias who says that Matthew brought together in writing the sayings of Jesus ἐν ἑβραϊδὶ διάλεκτῳ (Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.16), in Irenaeus (*Haer.* 3.1.1); in Eusebius' statement that the apostle Bartholomew took Matthew, written in Hebrew characters, to India (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.10.3); and in the repeated view, expressed in Epiphanius' account of the Ebionites, that the fourth century Jewish Patriarch Joseph of Tiberias had available for use Matthew in Hebrew (as well as John and Luke-Acts of the [*Pan.* 30.3.8-9; 6.9; 12.10]).

⁸ Some of these issues are indirectly addressed in Stanton 2002, 146f.

⁹ Origen refers to the fact that Matthew was originally written in Hebrew in the same passage. See also Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 3.24.6 for Eusebius' view that Matthew originally preached to the Hebrews.

However, attempts, notably by George Howard, to prove the existence of an ancient Hebrew Matthew have generally met with skepticism,¹⁰ not least because it is unclear, certainly for the first and second centuries, that Jews would have preferred Hebrew rather than Aramaic over against Greek. Aramaic as a more likely language might be said to be supported by the Aramaic terms found in Philo, Josephus and the New Testament, and the lack of evidence for the use of Hebrew in that period.¹¹ This has led some to countenance the possible existence of sayings material in Aramaic, even if not a full Gospel.

Nothing assured, then, emerges from the discussion above. We now proceed to actual evidence for Jewish interaction with the Gospels.

Evidence for knowledge of the Gospels amongst Jews

Direct Jewish references to the Gospels

There are few direct references to Jewish use of the Gospels. I shall deal briefly with three of these.

b. Šabb. 116a-b

In this passage we read of a certain *philosoph*, in this instance, a Christian,¹² who had a reputation for incorruptibility. Wishing to expose him as a fraud, Imma Shalom, R. Gamaliel's sister, the wife of R. Eliezer, brings him a golden lamp and a Libyan ass as bribes, and states that she wishes to share in the inheritance of her father. Her brother notes that such a thing is not possible for it is decreed that where there is a son, a daughter shall not inherit. The philosopher denies the validity of this law stating that "since the day that you were exiled from your land the law of Moses has been superseded and the '*awon gilyon* given, wherein it is written, 'a son and a daughter inherit equally.'" But in order to contradict him and expose him as a fraud, R. Eliezer says: "I have looked at the end of the '*awon gilyon*, wherein it is written, 'I, '*awon gilyon*,¹³ came not to destroy the law of Moses nor to add to the law of Moses, and it is written therein, a daughter does not inherit where there is a son."

¹⁰ See Horbury 1999, 128-9.

¹¹ Note the fact that the only known quotation of a Gospel verse in rabbinic literature occurs in Aramaic (*b. Šabb. 116a*: see our discussion below).

¹² For the possibility that the Christian was a bishop, arising out of the apparent proximity of the Greek words *episkopos* and *philosophos* see Herford 1903, 148. Also see Kuhn 1964, 53 n. 102: "Er (ein Philosoph) bezeichnet jeden Nichtjuden, der für irgendwelche wissenschaftliche oder religiöse Dinge Interesse hat."

¹³ Kuhn 1964, 54 n. 109, rejects the claim that '*awon gilyon* here is a gloss.

The authorities mentioned in the passage, R. Eliezer (B. Hyrcanus) and R. Gamaliel, hail from the first century but most scholars assume a later date, perhaps no earlier than the beginning of the third.¹⁴ With the notable exception of Johann Maier,¹⁵ most scholars who have examined this passage argue that the anonymous ‘philosoph’ is a Christian and that it should be read, therefore, as a sharp attack upon Christianity in which the fraudulence and corruptibility of one of its followers together with the contradictory character of its Gospel are exposed.¹⁶ Three principal observations support this. The first relates to the reference to the apparent redundancy of the Jewish law:¹⁷ the second to the threefold mention of the ‘*awon gi-lyon*, taken by most to be a reference to the *euangelion*; and the third to a possible allusion to Matt 5:17 in the words: “I came not to destroy the law of Moses but to add to it”, interestingly quoted in Aramaic. Admittedly, these words do not constitute a precise reproduction of Matt 5:17,¹⁸ and they do not appear at the end of the Gospel as the passage implies (in this respect one should note that the passage falsely attributes to a Gospel a statement about a son and a daughter inheriting equally), an observation, which might lead one to the view that the reference is to a collection of sayings rather than to any known Gospel.¹⁹ Even if we are left to accept this rather muted conclusion, the passage still gives evidence of a text in

¹⁴ In defence of a first-century date see Herford 1903, 146-54. For a date no earlier than the beginning of the third century, see Kuhn 1964, 55. He mentions in particular the fact that the passage is preserved in Aramaic, that it is unattributed and that it assumes things that seem unbelievable (Christian judges adjudicating in Jewish disputes, the Mosaic Torah as less authoritative than the Christian Gospel, etc.). He argues that the characters mentioned in the passage were chosen because both were known to be associated with Christianity, Gamaliel as the drafter of the *Birkath ha-minim* and Eliezer as someone who flirted with Jewish Christianity (see *t. Hul.* 2.24). Horbury (forthcoming), suggests that the reference to a Christian as a ‘philosoph’, in this context thinking of Justin and Tatian, and the punchline of the passage which mentions “the overturning of a lamp”, recalling accusations against Christians of such a practice in what were believed to be orgies (see Minucius Felix, *Octavius* 9.3.6-7), render a late second/early third century date likely. Kuhn also argues that the passage has evolved and that the Christian dimension has been added later. On this, see also Bammel 1982.

¹⁵ Maier 1982, 76f. His discussion contains a detailed bibliography.

¹⁶ Kuhn 1964, 56, terms it “eine satirische Anekdote zur Verhöhnung des Christentums und seines Evangeliums.”

¹⁷ Maier 1982, 86, relates the statement not to a Christian argument about the abrogation of the law, but to a realization that since the disastrous Jewish war against Rome, the Jews had lost their legal autonomy.

¹⁸ See Davies and Allison 1988, 485 n. 8. They refer to Jeremias’ opinion that the additional words “nor did I come to add to the law of Moses”, was Jesus’ original statement but sensibly reject it.

¹⁹ Maier 1982, 90, argues strongly that the passage has nothing to do with Matt 5:17 and is in fact closer to Deut 4:2; 13:1; and a passage like *b. Hul.* 63b.

which we have, in close proximity to each other, an allusion to a dominical saying and the word ‘Gospel’. To deny any Christian association, as Maier does, would seem overly skeptical.

The gilyonim and the books of the heretics

At *t. Yadayim* 2.13 we read: “The Gospels (*gilyonim*) and the books of the heretics (*sifrei minim*) do not defile the hands.” And at *t. Šabb.* 13 (14).5 we read: “The Gospels (*gilyonim*) and books of the heretics (*sifrei minim*) are not saved but are left where they are to burn, they and their sacred names.” The association of the term *gilyonim* with the Gospels has not gone undisputed and the term has also been understood as apocalypses or the margins of biblical scrolls.²⁰ Identification with the canonical Gospels arises precisely from its linguistic proximity to the term used in *b. Šabb* 116a-b where it seems certain that the reference is to something approximating to a Christian Gospel. Kuhn argues that such reasoning is spurious as the passage from the Talmud is clearly later than these passages from the Tosefta and that the transcription of the Greek word εὐαγγέλιον as *gilyonim*, that is, a transcription of only the second half of the word, is odd practice when we consider other transcriptions of Greek words in rabbinic material.²¹ For Kuhn the term should be understood as marginalia cut off from biblical books and *sifrei minim* as Bible scrolls that belong to communities thought to be heretical by the rabbis (see *b. Git.* 45b), as opposed to other Christian books or Christian Torah scrolls.²² While none of Kuhn’s points strikes me as conclusive, they warn us against a straightforward acceptance of the passages as referring to Christian books. Nevertheless, if we render *gilyonim* as ‘Gospels’,²³ while these references furnish us

²⁰ For a bibliography and a delineation of the alternatives see Kuhn 1964, 33-4. Interestingly, Alexander 1991, 11-15, assumes that the term refers to the Gospels and does not engage in a straightforward attempt to justify this assumption.

²¹ Kuhn 1964, 34-5. He also argues that if the Tosefta is second century, it would seem odd to have a reference to ‘Gospels’ in the plural from this time. But this point is less powerful as Kuhn mistakenly assumes that Irenaeus is the first to refer to the Gospels in the plural (see Justin, *1 Apol.* 66.1).

²² Ginzberg 1922, 122-3 n. 19, accepts a translation of these passages as ‘Gospels’, arguing that the interpretation of the term as margins as we appear to have at *b. Šabb.* 116a (a different section from that discussed above) arose from the fact that defilement would only be connected with a document where 85 letters or more of scripture were continuously quoted. This doesn’t occur in the Gospels and hence the interpretation.

²³ Some might want to refer to the reference at *b. Sanh.* 106b where the nameless heretic, in discussion with R. Hanina, states that “he has read a book he calls ‘The chronicle of Balaam’ which states that Balaam the lame was thirty-three years old when Pinhas the Robber killed him.” For a discussion of the passage see Herford 1903, 72-5. It is quite uncertain whether the reference to Balaam here is a reference to Jesus. G. F. Moore’s

with little information about how the Gospels were read by Jews, they might suggest an attempt by some Jewish Christians to pass these texts off as canonical within the synagogue, and perhaps, more interestingly, presents the possibility that these texts were read in Hebrew.²⁴

Joseph and the Hebrew gospels of Tiberias

At an early point in his lengthy discussion of the Ebionite heresy, Epiphanius, as noted above, mentions the fact that members of the sect use a Hebrew version of Matthew. Mention of this translation leads Epiphanius to state that the Gospel of John was also translated from Greek to Hebrew and that this is to be found in the Jewish treasuries together with a copy of the Acts of the Apostles. Epiphanius reports that he has been told this by a number of Jewish converts, in particular Joseph of Tiberias, whose story he then goes on to relate, repeating the claim about the Gospel translations (see *Pan.* 30.3.8-9; 30.5.3; 30.6.9; 30.12.10).

It is difficult to assess the historical value of this tradition concerning the existence of Hebrew translations of the Gospels secretly retained in a Jewish genizah. Some scholars might want to dismiss the assertion on the grounds that (a) the claim about the Acts of the Apostles and John is found nowhere else; and (b) that the account of Joseph as found in Epiphanius is uncorroborated and contains much that might be considered questionable.²⁵ But in relation to (b) there are elements of the story that seem to ring true,²⁶ and that it would not seem a peculiar thing for Jews to have Hebrew copies of the Gospels for the purposes of disputation, not least at a time when Christianity had become the favoured religion of the Emperor (note

view that we should read the “Books of Ben-Laana” at *j. Sanh.* 10.28a as a reference to the Gospels seems far-fetched. On this see Ginzberg 1922, 121 n. 18.

²⁴ This point is made by Alexander 2007, 682. While noting that it is possible that there is a reference here to Greek Gospels read in the Greek-speaking Diaspora, he argues that “(t)he question as to whether one should save Gospels and other books of the *minim* (Alexander understands *gilyonim* and “books of the *minim*” as non-contrastive) from destruction could only arise if those texts were *in Hebrew* and contained divine names in Hebrew. This text may point, then, to Hebrew Gospels circulating among Jewish Christians in Palestine, and to attempts by Jewish Christians to read some of these texts publicly in synagogue.”

²⁵ For some of these see Goranson 1999, 340; and Stemberger 2000, 73f. In general terms we should note that Epiphanius met Joseph in 353 but that he wrote his *Panarion* in 375, twenty-two years later. More specifically we might refer to some of the legendary stories such as Joseph’s healing of a naked maniac and his magical contests with Jews in Tiberias and the baths at Gader (7.5f.). Most doubt has been cast on the story of Judah Ha-Nasi III’s death-bed conversion to Christianity. (4.5).

²⁶ On this see Thornton 1990, 60f.

b. *Šabb.* 116a above).²⁷ Furthermore, it is the very existence of these translations that leads Epiphanius to tell the story of Joseph and to repeat the tradition about these translations on a number of occasions in the same section. But beyond that we can say very little in support of this uncorroborated assertion.

Indirect evidence

Josephus

AJ 18.63-4

The authenticity of few passages has been the subject of so much discussion as the so-called *Testimonium Flavianum*, and to try, therefore, and establish the degree to which it may betray knowledge of the Gospels on the part of Josephus is a probably futile task. And in any case, even if one accepts that some parts of the text are authentic, determining the extent of its dependence upon the Gospels is impossible. What Josephus states, even if we accept the passage as it stands in the received text of Josephus, could as easily have been gleaned from oral communication as from a reading of the Gospels.²⁸

AJ 18.113f.

This passage shares a number of things in common with the Gospels. In both Herod kills John; in both John is a preacher; and in both baptism is an action subsequent to an inner change, and in both crowds flock to hear John. But there are also significant differences: in Josephus it is John's popularity and fear of an uprising that leads to his death; in the Gospels it is his criticism of Herod's marriage, which leads to his death. Different locations for John's death are presented; and in Josephus John's preaching is meant to lead to a virtuous life, in the Gospels to repentance. Moreover, the failure of Josephus to associate John in any way with Jesus, a point to which Origen will allude (*Cels.* 1.48), would seem strange if he knew any of the Gospels.²⁹

²⁷ Avi Yonah 1976, 168, makes a similar point. Thornton 1990, 55 n. 2, sounds a more skeptical note, stating that Syriac versions of the Gospels and Acts existed "and that the original language of the versions was not accurately remembered."

²⁸ For detailed engagement with this question see chapter 8 of the present volume.

²⁹ See Mason 1992, 155. He rightly points to the presence of apologetic motifs in Josephus and argues that some of these might explain away a few of the differences cited above. A similar point is made by Meier 1992, esp. 234f. He shows how in his presentation of John, Josephus plays down the eschatological content of John's message and that this makes John's baptism unintelligible.

Justin Martyr

On a number of occasions Justin Martyr refers to Jewish accusations against Jesus. At *Dial.* 69.7 he states that the Jews (here he is referring to Jesus' contemporaries but also probably aping current accusations) call Jesus a magician and a deceiver of the people, an accusation that we find in broadly the same form in some rabbinic texts (see below). Further on in the *Dialogue* he states that Jews have sent out messengers who proclaim Jesus to be a Galilean deceiver, who was crucified, whose body was stolen from the tomb by his disciples and about whom a number of false claims are made (108.2f.). Accepting these two passages to be genuine reflections of Jewish opinion, might we take them to imply Jewish knowledge of the Gospels? Graham Stanton thinks not, at least in relation to the passage at *Dial.* 69.7.³⁰ Certainly it is difficult to prove. In this respect we should note two things. First, all of the information above could have been gleaned from independent Jewish tradition about Jesus for broadly they reflect Jewish opinion about Jesus found in the Gospels themselves. Secondly, it is striking to note that Justin Martyr, who appears to quote Gospel material and is the first Christian author to show knowledge of the fourfold Gospel, never makes Trypho engage in argument about these sources, although we should note that at *Dial.* 18.1 Justin states that Trypho has read the doctrines taught by Jesus. Such a statement, which one presumes possesses some verisimilitude (Justin knows of Jews who did such things), should make us wary of exploiting silence too much. Absence of straightforward argument about the content of the Gospels might be best explained by noting that the central concern of the *Dialogue* is Jewish and Christian contention over the Old Testament, for those were the texts that both parties acknowledged (see *Dial.* 120.5).

Celsus' Jew

Much has been written about Celsus' Jew and naturally enough widely divergent opinions on the subject have been adopted.³¹ A tradition deriving from the time of Origen to the present day has questioned the genuineness of the opinions attributed to this figure and argued for his constructed character. Others have, in broad terms, argued for the opposite case. A simple either/or on this matter is probably not possible. Ernst Bammel, amongst others, has shown that Origen's objections are not valid, not least when one assumes, as Origen seems unable to, that the Jew concerned was hellenized.³²

³⁰ Stanton 1994, 168.

³¹ For an account of the historiography see Bammel 1986, 265-6

³² See Bammel 1986, 267-83; and de Lange 1976, 42-3.

Interestingly, and in contrast to what we find in early *adversus Judaeos* literature, almost all of the argument offered by Celsus' Jew is directed against the person of Jesus.³³ He is described as the son of an adulterer, Mary, and a Roman soldier, Panthera (1.28, 32); he is said to have gone to Egypt when a young man to earn a living but ended up becoming a magician and returning to Palestine to declare himself the Son of God (1.28);³⁴ and he is associated with John the Baptist whom he appears to dupe into becoming his follower and who ends up being crucified with him (2.4; 1.41)³⁵. In line with the claim that he learnt magic in Egypt is the assertion that his miracles are the work of a sorcerer, that is, they have an impure origin, a point which receives particular emphasis (1.68; see also 1.71; 2.3, 48-9, for the claim that Jesus is a γόης [deceiver]). While Jesus can be portrayed as a pious person living in accordance with the law (2.4, 5), such praise is merely there to make more telling the accusation that he went on to abandon the law and mislead the people. In this broad context Jesus is described as if he was the leader of a political party, intent upon insurrection rather than religious renewal (2.12; see also 2.44). His pitifully small number of followers (2.46) emerges poorly from this. Duped into following Jesus (2.12), they are described as "infamous men, the most wicked tax collectors and sailors", who collected "a means of livelihood in a disgraceful and importunate way" (1.62).³⁶ Celsus' Jew takes particular pleasure in depicting Jesus' passion negatively. Rather than accepting that he has to die, Jesus is depicted objecting strongly to his death (2.24), even trying to hide and escape (2.9, 70), and his cry for sustenance on the cross is presented as greed (2.37). He is justly condemned as an impostor and false messiah and he dies a shameful death (2.35, 44, 47), hated by God (1.71). The account of his resurrection is assailed from a number of angles, not least the lack of reliable witnesses to Jesus' appearances (see 2.55, 63, 67

³³ See Lods 1941, 5. Origen notes that the Jew is introduced by Celsus in dialogue with Jesus (*Cels.* 1.28).

³⁴ Note that at 1.66 the Jew is made to refer to Jesus' flight to Egypt when still an infant. Lods 1941, 9, notes that this story is irreconcilable with the story of the visit to Egypt when Jesus was older. The latter story should probably be attributed to Jewish tradition.

³⁵ At 2.4 John is introduced as a Jew, "our prophet, the prophet of our God." This seems to be a polemical ploy to make it plain that Christianity's founder began life as a Jew and that, therefore, Christian movement away from Judaism is equivalent to desertion. In the second reference to John, which is not explicit, but plain from the context, Celsus' Jew attacks the veracity of the account of the events accompanying Jesus' baptism by noting that the only witness to it was someone punished with him. Again we seem to be in the presence of two mutually contradictory accounts of the same person's activities.

³⁶ See also 2.22 where they are described as "traitors and impious men".

and 70) and his failure to appear in public or to those who convicted him (2.63).

This unremittingly negative picture of Jesus is striking in its detail, at least when compared with the other relevant material we possess. Its claim to reflect genuine Jewish opinion is strengthened by the fact that we find parallels to some of the assertions, particularly those that are not found in the Gospels, in other independent Jewish and Christian sources.³⁷ Much of the material attributed to the Jew could, however, be said to have emerged from a negative reading of the Gospels and it is *Contra Celsum* above any other extant text which clearly betrays evidence for Jews reading the Gospels, at least before the writing of the *Toledoth Yeshu*. This much is implied in the Jew's comment, found at 2.74, that his assessment of Jesus emerges from a reading of the Gospels themselves. The point, as Origen notes, is a polemical one, but it does not misrepresent much of what we find in the *Contra Celsum*, some of which centres on interpretations or particular readings of words or events found in the Gospels.³⁸

Rabbinic texts

In discussing relevant rabbinic material, I do not wish to examine in any detail many of the passages that scholars have claimed refer to Jesus. There is not sufficient space to do such a thing and in any case very few of the relevant passages are germane to the present subject.

One potentially significant passage is found at *b. Sanh.* 43a. The passage in question states that "they hanged Jesus on the eve of Passover", that a herald went forth forty days before announcing that "Yeshu the Nazarene goes forth to be stoned because he has practised magic and led Israel astray and that anyone who has anything to say in his favour should step forward." It is then stated that Jesus practised sorcery, and deceived and led astray Israel, and that according to Deut 13:8, he should not be spared. Although some have claimed that only at a very late date was the

³⁷ On the questionable activity of Jesus' mother see Tertullian, *Spect.* 30.5 (on which see below), referred to above, as well as in the *Toledoth Yeshu*; on Panthera see *b. Sanh.* 67a; 104b, and esp. *t. Hul.* 2.22f., although here it is written in the form 'Pandira' (on this see Maier 1978, 264f.; and Horbury (forthcoming). Note that in the *Toledoth* it is Joseph, not Jesus, who is associated with Panthera); on the political overtones of his ministry see Lactantius, *Inst.* 5.3.4, probably reflecting Jewish opinion, discussed below; for the accusation that he was a magician see Justin *Dial.* 69.7 as discussed above, *b. Sanh.* 67a, and Arnobius 1.43 where Jesus' magical knowledge is explicitly associated with Egypt; on his execution with John the Baptist see a tradition in *Toledoth* found in the Cairo Genizah, and discussed by Bammel 1968, 194-5.

³⁸ See, *inter alia*, *Cels.* 1.58, 65; 2.24, 32, and 37. In each of these instances Origen speaks of a distortion of Gospel material. Note how the Jew accuses the Christians of distorting their own Gospels (2.70, though precisely what he is referring to is unclear).

passage made to refer to Jesus, most have argued for its relative earliness.³⁹ The passage has seemed important to some as witnessing to a pre-Gospel tradition favouring a Johannine (John 18:28) date for the crucifixion.⁴⁰ However, it looks more likely to be an attempt to show that Jesus was rightfully convicted. On the question that is principally the concern of this essay, namely the extent to which the passage reflects any dependence upon the Gospels, it should be noted that the passage attributes responsibility for Jesus' death exclusively to the Jews. Given the apparently apologetic motifs, which could be said to form a part of the passage, failing to mention Roman participation might seem odd, and point away from the idea of knowledge of the Gospels. Moreover, the accusation laid against Jesus, also found at *b. Sanh.* 107b, and similar also, as we noted, to that found in Justin (*Dial.* 69.7; see also Matt 27:63; John 7:12, 47), could have derived from non-Gospel traditions about Jesus.⁴¹

In relation to the same passage, *b. Sanh.* 43a, we should note the reference, which follows to Jesus' five disciples, Mattai, Nakai, Nezer, Buni and Todah. Originally thought to be an addition to the text, it is now generally acknowledged to be original. It bears no clear relationship to any known list of Jesus' disciples, but in naming just five followers, rather than the somewhat more significant twelve, it may have an indirectly polemical tone. But again this need not betray actual knowledge of the Gospels, but rather traditions associated with Jesus.⁴²

³⁹ For the view that the passage did not originally refer to Jesus see Maier 1978, 219-37, and Horbury's response, 1982 (1998), 104-7. Maier argues that Jesus fits uneasily in the original Talmudic context (a discussion of an halakic debate in the Mishnah), that the list of charges against Jesus (found also at *b. Sanh.* 107b) were probably not uncommon in the rabbinic period, and that the original story would have been told of a magician, Jesus ben Pandera, who is explicitly mentioned in *b. Sanh.* 107b. Horbury responds by stating that Maier too easily sets up a distinction between a Palestinian lack of interest in Jesus and a western Diasporan interest in him. For Horbury there is far too much evidence in favour of Palestinian interest in Jesus for such a distinction to be justified. He argues strongly that the passage can be read in such a way as to see the reference to stoning as an intrusion (crucifixion on Passover eve and the accusations laid against Jesus, then, come from older tradition), and that that reference was added in accordance with the halakah. The reference to the herald also accords with *m. Sanh.* 6.4 and is placed there simply to indicate that Jesus was "guilty peradventure".

⁴⁰ For a skeptical assessment of the historical value of the passage, see Catchpole 1971, 5-6.

⁴¹ On the apologetic motif of the passage, see Catchpole 1971, 4.

⁴² I have failed to discuss *t. Hul.* 2.24 and its parallels. What is interesting here is that in one of these, *Eccl. Rab.* 1.8.3, we have words attributed to Jesus not found in the Gospels. This seems to imply some interest in Jesus' words only hinted at in extant rabbinic literature. On this see Bauckham 1990, 106f.

The other passage to consider is *j. Ta'an.* 2.1. Here it is reported that R. Abbahu, a third century authority, said: "If a man says to you: 'I am God', he is a liar. If [he says, 'I am] the son of man', in the end people will laugh at him. If [he says], 'I will go up to heaven', he says, but shall not perform it." To some this clearly refers to Jesus, a point that might be supported by the fact that elsewhere we hear of R. Abbahu interacting with Christians.⁴³ Whether the references to the divine identity of Jesus, the "son of man" and "going up to Heaven", imply knowledge of John's Gospel is another matter. Herford, for instance, denies this possibility, noting that "it is enough to admit a general knowledge of what Christians alleged concerning Jesus from the rabbi's own discussions with them."⁴⁴ But the three assertions together, in particular the somewhat heightened use of the term "son of man", make one think immediately of John and might allow one to assert something more specific than the above statement would allow.

But none of this demonstrates any knowledge of the Gospels on behalf of the rabbis.⁴⁵

Early evidence for the existence of a Jewish anti-gospel

The earliest unambiguous evidence we have for the existence of a continuous account of Jesus' life written by Jews comes in the ninth century with the mention of the *Toledoth Yeshu* by the well-known anti-Jewish writer, the archbishop of Lyons, Agobard.⁴⁶ But is there evidence for a possible Jewish anti-gospel from an earlier period? What has been written above indicates the fragmentary character of the evidence for non-Christian Jewish interaction with the Gospels, and from this some have wanted to argue that insofar as Jews engaged in writing against the figure of Jesus, this was of a piecemeal kind and did not lead to the writing of a continuous narrative about him.⁴⁷ I wish to conclude this piece by noting

⁴³ See *b. 'Abod. Zar.* 4a.

⁴⁴ Herford 1903, 63.

⁴⁵ Even Herford, who takes a maximalist view of this material, agrees with this conclusion. "If the summary of the Jesus-Tradition, given above be examined, it will be found to contain little, if anything, which would imply the knowledge of a Gospel or Gospels, on the part of the Rabbis." (Herford 1903, 357).

⁴⁶ See Agobardus, *De judaïcis superstitionibus* 10 (*Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis* 52, 206-7). The work is dated to 827. For a helpful introduction to the complex collection of texts called the *Toledoth Yeshu* see Di Segni 1985.

⁴⁷ Bauer 1909, 452-86, although keen to collect together a lot of anti-Christian Jewish material relating to Christ (he was keen also to show how it converged with pagan material), argued for the view that this early material would have been more in the form of *disiecta membra* than a continuous narrative, not least because he could not see the need,

some of the evidence that might indicate a position somewhat different from that just expressed.⁴⁸

The Contra Celsum

The *Contra Celsum* gives evidence of a wide-ranging set of assertions about the life of Jesus, stretching from his birth through to his death and resurrection. It is not easy to determine the extent to which such material is taken from a source that looked something like an anti-gospel. Certainly the Jew goes on to claim that what he has written is no more than an account of the contents of the Gospels in whose pages the Christians themselves fall (2.74; see also 2.13). But such an assertion need not tell us anything about whether the material was originally in a written form or constituted sections of a continuous polemical account of Jesus' life rather than disjointed responses to different Gospel passages.⁴⁹ No such Jewish source is ever explicitly referred to,⁵⁰ an interesting point given that Origen does on at least one other occasion refer to a source related to the Jewish-Christian controversy.⁵¹ But at *Cels.* 1.28 there may be some evidence for a source that looked a little like an anti-gospel. Here we read of the adultery of Jesus' mother, his birth, his learning of magic in Egypt, return, and self-proclamation as Son of God. Lods argued that such a set of assertions might be read as a summary of a longer account, although he was unclear as to the extent to which such a longer account might be evidenced elsewhere in *Cels.*⁵²

Tertullian, De Spectaculis 30.5-6

At *Spect.* 30.5-6 Tertullian speaks of Christ's return to earth, mentioning in an accusatory way the opinions of those who were opposed to Jesus: "This is the carpenter's or hireling's son", I shall say, "that Sabbath-breaker, that Samaritan and devil-possessed. This is he whom you purchased from Judas! This is he whom you struck with reed and fist, whom you contemptuously spat upon, to whom you gave vinegar and gall to drink! This is he whom his disciples secretly stole away so that it might not be said that he

either pagan or Jewish, for such a thing. Individual incidents from the life of Jesus would have been discussed as the need arose.

⁴⁸ Horbury 1970, 354f., for a presentation of the relevant primary material. He argues for a third century date for a Jewish anti-gospel.

⁴⁹ See Bammel 1986, 274-82, for a discussion of the apparent differences between the material of books 1 and 2 of *Cels.*

⁵⁰ Although at one point (2.10), Origen rather vaguely refers to material taken ἐκ διηγημάτων Ἰουδαϊκῶν but nothing more is said about these 'tales'.

⁵¹ See *Cels.* 4.52 and the reference to the *Dialogue of Jason and Papiscus*.

⁵² See Lods 1941, 31-2.

had risen again, or the gardener removed so that his lettuces might come to no harm from the crowds of visitors.” The attribution of the opinions expressed to Jews has been widely accepted because they appear compatible with Jewish opinion about Christ expressed elsewhere. What is most interesting about the passage for our purposes is that amidst its straightforward repetition of observations gleaned from the Gospels, there also appear allegations not found there. The first is Jesus being a hireling’s son; the second that he is a Samaritan, and the third that Jesus was abstracted from the tomb by a gardener to stop people treading on his lettuces. All three of these assertions are found in a variety of forms in the *Toledoth*⁵³ as, incidentally, are the other claims witnessed in the Gospels. Indeed Krauss saw the passage as containing most of the contents of the *Toledoth*, even though he was not himself willing to countenance the existence of a Jewish anti-gospel much before the fifth century.⁵⁴ Krauss’ caution should be heeded, not least because no source for Tertullian’s statement is explicitly mentioned. But the passage, especially on account of its containing extra-Gospel material compatible with the contents of *Toledoth* and material covering the different facets of Jesus’ life, is suggestive of the existence of an anti-gospel.⁵⁵

*Lactantius, Divine Institutes 5.3.4*⁵⁶

Something similar to *Cels.* 1.28 might be found in Lactantius’ *Divine Institutes*. At 5.3.4 he states that an anti-Christian writer had asserted that Christ, driven out by the Jews, gathered a band of nine hundred men and committed acts of brigandage (*latrocinia*). Nothing more is quoted from the source that was probably authored by the vehemently anti-Christian Hierocles against whom Eusebius wrote. The view that Hierocles’ source for the allegation may ultimately have been a Jewish one emerges from parallels we can find in Jewish sources to the three assertions of the passage, namely that Jesus was driven out by the Jews, gathered a large band of followers and committed acts of brigandage. Two of these statements are probably derived from the Gospels while one, that relating to brigandage, probably is not. What is important in relation to our present discussion is that what we find cited by Lactantius via Hierocles could be taken to be a fragment from a longer story in which Jesus is defamed.

⁵³ For a discussion of the *Toledoth*’s relationship to the story about the gardener see Newman 1999.

⁵⁴ Krauss 1902, 3.

⁵⁵ See Maier 1978, 258-9; and Horbury 1970, 455-6.

⁵⁶ On this whole passage, its background and implications, see Horbury 1998, 162-75.

The Martyrdom of Conon

The first apparently clear reference to a Jewish anti-gospel source appears in the *Martyrdom of Conon*. Ostensibly this is the account of the death of a Christian, Conon, at the time of the Decian persecution (250 C.E.), but for a variety of reasons some have wanted to date it considerably later.⁵⁷ While the unnamed governor of Magydus addresses Conon, he states that he has learnt accurately from the Jews what Jesus' family was, the works he showed forth to his people, and how he died on the cross. He asserts that the Jews have brought his (αὐτοῦ) accounts and read them to him (see 4.6). The term for accounts (ὑπομνήματα) is a known and possibly early way of referring the Gospels,⁵⁸ and the accusations made against Jesus are again well-evidenced in a number of Jewish sources or sources claiming to represent Jewish opinion.⁵⁹

Some concluding observations

There does seem to be some direct evidence for Jews possessing copies of the Gospels. Which of the canonical Gospels, in what form, and in what language, is not clear. In the one place in Talmudic literature where we appear to have a quotation from a Christian Gospel, it could be argued that it comes from a collection of sayings of Jesus influenced by Matthew, possibly in Aramaic. The one reference to the existence of copies of Matthew and John in Hebrew that were kept in a Jewish genizah remains uncorroborated. Unfurnished references to *gilyonim* in the Tosefta, whose meaning is in any case disputed, do not help us any further on this point.

Where we have evidence of Jewish attacks upon Jesus, it is sometimes unclear whether these derive from a reading of the Gospels, from oral tradition, or from Jewish anti-gospels. This is particularly the case when we are dealing with short accusations against Jesus such as the claim that he is a magician and a deceiver of the people. In the case of Celsus' Jew, we

⁵⁷ For a discussion of the reasons for a date later than the third century see Horbury 1970, 383 n. 1. He notes Harnack's view that the very mention of forged ὑπομνήματα would suggest a time closer to the writing of the *Acta Pilati* in the fourth century, as would Conon's way of referring to himself as "of Nazareth" (4) and related to Christ. For a brief defence of the broad plausibility of the story in a third century setting see Lane Fox 1986, 483.

⁵⁸ See Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 2.15.1; 3.24.5; 3.39.15, here referring to Papias' description.

⁵⁹ The one difficulty with this reference is the personal pronoun αὐτοῦ which goes with ὑπομνήματα. Some might argue that this more likely refers to the Gospels themselves rather than a Jewish anti-gospel.

have an apparently clear admission that he has read the Gospels and that many of the negative things he says against Jesus derive directly from that source (such an admission may also be witnessed to at Justin, *Dial.* 18.1). This assertion is partially confirmed by the fact that Origen speaks on a number of occasions of the Jew's distortion of Gospel material.

Insofar as we can reconstruct it, the Jewish response to the Gospels was broadly negative. Attacks upon Jesus tended to concentrate upon his origins and the origins of his parents, his activity as a miracle worker/magician/deceiver, the shameful character of his disciples and their and Jesus' possible involvement in politically seditious activity, events surrounding his shameful and justified death and his resurrection. The main traditions about Jesus in this material, which are not found in the Gospels, can usually be explained as originating in a reaction to, or exploitation of, material found in the latter.

The phrase 'broadly negative' in the preceding paragraph should be taken seriously. In the story of Joseph of Tiberias, as found in Epiphanius' *Panarion*, Joseph is depicted as reading Gospels in Hebrew and responding positively to them. *Shabbat* 116a could be taken to imply respect, or at least neutral interest in Gospel material insofar as it is assumed that consultation of a Christian on a legal matter could take place.⁶⁰

There are some grounds for thinking that Jewish anti-gospels existed from perhaps the third century onwards, although apparently unambiguous evidence for their existence is first found in the *Martyrdom of Conon*, a text that purports to come from the third century but may be later. It is certainly striking that a number of traditions parallel to those found in the *Toledoth Yeshu*, the first Jewish anti-gospel for which we have indisputable evidence, are found in material dating from the second century onwards.

Some have noted that there is an uneven geographical distribution of the material under discussion (there is much more from the west than from the east), and have wanted to deduce from this that while in the west there was a greater need for Jews living in close proximity to Christians in a Diaspora setting to respond to Christian claims, the rabbis were only forced to enter into debate with Christians after the fourth century and in particular in the early Islamic period.⁶¹ But while such a view picks up on a genuine absence of substantial Jesus material in rabbinic texts, it too easily assumes a lack of interest in Christians on the part of Jews in Palestine and the east,

⁶⁰ For other rabbinic material implying positive responses to the figure of Jesus, see *b. Sanh.* 107b, at least part of it, as discussed by Catchpole 1971, 1-4; and *t. Hul.* 2.24 and its parallels.

⁶¹ Maier 1978, 254.

and makes too much of a near-silence which need not be reflective of what was really the case.⁶²

There remain some outstanding questions, which we have not addressed. One of these was alluded to, namely the almost complete lack of references to arguments against Jesus as he appears in the Gospels in material *adversus Judaeos*. Was this because Christians saw such arguments as considerably less significant than the arguments about the right interpretation of scripture, which dominate this material?⁶³ Or were they simply uninterested in allowing many of the blasphemous claims against Jesus to see the light of day? And another relates to the almost complete failure of any Christian writing after *Conon* and before the *Toledoth* to refer to Jewish anti-gospels. Again, if we are not to take the skeptical line and simply speak of the non-existence of such material, then embarrassment might be a possible explanation.

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⁶² Amongst a number of cautionary phenomena relevant to the above observation, we should note the almost total absence of references in rabbinic literature to apocalypses.

⁶³ In this respect we should note the way in which both Justin and his follower Tatian represent the importance of Old Testament scriptures for their conversions; and the interesting comments made by Augustine in *Epistula ad Catholicos* 50 (xix) where, referring to Luke 24:4-7, he states that the Lord expected his disciples to be convinced not by his resurrection appearances in themselves but because they could find the sequence crucifixion-resurrection foretold in the writings of the Law, Prophets and the Psalms.

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Section 2

Jewish Christianity

Chapter 10

The definition of the term ‘Jewish Christian’/‘Jewish Christianity’ in the history of research*

Introduction

One of the major problems scholars face in studying Jewish Christianity or Jewish Christians, is that neither term is witnessed in the ancient sources. Admittedly, on occasion we do meet phrases which come close to the latter term. So in his Gospel, John speaks of Jews who believed (John 8:31); in Origen we read of Jewish believers (*Cels.* 2.1), and believers who come from Judaism (Origen quoted in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.4); in Eusebius we read of Hebrew believers who had continued from apostolic times (*Hist. eccl.* 4.5.2); and of a Gospel according to the Hebrews (*Hist. eccl.* 3.25.5); in Jerome, coming closest perhaps to the term, we hear of the Nazoraeans, who wish to be both Jews and Christians but apparently end up being neither (*Epist.* 112.13);¹ and in the church of Santa Sabina in Rome there is still visible a fifth century inscription which contrasts the *Ecclesia ex circumcissione* with the *Ecclesia ex gentibus*.² We also hear of Judaisers.³ None of the above are, however, precise equivalents, that is, combinations of the word for Jew and Christian, and what terms are used are never used consistently, or to indicate an entity or party with specific views and opinions.⁴ Carsten Colpe’s description of the term ‘Jewish Christian’ as ‘Wissenschaftssprache’ is, then, true insofar as it conveys the novelty of the term in relation to the ancient sources which have given rise to its

* First published in O. Skarsaune and R. Hvalvik (eds.), *Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries* (Hendrickson: Peabody, 2007), 22-54.

¹ See also Jerome’s description of the probably fictitious Ebion, supposed founder of the Ebionites, as *semi-christianus* and *semi-judaeus* (*Comm. Gal.* 3.13-14).

² For a discussion of this inscription see Mimouni 1998a, 25-37.

³ See Déroche 1998, 130-42.

⁴ Mimouni’s claim (Mimouni 1998b, 62) that Jerome uses *iudaei christiani* in *Comm. Zech.* 3.14.9 in a sense approaching ‘Jewish Christian’ is a misreading of the passage which deals with those who hope for the restoration of sacrifice, in order that (Jerome says mockingly) instead of Jews becoming Christians, Christians may become Jews (*ut non iudaei christiani sed christiani iudaei fiant*). On this see Carleton Paget 1999, 731 n. 3.

usage.⁵ When we add to this the fact that the term 'Jewish Christian', in whatever language it appears, is ambiguous, the true extent of our difficulties becomes clearer.⁶

In what follows I shall principally be concerned to say something about the ways in which the term 'Jewish Christian' has been defined in the history of research. In the course of the essay I hope to make it clear that from a very early stage in research the term was thought to be a complex one and in need of precise definition, even if some of its most celebrated expositors implied a definition rather than giving one explicitly. I shall show how the study of Jewish Christianity itself gave rise to a number of other related terms whose usage was never consistently employed by scholars. I shall seek to make the obvious point that in part it is the definition of the term that has determined other factors in the study of the subject. I shall also attempt to show how no clear resolution on what the term means has been arrived at, raising questions about its usefulness and viability. But I wish to begin by saying a little about the question of the origins of the study of the subject.

The origins and definition of the term before F. C. Baur

It is traditional in accounts of the history of the study of Jewish Christianity to begin with the work of F. C. Baur. This is the case with Gustav Hoennicke, whose published Habilitationsschrift of 1908, *Das Judenchristentum im ersten und zweiten Jahrhundert*, presented one of the earliest 'Forschungsberichte' of the subject. It is equally true of Klijn's much-cited article in *New Testament Studies* of 1973-4;⁷ and of Gerd Lüdemann's important study of 1983, translated into English in 1989.⁸ There is some justification for such a decision. Baur's work, as we will note below, set the tone for much of the subsequent debate about Jewish Christianity precisely because in it he attributed to the phenomenon such a significant role in the formation of second century Christianity, and it was to his opinions that scholars reacted (and continue to react) either positively or negatively.

But in strict terms, an account of the history of research would do better to begin at a much earlier point. Baur clearly did have predecessors in the

⁵ Colpe 1990, 39.

⁶ For the ambiguity of the term in English, German and French, see Simon 1965, 2. For a thorough discussion of the ambiguities of the German term, both in its substantive and adjectival form, see Colpe 1990, 39-47.

⁷ Klijn 1973-74, 419-43.

⁸ Lüdemann 1989, 1-32. Harris 1975, 181, notes the existence of predecessors to Baur, but provides no information about them or what they argued.

field of the study of Jewish Christianity. For instance, his teacher, himself a convert from Judaism, August Neander, had, in a number of publications, written on the subject, and it is reasonable to think that one of the inspirations behind Baur's work was Neander even if he was to disagree with Neander's more harmonious reading of earliest Christianity.⁹ Interestingly Adolf Hilgenfeld, who was himself a notable contributor to the study of the subject, and one who was warm-hearted in his praise of Baur, although he was subsequently to disagree strongly with him,¹⁰ chastised the latter for not paying enough attention to scholars of an earlier period, noting in particular Baur's failure to take sufficient account of the work of Johann Salomo Semler,¹¹ who will be discussed a little later.

An indirect indication that Baur inherited a tradition of study is located in the fact that he refers to 'Judenchristen' without any sense that he is using a term that is new or distinctive, and, therefore, in need of detailed definition. How early, then, is our evidence for use of the term? The Grimm brothers' dictionary of 1877,¹² after defining the term as a Christian of Jewish origin, notes that it is used in such a way in the early church, although, unsurprisingly, given what we have asserted above, no evidence for such a usage as early as this is provided. The same entry goes on to refer to more popular usage of the term, citing a novel of A. Paul of 1800, *Das Leben Fibels*, where the term is used of "ein getaufter jüdischer Speculant" ("a baptised Jewish speculator", here used polemically), but there is no indication that the dictionary's reference to Paul is anything but an example of its use rather than a reference to one of its earliest uses. Other German dictionaries, including Duden, are equally unhelpful with regard to the question of origin. In my own researches, which have involved me in,

⁹ Of Neander's works which bear directly on the subject see Neander 1818, 361-421; Neander 1822; Neander 1826, especially 80-90; and 602-27; Neander 1832, especially 144-61; 283f.; and 293-302. In these works Neander showed a keen sense of many of the issues relating to the study of Jewish Christianity, including its relationship to Paulinism, its development in the second century, and its diverse manifestations exemplified in such writings as the *Pseudo-Clementines*. Many of his observations were to find an afterlife in the opposition to Baur, which arose from the 1850s onwards.

¹⁰ On Hilgenfeld's relationship with Baur see Harris 1975, 113-26.

¹¹ Hilgenfeld 1875, 193. Kümmel 1973, 127, acknowledges the fact that Semler had anticipated some of Baur's views in this area, citing in a footnote (n. 175) similar judgments by K. Bauer and M. Werner. Harris 1975, 181, notes that "(i)n itself Baur's view of historical investigation was not new; others before him had examined the problems, and to a very large degree Baur stood on the shoulders of his predecessors ..." He does not, however, go on to discuss in what respects he was indebted to the work of his predecessors or even to name them.

¹² *Deutsches Wörterbuch* von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm, Volume 4, Second Part (Leipzig, 1877). Unfortunately the new edition of Grimms' dictionary, being undertaken by Hirzel Verlag of Stuttgart, does not yet have an entry for 'Judenchrist'.

amongst other things, the reading of a large number of ecclesiastical histories dating back to the seventeenth century, I have come across expressions such as "jüdischgesinnter Christ" and "gläubiger Jude" from 1730s and 40s,¹³ and the phrase, *pars Judaeorum Christianorum*, here in the second edition of J. L. Mosheim's highly influential *Institutes*, published in 1755;¹⁴ used to describe the Judaizing party who remained discontented even after the resolution of Acts 15. However, I first met the term 'Judenchrist' in the works of J. S. Semler, dating from the 1760s and 1770s.¹⁵ We will have reason to return to Semler but first let us move away from Germany, so often the birthplace of important critical work on the history of early Christianity, to Britain. Here, intriguingly, it is much easier to discover early uses of the term 'Jewish Christian' or 'Christian Jew', not, of course, the precise equivalent of 'Judenchrist', but the term by which 'Judenchrist' is usually translated into English. So, for instance, already in 1618, in a letter dated February 14th, written by Sir Dudley Carleton to a certain John Chamberlain, we find the term being used to describe the figure of John Traske who founded a Christian sect which insisted on observing Jewish laws. Carleton writes of "one Trash or Thrash who was first a puritan, then a separatist, and now is become a Jewish Christian, observing the Sabath on Saterdag, abstaining from swines-flesh and all things commanded in the law";¹⁶ and usages of the term are intermittently witnessed throughout the century in English, more or less always to refer to those of a Judaizing tendency.¹⁷ But what is perhaps of greatest interest to us is that it is in England rather than in Germany that we have evidence of the earliest scholarly engagements with the subject of Jewish Christianity and

¹³ For the term "jüdischgesinnter Christ" see Baumgarten 1743, 460-1, here describing Nazoreans and Ebionites. The same author in the same volume uses the term "gläubiger Jude" (see Baumgarten 1743, 301, 304, 362).

¹⁴ Mosheim 1755, 56. In the English translations of Mosheim, of which there are a number, the Latin here is translated by the English 'Jewish Christian'. Unfortunately I have not been able to see a copy of the later German edition of the work.

¹⁵ See Semler 1773a, 37; and 1773b, Vorrede.

¹⁶ The passage is quoted in Katz 1982, 23.

¹⁷ For this observation, I am indebted to my colleague, Mr. Scott Mandelbrote. Amongst other things, he referred me to some manuscripts of Thomas Barlow, dating from circa 1660, which use the term 'Jewish Christian' in the midst of a discussion of the Apostolic Council of Acts 15. A brief browse through the website *Early English Books Online* reveals thirty uses of the term 'Jewish Christian' and over fifty of 'Christian Jew' in late sixteenth and seventeenth century printed books with the earliest found in a work by Anthony Copley dating from 1595. This is obviously a highly problematic tool (interestingly, no books published by Toland or Morgan are referred to), but gives us some sense of the widespread usage of these terms, a point made clearer by their appearance in literary works like plays and poems.

Christian origins, and that J. S. Semler, a possible source of Baur's ideas, probably had access to these English works.

Only the bare bones of this thesis, which supports a genealogy of ideas which leads from the shores of Britain to F. C. Baur, can be presented here. A much fuller and more detailed account is found in David Patrick's little cited, but informative, article in the *Theological Review* for 1877.¹⁸ The two characters to whose work I wish to refer are John Toland, an Irishman who lived from 1671-1722, a deist who published on a wide range of subjects; and a Welshman, also of deistic persuasion, called Thomas Morgan (d. 1743), a nonconformist minister, who lost his charge in 1726. Toland wrote the earlier work, a tome called *Nazarenus*, first published in 1718.¹⁹ With reference to the New Testament and patristic literature, including the *Pseudo-Clementines*, Toland argued strongly for the view that in origin Christianity consisted of two parties, the Jewish Christian party or the Nazoreans/Ebionites, characterised by their adherence to Jewish laws, and the Pauline party. These parties reached an amicable agreement at the Jerusalem conference described at Acts 15, and both agreed to preach different Gospels to the circumcised and uncircumcised respectively, one essentially law observant (and continuous with Jesus' preaching), the other not (aside from the observance of those laws set out in the apostolic decree recorded in Acts 15). The fact that Paul's Christianity came to dominate the church, and Jewish Christians (and Jews in general) were despised and excluded, represented a gross distortion of what was conceived to have been the case at the beginning of Christian history and a failure to take seriously the Christian mission to the Jews and the mission of Jesus himself. Toland played down what some took to be the *carte blanche* dismissal of Torah observance by Paul in Galatians and Romans, arguing that Paul's utterances there applied to Gentile Christians alone.

Morgan, in his diffuse and haphazard work, *The Moral Philosopher: in a Dialogue between Philalethes, a Christian Deist, and Theophanes, a Christian Jew*, published anonymously in three volumes between 1737 and 1740, presented the opposite case, arguing that in essence Jesus had preached a denationalised Judaism; that the original disciples, the 'Christian Jews', as he termed them, had failed to perceive this, preferring to

¹⁸ Patrick 1877, 562-603.

¹⁹ A new edition of this work has been published by Champion 1999 with a full introduction including a detailed discussion of the considerable textual difficulties arising from the fact that there was an edition of *Nazarenus* in French published in 1777.

preach a nationalistic, messianic faith excluding Gentiles;²⁰ and that Paul, with his emphasis on the law-free Gospel to the Gentiles, retrieved the most important elements of Jesus' original message. The Jerusalem conference represented a defeat for Paul and the beginning of a conflict with the apostles which was to cause him difficulties for the rest of his life. The two groups were only brought together under the external pressure of persecution. In their union the Gentile Christians became more like the Christian Jews "setting up a hierarchy in the Church ... [a] hierarchy they called the true, visible, Catholic Church, out of which there could be no salvation." (378-9), with Paul's true inheritors, the dissenters who denied the authority of the church, being falsely branded Gnostics by the Catholic authorities. In this reconstruction of early Christian history, the canon of scripture is a product of 'Catholicism' and, therefore, gives a false view of what is true about Christianity. As Morgan wrote: "If we consider by whom and upon what principles the canon of scripture was at first collected, revised and published, it is no wonder if it leans strongly towards Judaism, and seems at first sight to connect two opposite and contradictory religions one with another." (441).

Much of the above may seem to have a Bauresque colour to it, particularly in relation to the work of Morgan.²¹ Indeed if one follows the debate which the publication of *Nazarenus* in particular inspired,²² we find that many of the fault lines in the subsequent discussion of Jewish Christianity gained a sometimes detailed airing both in Britain, and in Germany.²³ Are

²⁰ Morgan, interestingly, saw the best manifestation of their creed in what he took to be the authentic Revelation of John.

²¹ For a list of the similarities of Baur with Morgan see Patrick 1877, 581-7. These include, amongst other things, the view that Paul and the Apostles represented different perceptions of the Christian Gospel, that Acts 15 is to be regarded with the deepest suspicion when compared with Galatians 2, the view that Revelation is a Jewish Christian work, and the thesis that the canon is a later formation and reflects a 'Catholic' disposition, although on this last point it should be noted that, unlike Baur, Morgan knows nothing of mediating books in the canon. Toland obviously differs most clearly from Baur, at least the later Baur, in his view of an essentially harmonious relationship between Pauline and Petrine parties (here he is closer to the likes of Ritschl, Lechler and others). Where he came closest to Baur was in his willingness to use the Clementine writings and other patristic sources in his attempts to make sense of an earlier period in the church's history.

²² For a helpful discussion of the response to *Nazarenus* (Morgan's work went relatively unnoticed, at least in relation to the aspect of the work I have highlighted) see Champion 1999, 89-96.

²³ In Britain see in particular Mangey 1718; and in Germany, amongst a large number of responses, see Mosheim 1720 and extended in 1722. For further evidence of specifically German interest in the work, see Patrick 1877, 599-600, who mentions Thorschmid's *Freidenker-Lexicon* where pages 188-278 are devoted to listing refutations of *Nazarenus*, including ten from German divines.

we, then, able to posit a direct influence of British opinion upon Germany? A number of observations might point in this direction. First, attention should be drawn to the fact that both Toland's and Morgan's works were widely reviewed in Germany, although, as noted, the latter received more attention.²⁴ Such attention accorded to deistic works from England was not uncommon in Germany during the eighteenth century.²⁵ Secondly, it is worth drawing attention to the figure of J. S. Semler.²⁶ In a series of works Semler argued that at the beginning of Christian origins there were, as Paul implied, two Gospels. One belonged to the Jewish Christians, defined as law-observant Christians,²⁷ and represented by the pillar apostles. The other belonged to Paul, the true spiritual Gospel. As the spirit of Judaism grew within Christianity, the enmity between the parties grew. Out of them arose a third party, the Catholic. This party sought to discredit the two parties out of which it arose referring to them as Ebionite and Gnostic respectively. The New Testament, Semler argued, was a collection put together by the Catholic party in such a way as to incorporate books belonging to Judaists and Paulinists.²⁸ This observation about the origin of the canon allowed Semler to argue for a more liberal and less absolute approach to the canon of the New Testament, which for him, as for Toland and Morgan, was no more than a list of books. Such a convergence of opinions between Semler, Toland, and in particular, Morgan, is difficult to regard as coincidental. This view receives added support if we note that Semler was himself an enthusiast for English theology, and that the works of Morgan and Toland were widely known and reviewed in Germany, as previously noted. It is difficult, therefore, to imagine that Semler would not have been

²⁴ For German responses to Morgan see Patrick 1877, 600-1; and more recently, with much relevant bibliography, van den Berg 2008. The latter draws attention not only to reviews of Morgan's work, but also to German refutations of the latter (the response to Morgan was overwhelmingly negative) and to evidence for knowledge in Germany of critical discussion of Morgan's work, some of which was translated into German.

²⁵ The influence of English deistic thought upon Germany has long been acknowledged. See in particular Kümmel 1973, 51-61; and Brown 1985, 51-2, with accompanying endnotes; and relevant bibliography in van den Berg 2008. It is interesting to note that the first person to write a serious book about English deism was a German, G. V. Lechler (Lechler 1841).

²⁶ See Kümmel 1973, 62-9.

²⁷ See, for instance, Semler 1792, 86: "Juden-Christen behielten Gesetz Mosis, Beschneidung, Sabbat mit in ihren Grundartikeln ..." He adds, interestingly, "nahmen auch keine Schriften oder Lehrsätze Pauli an."

²⁸ A. Hilgenfeld gives a helpful outline of Semler's views on the origin of the canon in Hilgenfeld 1863, 112-19. In particular he points to Semler 1784. Note also Hörnig 1996, 197-200, who highlights Semler's famous *Abhandlung von freier Untersuchung des Canons* [Vorrede]. (See Semler 1773b, and Semler 1762, 891f.), placing Semler's views in the context of his theory of accommodation.

acquainted with them. Patrick believes that there is conclusive proof of this in Semler's own autobiography (vol. 1.117), where the author notes that he had been a reviewer for Neander, Baumgarten's *Nachrichten von einer hallischen Bibliothek* between 1749 and 1751, precisely the time in which a review of *Nazarenus* appeared in the journal, a review which, given Semler's clear involvement in the production of *Nachrichten*, he could have written.²⁹

The contention of this section of the paper must remain skeletal, but in brief it is this: that the origins of the serious study of Jewish Christianity, and in particular its role in the history of earliest Christianity, are to be located in Britain; that many of the neuralgic points of study were aired either in the works of Toland or Morgan, or in the debate which followed the publication of their books, in particular *Nazarenus*; and that perhaps through Semler, these ideas found their way into the writings of Baur.³⁰ To posit the influence of English deists upon German theologians is not to do something eccentric. Such influence is widely accepted and well-documented. Such a thesis may in turn explain the origins of the German term 'Judenchrist' – it constituted a translation either of the term 'Christian Jew' or 'Jewish Christian', understood in terms of Jewish converts to Christianity who continued to observe certain Jewish laws (and in the case of Morgan, understood to have an anti-Pauline aspect), both of which ap-

²⁹ See Patrick 1877, 600-1. Note should also be taken of the fact that a disputation concerning Morgan's *Philosopher* also took place in Halle in 1745, and it is difficult to imagine that the young Semler would not have known about it. Patrick notes that at no point does Semler attribute his views on the twofold Gospel and the canon to Toland or Morgan but that this may well have been because English deism was regarded in Germany with considerable suspicion at this time, and it was precisely with their views that Semler was associated.

³⁰ It is interesting to note that Lechler 1841, who devotes some thirty pages to a discussion of Toland (180f.), and some twenty-six to a discussion of Morgan (370f.), nowhere makes any connection with Baur's views. This is perhaps less odd in relation to his discussion of Toland's work where almost no interest is shown in *Nazarenus* (Lechler does appear to know the work – witness in this respect his reference to Mosheim's *Vindiciae* at 205 n. 6, here in the midst of a discussion of Toland's *Amyntor* of 1699). It is perhaps more surprising in relation to his discussion of Morgan. Here, while most space is given over to Morgan's views on the Old Testament, Lechler does discuss his views on the New Testament, and in particular his views on the origins of the New Testament canon, which seem to have a close affinity with Baur's. Lechler does in fact refer to Baur in a footnote (387 n. 1), but here only to refer to the latter's discussion of Marcion, whose views Lechler sees as close to Morgan's. The matter becomes stranger still when we note that Lechler himself was to engage in a refutation of Tübingen school opinions. Hörnig 1996 also fails to refer to English deistic writings in his discussion of Semler's views on early Christianity and the origins of the canon, and appears not to have read Patrick's article.

peared in Toland's and Morgan's respective works, and had already appeared in English long before these works.

Of course, much of this is difficult to prove. Patrick's argument, supplemented by some of my own observations, has to contend with a number of silences, such as, for instance Semler's failure to acknowledge any straightforward debt for his views on Jewish Christianity to Toland or Morgan;³¹ and with the possibility that Semler arrived at his conclusions by other means than by reading deists.³² The contention that the term 'Judenchrist'/'Judenchristentum' derives from the English 'Jewish Christian'/'Jewish Christianity', is also problematic in that responses in German to Toland and Morgan do not contain the word 'Judenchrist', or 'Judenchristentum' (a point which itself may give further support to our contention that the word was not known in German until after the 1740s). In addition the word is not a direct translation of the English 'Jewish Christian', being itself that most German of words, a combination of two substantives. Moreover, terms which seem more obviously to be a translation of the English 'Jewish Christian' appear before the time of Semler ('jüdischgesinnter Christ' etc.); and the influential Mosheim, whose reliance upon English writers such as Toland and Morgan is less easy to demonstrate, may show knowledge of the term in the 1750s.

However one assesses the above argument, my main aim in presenting it has been to provide a partial corrective to traditional accounts of the historiography of Jewish Christianity, accounts which often fail to show what interest in the subject existed before Baur began to write. It does, however, remain the case that the dominant figure in the history of the study of the subject is F. C. Baur, even if his views should not be considered as original as some have perceived them.

Some definitions of the term from F. C. Baur to the Second World War

It is not my intention to give an account of Baur's work on Jewish Christianity.³³ What is clear is that in pungent and detailed form he attributed to Jewish Christianity a vital place in what was a 'total' account of Christian

³¹ See n. 28 and n. 29 above.

³² See Hilgenfeld 1875, 189, for the view that Semler's understanding of the origins of the Christian canon can be explained by reference to his Lutheranism rather than anything else.

³³ Helpful accounts of Baur's work as it developed from 1831 can be found in Pfeleiderer 1890, 224-33; Kümmel 1973, 126-44; Harris 1975, 181-237; Morgan 1978-9, 4-9; and Lüdemann 1989, 1-7.

origins, and that it was precisely the comprehensiveness and the detail of his account that rendered his work so significant. It was Baur who gave lucid expression to the central questions in the study of Jewish Christianity. In this context one recalls in particular his discussion of evidence for the opposition between the Christianity of Paul and that of the apostles, especially Peter, and also his use of what he took to be second century literature, in particular the *Pseudo-Clementines*, in his assessment of this question. One also recalls his attempts to align Ebionite views with those of the earliest Jewish Christians and his attempt to explain the date of individual New Testament writings in relation to their tendency (Jewish Christian, Pauline, Catholic), and to understand the canon as a kind of diplomatic document evidencing the coming together of Jewish and Gentile Christian in the form of early Catholicism. All of this had been hinted at in previous work, as we have shown, but none of it had been expounded with the same lucidity and as part of a unified narrative of Christian development.³⁴

The principal concern of this essay is to discuss the question of the various definitions scholars have adopted in their discussions of Jewish Christianity. Interestingly, Baur, the expositor *par excellence*, one might think, of the term, does not in any of his works dedicate a detailed discussion to defining it. The term simply appears as a given, assuming an agreed definition. Implicitly, of course, Baur does define the term, and that definition is in some sense determined by what it opposes, namely Pauline Christianity. Where Pauline Christianity was universal and spiritual (here picking up on a significant aspect of Jesus' own ministry),³⁵ Jewish Christianity was particular/national and legalistic. In essence, Jewish Christianity was Judaism plus the belief that Jesus was the Messiah (a belief that in its conception was Jewish). As he wrote in his *Paulus*: "The only thing that divided them (Jewish Christians) from the rest of the Jews was the conviction at which they had arrived, that the promised Messiah had appeared to Jesus of Nazareth."³⁶ A strong commitment to the Jewish law, in particular circumcision, and the Jewish nation over against the Gentiles, with a concomitant anti-

³⁴ Note Harris 1975, 181, who, after admitting Baur's reliance upon predecessors, goes on to state "that he (Baur) presented not just solutions to questions but a new total-view, a comprehensive picture of the situation in the early church, and a new standard by which the New Testament narratives might be appraised."

³⁵ Baur saw Jesus' ministry as evincing, on the one hand, a moral universalism, manifest in particular in the sermon on the mount, and on the other hand, a messianic aspect which was particular and nationalistic. He argued that the messianism constituted the necessary clothing for the moral universalism in order to facilitate the latter's entry into the stream of history. For Baur some of Jesus' followers took the nationalism seriously (the Jewish Christians) while others (the Paulinists) took the universalism to heart. For this see in particular Baur 1878, 48-9.

³⁶ Baur 1875, 43.

Paulinism, are the central aspects of Jewish Christianity. At times in his narrative, Baur hints at divisions within the body he calls Jewish Christian, implying the existence of a more liberal wing who did not oppose Paul,³⁷ but this is never fully developed in his later writings where he becomes bolder in his assertion of Paul's opposition to the views of the apostles. Of course, for Baur's view of Christian origins to be convincing, he had often to indulge in arguments from silence in order to prove the anti-Paulinism of a particular document (see especially in this regard his discussion of Revelation), and to demonstrate that Jewish Christians changed their opinions, and it is in his discussion of this transformation that he hints at an understanding of Jewish Christianity as in some senses a mentality that went beyond simple legalism and nationalism and bound itself up with a type of moralism, with apocalypticism, a hierarchical view of religion, and an over-reliance on Old Testament categories,³⁸ elements of which were to find their new expression in the Catholicism of the second century.³⁹ Baur's attempt to attribute to it a significant role in the formation of Catholicism was itself an attempt to associate Roman religion with Judaism, a point that becomes more explicit in some later writers.⁴⁰

Baur's pupil, A. Schweigler, sought in his *Das nachapostolische Zeitalter*, published in 1846, to radicalise his teacher's views by arguing that the early period of Christian history was essentially Jewish Christian, or as he preferred to term it 'Ebionite' in character and that the Catholic church was not formed out of a conflict between Jewish Christianity and Gentile/Pauline Christianity, but rather out of Jewish Christianity itself.⁴¹ This involved Schweigler in a considerable diminution of Pauline Christianity's influence in the early period, and in a correspondingly more complex presentation of the development of Jewish Christianity than that of Baur.

³⁷ Baur was more explicit on this point in a very early article (Baur 1831), where he highlights the essential agreement between the apostles and Paul. The same thought is hinted at in 1875, 132-3, but here in a much less obvious way. For Baur Jewish Christianity is essentially monolithic. For the evolution of Baur's views in this regard, see Lüdemann 1989, 3-4.

³⁸ See in particular his discussion of the epistle to the Hebrews in Baur 1878, 114-21.

³⁹ See Baur 1878, 112-13. In his reconstruction, Paulinism contributes the idea of universalism to the Catholic church, "but it was Jewish Christianity which applied the forms of organisation and erected the hierarchical edifice upon this basis." In such a statement there is definite continuity with the work of Thomas Morgan as described above.

⁴⁰ See in particular Wernle 1903, 102-3, where he speaks of Roman Catholicism as "from our point of view, the Judaising of Christianity"; and continues: "It is not without reason that the Reformation means a reawakening of St. Paul, the opponent of the Jews." For the thesis that much of nineteenth century German Protestant theology had an anti-Catholic bias, in part inspired by the work of Baur, see O'Neill 1985, 143-78.

⁴¹ Schweigler's work is discussed by Harris 1975, 78-88, 198-207.

Schwegler's definition of the term was, implicitly at least, very general and simply related to everything that was not Pauline. But on occasion, he attempted a more positive definition. So on p. 34 of his magnum opus he writes that Jewish Christianity is characterised by the failure to acknowledge the essential and basic difference between Christianity and Judaism, between law and Gospel.⁴² Such a broad definition appeared to include in its embrace such figures as Justin Martyr, who had been seen by Baur as marking the transition point between Jewish Christianity and Catholicism.⁴³ Outside of observance of the law, Schwegler implied that things Jewish Christian could pertain to matters christological, chiliastic, ascetic, moralising and constitutional, and like Baur, he saw many of these things as reemerging in Catholicism.

By the time Albrecht Ritschl came to write the second edition of his *Die Entstehung der altchristlichen Kirche* in 1857, it seemed to him at least that there was a need to look again at the question of defining 'Jewish Christianity'.⁴⁴ Interestingly, however, he did not begin by attacking Baur or Schwegler's definitions of the term. Rather he took as his starting point the definition of A. Schliemann which had appeared in the same author's work on the *Clementines*, published in 1844.⁴⁵ Schliemann, who had begun his brief discussion of the definition of the term by noting the confusion ('Verwirrung') which surrounded the term 'Jewish Christian' and related concepts such as 'Judaising Christian' or 'Ebionite', defined 'judenchristlich' in terms simply of racial origin, i.e. Christians who had once been Jews,⁴⁶ adding, somewhat subjectively, that he understood by a Jewish Christian perspective ('Auffassung'), one in which the Jewish heritage was discernible without being detrimental. Where such a perspective was detrimental, as was the case, in his opinion, with a text like *Hermas*, we would do best to describe that as Judaising or Judaistic, a term that described an orientation ('Richtung') and had no reference to racial origins. For Ritschl such a definition involved, on the one hand, a subjectivity that was difficult to apply in any scientific way,⁴⁷ and on the other hand, the

⁴² " ... die Nichtanerkennung eines prinzipiellen und grundwesentlichen Unterschieds zwischen Christlichem und Jüdischem, zwischen Evangelium und Gesetz ist es, was jene Epoche in eigentümlicher Weise charakterisiert, und darum fällt sie auch, alles zusammengekommen, unter dem Gesichtspunkt des Judenchristentums." (ibid., 34).

⁴³ Baur had argued that Justin could not be called Pauline because of his strong interest in the Old Testament. See Baur 1878, 147.

⁴⁴ Ritschl 1857, 104-8.

⁴⁵ Schliemann 1844, 371-2, n. 1.

⁴⁶ The term was not to be regarded as referring in any way to what Schliemann called a 'Richtung'.

⁴⁷ Note his words on p. 105: "Ohne noch auf die Frage einzugehen, welches denn das Maass des Gesunden, Berechtigten, gegenüber dem Trübenden und Ungehörigen in der

creation of a definition of 'Jewish Christian' which would incorporate a figure like Paul as well as Barnabas, and of 'Judaistic' which could potentially incorporate Catholic Christianity. Ritschl's definition of the term took its starting point from the *Epistle of Barnabas* 4.6. Here, it is stated by those apparently opposed to the author of *Barnabas* that the covenant is both theirs (the Jews) and ours. Ritschl understood this verse to mean that the law given through Moses is also the central element in Christianity (cf. also *Ps. Clem. Rec.* 4.5; *Ps. Clem. Hom.* 8.6).⁴⁸ For Ritschl these words, with their insistence on the centrality of Jewish law, brought out most clearly his understanding of the definition of the word in terms of the identity of Judaism and Christianity.⁴⁹ The terms 'judaistisch' or 'Judaismus' were to be used to describe ongoing Jewish influences within the church expressed in ways other than those one would associate with Jewish Christianity as defined above (in this respect, Paul could be conceived of as 'Judaistic' – here the term almost had the sense of 'alttestamentlich').⁵⁰ Ritschl then went on to distinguish between, on the one hand, the apostles and other Christians of Jewish origin who continued to observe the law out of a sense that it was appropriate for Jews so to behave but accepted the law-free Gentile mission associated with Paul, and, on the other, other strict Jewish Christians who took the view that a law-free mission to the Gentiles was anathema (what Ritschl termed "Pharisaic Jewish Christians") and who appeared more clearly to comport with his definition of the term. These people could only conceive of a Christianity that was nothing other than national. The successors of these two groups are seen in the Nazoreans and the Ebionites respectively, the latter of whom were in part influenced by Essenes, and both of whom ceased to have any real influence on church affairs after the Bar Kokhba revolt. In essence, then, Jewish Christianity conceived of in this narrower sense, rather than being a central lynchpin in the development of the Catholic church, was from a relatively early stage a sect without real influence. The rise of Catholicism in the

Nachwirkung jüdischer Anschauung auf das Christenthum sei ..." He extends this point on the next page by asking how the scholar might judge the eschatology of Paul over against that of Revelation. Could one legitimately call one Jewish Christian and the other Judaistic?

⁴⁸ "Das Gesetz, welches Gott durch Moses gegeben hat, ist auch das Wesen des Christenthumes" (ibid., 106).

⁴⁹ Ritschl did not limit this definition to born Jews but to Gentiles who entertained such opinions as well. See Ritschl 1857, 107.

⁵⁰ Ritschl 1857, 107. After noting that Paul is strongly "judaistisch" insofar as he sees Christianity as the true fulfillment of Judaism, he goes on to note that the difference between Paul and the Jewish Christians lies in the former's placement of Christianity in continuity and agreement with the divine promise but in opposition to the Mosaic law.

middle of the second century could more easily be accounted for by reference to tendencies within Pauline/Gentile Christianity.⁵¹

Ritschl's attack upon Baur, Schwegler and others provided an alternative and popular route towards understanding the origins of the church, and in turn, hinted at a more complex perception of Jewish Christianity, conceived of in heretical and orthodox terms, in terms of a mild ('mild') and strict ('schroff') form of the phenomenon.⁵² Certainly Ritschl's thesis did much to question the idea that there was a united Jewish Christian front, which, though able to develop, was monolithic – there were different parties of Jewish Christians, who differed on various points. This thesis, for instance, was to be accepted even by those who were more sympathetic to Baur's ideas, like Hilgenfeld.⁵³ Moreover, by distinguishing what was 'judenchristlich' and what was 'judaistisch' in the way he did, Ritschl allowed for the possibility that things Jewish could be mediated to Christianity through individuals, like Paul (Baur took such a non-Jewish view of Paul that this conclusion should be regarded as significant), who need not themselves be described as Jewish Christian (Paulinism, the phenomenon with which Jewish Christianity was most frequently contrasted by the Tübingen School, had within itself Jewish elements). By the same route Ritschl narrowed considerably the definition of the term 'Jewish Christian' – what he wished to term 'judaistisch' would have been termed 'judenchristlich' by Baur and, in particular Schwegler, with their implicitly broader understandings of the term.

Some criticised Ritschl's definition. So, for instance, Uhlhorn in his article entitled 'Judenchristen – Judenchristenthum' in Herzog's *Realencyclopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*,⁵⁴ stated that Ritschl had misused the word 'judaistisch', when he had given it the meaning 'alttestamentlich'. In fact this term, together with the less good word 'judenzend', were better understood as relating to what Uhlhorn termed, a "false intermingling of the Jewish and the Christian", 'false' because it incorporated a misconceived emphasis on the unity of Judaism and Christianity at the expense of what was new in the latter⁵⁵. On account of this Uhlhorn

⁵¹ A helpful summary of Ritschl's views is found in Lüdemann 1989, 12-16.

⁵² Such a distinction, which was to become standard, had already been anticipated by, amongst others, Neander and K. Hase. See in particular Hase 1855, 63-4.

⁵³ Hilgenfeld 1884. For a discussion of Hilgenfeld's contribution to the study of Jewish Christianity, see Lüdemann 1989, 18-21. Another individual, who could be thought part of the so-called Tübingen School but came close to agreeing with Ritschl's more complex picture, was Karl Reinhold Köstlin. On his work, see Harris 1975, 96-100.

⁵⁴ Uhlhorn 1857, 132-5.

⁵⁵ "Judaismus", 'Judaistisch' schliesst immer den Nebenbegriff einer falschen Vermischung von Jüdischem und Christlichem in sich und wird deshalb besser für die Richtungen des Judenchristenthums gebraucht, welche durch ein falsches Betonen der Einheit

preferred to give 'Judenchristenthum' (sic) the broadest definition "so dass es diejenige Auffassung des Christenthums bezeichnet, welche vorwiegend die Continuität der alttestamentlichen und neutestamentlichen Offenbarung betont, so dass unter dem Namen Judenchristenthum die *verschiedensten* (my italics) Richtungen von denen an, welche über der Continuität keineswegs den Fortschritt verkennen (1 Peter and the epistle of James are cited as examples of this type of Jewish Christianity), bis zu denen hin, für welche die Continuität völlige Identität wird ..." (the Ebionites and the *Pseudo-Clementines* are cited).⁵⁶ In this respect, it was legitimate, as Ritschl and others had argued, to distinguish between, for instance, a mild and a harsh Jewish Christianity.

In a sense Uhlhorn's definition raised more questions than it answered. While he was right to question Ritschl's understanding of the term 'judaisch' (Uhlhorn's own interpretation comported more with general usage), his own understanding of 'judenchristlich' seemed vague and not fully developed. Evidently Uhlhorn was trying to broaden the meaning of the term relative to Ritschl but in so doing he was not clear, unlike Ritschl, about how precisely to define continuity between the Old Testament and the New, the central plank in his own definition. Also lurking beneath the surface of his definition was, as with many of his predecessors, a view of what constituted within a text or writer an acceptable or unacceptable degree of Jewish influence.

Harnack, who like Ritschl before him, wished to play down the significance of Jewish Christianity for the history of the church (he would describe it as a "Gegenstand der Neugierde" in the original German),⁵⁷ seemed to be responding to such broad definitions as those provided by Uhlhorn and others. He stated in this regard that Christianity's claim to be the fulfilment of the Old Testament promises did not in any sense align it with Judaism and thus with Jewish Christianity. "To describe the appearance of the Jewish, Old Testament, heritage in the Christian faith ... by the name Jewish Christianity must, therefore, lead to error and it has done to a very great extent", he wrote.⁵⁸ When Christians called themselves the true Israel, they were indulging in a claim that was there from the beginning and could only be denied by a view that was alien to Christianity itself. He

von Judenthum und Christenthum das Neue im Christenthum beeinträchtigen." (Uhlhorn 1857, 132-3).

⁵⁶ Ibid., 132-3.

⁵⁷ Harnack 1894, 290: "From the standpoint of the universal history of Christianity, these Jewish Christian communities appear as rudimentary structures which now and again, as *objects of curiosity*, engaged the attention of the main body of Christendom in the east, but could not exert any important influence on it, just because they contained a national element."

⁵⁸ Ibid., 288.

continued: "The eschatological ideas of Papias were not Jewish Christian, but Christian, while, on the other hand, the eschatological speculations of Origen were not Gentile Christian, but essentially Greek."⁵⁹ The Montanists were not Jewish Christians but simply aficionados of the Old Testament. To view the appropriation of the Old Testament religion as Jewish Christian was arbitrary for Christianity had laid claim to the Jewish heritage. It would, claimed Harnack, be quite wrong on these grounds to name a text like the *Didache* Jewish Christian.⁶⁰ For Harnack, the application of the term Jewish Christian was only appropriate when applied to those Christians "who really maintained in their whole extent, or to some degree, the national and political forms of Judaism and the observance of the Mosaic law in its literal sense, as essential to Christianity, at least to the Christianity of born Jews, or who, though rejecting these forms, nevertheless assumed a prerogative of the Jewish people even in Christianity."⁶¹ Such a perspective was opposed, not by Gentile Christianity, but by Christianity itself insofar as it is conceived of as universalistic and anti-national in the strict sense of the term.⁶²

Similar observations, although slightly differently conceived, appeared in Hort's lectures on 'Judaistic Christianity', rather than 'Jewish Christianity', published posthumously as a book in 1904.⁶³ Hort began his introductory lecture by distinguishing his own use of the term from at least three other uses. 'Judaistic Christianity', Hort argued, was not to be confused with a Christianity that was "Judaistic in tone and spirit only."⁶⁴ The whole course of Christian history, he stated, was full of beliefs, practices and institutions, which were based on a misunderstanding of the Gospel dispensation, upon "the beggarly spirits" against which Paul warned his congregations. "Such a Christianity, however, though strictly analogous to the Judaistic Christianity of the apostolic age, is not itself strictly, i.e. historically, Judaistic." Judaistic Christianity was equally not to be likened to those forms of Christianity, which arose "from a recognition of the authority of the Old Testament unaccompanied by a clear perception of the true relation of the Old Testament to the New."⁶⁵ And nor could Judaistic Christianity be associated with forms of Christianity which accord significance to the Old Testament (that was the mistake of Marcion). Rather Ju-

⁵⁹ Ibid., 288.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 287 n. 1.

⁶¹ Ibid., 289. In this regard Harnack quoted a passage from the *Clementine Homilies* 11.16, where it is stated "if the foreigner observes the law he is a Jew, but if not, he is a Greek."

⁶² For Harnack Christianity is the religion of Israel perfected and spiritualised.

⁶³ Hort 1904. Note Slater 1895 for an early review of the lectures.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 1.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 3.

daistic Christianity, in Hort's view, should be used to refer to that form of Christianity which falls back to "the Jewish point of view", i.e. to that opinion which ascribed perpetuity to the Jewish law rather than recognising its limited role until Christ, the universalist, had come (hence the term 'Judaistic' understood in a similar way to Uhlhorn). "Judaistic Christianity, in this true sense of the term might with at least equal propriety be called Christian Judaism."⁶⁶ Jewish Christianity thus defined was a phenomenon which, broadly speaking, was confined to what Hort termed, "the first ages of the church", and of no particular significance in the history of the church's development.

Harnack's and Hort's efforts at defining Jewish Christianity, hinted, as had Ritschl's before them, at a need to exclude from the evidence of Jewish Christian influence the presence of apparently Jewish ideas in the church. These ideas were often associated with the development of Catholicism in the second century, but were also associated with the fact of Christian reliance upon the Hebrew scriptures and phenomena like apocalyptic. Indeed such influence was accepted in many cases as resulting from the ongoing influence of Judaism upon Christianity.⁶⁷ Such a view of what was Jewish Christian hinted at a broader understanding of the term than they were willing to countenance. Such restrictive approaches to the definition of the term, while not always precisely clear themselves, highlighted the fact that many scholars had, either consciously or unconsciously, operated with broader understandings of the term.⁶⁸

Something of the confused state of affairs in relation to the question of definition was reflected in Gustav Hoennicke's work of 1908.⁶⁹ After his helpful review of research on Jewish Christianity from the time of Baur to his own day, Hoennicke noted that difficulties surrounded the term,⁷⁰ as they did the terms 'Ebionism' and 'Judaismus'. He began by outlining a number of definitions, which had been used up to his time. He criticised Baur for seeing Jewish Christianity as simply the opposite of Paulinism – like Ritschl and others before him he noted that Paul's theology had not escaped the influence of Judaism. He criticised a simple ethnic definition

⁶⁶ Ibid., 5.

⁶⁷ Amongst many others, this view is represented by Wernle 1903.

⁶⁸ This point is explicitly made by Sorley 1881. After defining the term as used by the Tübingen School as "a distinct party or sect of Christians, according to whom Christianity was conditioned by, or was indeed a mere supplement to, the national ideas and legal observances of Judaism" (14), he goes on to criticise Baur's designation of Hebrews as Jewish Christian, and Schwegler's definition of *Barnabas*, the Ignatian Epistles, and Justin by the same term, by noting that "they must be understood as using the word 'Jewish Christian' in another than its technical sense as already defined." (ibid. 56).

⁶⁹ Hoennicke 1908.

⁷⁰ "Schwierigkeiten bereitet der Ausdruck 'Judenchristentum.'" (ibid., 17).

on the grounds that it was difficult to define what was characteristic of the theology of Jews who became Christians. And he also accused those who saw Jewish Christianity as marked by a certain national affinity with Judaism of being vague.⁷¹ Hoping to clarify matters a little, he went on to present his own definition. Accepting the view that Jewish Christians were converted Jews, he argued that such people believed that all salvation could only be mediated through Judaism, thus preserving the link between religion and nationality.⁷² But rather than calling the reality so defined 'Judenchristentum', he called it 'Judaismus', appearing in part at least to echo the views of Uhlhorn. 'Judenchristentum', he went on to argue, should be used to describe the ongoing influence of Judaism upon Christianity, particularly where this was reflected in a heavy emphasis on what he termed Old Testament-Jewish elements ("alttestamentlich-jüdische Elemente"). Of course, he continued, such a definition could be applied to all of early Christianity at the beginning and so the term should be narrowed down to refer to manifestations of Christianity in which the Old Testament-Jewish element did not correspond to the essence of the Gospel.⁷³ Hence the book's two main chapters discuss 'Judaismus', and the influence, in broader terms, of Judaism on Christianity. At the end of the discussion of the latter Hoennicke can affirm the extraordinary importance of Judaism's influence upon early Christianity, and of its role in the formation of early Catholicism, conceived of in terms of a certain type of moralism, of hierarchy and ritualism, eschatology, and an excessive use of the Old Testament.⁷⁴ In this respect, Hoennicke argued, Baur had been right to emphasise the influence of Judaism upon early Christianity.⁷⁵ Where he had been wrong was to ascribe such influences to Jewish Christianity, as he, Baur conceived it. What Baur had understood as Jewish Christianity was in fact 'Judaismus' which had ceased to have any real influence relatively early in

⁷¹ "Indes, diese Bestimmung ist zu weitschichtig. Denn schon das ist zu beachten, dass auch dem Paulus Israel stets das auserwählte Volk geblieben ist." (ibid., 18).

⁷² "... alles Heil kann nur durch Vermittlung des Judentums gewonnen werden, dass sie bei Verkündigung des Evangeliums Jesu das Jüdische Nationalprinzip geltend machen und das Band zwischen Religion und Nationalität festhielten." (ibid., 18).

⁷³ "... im Grunde von Judenchristentum nur da gesprochen werden kann, wo alttestamentlich-jüdische Elemente innerhalb des Christentums auftreten, welche dem Wesen des Evangeliums nicht entsprechen." (ibid., 18).

⁷⁴ Ibid., 369f. Note in particular Hoennicke's discussion of the Apologists from 371f.

⁷⁵ "Damit ist die Bedeutung des jüdischen Einflusses erwiesen. Ferdinand Christian Baur hatte es Recht, wenn er betonte, dass bei der Betrachtung der Entwicklung des Urchristentums die jüdischen Einflüsse sehr hoch zu taxieren seien." (ibid., 373).

Christian history. What Baur had been granted with one hand, Hoennicke had taken away with the other.⁷⁶

Hoennicke's discussion of the definition of Jewish Christianity might be said to act as a kind of summary of the discussion in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It reflected a growing tendency amongst scholars to move away from a view of the phenomenon as a highly influential force in the formation of what some termed Catholicism. Amongst other things, an essentially narrow interpretation of the term facilitated such a view, one which tended to play down anti-Paulinism, at least as an explicit aspect of the definition, and play up the concepts of 'nationality' and law. Out of this emerged a more diverse movement than Baur and his followers had been willing to countenance. At the same time Hoennicke's discussion highlighted an ongoing confusion over terminology in particular in relation to the terms 'Judenchristentum', 'Judaismus', and 'Ebionismus.' So what Hoennicke defined as 'Judaismus' was, more or less, what Ritschl and Harnack had called 'Judenchristentum'. But what Hoennicke called 'Judenchristentum' seemed not so far from Catholicism, even if his use of the term was not strictly consistent.⁷⁷ Moreover, and perhaps most significantly, Hoennicke's discussion reflected a genuine consciousness on the part of scholars of the ongoing importance of Jewish categories for developing Christianity, and a genuine anxiety about this fact, which led some scholars to subjective judgments as to what level and what type of Jewish influence could be understood as deleterious. When Hoennicke defined 'Judenchristentum' in terms of a Jewish influence on Christianity, which in some sense affected the essence of Christian faith, what precisely did he mean, especially when he was not referring to Jewish understandings of nationhood and the law?⁷⁸

⁷⁶ "Die national-jüdische Auffassung des Evangeliums wurde, wie wir gezeigt haben, verhältnismässig früh in der Christenheit überwunden." (ibid., 373-4). He went on: "Nur die Nachwirkung jüdischer Elemente in Christentum war noch lange von der grössten Bedeutung."

⁷⁷ For the lack of consistent usage of the terms 'judaistisch' and 'judenchristlich' see in particular Hoennicke 1908, 373.

⁷⁸ Something of this confusion is reflected in Seeberg's discussion of Jewish Christianity in Seeberg 1920, 249-67. While he notes that one can understand the term to mean "die religiöse und sittliche Denkweise der national-jüdischen Christenheit", one could also understand it as "eine Denkweise ... die das ursprüngliche Christentum mit spezifisch jüdischen Anschauungen und Tendenzen so versetzt, dass es dadurch in seinem wesentlichen Gehalt modifiziert wird." (250). While he goes on to combine these two views of the term in his own definition – it is Christianity "insofern sie prinzipiell das Christentum mit dem angestammten Judentum, seinen Satzungen, Bräuchen und Tendenzen verband", perhaps coming closer to the more nationalist understanding of Harnack et al. – his discussion seems to hint at a more theological understanding of the term.

This subjectivity and 'vagueness', by no means untypical, hinted at an essentially Protestant disquiet about Christianity's Jewish origins, a Jewishness they often saw carried forward in Roman Catholicism. Scholarly debate about Jewish Christianity exemplified, at least partially, the truth of O'Neill's judgment that "Marcion the historian had his greatest success in the nineteenth century."⁷⁹

More recent study

Much of the work dedicated to Jewish Christianity had inevitably concentrated upon the reports in patristic sources relating to Ebionites/Nazoreans/Elchasaites and it had often been the case that Jewish Christianity found itself exclusively bound up with Ebionism – a clear throw back to Baur. One of those who wished to revive interest in this form of Jewish Christianity was Hans Joachim Schoeps. In a book entitled *Die Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums*,⁸⁰ through extensive use of patristic sources, and in particular the *Pseudo-Clementines*, Schoeps, eschewing the view of many of his predecessors that we possessed little reliable information about such people, went on to reconstruct what he termed a theology of the Ebionites. He, too, emphasised their strong commitment to Jewish observances but also highlighted their developed approach to the interpretation of scripture, their singular Christology, and their strongly anti-cultic tendency. Schoeps argued that this group's theology could in part be seen to have derived from certain forms of pre-Christian Judaism and that in some respects, it could lay claim to representing a very early form of Christianity associated with the apostles, a claim which Ritschl, Hort, Harnack and others had explicitly denied. Also contrary to the tendency of study at the time, Schoeps appeared to maintain that the Ebionism which he was seeking to describe was not a part or sub-section of the broader phenomenon, Jewish Christianity, but was in fact Jewish Christianity itself. Here, as in other respects, Schoeps came close to reviving views associated with Baur and the Tübingen School, even if he attributed to the movement much less importance than Baur had.⁸¹ Here, then, was a bold and coherent account of Jewish Christianity,

⁷⁹ O'Neill 1985, 171.

⁸⁰ Schoeps 1949.

⁸¹ Schoeps explicitly acknowledged his proximity to Tübingen School perspectives: "In manchem werden unsere Bemühungen die späte Rehabilitierung eines geläuterten Tübinger Standpunktes darstellen, um so ein altes Unrecht gutzumachen." (Schoeps 1949, 4-5).

which gave to the movement a clear ideological/theological profile, and resurrected the view of it as a party.⁸²

Jean Daniélou's *Théologie du Judéo-Christianisme*, first published in 1958, but subsequently translated into English as *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*,⁸³ constituted an attempt to broaden, rather than to narrow (as had been the case with Schoeps), the definition of Jewish Christianity. Daniélou suggested that in the early church there existed three types of Jewish Christianity. The first type, which he associated in particular with the Ebionites, he termed heterodox Jewish Christianity, not least because of its christological views. The second he termed orthodox Jewish Christianity. These were Jews by birth who, like the first apostles in Jerusalem, observed the Jewish law without imposing it upon others, and entertained orthodox christological views. In later Christian history the sect of the Nazoreans, as described by Jerome and Epiphanius, came closest to this group. A third type of Jewish Christianity, and the subject of his book, he identified as "a type of Christian thought expressing itself in forms borrowed from Judaism."⁸⁴ Such a form of Jewish Christianity contained within its number those who were not necessarily associated with the Jewish community including men who had broken completely with the Jewish world but continued to think in its terms. Thus the Apostle Paul, although by no means a Jewish Christian in the first two senses of the term, was certainly one in this third sense, as were a number of other Christians. Indeed the period of church history up to the Bar Kokhba revolt could be described as the Jewish Christian period of the church's history, as distinct from the Hellenistic and Latin periods, the subject of Daniélou's subsequent two volumes. Such a form of Christianity was marked by a certain affiliation with what Goppelt had termed 'Spätjudentum', that is, with theology associated with the Pharisees, Essenes and zealots, but in particular with apocalyptic. The identification of a Jewish Christian work has a chronological aspect (it must fall into the period up to about the middle of the second century), a generic aspect (it must comport with a particular genre of literature witnessed within Judaism, even though Jewish Christian traditions can be found in works from a later period), and a doctrinal criterion. To quote: "Jewish Christianity expresses itself in certain characteristic categories of ideas, notably those of apocalyptic ...",⁸⁵ the term understood broad-

⁸² See also Schoeps 1969, 9: "Jewish Christianity is not used as a designation of origin, but as the designation of the point of view of a party." For further discussion of Schoeps' contribution to the study of Jewish Christianity, see Carleton Paget 1999, 736-7.

⁸³ Daniélou 1964.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 11.

ly to refer to a gnosis relating to the hidden things of the world and the coming of revelation.

What Daniélou had done was make clear how important and widespread was the influence of Judaism upon Christianity of the first century and beyond, something that most of his predecessors had acknowledged. But unlike many of his predecessors he had straightforwardly termed Christianity so influenced, 'Jewish Christian' (here in part harking back to a broader definitions of the term against which Ritschl, Harnack and others had protested), and he had done so without any sense of embarrassment or anxiety. But whether Daniélou had done nothing more than identify a religious atmosphere prevalent at the time of Christian origins rather than a religious movement, or as he put it, "a first form of Christian theology expressed in Jewish-Semitic forms",⁸⁶ seemed altogether less clear, as many of his critics did not hesitate to point out.⁸⁷

Another Frenchman to busy himself with the question of the definition of Jewish Christianity was Marcel Simon. In *Verus Israel*,⁸⁸ which appeared in its original French version before the publications of Schoeps and Daniélou, in a chapter devoted to Jewish Christianity, Simon began by noting that the term had traditionally been used in an ethnic (Jews who converted to Christianity) and religious sense (Christians who continued to lead a Jewish way of life after conversion). Sometimes scholars combined these two definitions into one, holding a Jewish Christian to be an ethnic Jew who had converted to Christianity but continued to lead a Jewish way of life. Such a definition would not do, claimed Simon, because it too easily excluded Judaisers from the definition. Jewish Christianity should not be too tightly defined, he averred. After noting the ambiguity of the phrase 'Jewish' (Marcion, after all, had considered all Catholic Christianity Jewish), he appeared to opt for a definition based upon practices, while noting that within that spectrum were contained groups with a diverse body of

⁸⁶ Ibid., 10.

⁸⁷ Klijn 1973/4, 426, argues that where Baur had attributed Jewish ideas to a group, Daniélou had shown how widespread such ideas were amongst Christians. But Klijn's comment could be seen to be misleading. While Daniélou was not willing to limit the influence of his ideas to a group in the sense Baur conceived of such a term (all Christians of early Christian history, according to Daniélou, seem to be Jewish Christians), he still spoke of what he had identified as "a distinct entity." (Daniélou 1964, 405). On this point see in particular Murray 1965, 414f.; Kraft 1972, 81-92. See especially Kraft's comment, "It seems to me legitimate to ask whether any historically identifiable and self-conscious entity (person or group) ever existed behind Daniélou's 'Jewish Christian theology'?" (87); and later on after quoting a number of places where Daniélou spoke of a "common mentality", or "overall view" from Daniélou 1964, he wonders: "But it must be asked was there any conscious awareness of this 'common' bond on the part of these 'Jewish Christians'?"

⁸⁸ Simon 1986, 237-40.

opinions. Judaisers differed in this respect from Ebionites who differed from what he somewhat obscurely called syncretistic forms of the phenomenon. "We can say", Simon concluded this part of the discussion, "that there existed not a single phenomenon, Jewish Christianity, but several Jewish Christianities."⁸⁹ In an essay published after *Verus Israel*, Simon was clearer that practices should be the criteria by which one defined Jewish Christianity. As he wrote: "The criterion of observance seems to be uncontestedly the most secure."⁹⁰ To the question "What observances?", he answered those that go beyond the bare minimum of what is said to have been required of Gentiles at the Apostolic Decree of Acts 15, although here he is a little vague.⁹¹ In the same essay, which contains a helpful review of some other attempts at defining the term, Simon goes on to examine the question of a type of theological definition of Jewish Christianity, such as we find in Daniélou. While criticising his compatriot on a variety of grounds, he still appears inclined to adopt a broader definition than in previous publications. Simon argued that one is entitled to speak of Jewish Christianity in relation to doctrinal positions, liturgical practices, and theological thought which is on the one hand distinguished from Christianity of a Hellenistic type, and on the other hand offers clear affinities with elements of thought associated with one or more of the Jewish sects of the era of Christian origins. He cites the *Pseudo-Clementines* as an example of such a type of Christianity, as well as the Christianity of Ephesus, Rome and Edessa.⁹²

More recent work on Jewish Christianity has exhibited similarly diverse understandings of its character and history. Michael Goulder, for instance, has sought to keep elements of the Baur flag flying, and in the process has made somewhat questionable use of sources such as the *Pseudo-Clementines* to illuminate the theology of the earliest Jewish Christians.⁹³

⁸⁹ Ibid., 240.

⁹⁰ Simon 1965, 7. For similar thoughts, see Simon 1965, 53-76.

⁹¹ "Sera judéo-chrétien celui qui ira au-delà de cet ἐπάναγκες, qui se pliera à d'autres prescriptions de la loi rituelle juive." (ibid., 8).

⁹² See the same author's definition in Simon 1962. In his brief 'avant-propos' to the book, Simon notes that the term 'Jewish Christian (judéo-chrétien)' is susceptible of a number of meanings. It can mean Torah-observing Christian, but it can also have a more general sense. In this sense it can characterise what the two religions have in common and what divides them. Hence the essays collected together in the volume pertain to examples of what Simon terms a kind of syncretism between the religions, to subjects which reflect their continuity with each other, and to questions of polemic. One half suspects that this broad-based definition of the term arose in part from a desire on the part of Simon to justify his decision to bring this diverse body of essays into one volume. For a discussion of Simon's contribution to the study of Jewish Christianity, see Blanchetière 2001, 19-30.

⁹³ Goulder 1994.

Gerd Lüdemann has also wandered the Baur route by, like Goulder, playing up the anti-Pauline character of Jewish Christianity.⁹⁴ But many scholars, eschewing an old-fashioned 'party' definition of the term which plays up anti-Paulinism as a central feature of the movement, have settled for one based upon the ongoing attachment to certain Jewish practices. So, for instance, Mimouni has in his recent collection of essays on Jewish Christianity defined the phenomenon as "a recent formulation designating those Jews who recognised Jesus as Messiah, who recognised or did not recognise the divinity of Christ, but who continued to observe the Torah."⁹⁵ Such a definition is not, of course, without its problems. As we noted when discussing Simon's endorsement of a praxis-based definition, it is not straightforwardly clear in such a formulation which laws one would need to observe in order to be called a Jewish Christian, and scholars' views on this matter vary,⁹⁶ even if a majority would appear to make circumcision central.

Two further things emerge from Mimouni's definition. The first relates to the role of ethnicity in any definition. For some the Jewish origins of a Christian convert are enough to render him a Jewish Christian, although for others this is to render the definition meaningless given the very diverse ways in which Jewish converts to Christianity reacted to their Jewish heritage.⁹⁷ For Mimouni, in contrast to Simon, Jewish Christians are Jews who have been converted to Christianity, and continue to observe Jewish laws, even if their opinions vary as to the necessity for Gentile converts to observe these laws. In this respect he follows a number of recent interpreters.⁹⁸ In this definition Judaisers of Gentilic origin must be put in another category.⁹⁹ Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, there is already implicit in this definition a sense of the diversity of the phenomenon, expressed for Mimouni in terms of Christology, but expressed for others such

⁹⁴ Lüdemann 1989, especially 28-32.

⁹⁵ Mimouni 1998b, 70. This essay originally appeared in *NTS* 38 (1992), 161-86. For similar praxis-based definitions see Taylor 1990, 326; Kaestli 1996, 243-72; and Carleton Paget 1999, 733-42.

⁹⁶ For a variety of recent responses to this question, see Carleton Paget 1999, 735-6.

⁹⁷ From an earlier period see Ritschl's criticisms of Schliemann, and Hoennicke's criticism of such a definition. For a more recent criticism, see Strecker 1988, 311.

⁹⁸ Note, for instance, Wilson 1995, 143; and Stemberger 1998, 229. The latter places Jewish Christians between Judaisers of pagan origin and Christians of Jewish origins, who absorbed themselves into the Gentile Christian community.

⁹⁹ Kinzig 1991, 44-5, appears to follow Simon when he states that "on the institutional level the Jewish Christians and the Judaizing Christians were clearly distinct", but as far as religious practices were concerned, "there was a wide overlap". Interestingly, Kinzig sees the prevalence of Judaizing in the fourth century as a direct consequence of the decline of Jewish Christian groups. For further interesting comments on the categorization of Judaisers see Visotzky 1989, 61-2.

as Visotzky not only in terms of doctrine, but in terms of the type of Jewish laws practiced by Jewish Christians, a point we have already hinted at in the previous paragraph.¹⁰⁰ Current secondary literature, following Simon, tends to talk about Jewish Christianities. Sometimes these Jewish Christianities are divided into orthodox and heterodox types,¹⁰¹ sometimes into more complex groupings.¹⁰² Some form of legal observance is the invariable part of the definition. Jewish ethnicity is either a necessary or unnecessary requirement. All this has its origins in the literature of an older age, which was responding to Baur. Taken together this has a number of consequences. One is obviously further to erode the Bauresque model of a Jewish Christianity opposed to a Gentile Christianity.¹⁰³ More significantly it may lead some to question the legitimacy of the designation. If we incline to this skeptical view, perhaps the future of study lies more straightforwardly in the detailed examination of sources relating to sects traditionally associated with Jewish Christianity rather than in studies of 'Judenchristentum' with what that term appears to imply about the unity of the phenomenon. Such a thing already manifests itself in the work of Koch on the Ebionites,¹⁰⁴ Pritz on the Nazoreans,¹⁰⁵ and Luttkhuizen on the Elchasaïtes,¹⁰⁶ even if the *raison d'être* for such work does not overtly lie in a skepticism about the concept of Jewish Christianity.

Two further points need to be made. First, the study of Jewish Christianity has to a certain extent been affected by an ever-increasing appreciation of the diverse character of Judaism at the time of Christian origins. Such an acknowledgement of diversity, and its accompanying understandings of Jewish self-definition, have in a sense contributed to the ongoing perception of the plural character of those designated 'Jewish Christian' – their diversity reflects a diversity already present in Judaism itself. But such a recognition has also contributed to a perhaps greater appreciation of the complex issue of who and what to term 'Jewish Christian' conceived of in terms of what might or might not be tolerated within the Jewish community. An understanding of Jewish Christianity, therefore, is to a certain extent dependent upon one's perception of the Jewish-Christian schism, now widely held to be an event that is by no means uniform or precisely datable.¹⁰⁷ In this respect Colpe is quite right to note that the term 'Juden-

¹⁰⁰ Visotzky 1989, 47-70, esp. 56-60.

¹⁰¹ See Mimouni 1998.

¹⁰² See, for instance Brown 1983, 74-9; and Wilson 1995, 148-59.

¹⁰³ On this see Brown 1983.

¹⁰⁴ Koch 1976.

¹⁰⁵ Pritz 1988.

¹⁰⁶ Luttkhuizen 1985.

¹⁰⁷ For a highly critical engagement with the subject of the 'parting of the Ways', and a strong, and generally nuanced, argument in favour of a late date, see Reed and Becker

christentum' necessarily connects up with one's understanding of the reasons for and the processes by which Christianity was transformed from a movement within Judaism to an independent phenomenon, Christianity, outside of Judaism.¹⁰⁸ But here we should be a little cautious – a person may be conceived of as a Jewish Christian without being a part of the Jewish community. It is, in the parlance of J. L. Martyn, only a Christian Jew who can be thought of as within Judaism.¹⁰⁹ But arriving at a clear view of who is and who is not a Christian Jew or a Jewish Christian, conceived in the above terms, is made difficult precisely because determining Jewish reactions to Christians is itself so difficult.¹¹⁰

A second, and related point, concerns the ongoing influence of a definition of the term not so very distant from that advocated by Daniélou i.e. one that plays up a broadly ideological definition of the term,¹¹¹ and this in spite of the fact that Daniélou has come in for considerable criticism.¹¹² This influence is perhaps most strikingly evidenced in the work of Bagatti, Testa and others on the archaeology of Jewish Christianity, not least because they rely so heavily upon Daniélou's analysis of so-called Jewish Christian symbols for their identification of Jewish Christian artefacts and

2003; and Daniel Boyarin in numerous publications, but most recently, Boyarin 2004. For the possible consequences of this for an understanding of Jewish Christianity, see Skarsaune 2007, but also Reed 2003.

¹⁰⁸ Note Colpe 1990, 38: "Unter den 'Transformationen' in der Religionsgeschichte ist diejenige, die vom Judentum zum Christentum geführt hat, vielleicht immer noch der historisch schwierigste Fall, obwohl ihr mehr Untersuchungen als anderen Transformationen gewidmet worden sein dürfen. Der Begriff 'Judenchristentum' drückt nicht mehr als die Schwierigkeit dieses Tatbestandes aus."

¹⁰⁹ Martyn 1978, 90-121, especially 104. See also Malina 1976, 46-57.

¹¹⁰ In this context it is worth noting the work of Boyarin, referred to above. In Boyarin 2004 he posits an essentially late date for the division between Christianity and Judaism (4th century). Prior to that date it is best to describe those we call Jews and Christians as Judaeo-Christians, occupying different positions on a spectrum running, approximately, from the rabbis to Marcion. Against this background, he is not so much interested in a phenomenon 'Jewish Christianity' – in fact it is meaningless to talk about such a phenomenon – but rather why it was that people were so keen to denounce those we call 'Jewish Christians' as heretics so late (thinking in this context particularly of the work of Epiphanius, Jerome etc.). He argues that this had much to do with the desire on the part of Christians (and rabbis) to define both what they were and what they were not. On this see chapter 1 and chapter 11 (the essay in this volume on Ebionites); and Reed 2008 for a nuanced response.

¹¹¹ See Lüdemann's comment: "Unless my impression is mistaken, Daniélou's understanding of the matter ... enjoys the greatest success." (1989, 29).

¹¹² In this regard special note should be taken of Murray 1965; and Kraft 1972, 81-96.

sites.¹¹³ However, his influence, unacknowledged or acknowledged, is also seen in the somewhat profligate use to which the term Jewish Christian is put in modern scholarship – a tradition is more often than not deemed Jewish Christian, not because it can be demonstrated that it emerged from a community which observed certain Jewish laws, but because it has a Jewish character about it, however we might define such a thing. We have already noted how even a scholar such as Simon, who endorsed an essentially praxis-based understanding of Jewish Christianity, at the same time flirted with a more ideologically based definition. Richard Longenecker can still in his careful definition of the term, write that it can be applied to Christians whose conceptual frame of reference and whose expressions were rooted in semitic thought generally and Judaism in particular.¹¹⁴ Klijn, admitting to the immense Jewish influence on the church, can state that “The object of the study of Jewish Christianity is to detect the presence, the range, the development and the disappearance of this influence”,¹¹⁵ in this context understanding “this influence” to have a heterodox character.¹¹⁶ Gunther Stemberger, who is insistent upon the praxis-based aspect of any definition, can still state that any definition of the term expresses itself in what he describes as, “die Ausprägung des Glaubensbekenntnisses”,¹¹⁷ although he admits that there are difficulties with unravelling the precise meaning of such a phrase. Of course, this type of definition, which appears to be intentionally broad, need not be held outside of a praxis-based definition¹¹⁸ as the case of Stemberger, for instance, makes plain, but very often it is.

¹¹³ Bagatti's views are set out in Bagatti 1971. For the relationship of his and others' work to that of Daniélou, see Taylor 1993, 12, who is herself maximally skeptical of Bagatti's et al.'s findings. For a less skeptical assessment see Mimouni 1998, 317-452.

¹¹⁴ Longenecker 1970, 3.

¹¹⁵ Klijn 1973/4, 426.

¹¹⁶ Klijn 1973/4, 431.

¹¹⁷ Stemberger 1998, 229. Note also Mimouni 1998, who in spite of the definition he espouses, still terms the strikingly antinomian *Barnabas* Jewish Christian.

¹¹⁸ Daniélou had explicitly stated this when outlining his own understanding of the term. Richard Bauckham, in his discussion of the theological profile of the Epistle of Jude, Bauckham 1983, 8-10, betrays a certain uneasiness about adopting such a position. He categorises the text “apocalyptic Jewish Christian” but is uncertain as to whether Jude or the community he addressed observed the Jewish law. His categorisation appears to derive more clearly from the fact that Jude betrays knowledge of certain apocryphal Jewish texts, and from its apocalyptic profile. See also his categorisation of *The Apocalypse of Peter*, as discussed in Bauckham 1998, 228-38. Here he defines Jewish Christianity as “refer[ring] to communities of Christian Jews who maintained their Jewish identity” (235 n. 1), but is only able to show that the community of *The Apocalypse* maintained such a thing in relation to its apocalypticism, mode of writing etc. That is not to say that this community did not maintain its Jewish identity by observing certain Jewish laws. It is

Explaining this ongoing tendency to use the term 'Jewish Christian' in this somewhat vague way to describe what seems at first sight to be nothing more than material which shows evidence of Jewish influence, is understandable. We need not attribute it to the overarching influence of Daniélou (few, for instance, would follow him in believing that the different things they describe form what Daniélou called "a distinct entity"). Tendencies in the wider world of New Testament studies, and to a lesser extent, patristics, may account for the matter. One of these lies in the much greater emphasis scholars are now willing to place upon Christianity's Jewish heritage. This emphasis has been present within scholarship for a long time, but in recent times has become notably prominent, in part stimulated by its post-holocaust setting, in part inspired by a recognition of Jewish diversity. The ongoing recognition of Christianity's debt to Jewish thought and theology is held by some best to be expressed with the term 'Jewish Christian'. The difficulty with such an application lies, amongst other things, in determining, on the basis of the definition, what is not Jewish Christian, assuming the multi-faceted nature of Judaism; and in the fact that the term, given the history of its application, can imply some unified ideological perspective which it is difficult to eke out of the vaguer theological definition.

Concluding observations

In antiquity noone, as far as we know, called themselves a Jewish Christian or spoke of belonging to an entity called 'Jewish Christianity'. The terms are invented ones, introduced to describe a supposed phenomenon of early Christianity. When we add to this the fact that the terms as used in English or any other modern language are ambiguous as they stand, and that they may be taken to imply different things in different languages ('Judenchrist' is not the same as a 'Jewish Christian'), the problem of definition becomes more complex still.

Those in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who sought to define the term were usually insistent that a law-observant and national aspect should be central to any definition. In the light of Baur's thesis about the formation in the second century of what was termed 'Catholic Christianity', scholars differed as to the influence and unified character of Jewish Christianity. By the end of the century many scholars saw the movement as minimally influential and variegated in its character, assuming, for instance, a mild and more extreme form of the phenomenon. Many had

merely to state that, lacking such evidence, we must assume an understanding of the term on the part of Bauckham that is theological in profile.

moved away from Baur's view of the movement as essentially anti-Pauline. At the same time it should be noted that scholars were only too aware of the influence of Judaism upon early Christianity and in particular so-called 'early Catholicism', and that in the light of this some continued to operate with definitions of 'Jewish Christian' that did not always straightforwardly emerge from an understanding of the term as 'Judaising'. This explains, for instance, Ritschl, Harnack and Hort's insistence that the term 'Jewish Christian' not be mixed up with Christianity's obvious indebtedness to Jewish theology and scripture – hence Hort's 'Judaistic Christianity'. When scholars like Hoennicke, and to a lesser extent, Seeberg, talked of Jewish influence of a deleterious kind upon Christianity, by which they did not exclusively mean insistence upon law-observance, and in the case of Hoennicke, wished to call this 'Judenchristentum' (rather than 'Judaismus'), they reflected this ongoing difficulty with defining the term and with establishing a universally accepted form of vocabulary.

More recent study of Jewish Christianity has taken further many aspects of the previous era of study. Baur's view of the influence of Jewish Christianity upon the Christianity of the second century has now been more or less abandoned. The notion of Jewish Christians as belonging to a unified entity called 'Jewish Christianity' has also come under attack with the tendency now to speak in the plural of 'Jewish Christianities'. Broadly speaking the view is taken that such people, while professing a belief in the messiahship of Christ, were united by their commitment to certain Jewish laws, although scholars disagree about which ones,¹¹⁹ but that they entertained a variety of opinions on the need for Gentiles to implement such laws, and on questions of doctrine. Some scholars still wish, in this context, to speak of an heretical and orthodox form of the phenomenon. Scholars remain divided upon the role of ethnicity in such a definition, and consequently uncertain as to how to categorise Gentile Judaisers. Some, taking seriously the apparent collapse of any kind of meaningful ideological profile for Jewish Christians, have defended an old view, and one that might at one level be said to bring out most clearly the sense of 'Judenchrist', that ethnicity alone should determine whether someone should be categorised a Jewish Christian, independent of questions of an ongoing commitment to certain Jewish laws. In such a tepid and probably unworkable defi-

¹¹⁹ This is the definition adopted in Skarsaune and Hvalvik 2007. This states that a Jewish Christian is "any Jewish person who believes in Jesus as the Messiah, and who still exhibits some markers of Jewish identity, first and foremost some measure of Torah observance." It should be noted that there is an element of vagueness in the phrase "some markers of Jewish identity", a vagueness, which is only marginally clarified by the final phrase "some measure of Torah observance." Note our discussion of this issue on pp. 29-31.

nition, 'Jewish Christian' comes under what the editors of this volume have designated "Jewish believer in Jesus."

As implied above, one of the major changes in the more recent period of study has been the almost complete abandonment of the kind of historical narrative into which Jewish Christianity was made to fit by Baur. Nowadays we do not so easily speak as we once did about Catholic Christianity and its formation in the second century. In such a narrative, Jewish Christians were normally perceived as a central cog in the history of Christianity, and their profile within Judaism was regarded as much less important. That is not to say that it was not considered at all. Neander, for instance, took an interest in such a problem, as did Graetz, and those other scholars who busied themselves with finding references to Christians in rabbinic literature. But nowadays, in part following the lead of Schoeps and Simon, and stimulated by an ever-growing interest in the question of Jewish self-definition in antiquity, such a concern has increased, a fact witnessed to, in part, by the growing participation of Jewish scholars in the discussion of the subject.¹²⁰

We concluded the final section of the main part of this paper by noting the ongoing presence in New Testament and patristic circles of a use of the term Jewish Christian to describe a thought, viewpoint, religious motif, or literary form, which seemed to have a Jewish aspect to it. We noted that such an understanding of the term, which had been discussed most fully by Daniélou, but informed the work of many other scholars who were not necessarily themselves conscious followers of the Frenchman, was altogether more diffuse than the traditional, sectarian use of the term with its strong emphasis on Jewish practices. More often than not, it was impossible to show that the presence of an apparently Jewish motif or idea in an individual writing betrayed its origin in a Jewish Christian community, or that it belonged to an overarching entity we could call Jewish Christian theology. But this 'vaguer' use of the term, employed to express the widespread influence of Judaism on ancient Christianity, persists in one form or another, and sets up a potential contrast with other uses of the term with their concern for questions of practices and sectarian groups like the Ebionites and Nazoreans.

The history of scholarly attempts to define 'Jewish Christian'/'Jewish Christianity' show up the ongoing difficulty with the terms. In part at least the difficulty may be said to lie in fulfilling the two conditions for any successful definition which Richard Longenecker set out over thirty years ago, namely to create a definition with a sufficient degree of particularity and specificity to enable precision of treatment, yet a breadth of designation

¹²⁰ See Visotzky 1989, esp. 61, where he notes different tendencies in Christian and Jewish approaches to the subject of Jewish Christianity; and Segal 1987, 327-51.

that will allow for variations in the entity studied.¹²¹ There may, however, be a sense in which we have become overly concerned with the creation of a hold-all definition precisely because our instinct is to think of the term in a sectarian way – in this respect the shadow of Baur still looms over modern study. Perhaps we should simply accept the breadth of the term and the multiple uses to which it has been put. This, for instance seems to have been the attitude of the most recent gathering of experts in the field where the question of definition was left entirely open.¹²² This may, of course, mean that each author who uses the term is forced to define what s/he means by it before commencing substantive discussion. Alternatively, it may mean that we adopt different designations to describe different definitions of the term. In such a scheme, ‘Jewish Christianity’ means one thing, ‘Judaising Christianity’ another, ‘Judaeo-Christianity’ another and so on. After all, one feature of the study of the subject has been its capacity to make use, in an often not entirely consistent way, of terms related to Jewish Christianity but apparently describing something different. Attempts at such standardization may of course not succeed.¹²³

To some retaining the term, with all its difficulties, many of which have emerged in the preceding discussion, may seem counter-productive. The term is simply too slippery and has too complex a history to be worth preserving, the argument might go. In this context we should point to Michael Williams’ attempt to do away with the term Gnosticism and replace it with a more general category of “biblical demiurgical traditions” which, in his opinion, better describes the content of those texts usually called ‘Gnostic’.¹²⁴ Part of his argument relates to the fact that it is by no means clear that many of those designated ‘Gnostic’ did in fact refer to themselves as such (this is particularly the case with the Nag Hammadi finds where the term does not appear);¹²⁵ and in part to the fact that attempts at a typological designation too easily misdescribe the texts they seek to define and lead, consequently, to a misreading of these same texts.¹²⁶ Similar criticisms could be aimed at the category ‘Jewish Christian’. First, as we have already stated, there are *no* ancient texts in existence in which individuals call themselves ‘Jewish Christians’ (in the case of Gnostics, we do at least possess a few texts in which individuals call themselves Gnostics, and

¹²¹ Longenecker 1970, 3.

¹²² See Mimouni and Jones 2001. See also Pritz 1988, 9: “In the end it may prove fruitless to define it because it is so varied, but all should agree that needless argument over the differing concepts of ‘Jewish Christianity’ can be avoided.”

¹²³ See, for instance, Riegel 1978, 414-15, for a not entirely successful attempt at such a thing. He, of course, is not the first to undertake such a task. See Tomson 2003, 2.

¹²⁴ Williams 1996, 51.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 29-43.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 49-53, and much of the rest of the book.

many texts in which they are called Gnostics). Secondly, it is quite clear that certain typological definitions have led to a misreading of material in particular where generic relations are supposed to have existed between different texts associated with so-called Jewish Christians. While some may think that this problem has largely been overcome by the introduction of the idea of Jewish Christianities, some may still deem the term unhelpful, not least because of the Jewish aspect of its name. Not only is it very difficult to determine the amount of Jewishness that makes a text Jewish Christian, and the extent to which such a term implies a positive relationship to non-Christian Judaism but, given the ongoing affirmation of the dependence of early Christian culture on Judaism, the term Jewish Christian might simply appear tautologous. Why not simply settle upon a term like 'Torah observant' and then introduce categories like Ebionite, Elchasaite etc.? This would, among other things, do away with the problem of the Jewishness of Jewish Christianity, outlined above, and transcend such complex issues as the role of ethnicity in the definition as well as the place of a term like 'Judaizer'.

I leave this as a not unproblematic option at the end of this piece. Some may think it unrealistic, not least because the term has for so long been a part of scholarly discourse.¹²⁷ But that in itself is no reason to retain it. When one looks at its complex history and the ongoing complications of the debate about its meaning, a new start might be thought to be desirable.

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¹²⁷ Kurt Rudolph presented this argument as a possible reason for the retention of the 'Gnosticism' in Rudolph 1983, 21-37.

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Chapter 11

The Ebionites in recent research

Introduction

In recent times there has been a considerable growth of interest in the study of Jewish Christianity, an interest, which, in contrast to a previous era, has brought forth books as well as articles.¹ Amongst many other things, much space has been given over to the discussion of the so-called Jewish Christian sects, amongst which it has been traditional to place the Ebionites. However, while some of the discussion of this group has been detailed,² none of it has led to the writing of a book in English.³ The closest we in fact come to such a thing is an unpublished University of Pennsylvania dissertation by Glenn Alan Koch, dating from 1976, which, while remaining a helpful, limpid and scholarly contribution to the subject, is principally concerned with the specific, but important, subject of the sources of our information for Ebionites, in particular Epiphanius.⁴

For a number of reasons, this lack of a general book on the Ebionites is surprising. First, insofar as we have any information about people traditionally called Jewish Christian, however defined, much of it pertains to Ebionites, a point easily appreciated by seeing the proportion of space given over to them in the collection of sources on Jewish Christian groups compiled by Klijn and Reinink and published in 1973.⁵ By comparison, our sources on the Nazoreans and the Elchasaites are much less expansive and yet both have been the subject of recent monographs.⁶ Secondly, and

¹ See Mimouni 1998; and *idem* 2004a; Jackson-McCabe 2007; and Skarsaune and Hvalvik 2007. Interestingly, all of these books are collections of essays, rather than straightforwardly interconnected accounts of the phenomenon.

² The most recent of these are Bauckham 2003; Mimouni 2004b; Häkkinen 2005; Luomanen 2007; and Skarsaune 2007. The last of these is the fullest, and possibly the most innovative, discussion in English of the last twenty years.

³ Note the work published in Finnish by Häkkinen with the translated title "Poor Heretics: The Ebionites in the Texts of the Church Fathers" (Helsinki, 1999). This, as far as I know, is the only book to be devoted to the subject in the last thirty years. Häkkinen's work is summarised in the article cited in n. 2 above.

⁴ Koch 1976.

⁵ Klijn and Reinink 1973.

⁶ Pritz 1988; and Luttikhuisen 1985.

not unrelated to the first point, there has been a tendency in scholarship, to elide the terms ‘Ebionite’ and ‘Jewish Christian’. This was seen early on in the work of F. C. Baur,⁷ and from a later period, in the work of H. J. Schoeps,⁸ and more recently, Michael Goulder,⁹ just to mention a few.¹⁰ Thirdly, scholars going back as far as the seventeenth century, have often argued that even though sources relating to the Ebionites date from the second century onwards, what information we are given about them potentially connects us with the earliest Jewish Christian communities of Palestine.¹¹ This sentiment is summed up in Baur’s assertion that “(t)he Ebionites when we find them as a sect disowned by the catholic church, are just what the Jewish Christians were originally as distinguished from the Pauline Christians.”¹² These last two points in particular make plain how important the Ebionites have been, and continue to be, in the historiography of Jewish Christianity (and Christianity more generally).

It is not my intention in what follows to account for this lack of a book – part of the explanation may lie in the sheer complexity of the relevant source material, a point admirably illustrated by Koch’s dissertation to which reference has already been made. Rather the aim of the piece is to outline and to evaluate critically some of the recent currents in research on the Ebionites, bringing under one roof material located in disparate places. I shall also attempt to show how some of this work reflects changes in recent work on Jewish Christianity and Jewish-Christian relations.

⁷ “But an examination of their principles, doctrines, and usages, while it shows us in many points the harsh sentiment of their attitudes, points at the same time to a very close identity and connection with Jewish Christianity. So much is this the case that it cannot be denied an unjustifiable use of the name to say that Jewish Christianity in general was a kind of Ebionitism.” (Baur 1879, 182-3).

⁸ Schoeps 1949.

⁹ See Goulder 1994; 1999a; and 1999b.

¹⁰ Luomanen 2007 comes close to endorsing a similar view.

¹¹ This view is also witnessed in Christian sources from the third century. See especially Tertullian, *Praescr.* 32.5; and *Carn. Chr.* 24, where Ebion’s heresy is seen to be the subject of some New Testament texts.

¹² Baur 1879, 181. This point was most strongly argued by Baur’s pupil, Albert Schwegler, in Schwegler 1846. See especially vol. 1: 22-3, 104-7, and 195-6. Hints of the same view are found in Schoeps 1949; and are explicit in Goulder 1994. Reed, commenting on the study of the *Pseudo-Clementine* literature, often associated with the Ebionites, notes, somewhat polemically, the persistence of such an approach to the subject when she writes, “(i)n effect, those who take seriously the ‘Jewish Christianity’ of H (the *Homilies*) and R (the *Recognitions*) still search, like Baur, for second-century heirs to the Jerusalem church of James and Peter.” (Reed 2003, 201).

Sources

The study of the Ebionites and their opinions is dogged by complex, source-critical questions. A number of points need to be made:

(i) Our earliest reference to the Ebionites occurs in Irenaeus' *Haer.* 1.26.2 and elsewhere in the same work (3.11.7; 3.21.1; 4.33.4; 5.1.3). Irenaeus tells us that the Ebionites agreed that the world was made by God, that they held christological opinions similar to those of Cerinthus and Carpocrates (heretics whom he has mentioned in the two sections preceding his account of the Ebionites at 1.26.2), denying the virgin birth, and claiming Jesus to be the son of Joseph (*Haer.* 3.21.1; 5.1.3), that they used the Gospel of Matthew only, although they misunderstood it (*Haer.* 3.2.7), that they repudiated the apostle Paul, holding him to be an apostate from the law, that they interpreted the prophetic writings diligently (*curiosius*), and practiced circumcision and a Jewish way of life, "even adoring Jerusalem as if it were the house of God." (*Haer.* 1.26.2). Irenaeus' information about the Ebionites probably does not emerge from any personal knowledge of them.¹³ Most of those who write about the Ebionites follow Irenaeus or Hippolytus who is dependent upon him.¹⁴ Some think that Irenaeus may have been reliant for his information upon Justin's lost *Syntagma*, the first known Christian catalogue of heresies, and referred to by Justin at *1 Apol.* 26.8,¹⁵ but this seems unlikely if only because Justin does not seem to regard Ebionite-like people as heretical, a conclusion based upon *Dialogue* 47-48 where Jewish Christians are mentioned together with christological opinions akin to those of the Ebionites but are not held to be outside the church.¹⁶ Some suspect that Irenaeus' source may have been "an updated version of Justin's *Syntagma*" possibly similar to Hippolytus' *Syntagma* to which reference is found in a number of patristic sources.¹⁷ It

¹³ Häkkinen 2005, 250, argues this point on the grounds that (a) when we compare what Irenaeus has written about the Ebionites with those places where he is clearly personally acquainted with the heresy in question (e.g. Valentinians), we note the difference in length; and that (b) the places where Irenaeus writes about the Ebionites other than where they appear in his list of heresies, contain no straightforwardly new information.

¹⁴ See *Haer.* 7.7-9; 7.33.1-2; 34.1-2; 35.1-2.

¹⁵ See the claim of Jerome at *Helv.* 17: "Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr and many other eloquent men ... write volumes full of wisdom against Ebion ..."

¹⁶ Häkkinen 2005, 249. The point had already been made by Le Boulluec 1985, 168. It should be balanced possibly by noting that though Irenaeus refers at some length to what one might term the 'Judaising' practices of the Ebionites, his principal reason for mentioning them lies in their errant christological views. It might well have been the case in Justin's *Syntagma* that Ebionite-like people were held to be heretical for the same reason, and that, in passing, he alluded to their Judaising tendencies.

¹⁷ For references to Hippolytus' *Syntagma* see *Chronicon Paschale*, PG 92.80 and Photius, *Bibliothèque* 121. For this theory and other supporting evidence, see Häkkinen

is probably the case that other patristic authors who refer to Ebionites, and appear to be reliant upon Irenaeus, are reliant upon Hippolytus.¹⁸

(ii) Some of the authors who mention the Ebionites and are clearly dependent upon Irenaeus, add new information. Some, for instance, mention a supposed founder of the sect called Ebion;¹⁹ and others add material on the Ebionites' Christology.²⁰ As we will go on to see, the historical importance of this evidence has been variously assessed.²¹

(iii) Origen provides some new information about the Ebionites.²² He appears to have knowledge of the origins of the name of the Ebionites, which is independent of their relationship to any mooted founding figure, Ebion.²³ On a number of occasions he speaks of two types of Ebionites, demonstrating that he knows about Ebionites who do not conform to the Irenaeian picture.²⁴ He knows something about their interpretation of the Gospel of Matthew;²⁵ and gives us additional information about their attitude to Paul and their Christology.²⁶ Most scholars agree that Origen's information is independent of Irenaeus/Hippolytus and that it probably reflects actual knowledge of the Ebionites.²⁷ The fact that Origen confirms aspects of Irenaeus' picture of the Ebionites but is independent of him

2005, 251. It is certainly true that the notice about the Ebionites does not fit easily into Irenaeus' general list of heresies. In this context we might point to (a) the apparent need to connect the heresy with what has directly preceded it by the use of *similiter* (see below for the text-critical issue); and (b) the apparent absence in Irenaeus' list of any reference to the individual founder of the sect.

¹⁸ See Häkkinen 2005, 253.

¹⁹ See Tertullian, *Praescr.* 10.8; 22.3-5. Some argue that the term originated with Hippolytus who referred to Ebion in his lost *Syntagma*. Häkkinen 2005, 251, thinks this on the grounds that Pseudo-Tertullian refers to Ebion and he seems to have been reliant upon Hippolytus' *Syntagma*. Hippolytus himself refers to Ebion at *Haer.* 7.35. Hippolytus' account as it comes down to us in *Haer.* is clearly dependent upon Irenaeus but as far as we can know Irenaeus did not refer to an Ebion.

²⁰ See Tertullian, *Carn. Chr.* 14 and 18.

²¹ Häkkinen, for instance, does not think that Tertullian had access to any independent evidence about the Ebionites. Skarsaune, on the other hand, takes a slightly different view. See Skarsaune 2007, 431f. and the discussion below.

²² This is discussed by amongst others Strecker 1971, 282f.; Koch 1976; Dorival 2001, 257-73; Skarsaune 2007.

²³ Origen, *Princ.* 4.3.8; *Hom. Gen.* 3.5; *Cels.* 2.1. But note also a reference to Ebion at *Ep. ign.* 3.11. Häkkinen holds this reference to go back to Origen's translator, Rufinus. Rufinus, on this view, has changed 'Ebionites' to 'Ebion'.

²⁴ See esp. *Cels.* 5.61.

²⁵ See *de Princ.* 4.3.8.

²⁶ See *Comm. Matt.* 16.12; *Hom. Jer.* 19.12; *Comm. ser. Matt.* 79.

²⁷ See Häkkinen 2005, 254; Skarsaune 2007, 445, who entertains the possibility that Origen's knowledge is purely literary, only to express himself skeptical about this.

might be used in support of the essential accuracy of Irenaeus' description.²⁸ Eusebius of Caesarea repeats some of the same information about the Ebionites found in Origen, although he, unlike Origen, is dependent for some of his information on Irenaeus.²⁹ He, too, gives us information not found in sources prior to him, including material about the Ebionite practice of observing both the Sabbath and the Lord's Day (*Hist. eccl.* 3.27.5); slightly different information about the second type of Ebionite mentioned by Origen (*Hist. eccl.* 3.27.3); a claim about the Ebionite origin of the translator of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, Symmachus (*Hist. eccl.* 6.17); and knowledge of their hometown (*Onom.* 172.1-3).

The above implies two major sources of information about the Ebionites, one associated with Irenaeus, and possibly dependent upon an updated version of Justin's *Syntagma*; and another possibly of Alexandrian or Palestinian provenance, associated with Origen and independent of Irenaeus. Eusebius is the first known writer to combine both of these sources of information. The state of our knowledge becomes richer and correspondingly more complex as we move towards the end of the fourth century.

In 1819 J. K. L. Gieseler, while writing about the Ebionites and the Nazoreans, stated that the brightest moment in the history of these two groups doubtless falls in the year 400 C.E. at which time we have the detailed accounts concerning them.³⁰ Gieseler was alluding to the fact that the Nazoreans, not the subject of this study, only first enter the pages of history in the *Panarion* of Epiphanius (in fact written in the mid-370s), and, most importantly for this study, that the Ebionites are given their most extensive treatment in the same work. "It is", as one scholar has recently commented, "as if one enters a completely new world."³¹ Epiphanius' account, found mainly in *Pan.* 30, is long and involved and, although he is clearly dependent upon previous writers,³² he gives us new information on, amongst other things:

²⁸ Origen agrees with Irenaeus in his claim that the Ebionites deny the virgin birth (*Hom. Luc.* 17; *Comm. Tit.*; *Cels.* 5.61); that they observe the Jewish law, including circumcision (*Hom. Gen.* 3.5); and that by implication they use the Gospel of Matthew (*Princ.* 4.3.8).

²⁹ See Häkkinen 2005, 255, esp. n. 25.

³⁰ Gieseler 1819, 279: "Dieser lichteste Zeitpunkt in der Geschichte der Nazoraer und der Ebioniten fällt unstreitig um das Jahr 400 ... denn aus dieser Zeit allein haben wir von Schriftstellern, die mit diesen Parteyen genauer bekannt waren, ausführlichere Nachrichten über sie."

³¹ Skarsaune 2007, 423.

³² All of this is well documented by, amongst others, Koch 1976; and Skarsaune 2007, 450f.

(i) the history of the sect. Epiphanius reports that Ebion lived in the village Kokabe in Basanitis, close to Karnaim and Astaroth (2.8), and he rose to prominence after 70 in Peraea, and he preached in Rome and Asia (18.1). He also asserts that the Ebionites derived their name from the fact that their ancestors gave over their property to the apostles (17.2-3).

(ii) their customs and habits, including habitual washings (2.3-5; 15.3; 16.1), vegetarianism (15.1-4; 18.4-19.5), their prohibition of virginity and chastity (2.6: note that this constitutes a change from a previous commitment to virginity inspired by James the Lord's brother [2.6]), the annual celebration of the Eucharist with unleavened bread and water only (16.1), their use of invocations and washings to help the sick and those bitten by snakes (17.4-5).

(iii) their views on scripture, in particular the Old Testament. So Epiphanius reports that they hate all the prophets (15.2; 18.4-5; 18.9), and that they do not accept the whole of the Pentateuch (18.7-9).

(iv) their christological beliefs which include an adoptionist one (2.2; 3.1; 16.3-4; 18.5-6) and a docetic Christology attributed to Elxai who apparently influenced the Ebionites after Ebion (3.2-6; 17.5-8); and a "Jesus the true prophet Christology" (3.2-6; 18.4-5).

(v) their synagogues and government by archisynagogues and elders (18.2-3).

Much of this new information appears to have been gleaned from sources that Epiphanius assumed to be Ebionite. He mentions the so-called *Peregrinations of Peter* (Περίοδοι Πέτρου) which he attributes to Clement and asserts have been corrupted by the Ebionites (15.1): an Ebionite *Acts of the Apostles* (16.6); a work called the *Anabathmoi Iakobou* (Ἀναβαθμοί Ἰακώβου) (16.7); a Gospel (3.7); and a work Epiphanius calls *The Book of Elchasai*. Their content bears a close resemblance to some of the contents of the so-called *Pseudo-Clementine* writings.

The fact that we have so much new information at a relatively late date, which at points appears different from information we have from an earlier period (although, as we have stated, Epiphanius has clearly used material from Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Origen and Eusebius), immediately raises questions about its reliability. Those who broadly support the historicity of Epiphanius' account appeal to the fact that when he wrote about the Ebionites, he was bishop of Salamis on Cyprus where, he claims, Ebionites were located (*Pan.* 30.18.1). Moreover, on occasion he appears to refer to conversations with Ebionites (see esp. *Pan.* 30.15.4; 18.7 etc.). To account for the apparent differences between things asserted by Epiphanius, and what we find in earlier streams of tradition associated with Irenaeus and Origen, these same scholars often argue that some Ebionites underwent an ideological change, around about 70, which may have resulted from a com-

ing together of Ebionites and Essenes,³³ Elchasaites, and even Samaritans.³⁴

Other scholars are more skeptical for a number of reasons.³⁵ First, they emphasise the real difference between the evidence found in texts preceding Epiphanius, and dating from the time of Irenaeus onwards, and Epiphanius himself. Such differences are sometimes striking. One particular example relates to Epiphanius' view that there was some sort of coming together of the Ebionites and Elxai which modified the christological views of the former. But such a claim seems problematic when we note that both Hippolytus and Origen, who both knew of Ebionites and Elchasaites, do not imply any relationship between them.³⁶ Secondly, much of what we find in Epiphanius' account of the Ebionites bears the marks of a somewhat ham-fisted cobbling together of a variety of sources which either were about the Ebionites, or Epiphanius took to be about them, but sources which stand in tension with each other. Just a few examples will suffice to illustrate this point. The first relates to the origins of the Ebionites. In what most agree is a somewhat convoluted account, Epiphanius asserts that the Ebionites came into existence after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. (2.7), here making use of Eusebius' much disputed account of the flight of the Christians to Pella. But elsewhere, when Epiphanius discusses the etymology of the name of the sect, he asserts that their name derives from the fact that in apostolic times they sold their possessions "and have gone over to poverty and renunciation (εἰς πτωχείαν καὶ ἀποταξίαν)." (30.17.2) Both claims cannot be right and so Epiphanius simply asserts, without any argument, that the Ebionite account of the origin of their name is false (17.2). A second example relates to the name of the description of the Ebionite Gospel. At 3.7 Epiphanius writes that "they too accept the Gospel according to Matthew ... and use it alone. They call it 'according to the Hebrews.'" But in what is another strangely muddled account (on which see below), Epiphanius seems simply to have combined the claim of

³³ This is implied in Schoeps 1949, 273, where he refers to Pella, the place where Eusebius believes the Christian Jerusalem community fled after the fall of Jerusalem (*Hist. eccl.* 3.5.3), as "das Jabne des Ebionitismus", here referring to the old view that Johanan ben Zacchai instituted considerable reforms in Judaism in the city of Jamnia. Cullmann 1966, 241-58, also posits a development within Ebionism brought about by Essenes. See also Magnin 1974, 233, for a similar point.

³⁴ See Luomanen 2007, 95-102, who argues that at the beginning of their history there may have been two strands of Ebionite, one Hebrew-Aramaic, and one Hellenistic-Samaritan. See below for further discussion of this point.

³⁵ Such skepticism goes back to Schmidtke 1911 whose work has recently been endorsed by, amongst others, Skarsaune 2007, 423, 451, 457. Häkkinen 2005, 257, is a little unclear about the worth of Epiphanius as a source of information about the Ebionites.

³⁶ Origen reported in Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 6.38; Hippolytus, *Haer.* 9.1-17.2.

Irenaeus and many others that the Ebionites used Matthew only, the claim of Papias that Matthew was written in Hebrew (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.16), and the claim of Eusebius that they called their Gospel “according to the Hebrews.” A third example concerns the area of activity of the Ebionites. Ebion, Epiphanius claims, lived in the village of Kokabe in Basanitis (17.3). At 18.1 he goes on to assert that Ebion presented his doctrine in Rome and Asia, but that the main centres of activity were in Nabatea, Paneas, Moabitis and the Kokabes in the land of Basanitis, and also in Cyprus (18.1). Some of this material comes from Eusebius; but some appears to have been added by Epiphanius on the basis of certain connections he has made. So the reference to “Asia and Rome” seems to emerge from his belief that Ebion travelled with Cerinthus and from Hippolytus’ claim that the Ebionites were influential in Rome (Hippolytus, *Haer.* 7.9), and the reference to Nabatea, Paneas and Moabitis seems to be accounted for by reference to Epiphanius’ belief that the Ebionites were related to the Elchasaites whom he locates in these areas. The Cyprus reference reflects the fact that Epiphanius met people he assumed to be Ebionites in Cyprus where he lived in the later part of his life.³⁷ These examples, and more could be given, create the impression that Epiphanius’ Ebionites have all the trappings of a literary construction rather than reflecting a group of people with whom the bishop was personally acquainted.

A third, and related, point is important. Epiphanius’ account of the Ebionites is obviously polemical in intent and that polemic manifests itself not least in a desire to make the Ebionites look hybrid – after all, he describes Ebion, the supposed founder of the sect, as a “a monstrosity with many shapes” (πολύμορφον τεράστιον) and “a many-headed hydra” (πολυκεφάλου ὕδρας) (30.1.1), asserts that he was a Samaritan but rejected this name, confessing to be a Jew but entertaining hostile opinions about Jews (30.1.5), (and, in the same vein, associates the Ebionites with a variety of sects including the Nasareans, Elchasaites, and Osseans [30.1.8]). Such a presentation obviously leads to a view of the sect as inconsistent, and “the receptacle of all sorts of heretical ideas.”³⁸ In this context we might take as an example *Pan.* 30.3.1-6 where Epiphanius describes the Christology of the Ebionites. In a difficult passage, at one and the same time he claims that the Ebionites thought Jesus to be begotten of the seed of Joseph, that they entertained a fantasy about Christ and the Holy Spirit, that they claimed that Christ is also Adam the man who was formed first and infused with God’s spirit, and that Christ is from above and that he has

³⁷ For this point see Skarsaune 2007, 451, who repeats observations made many years before by Schmidtke 1911.

³⁸ Luttikhuisen 1985, 130 n. 39. The same point is made slightly differently by Verheyden 2003, 182-208.

entered a variety of individuals, including Adam, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but then Jesus in the form of Adam's body, and, finally, that the spirit came upon Jesus in the form of Christ. These so-called "conflicting accounts", as Epiphanius calls them, come from a medley of sources. So the claim that Jesus was born of the seed of Joseph comes from Irenaeus; Epiphanius himself asserts that the Christology he calls a fantasy and he associates with Jesus and Holy Spirit comes from the Elchasaites "because Elxai was connected with them" (συναφθῆναι αὐτοῖς Ἐλξαῖον) (30.3.2).³⁹ The Adam Christology together with the recurring Christ Christology reflect comments he makes about the Sampseans (53.1.8-9), and he may well have been inclined to associate the Ebionites with such a Christology because in part at least it bore a close resemblance to a Christology witnessed in the *Pseudo-Clementine* literature which, in the form of a revised version, the *Periodoi Petrou*, he assumed to be an Ebionite work.⁴⁰

How do we respond to this confused picture? Can we discern within it the shards of historically reliable material? Or should we attribute it all to Epiphanius' literary imagination? Or should we posit some middle position, in which we argue for the authenticity of bits of what Epiphanius tells us? It is important to note that apart from the reference to Jesus being born of Joseph's seed, everything else asserted about the Christology of the Ebionites by Epiphanius is not evidenced in earlier sources. This might incline us, for instance, to think that his claim that Elxai had some sort of connection with the Ebionites is no more than an attempt to explain the presence amongst them of conflicting christological views. Such an association may have arisen because Epiphanius thought that other christological material, which had its origins in the *Pseudo-Clementine* literature was like material associated with the Elchasaites;⁴¹ or because he associated the Ebionites with the views of the Sampseans, who in turn were associated with the Elchasaites.⁴² The view that this association with the Elchasaites is artificial and caused by falsely conceived interconnections grows in strength when we recall a point that has already been made that neither Hippolytus nor Origen, who knew both Elchasaites and Ebionites, associate them in any way; and when we note that Epiphanius seems to imply doubt when he states that he thinks that there is such a connection.

³⁹ Clearly Epiphanius has in mind the claim, found in the *Book of Elchasai*, of Christ and the Holy Spirit as "heavenly figures of enormous dimensions" (Luttikhuizen 1985, 131), which he describes in a number of places, including his chapter on the Ebionites (30.17.6f.; see also 19.4.1f; 53.1.9).

⁴⁰ See *Hom.* 3.19-20.

⁴¹ Skarsaune 2007, 452-3.

⁴² This is the claim of Luttikhuizen 1985, 132-3. At *Pan.* 53.1.2 Elxai is described as the teacher of the Sampseans.

This argument has been indirectly challenged by Luomanen.⁴³ He draws attention to the activity of the missionary figure, Alcibiades from Apamea in Syria, recorded in Hippolytus (*Haer.* 9.13.1f.), and to the reference to Elchasaite missionaries in Origen (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.38). In the case of the former we know that he made considerable use of the *Book of Elchasaï* to which Origen also refers but without naming it, and Luomanen thinks it ‘not unlikely’ that ideas from the book circulated in the Transjordanian areas where we know Jewish Christian groups, like the Ebionites, lived. He goes on to argue that it is probable that the same ideas reached Ebionites in Cyprus. “Thus the most plausible explanation for Epiphanius’ use of the *Book of Elchasaï* in his description of the Ebionites is that he acquired the book from Ebionites in Cyprus ...”⁴⁴ This observation becomes more likely when we note the strong similarities between Elchasaites and Ebionites. Both were advocates of circumcision (*Haer.* 9.14.1; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.38), entertained anti-Pauline ideas (Origen recorded in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.38) and made selective use of the Old Testament (Origen recorded in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.38). Elchasaites would, on this argument, have received a natural welcome amongst the like-minded Ebionites.⁴⁵

Luomanen’s is a spirited attempt to assert the historical plausibility of Epiphanius’ association of Elchasaites and Ebionites but it fails to take sufficient account of: (a) the failure of Origen or Hippolytus to associate the two sects; (b) the problem of chronology – most assume the *Book of Elchasaï* was written after or during the Trajanic revolt, and that Alcibiades of Apamea was active from the 220s, neither of which are dates which coincide with Epiphanius’ assertion about the period in which Elxai and Ebion supposedly met; and (c) the clear evidence from elsewhere in Epiphanius’ account of the Ebionites of the artificial combination of disparate sources. Of course, we cannot exclude the possibility that Epiphanius met Ebionites who made use of the *Book of Elxai*. However, as we will show below, it is unclear that Epiphanius actually met any Ebionites in person.

⁴³ Luomanen 2007, 96-8.

⁴⁴ Luomanen 2007, 98.

⁴⁵ See also Dorival 2001, 278, who has argued for a possible connection between the Elchasaites, as described by Hippolytus in his *Haer.*, and the second group of Ebionites described by Origen as recorded in Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 3.27.3), and in his *Cels.* 5.36. Both groups appear to believe in the virginal conception of Jesus (see Hippolytus, *Haer.* 9.14; and 10.29.1-2), and to entertain similar opinions about the law. Dorival notes, however, that Eusebius’ claim that the Ebionites did not believe in Christ’s pre-existence finds no parallel in either Origen’s or Hippolytus’ account of the Elchasaites. It is also the case that both the passages from Hippolytus, which supposedly speak about Jesus’ virginal conception, do so in a somewhat inconsistent way.

The question of the so-called Elchasaite association of the Ebionites is but one aspect of the Epiphonian problem. Another aspect of it relates to Epiphanius' claim that material he associates with the so-called *Periodoi Petrou*, and we would identify with the *Pseudo-Clementine* literature, was in fact Ebionite. If it is shown not to be, then a good deal of material thought to be Ebionite by Epiphanius needs to be excluded.⁴⁶ Inevitably, scholars are divided as to whether to accept the *Pseudo-Clementines* as a possible source of information about Ebionites.⁴⁷

A number of points need to be made:

(i) H. J. Schoeps was able to write as large a book as he did on the theology of Jewish Christianity because he tended to assume that Epiphanius was right to attribute the *Pseudo-Clementine* material he did to the Ebionites. But that is precisely the wrong way to proceed. As Oskar Skarsaune has commented, here echoing the views of Alfred Schmidtke, from an earlier period of research: "The evidence for Jewish believers in the *Pseudo-Clementines* must be evaluated on its own terms, without any *a priori* assumption about this evidence being 'Ebionite' in the Irenaeian sense of this term."⁴⁸

(ii) There is no indication in the extant *Pseudo-Clementines* of an unambiguous association with the Ebionites. They are, for instance, not mentioned by name and issues relating to poverty are not the subject of discussion.⁴⁹ This argument can appear stronger than it is as what we possess in

⁴⁶ For shared material, see *inter alia*: *Pan.* 30.2.3-6; and *Hom.* 13.4; *Ep. Clem. Ad Jac.* 7.1-2; *Pan.* 30.3.4-5; and *Hom.* 3.19-20; *Pan.* 30.15.2; and *Hom.* 3.25.5; 3.53.2; *Pan.* 30.15.3; and *Hom.* 10.1-2; 11.1-2; and *Rec.* 4.3.1; 8.1.1; *Pan.* 16.2; and *Hom.* 3.19.2; 8.2.1; 15.7.4; 20.2.1; and *Rec.* 1.24.5; 9.3-4; *Pan.* 30.18.7; and *Hom.* 2.45; 51; 18.19-20.

⁴⁷ For generally positive assessments of Epiphanius' association of the *Pseudo-Clementines* and the Ebionites see Magnin 1973f.; Mimouni 1998, 277-83; Mimouni 2004a; and with perhaps slightly more reserve, Häkkinen 2005, 257. Skeptical assessments are found in Strecker 1958; and Skarsaune 2007. Koch 1976, while accepting that Epiphanius introduced the *Pseudo-Clementine* material into the discussion of the Ebionites, is not clear whether in fact to view this material as Ebionite. A helpful presentation of the history of the debate up to the early 1980s is found in Jones 1982, 84-96.

⁴⁸ Skarsaune 2007, 424, on a related point, and one relevant to Schoeps' work in discussing the *Pseudo-Clementines* and the Ebionites, Koch notes that "one should limit oneself only to those *Pseudo-Clementine* materials Epiphanius introduces rather than expositing *Pseudo-Clementine* materials in some larger fashion as representing Ebionite thought." (Koch 1976, 314).

⁴⁹ See Strecker 1958, 215, who notes the absence of the name, and points to the lack of any strong interest in the issue of poverty. So, for instance, where Schoeps 1949, 199, had thought the reference to Peter's family's poverty at *Hom.* 12.6 important, Strecker described it as "eine rein literarische, untheologische Ausgestaltung" (Strecker 1958, 215 n. 1). See also Häkkinen 2005, 257, who writes, "However, because the Ebionites are not mentioned by name in the *Pseudo-Clementines*, the connection between the two must be based on Epiphanius' own conclusions."

the relevant sections of the *Pseudo-Clementines* are only excerpts from a supposed Ebionite corpus of literature; and it is in any case an argument from silence with all its weaknesses. As one scholar has noted, admittedly in a slightly different context, “(a)n argument of this kind from silence has no force if there are other, convincing reasons for connecting this source to the Ebionites.”⁵⁰ But that, of course, is precisely what some people tend to find lacking. The simple truth is that aside from Epiphanius, no other writer/source associates the Ebionites with the *Pseudo-Clementine* writings.

(iii) Origen, who may have known a version of the *Pseudo-Clementines* (*Philoc.* 23), never attributes it to the Ebionites, but this may not be surprising because Origen obviously attributed it to Clement; and some doubt that the relevant passage refers to the *Pseudo-Clementines*.⁵¹ Epiphanius, on the other hand, thought that the Ebionites had in some sense falsified the writings which he also attributes to Clement.

(iv) The very fact of the difference between the *Pseudo-Clementines* and what Irenaeus and later third and fourth century writers tell us about the Ebionites; and the fact that none of these sources hint at any straightforward development in a broadly *Pseudo-Clementine* direction on the part of the Ebionites might lead us to be skeptical about any identification of the latter as Ebionite.

(v) The convoluted character of Epiphanius’ account points to the probability that it is more like an artificial literary construction, brought about by the ham-fisted combination of sources and unwarranted connections, than an historical account.

(vi) Positing complex developments within Ebionism to explain these apparent changes is very difficult. Koch’s comment is important in this respect: “Since earlier patristic sources do not seem to know anything about them (the *Pseudo-Clementine* parallels), there is the temptation to say that they were not ‘earlier Ebionite’, but were a feature of later Ebionite thought and practice. Or, there is the possibility that Epiphanius read them into Ebionite thought for reasons known only to him.”⁵² One option may seem more warranted on the basis of the evidence than the other.

(vii) Some who hold Epiphanius’ discussion of the Ebionites to be broadly reliable draw attention to places where he asserts that opinions of a *Pseudo-Clementine* character were gleaned from actual conversations with Ebionites (*Pan.* 30.15.4; 18.7-9). Skarsaune replies by stating that on a number of occasions elsewhere in the *Panarion* Epiphanius creates living

⁵⁰ Bauckham 2003, 165.

⁵¹ The matter is discussed by Strecker 1958, 262-3.

⁵² Koch 1976, 312-3. He goes on to note that “whether Ebionite or not, this thought represents a strain of Jewish Christianity which ... goes back to the second and third century.”

dialogues with those he considers to be heretics in order to dramatise a written source.⁵³ It is not warranted, he contends, to claim that such evidence of apparent discussion between Epiphanius and the Ebionites is proof of actual contact. Where in fact he has had actual contact with a person, he is much more explicit about it. This is especially notable in his digression at *Pan.* 30.4-12 on the subject of Joseph the Jew's conversion to Christianity. So at 30.5.1 Epiphanius writes, "Josephus told me this in conversation. For I heard all this from his own lips and no one else's (ἐκ στόματος αὐτοῦ ... καὶ οὐκ ἀπὸ ἄλλου τινός), in his old age when he was about seventy or more." And Epiphanius goes on to state that he was entertained in Joseph's home in Scythopolis. Such specificity, and insistence on the fact of the conversations, is to be contrasted with rather vague words like, "When you ask one of them" (ὅταν δὲ ἐρωτήσης ἓνα τῶν αὐτῶν) which introduce supposed statements about Ebionites known to Epiphanius.

(viii) In order, therefore, to explain the latter's decision to include such material in his description of the Ebionites, one must assume that Epiphanius discerned Ebionite-like positions in the *Pseudo-Clementines* and then went on to make the connection that they were Ebionite. This then produced, or at least partially contributed to, the convoluted nature of his account, something which he may have wished in any case to promote. He must have found such material in Cyprus – hence his view that there were Ebionites on the island.⁵⁴

While much of Epiphanius' additional material about the Ebionites is accounted for by reference to the *Pseudo-Clementine* material (and the so-called *Gospel of the Ebionites*), not all of it is. What should we make, for instance, of Epiphanius' claims about the origins of the name Ebionite (17.2-3), the practice of baptism (15.1) and Passover Eucharist (15.3) celebrated with bread and water, the claim that Ebionites are coerced into marrying (18.2), and the apparent existence of Ebionite synagogues and archi-synagogues (18.2-3)? As we will go on to argue, the claim that the Ebionites derived their name from the voluntary poverty of some of the earliest Jerusalem community seems reliable if only because it goes against the normally negative derivation of the name as this relates to poverty, found first in Origen. The fact also that Epiphanius asserts that the Ebionite understanding of the origin of their name is a lie adds further to this possibility that it is true. Similarly, some have regarded other claims as reliable. So,

⁵³ See *Pan.* 23.4.1-7 and 24.5.5.

⁵⁴ Skarsaune 2007, 452, attributes some significance to this geographical reference. After all, at the time of writing his *Panarion*, Epiphanius was resident on the island. Skarsaune, however, doubts that he knew actual Ebionites on the island but rather that he came across material there that he took to be Ebionite.

for instance, the claim that Ebionites are coerced into marrying by their parents has been thought to be too circumstantial to be doubted.⁵⁵ Some may think that acceptance of some parts of the Epiphonian account makes less sustainable attempts to dismiss other parts.

Aside from this additional information, of a piecemeal and almost circumstantial character, there are two other sources of new information which Epiphanius attributes to the Ebionites. The first of these is the *Anabathmoi Iakobou* or *The Ascents of James*, referred to by Epiphanius at *Pan.* 30.16.7. For a variety of reasons scholars have often associated this source with a section of the *Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions* 1.27-71 or 1.33-71, a part of that work usually thought to be in some ways distinct from the corpus in which it is placed. It consists of a kind of history of Israel culminating in the person of Jesus the great prophet and then an account of a debate between the apostles and various Jewish sects and leaders. The source ends violently with the arrival of Paul on the scene and the near death of James. Two of the most recent commentators on this section of the *Recognitions* have differed on whether the source mentioned by Epiphanius is in fact the same as that found in the passage from *Recognitions* mentioned above;⁵⁶ but both have, either explicitly or implicitly, denied its Ebionite character, in part on the basis of differences between its Christology and that attributed to the Ebionites,⁵⁷ and in part on the basis of its supposedly positive attitude to Catholic Christianity and its provenance.⁵⁸ More recently, Richard Bauckham has argued for the Ebionite identity of the source. His case is in part based upon a refutation of arguments against its Ebionite identity.⁵⁹ His one positive argument rests on the clear parallel, uniquely witnessed here, between the source's claim that the true prophet came to abolish sacrifice and that the Jews' failure to apprehend this led to the destruction of the temple, found, in Bauckham's opinion, a number of times in the Latin and Syriac translations of the source, and the similar

⁵⁵ See Luomanen 2007, 89.

⁵⁶ Jones 1995a, 147; and Van Voorst 1991, 45.

⁵⁷ Van Voorst 1991, 179-80.

⁵⁸ See Jones 1995a, 166-7. He makes these points without explicitly denying an Ebionite character to the source but the points he makes could be taken to exclude such an identification.

⁵⁹ Bauckham 2003, 165f., argues that from a christological perspective Van Voorst's attempt to play up the apparently pre-existent character of *Recognitions'* Christology is not justified, not least because the passages which speak of Jesus as a 'True Prophet' who appears to Moses and Abraham (*Rec.* 1.33.1-3; 1.34.4 and 1.44.5-6) are generally held to be interpolations into an original source. See also his discussion of the term "eternal messiah" at 1.43.2 and 1.44.2 on p. 171. Bauckham also sees no real support for Jones' view that the community was in touch with the catholic bishop, a view based almost exclusively on their commitment to a Gentile mission (1.42.1; 1.64.2).

claim, explicitly present in fragment 6 of the so-called *Gospel of the Ebionites*.⁶⁰ Bauckham's case is a good one, although it has to read a little into the relevant passages in *Recognitions*.⁶¹ But it only stands if one believes the Gospel mentioned by Epiphanius to be Ebionite.

This brings us onto another source attributed to the Ebionites, namely the eponymous Gospel (from now on GE). This refers to seven fragments from a Gospel quoted by Epiphanius. This gospel seems to consist of what some have seen as a harmonising text of the Gospels.⁶² In addition to its reference to Jesus coming to abolish sacrifices, it appears to have had no genealogy and to reflect both the adoptionist tendencies of Ebionite Christology and their vegetarian leanings, as witnessed in Epiphanius, amongst other things. In general scholars have accepted the Ebionite identity of this work – hence Bauckham's uncritical use of it as an Ebionite source. More recently, however, Oskar Skarsaune has argued strongly for the view that the GE is not in fact Ebionite. Part of Skarsaune's argument arises from his view that Epiphanius' introduction to the Gospel (*Pan.* 30.3.7) is simply an amalgamation of what Irenaeus, Papias and Eusebius say about the Hebrew Matthew and the Matthew used by the Ebionites, a point to which we have already made reference;⁶³ and that such an amalgamation betrays no personal knowledge of an actual Ebionite Gospel. Secondly, he asserts that the citation of the relevant fragments looks like an interpolation on the part of Epiphanius into an originally shorter account of the Ebionites. This is supported by the fact that what Epiphanius has originally told us about the Ebionite Gospel, that it was Matthew in Hebrew, bears no relationship to

⁶⁰ *Pan.* 30.16.5: ἤλθον καταλῦσαι τὰς θυσίας καὶ ἐὰν μὴ παύσησθε τοῦ θύειν οὐ παύσεται ἀφ' ὑμῶν ἡ ὀργή. Bauckham 2003, 167-8: "The idea that the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple occurred because the Jews refused to heed Jesus' mission to abolish sacrifice and to obey his command to cease sacrifice is unique to the Gospel of the Ebionites and the source we are calling The Ascents of James."

⁶¹ Bauckham makes much of the reference to God's mercy in *Rec.* 1.39.1 (Latin) in the sentence "... whom he (Moses) had predicted would appear and who first of all would admonish them by the *mercy* of God to cease from sacrifices." "The reference to the mercy of God implies that should they not obey Jesus' admonition they will experience judgment." (Bauckham 2003, 167).

⁶² On the Gospel see Bertrand 1980; Howard 1988; Klijn 1992; Verheyden 2003, 187-200.

⁶³ See *Pan.* 30.3.7 and our discussion above. Before Epiphanius the information we receive about the GE is as follows: at *Haer.* 1.26.2 and 3.11.7, Irenaeus claims that the Ebionites only use Matthew; Origen implies that they use Matthew when at *Princ.* 4.3.8, citing an interpretation of Matt 10:6 he attributes to the Ebionites; Eusebius calls their Gospel "the Gospel according to the Hebrews" (εὐαγγέλιον δὲ μόνον τῶ καθ' Ἑβραίου λεγομένον χρώμενοι) (*Hist. eccl.* 3.27.4) but obviously does not know it and does not associate it with Matthew. Origen mentions a "Gospel according to the Hebrews" (Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 15.14), but never associates it with the Ebionites.

the contents of the Gospel he in fact quotes. It is, as Skarsaune writes, not Hebrew (GE was definitely originally in Greek) and not Matthew – in fact Epiphanius goes on to state that the GE is based upon a corrupted version of Matthew (*Panarion* 30.13.2)!⁶⁴ And most scholars who have studied its Gospel quotations see it as an essentially harmonistic work, possibly based more on Mark and Luke than on Matthew.⁶⁵ This leads Skarsaune to assert that what Epiphanius writes about GE *outside of 13.2-14.6*, the section in which the majority of the quotations from the GE occur, is not based on any personal knowledge of the GE, that that section (13.2-14.6) appears to have been added at a later date (how otherwise can we explain the apparent contradictions between what is asserted about GE in 3.7, and the contents of GE as they are recorded in 30.13.2-24.6),⁶⁶ and that any attempt to argue for its Ebionite origin must, therefore, be based on the content of the citations from GE. This content, he argues, bears little relationship to his own reconstruction of Ebionite theology in which the Davidic origin of Jesus receives special mention, which contrasts with what he sees in GE as a Christology stressing Jesus' identity as a prophet⁶⁷ and with GE's omission

⁶⁴ "Epiphanius himself betrays that he has in fact observed the discrepancy between the Gospel made known to him, and the Gospel described by his predecessors: 'Now in what they call a Gospel according to Matthew, though it is not entirely complete, but is corrupted and mutilated – and they call this Hebrew! – the following passage occurs ...' (*Pan.* 30.13.12). It is far from certain that they called their Gospel Matthew; it is more probable that Epiphanius took their Gospel to be a mutilated version of Matthew because he identified it with the Gospel spoken of by Irenaeus and Eusebius." (Skarsaune 2007, 3-4 n. 11).

⁶⁵ See Bertrand 1980; Howard 1988. See also Verheyden 2003, 189-200, for the view that GE is not so much a Gospel harmony as a rewriting of what we find in the Synoptic Gospels. So, for instance, on a number of occasions Jesus is made to say the opposite of the words that are attributed to him in the Synoptics, e.g. at 30.22.4, he is made to say exactly the opposite of what Jesus in fact says at Matt 26:17b, namely that he is looking forward to eating the Passover with the disciples. Harmonising tendencies are perhaps best exemplified in GE's account of the baptism at 30.13.7-8.

⁶⁶ Skarsaune supports this judgment by arguing that there is almost a seamless thread between 30.3.7 where Epiphanius reports on the Ebionite use of Matthew and 15:1 where he continues: "But they use certain other books as well: Clement's so-called *Peregrinations of Peter*." The interpolation consists of two parts, the story of Joseph (3.7-15.1) and 13.2-14.6 where we find the quotations from GE.

⁶⁷ The prophetic identity of Jesus in the GE is indicated, according to Skarsaune, in its opening sentence: "It happened in the days of Herod the king of Judea when Caiaphas was High Priest" which comes closer in style to the beginning of prophetic books (cf. Amos 1:1; Micah 1:1; Haggai 1:1 etc.) than Luke 3:1-3; and especially in the account of Jesus' baptism at 13.7-8 where Skarsaune argues that the reference to the spirit entering into Jesus recalls prophetic endowment with the spirit; and in the reference to a great light shining around Jesus, which Skarsaune claims, has prophetic overtones, here citing Wis 7:26-9, where wisdom as the eternal light passes into every generation making them friends of God and prophets. See further below for our discussion of Christology.

of the genealogy of Jesus. Skarsaune also notes that if we are to assume an Ebionite origin for the Gospel, then it seems odd that in its opening section (13.6 and 14.3), clearly based upon Luke 3:1-3, it omits to refer to John the Baptist as going into the region around the Jordan. After all, it was precisely this area in which all patristic authorities located the Ebionites. Skarsaune argues that Epiphanius first encountered the GE in Cyprus and it was there that he added it to his previous account. In rejecting an Ebionite origin for the GE, Skarsaune argues that it does bear a close relationship to the *Anabathmoi Iakobou*, citing in support precisely the passages to do with Jesus and the abolition of sacrifice which Bauckham had used to support such a link in his argument for an Ebionite origin for the *Anabathmoi*.

Assessing Skarsaune's arguments is difficult. In some respects he builds on arguments that we already find in those who would accept the authentically Ebionite quality of the GE. So, for instance, most scholars would accept that Epiphanius' introduction to the Gospel is an odd amalgam of different statements about the Ebionite Gospel. But other observations upon which Skarsaune builds his thesis are original, in particular his view that the majority of the quotations from the GE in *Panarion* 30 were added at a later date. It might be claimed against Skarsaune that some of his arguments are dependent upon his own interpretation of the Christology of GE, and his own intriguing denial of the vegetarian character of GE. The first point may be true, and can only be addressed when we move on to consider the Christology of the Ebionites below. But the second is potentially irrelevant for it is clear that the vegetarianism of the sect is dependent upon the view that the sect wrote or used the *Pseudo-Clementine* material, a point which could be extended to cover other aspects of the content of GE.⁶⁸ Whatever the validity of Skarsaune's detailed arguments against the Ebionite character of GE, he has shown that in the end we are wholly dependent upon Epiphanius for the view that the GE is Ebionite and that such dependence raises considerable problems, not least because the contents of the Epiphanian GE do not obviously square with what we hear about either the Gospel or the Ebionites in earlier sources.

We need very briefly to address one final point before leaving the involved subject of the sources which mention Ebionites. As has been noted by a number of scholars, there are a considerable number of references to Ebion and Ebionites in writers who follow Epiphanius. Amongst their number we should count Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Philaster and Theodoret of Cyr, to name a few.⁶⁹ However, it seems clear that all of these authorities do not in fact betray actual knowledge of Ebionites, and

⁶⁸ Koch 1976 had tentatively argued that GE's content resembled material in the *Pseudo-Clementine* material most closely.

⁶⁹ These testimonies are all helpfully listed in Klijn and Reinink 1973.

that all of them are dependent upon any one of their predecessors for what information they provide, especially upon Irenaeus and Epiphanius.⁷⁰ Such a view even applies to Jerome who one might think, because of his interest in *Judaica*, would be likely to have been acquainted with Ebionites, in the same way he seems to have been acquainted with Nazoreans.⁷¹

Conclusion:

(i) Unfortunately there exists no tract entitled “Concerning the Ebionites”. The group is either mentioned in lists of heresies, as with Irenaeus or Epiphanius, or circumstantially as in Origen, Eusebius and Jerome.

(ii) Most scholars seem to accept that the earlier sources which speak of the Ebionites, in particular Irenaeus, and Origen and Eusebius, give us reliable information, even if some of it may be confusing; and none of it can be corroborated (unless, and insofar as, we accept the independence of Irenaeus and Origen, and attach particular significance to places where their accounts coincide).

(iii) The real difficulty lies in trying to determine what material from Epiphanius’ account of the Ebionites at Panarion 30, which both incorporates and adds to earlier sources, is in fact reliable. In a former period there was a tendency to accept much of it, positing unattested developments in the history of the Ebionites and voicing an elaborate theology of the sect.⁷² But skepticism about this question always existed. This in part arises from the somewhat confusing, not to say contradictory, character of what Epiphanius tells us; the fact that there are good grounds for thinking that some of what he says is simply a literary creation; the cobbling together of sources of various kinds, and possibly of disparate origins; the lack of any corroborating evidence for an Ebionite ascription for the *Pseudo-Clementine* material, or at least bits of it, including the *Anabathmoi Iakobou*, and of an Ebionite association with the Elchasaites – in fact this last point seems to be confirmed by the failure of either Origen or Hippolytus, who knew both Ebionites and Elchasaites, to link the two. Some scholars

⁷⁰ See Klijn and Reinink 1973, 39-42. Interestingly, Gager 2003, 367, n. 38, cites Klijn and Reinink’s publication as evidence of his possibly exaggerated claim that “(t)he evidence for the persistence of Jewish Christianity is overwhelming”, but fails to note the Dutchmen’s considerable skepticism about whether Christian sources after Epiphanius betray direct knowledge of Ebionites.

⁷¹ Of his knowledge of the Nazoreans there seems to be little doubt (see especially his quotations from their commentary on Isaiah, cited by Klijn and Reinink 1973, 219-27). That he only knew of a group called Nazoreans is proven when he writes: “What shall I say of the Ebionites ... ? Until now a heresy is to be found in all parts of the east where the Jews have their synagogues. It is called “of the Minaeans” ... These are named Nazoreans.” (*Epist.* 112.13).

⁷² This is helpfully laid out in Koch 1976.

have suggested that Epiphanius' apparent quotations from an Ebionite Gospel are in fact quotations from something different. Bauckham's attempt to resurrect the view that the so-called *Anabathmoi Iakobou*, understood as *Rec. 1.33-71*, is a genuinely Ebionite document, is heavily dependent upon the view that GE is Ebionite, and yet we cannot be certain about this, although Bauckham is probably right to see a link between the two sources.

(iv) If we accept such skepticism, then we are deprived (a) of a richer account of Ebionism; and (b) of their own voice, that is, documents that they themselves have written. Everything is potentially tendentious reportage (even though the maximalist position would still leave us with material which precisely because it had been chosen by enemies of the Ebionites, is tendentious).

(v) How Epiphanius came to attribute all of this material to Ebionites is difficult to know. The most likely solution is that he felt that much of the material was 'Jewish Christian', for want of a better word, and thought Ebionite a term for such people. That he met Jewish Christian-like individuals who were making use of this material and called themselves Ebionites is less clear – the extent to which his account betrays personal contact is far from certain.

(vi) In truth assured tones on the genuinely Ebionite origin of these sources is not possible and it may be the case that, along with Koch, we should speak of the Ebionites of individual authors. Given the state of the evidence, this may seem like the most sober assessment of matters.

(vii) We should also mention the fact that a number of scholars have wanted to see an Ebionite presence in sources where they are not directly mentioned or with which they are not directly connected. Such a view was present with Baur, but reached its most extravagant expression in the work of Albrecht Schweigler who thought most Christian works of the first two centuries had an Ebionite flavour. Below we will have reason to refer to the work of Michael Goulder who sees some New Testament and sub-apostolic works as responses to Ebionite positions, and Oskar Skarsaune who argues for the presence of Ebionite opinions in Justin Martyr.

(viii) References to Ebionites or Ebion later than Epiphanius probably do not betray any knowledge of actual Ebionites, or of information gleaned from sources other than those which are attested before and including the time of Epiphanius.

The name

There are two explanations for the origin of the name 'Ebionite' in the ancient sources. The earliest of these derives the name from a mooted founder of the sect, Hebion, or Ebion,⁷³ an explanation which appears to reflect a tendency amongst heresiologists to name heresies after their founders.⁷⁴ This contrasts with the second and later explanation that it goes back to the Hebrew word for poor, a claim found first in Origen and repeated in Eusebius and in a slightly different form in Epiphanius.⁷⁵ While some scholars have sought to argue for the validity of the first explanation, notably Hilgenfeld, most scholars argue that the term is derived from the Hebrew word for poor, probably via its Aramaic equivalent, 'ebionaya' (עביונייה) (note in this respect Pharisaioi, Galilaioi, Nazoraioi, whose Greek ending appears to reflect an Aramaic, rather than Hebrew, original). The first explanation is then accounted for by the tendency noted above to derive the names for heresies from the names of their founders, an explanation made more likely by the fact that those responsible for such a move did not know Hebrew, much less Aramaic, and were not in a position to give the term its proper derivation.

Origen, who was the first person to give the apparently correct derivation, understands it polemically to refer to the Ebionites' supposed poverty of understanding and so one that was not a self-designation.⁷⁶ But it is much more likely that Origen has given an originally positive self-designation a negative spin, a point which would appear to be confirmed by Epiphanius who states, while claiming the assertion to be a lie, that "... they (the Ebionites) esteem themselves saying that they are poor, because, they say they sold their belongings in the time of the apostles ... and because they looked for poverty and the abolition of all worldly goods ... (εις πτωχείαν καὶ ἀποταξίαν μετεληλυθέναι)." (*Pan.* 30.17.2).⁷⁷ If this is the case, whence comes the word?

⁷³ See Tertullian, *Praescr.* 23.5: "Writing also to the Galatians, he blazes against those who observe and defend the circumcision and the law: this is Ebion's heresy." See also the reference at Hippolytus, *Haer.* 7.35, to a "school of Ebion."

⁷⁴ See *inter alia* Justin Martyr, *Dial.* 35.6.

⁷⁵ See Origen, *Cels.* 2.1; *Princ.* 4.3.8; *Comm. Matt.* 16.12; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.27.1; and Epiphanius, *Panarion* 30.17.2.

⁷⁶ *Princ.* 4.3.8; *Cels.* 2.1.

⁷⁷ It is worth noting that Eusebius can be taken to attribute an early origin to the name when he asserts that "(t)he first men (οἱ πρῶτοι) gave these the suitable name of Ebionites because they had poor and mean opinions about Christ." (*Hist. eccl.* 3.27.1). οἱ πρῶτοι is ambiguous and could refer to the leaders of the community, which might be suggested by the fact that the Ebionites are mentioned in the context of the rise of heresy which Eusebius assumes to be after apostolic times. Some might want to suggest, al-

Some scholars, including Ernst Bammel,⁷⁸ J. M. Magnin⁷⁹ and Michael Goulder,⁸⁰ have wanted to argue for a derivation from a presumed self-designation of the earliest Christian community in Jerusalem. This thesis, which, as we have noted, has a long heritage going back to Epiphanius himself (see *Panarion* 30.17.2 as quoted above), highlights those places in the New Testament where the ideal of poverty appears to loom large, evidence for the apparent designation of early Christians as poor in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere⁸¹ as well as evidence for a close association of Christians in Jerusalem with the term for poor, found in such texts as Gal 2:10 and Rom 15:26.⁸² Also cited is evidence, both biblical and intertestamental, of a strongly developed positive ideology of the poor.⁸³ Such a thesis is only superficially attractive. However, its weakest point lies in the fact that its advocates cannot point to any unambiguous evidence of the use of the term as a self-designation or title for the earliest Christian communities. This point was forcefully made by Leander Keck in two articles published in 1965 and 1966.⁸⁴ He argued that it was very difficult to read either Gal 2:10 or Rom 15:26 as implying that the church in Jerusalem called itself poor. The former passage clearly refers to a group of economically distressed people who constitute a subsection of the church; and the latter passage can only be taken to refer to the Christian community in Jerusalem as the poor if we understand τῶν ἄγιων to be an appositional genitive which seems very unlikely (it is much more likely to be a partitive genitive).⁸⁵ Amongst other things, Keck noted that if such a title had been used of the church, it is odd that the author of Acts, a man not uninterested in connecting the Jesus movement with the redemption of

though I have not in fact seen it suggested, that in attributing an apostolic origin to the name, Epiphanius has copied Eusebius, but this would seem unlikely not only because of the ambiguity of the word οἱ πρῶτοι but also because Eusebius reports that the attribution was negative in intent, the opposite of what Epiphanius claims.

⁷⁸ Bammel 1968, 909.

⁷⁹ Magnin 1973, 248-65.

⁸⁰ Goulder 1999a, 333-4.

⁸¹ See Luke 4:16; and Matt 5:3//Luke 6:20.

⁸² Goulder 1999a, 333.

⁸³ See Bammel 1968, 888f.

⁸⁴ Keck 1965 and 1966.

⁸⁵ Goulder 1999a, 333, concedes that the money is for the poor, "for it is not to be thought that any rich Christian will benefit." But he goes on to note that 15:25 and 31 speak of the money going to the saints in general. But it is not at all clear that this implies that the terms for 'poor' and 'saints' are used interchangeably. We should note that there is little doubt that Paul sees the poverty of the Jerusalem community in terms of genuine economic need (Cf. 1 Cor 16:1; 2 Cor 8:4; 9:1, 12). This adds further support to the view that "Paul does not designate the recipients as 'the Poor' but thinks of them as saints who are now distressingly poor." (Keck 1965, 122).

the poor, or in recording different names for the community (see, for instance, the use of the word ‘Christian’ [11:26]; ‘the way’ [9:2; 19:9; 22:4; 24:14, 22], and the ‘sect of the Nazarenes’ [24:5]), never asserts that such a name was current.⁸⁶ Keck also notes that it is striking that in Eusebius’ account of the second century church in Palestine, which is largely dependent upon Hegesippus, there is no mention of the term ‘Ebionite’ in connection with the Jerusalem church, striking because Hegesippus does mention the considerable poverty of Jesus’ family on one occasion,⁸⁷ and that it is notable that the term is absent from Hegesippus’ list of seven heresies (*Hist. eccl.* 4.22.5), and is not mentioned by Justin who does not see Jewish Christians as heretical unlike Gnostics and Marcionites (*Dial.* 35; 80).⁸⁸ In the light of this total absence of reference to Ebionites in literature of the second century, Keck suggests that Epiphanius’ account of the Ebionite explanation of the origin of the term is nothing “other than a sectarian, etiological exegesis of Acts promoted by the Ebionites in defence against the imperial church.”⁸⁹

Whether Keck is right to bestow so much significance on the failure of certain sources to mention the term Ebionite is a question⁹⁰ – we should note in this respect the relative absence of references to the term Nazorean in literature before Tertullian and in particular Epiphanius; and the fact that some of the terms Paul uses to describe Christian communities, notably ἄγιοι (Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1; Eph 1:1; Phil 1:1, 2 Thess 1:10), never find their way into Acts. What is clear is that (a) the absence of any unambiguous evidence of its use as a self-designation in the NT period; and that (b) its absence from later sources, should make us more cautious than, let us say, Goulder, about its early use as a Christian self-designation.

Given the above, some scholars have sought an Old Testament root for the name. The term, ‘ebion’ (אֲבִיּוֹן) or ‘ebionim’ (אֲבִיּוֹנִים), occurs 54 times in the Old Testament, and rarely does it in fact refer to the economically destitute except in a few cases in Exodus and Deuteronomy. “The

⁸⁶ Keck also claims that it is striking that neither Matthew nor the author of the epistle of James, use the term as a self-designation for Christians.

⁸⁷ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.20.2.

⁸⁸ Keck 1966, 56-7.

⁸⁹ Keck 1966, 59.

⁹⁰ Hegesippus’ list seems to centre on those we would call Gnostics, and it is not clear that he would have seen Ebionites as heretical. Also, as Christoph Marschies has noted (*Marschies* 1997, 53), in the context of a discussion of Cerinthus’ absence from the Hegesippian list, those who are mentioned by Hegesippus are associated with schools of thought. The Ebionites could not be described in such a way. Moreover, they are all associated with individual founders. As we have noted, it is unlikely that the Ebionites were associated with an individual founder, in spite of later claims about a figure called Ebion.

term”, as Skarsaune writes, “is theologically loaded”, and tends to refer to those within Israel who are suppressed by the rich and powerful and whose rights are often taken away. While the oppression they receive is often described (Isa 32:7; Ezek 22:29; Amos 5:12; Job 24:4), so also is the deliverance that God will bring to them (Isa 25:4; Jer 20:13; Psalm 9:19; 12:6). In relation to the latter, particular importance is ascribed to Psalm 72, held by some to be a messianic psalm, in which the word for poor is mentioned three times (72:4, 12, 13). In this scenario, the word finds its origin in a period when Christians in Palestine were suffering persecution from their non-Christian Jewish peers and when they felt confident in looking to God for future vindication. This view, at least in broad terms, has been given support that is more specific by Richard Bauckham.⁹¹ He has sought to argue for a connection between the land and the poor in the *Ascents of James*, a text already alluded to above,⁹² and the derivation of this hope from the third Matthean beatitude (Matt 5:5) where, of course, it is the meek who inherit the earth in combination with the first beatitude which refers to the poor. This beatitude, he argues, has its origin in Psalm 37:11, interestingly alluded to by the Qumran community in the *Peshar* on this Psalm (4Q171). Here the Psalm is quoted, “And the meek (ענווים) shall inherit the land, and enjoy peace in plenty”, and interpreted as “concerning the congregation of the poor (עדת האביונים) who will tough out the period of distress and will be rescued from all the snares of Belial. Afterwards, all who possess the land will enjoy and grow fat with everything enjoyable to the flesh.” This, he argues, closely resembles what we find in the *Ascents of James*. He then goes on to claim that the readers of Matthew’s Gospel represented by the authors of the *Ascents of James*, have combined the first and the third beatitude to read Psalm 37:11, “The poor shall inherit the land”. So in Bauckham’s reconstruction the name derives from the first Matthean beatitude and “expresses the community’s eschatological hope of restoration from the disinherited condition in which they find themselves ...”⁹³

Obviously it is very difficult to determine the precise origins of the term Ebionite but we are probably right to assume, along with many others, that it was an honorific self-designation deriving from the Bible, which may also have been informed by some knowledge of the impoverished circumstances of the earliest communities. It may be significant in this context that

⁹¹ Bauckham 2003, 178-80.

⁹² “He said that the poor were blessed; he promised that there would be earthly rewards; he placed the highest reward in earthly inheritance; and he promised that those who observe righteousness would be filled with food and drink.” (*Rec.* 1.26.1).

⁹³ Bauckham 2003, 180. For a broad endorsement of this idea, see Skarsaune 2007, 427.

Irenaeus in particular notes the close attention Ebionites paid to study of the Hebrew scriptures.⁹⁴

One final point needs to be made. Skarsaune has argued that if scholars are right to assert that in origin the term ‘ebionim’ (אֲבִיּוֹנִים) was not originally a sect name, then “it could have been a name by which several groups and kinds of Jewish believers liked to call themselves.”⁹⁵ This would appear to be supported by Origen who knew of the Hebrew roots of the name. On at least one occasion, Origen uses the term to refer to Jews who become Christians but continue to practice the law (*Cels.* 2.1),⁹⁶ and elsewhere it is used to describe two types of Ebionites.⁹⁷ The creation of the sect of the Ebionites, on this account, emerges partially out of a failure to translate probably the Aramaic term ‘ebionaya’ (אֲבִיּוֹנַיָא) or possibly the Hebrew (אֲבִיּוֹנִים) by πτωχοί, and therefore to understand the biblical roots of the self-designation. The simple transcription of a Hebrew name encouraged the creation of a sect. For Skarsaune we can explain the origin of Irenaeus’ notice by arguing that (i) he knew that some Jewish believers were called ‘Ebionim’ (אֲבִיּוֹנִים); and (ii) that some Jewish believers denied the virgin birth and derived Jesus’ lineage through Joseph. It was this latter group he called Ebionites. Irenaeus’ picture of the Ebionites then established itself as a standard picture. When people met individuals who resembled the Ebionites but did not entertain all of their beliefs, they assumed the existence of more than one group of Ebionites. Such a view of the development of the term has the strange effect of limiting discussion of the Ebionites to the group so-called by Irenaeus, itself an artificial creation.⁹⁸

There is explanatory power in Skarsaune’s suggestion. It allows us to account for both the absence of any reference to the term ‘Ebionite’ in such writers as Hegesippus, in particular its absence from his list of early Christian heresies, and Justin (the former wrote about the history of Christians in Palestine where no doubt those calling themselves Ebionite would

⁹⁴ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.26.2.

⁹⁵ Skarsaune 2007, 427.

⁹⁶ “He (Celsus) failed to notice that Jewish believers in Jesus (οἱ ἀπὸ Ἰουδαίων εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν πιστεύοντες) have not left the law of their fathers. For they live according to it, and are named from the poverty of their interpretation of the law (ἐπώνυμοι τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἐκδοχὴν πτωχείας τοῦ νόμου γεγενημένοι). The Jews call a poor man Ebion (Ἐβίων [understood as a Greek transliteration of the Hebrew word]), and those Jews who have accepted Jesus as the Christ are called Ebionites.” The implication of this passage might be that all Jewish believers continue to observe the law after conversion. But at 2.3 Origen notes a variety of responses to the question of legal observance on the part of Jewish believers.

⁹⁷ Origen, *Cels.* 5.61. See also Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.25.2.

⁹⁸ Skarsaune 2007, 427.

have been the majority; and the latter did not regard them as heretical yet); and for the presence from Origen onwards of two types of Ebionites as well as those places, at least one of which is also in Origen, where the term Ebionite looks more like a general designation for Jewish Christians. It also takes seriously the positive implications of the term when seen from a biblical perspective. The explanation remains conjectural, however, and suffers from the general absence of the term ‘Ebionite’ in Christian literature prior to Irenaeus. Would we not expect at least a whiff of the term as a self-designation in earlier literature, particularly if it was the self-designation of a wide group of people, as Skarsaune has suggested? Specifically, might we not, for instance, have expected to have evidence of it in a text like the *Apocalypse of Peter* where the Christian author clearly writes at a time of oppression (probably the Bar Kokhba revolt [see Justin, *I Apol.* 31.6]) and difficulty, precisely the sort of circumstances in which according to Skarsaune’s theory, the term would have taken on its greatest resonance?⁹⁹

Beliefs

Any decision on the beliefs of the Ebionites is obviously determined by the sources one deems Ebionite. If one reads Schoeps’ account of the Ebionites in his great work of 1949, *Die Theologie und Geschichte des Judentums*, where the author assumes that parts of the *Pseudo-Clementines* are genuinely Ebionite, one gains a very different impression, for instance, from reading works which tend to be more skeptical about the Ebionite character of the same corpus, and to concentrate their attentions upon pre-Epiphonian sources.

Christology

When Irenaeus discusses the various heresies in book 1 of his *Adversus Haereses*, his principal concern would appear to be their ideas of God. The Ebionites, however, are presented as conventional monotheists (they agree “that the world was made by God”) in contradistinction to the Cerinthians who immediately precede them in the list.¹⁰⁰ Then in the next sentence, where Irenaeus comments upon the Christology of the Ebionites, there is a textual difficulty. In the Latin translation of the original Greek of Irenaeus

⁹⁹ On the date and historical background of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, see Bauckham 1998.

¹⁰⁰ Cerinthus taught that the world “was not made by the supreme God ...” (*Haer.* 1.26.1).

we read that “their opinions with regard to the Lord are not presented in a similar way (*non similiter*) to those of Cerinthus and Carpocrates.” But in what appears to be Hippolytus’ version of Irenaeus’ sentence (*Haer.* 7.34.1), the negative disappears and the christological opinions of the Ebionites become similar to (ὁμοίως) Cerinthus and Carpocrates. Klijn and Reinink opt for the first reading with the *non similiter*.¹⁰¹ Most recent commentators, however, have argued for the authenticity of Hippolytus’ reading, partly on the grounds that Hippolytus knew Irenaeus’ *Adversus Haereses* and yet showed no knowledge of a negative reading, partly on the grounds that had their Christology been dissimilar from that of Cerinthus and Carpocrates surely there would have been grounds to describe it, but more especially because if we retain the negative it seems difficult to account for why the Ebionites are in Irenaeus’ list at all. The only reason for mentioning them must be because their *Christology*, rather than their *theology*, is heretical in the opinion of Irenaeus. Such a view better accounts for the adversative Latin *autem* (reflected in Hippolytus’ δέ) at the beginning of the description of their Christology.¹⁰² Klijn and Reinink’s view that in this section of *Adversus Haereses*, Irenaeus is only interested in doctrines of God, not of Christ, and so there is no need to mention the christological opinions of the Ebionites, is not convincing unless, of course, one holds to the view that they are mentioned because of their ‘Judaising’ tendencies. But in the context of the list this would make them a little eccentric, even if it is their ‘Judaising’ tendencies which Irenaeus spends most space describing.

But what precisely was the Christology of the group described by Irenaeus? In general scholars have wanted to argue for some form of adoptionism. But what form of adoptionism? Michael Goulder argues for what he calls possessionism,¹⁰³ on the basis of the presumed similarities between the Ebionites and Cerinthus¹⁰⁴ as described by Irenaeus. “He (Cerinthus) suggested”, Irenaeus writes, “that Jesus was not born of a virgin ... but that he was the son of Joseph and Mary in the same way as other men but that he was more versed in righteousness, prudence and wisdom than other

¹⁰¹ Klijn and Reinink 1973, 20. Le Boulluec 1985, 168 n. 123, presents a possible translation of the passage with *non similiter* taken to refer to the fact that their opinions do not accord with holy doctrine. “Mais, pour ce que concerne le Seigneur, d’une façon différente, (c’est à dire sans être d’accord sur ce point avec la sainte doctrine ...), ils ont les mêmes opinions que Cérinthe.” This seems a tad artificial.

¹⁰² For these arguments, see esp. Skarsaune 2007, 428; and Häkkinen 2005, 265 n. 49.

¹⁰³ See the articles mentioned and Goulder 1994, 109-10. For a more recent adherent of this theory see Myllykoski 2005, 228, but here with no supporting arguments. Häkkinen 2005, 268-9, discusses Goulder’s possessionist ideas without refuting them.

¹⁰⁴ The claim is repeated in a number of other patristic authorities. See Hippolytus, *Haer.* 7.35.1; Pseudo-Tertullian, *Adv. Haer.* 3; Victorinus of Pettau, *Comm. Apoc.* 9.1.

men. And after his baptism, Christ descended upon him from that principality that is above all in the form of the dove. And then he proclaimed the unknown Father and performed miracles. But at last Christ flew away from Jesus; Jesus suffered and rose again while Christ remained impassible ...” [*Haer.* 1.26.1]). For Goulder, the Christology of the Ebionites, which he holds to be the earliest Christology,¹⁰⁵ posits a human Jesus who at his baptism is possessed by the figure known as Christ. Such possession lasts only until the crucifixion when the Christ figure leaves Jesus. Such a position, Goulder asserts, is further witnessed to by Epiphanius, and parts of the New Testament¹⁰⁶ and in what information Ignatius of Antioch gives us about his opponents.¹⁰⁷

Other scholars who have approached this question prefer to argue for a form of adoptionism, which assumes that Jesus was adopted at the baptism by the spirit but in a manner which does not involve the kind of possessio-nistic docetism assumed by Goulder.¹⁰⁸

At first sight it is difficult to decide between these two alternatives. Irenaeus in his original notice about the Ebionites only states whose Christology that of the Ebionites most resembles, and does not go on to describe their Christology, but elsewhere talks of their denial of the virgin birth and their preference for a translation of ‘almah’ (אַלְמָה) at Isa 7:14 by νεᾱνίς (young woman).¹⁰⁹ In the former context he is rather imprecise preferring to speak in terms of being ‘more similar to’ than ‘exactly like’. But if this is the case in what does the presumed similarity with Cerinthus lie? Neither Origen nor Eusebius, possibly our most reliable witnesses on the Ebionites, go into detail about their Christology, save to assert that some of the latter deny the virgin birth, and that some of those who do not deny it still deny Christ’s pre-existence.¹¹⁰ Had their Christology consisted in what Goulder asserts it did, I find it difficult to believe that they would not have made some mention of that fact. Epiphanius, as we have noted above, gives a very garbled account of the Christology of the Ebionites, which

¹⁰⁵ See Goulder 1994, 134: “It (the Ebionite Christology) was the creed of the Jerusalem church from early times.” See also Goulder 1999a, 347-8. Häkkinen 2005, 269, seems to accept Goulder’s thesis, but expresses himself a little more skeptically on the matter on p. 272.

¹⁰⁶ Note in particular his interpretation of 1 John 4:1-3; 5:6-8; 1 Cor 12:1-3; parts of Hebrews; and Ignatius, esp. *Ephesians* 7.

¹⁰⁷ Goulder 1999b.

¹⁰⁸ It is odd that Skarsaune 2007 contains no reference to Goulder’s views, not least because his own understanding of the Christology of the Ebionites is different from Goulder’s.

¹⁰⁹ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 5.1.3.

¹¹⁰ See Origen, *Cels.* 5.61; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.27.1-3.

contains too many unlikely assertions to be fully trusted.¹¹¹ One might, on the basis of this evidence, be inclined to argue for a less heterodox form of adoption and so against Goulder. In this context it is worth drawing attention to the fact that Irenaeus indicates that the Ebionites, contrary to Cerinthus, do, as has been noted, accept that the world was made by God, not by some lesser principality. In Cerinthus' Christology the separate entity, Christ, comes as a representative of the ultimate deity "that is above all." (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.26.1). As Marcel Simon observes: "The notion of an unknown father smacks disquietingly of Marcionism. It is not compatible with the perfectly orthodox theodicy with which the same authors credit the Ebionites. If the world was the work of the true God, who is abundantly shown forth in His creation, He could hardly be the unknown Father."¹¹² For Simon Irenaeus' decision to assert the similarity of Ebionites and Cerinthians shows up the failings of this method of classification. "It sees a connection between two sects, a connection based on a single common feature. The similarity, though real enough, may be entirely fortuitous, but on the basis of it the two systems as a whole are arbitrarily assumed to be related."¹¹³ More importantly, and Goulder ignores this point, when Irenaeus happens, circumstantially, to mention the Ebionites again, this time at *Haer.* 3.11.7 and in the context of a discussion of heretical attitudes to the Gospels, he notes that they, the Ebionites, only use Matthew and are in fact directly confuted by it (no doubt because Matthew attests to the virgin birth). Irenaeus then goes on, clearly referring to a different group of people, to comment: "But those who separate Jesus from the Christ, alleging that Christ remained impassable, but that it was Jesus who suffered, prefer the Gospel of Mark", although, of course, *pace* Irenaeus, they read it incorrectly. This is precisely the Christology that Goulder attributes to the Ebionites, and yet it is not associated with the Ebionites.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Goulder 1999a, 335, makes much of what Epiphanius tells us about the Ebionite account of Jesus' baptism (*Pan.* 30.13.7), arguing that the reference to the Holy Spirit entering into Jesus and the reference to Jesus being begotten that day amply attest to the central elements of the Cerinthian Christology. But this is by no means clear. It is perfectly possible to take the passage as adoptionist in the traditional sense; and in any case, as we have noted, it is not certain whether the source from which it is taken, the so-called Gospel of the Ebionites, is in fact Ebionite.

¹¹² Simon 1986, 250.

¹¹³ Simon 1986, 250.

¹¹⁴ Klijn and Reinink 1973, 20, partially justify their view that Irenaeus originally wrote that Ebionite Christology was *not* similar to that of Cerinthus by drawing attention to the fact that such an assertion would be true whereas its opposite would not be. While they are right to argue for a difference between the two Christologies, they are wrong to draw the inference they do. For the reasons stated by Simon above, it is possible to see how Irenaeus could have affirmed the similarity in christological opinions while failing to draw out the differences.

Goulder's case, then, founders because he has not been able to demonstrate that the Ebionites as described by Irenaeus in fact entertained the christological views he maintains they did. If that is the case, then, in a discussion devoted to the Ebionites, the need to discuss his thesis that such a Christology is evidenced in the pages of the New Testament becomes less urgent, even though it seems unclear that his case is proven here either.¹¹⁵

Some of those who have advocated a view of the Ebionites as straightforward adoptionists, rather than, for want of a better term, docetic adoptionists, as suggested by Goulder, have sought to give a more involved description of Ebionite Christology. Oskar Skarsaune has argued that a central claim of the Ebionites on the basis of what we read in Irenaeus and related sources, lies in the view that Jesus was the son of Joseph,¹¹⁶ and that this had the consequence that they gave great emphasis to the significance of the baptism.¹¹⁷ Skarsaune then quotes from Irenaeus' section on Cerinthus, where the baptism is explicitly accorded great importance.¹¹⁸ Accepting some degree of similarity between this and Ebionite understandings of Jesus, he goes on to cite two passages from Justin's *Dialogue* (*Dial.* 49.1;¹¹⁹ 67.2¹²⁰), both of which come from the mouth of Trypho who here, in the opinion of Skarsaune, acts as a spokesman for the Ebionites. Emerging from these two citations are three observations: (i)

¹¹⁵ Let me make just two points in this respect. First, Goulder's case is based upon often speculative mirror reading of New Testament texts, none of which is straightforwardly convincing. Secondly, his attempts to show that the possessionistic Christology he is proposing is the earliest Christology lacks support on two grounds: (i) there is no evidence that Paul disagreed with his opponents on matters of Christology (Horbury 2006, 43-4, makes this point); and (ii) if, as he asserts, the apostles and, therefore, one assumes, quite a number of Jewish Christians entertained the possessionist Christology he describes, then why did Paul (Goulder 1999a, 345-7, discusses Paul) make such profligate and unqualified use of the term 'in Christ', and did not instead choose to use 'in Jesus Christ'? It is in part Ignatius' use of the term 'Jesus Christ,' which Goulder (Goulder 1999b, 30) takes to indicate the presence of Christ possessionists in some of the communities he addresses.

¹¹⁶ See *Haer.* 3.21.1 where Irenaeus asserts that they follow those Jewish versions, which read νεάνις rather than παρθένος at Isa 7:14.

¹¹⁷ Skarsaune 2007, 429.

¹¹⁸ See Irenaeus *Haer.* 1.26.1.

¹¹⁹ "And Trypho said; 'It seems to me that those who say that he was a man (ἄνθρωπον γεγενῆσθαι) and that by election (κατ' ἐκλογήν) he has become Christ, hold a more reasonable opinion than you ... For the Christ whom we all wait for will be a man of human origins (ἄνθρωπον ἐξ ἀνθρώπων), and Elijah will come to anoint him.'"

¹²⁰ "... you should acknowledge this Jesus to be a man of mere human origin (ἄνθρωπον ἐξ ἀνθρώπων). If you can prove from the scriptures that he is the Messiah, confess that he was considered worthy to be chosen as such because of his perfect observance of the law (διὰ τὸ ἐννόμως καὶ τέλεως πολιτεύεσθαι)."

that Jews expected a human only Messiah who would become Messiah by election based on his perfect obedience to the law; (ii) that the Jews expected him to be anointed as the Messiah by the prophet-like Elijah; and (iii) that there were believers in Jesus who had the same ideas about Jesus as Messiah. This third point is not only supported by the fact that at *Dial.* 49.1 where Trypho talks about “those who assert that Jesus was of human origin”, implying Christian believers, but also by reference to *Dial.* 48.4 where the existence of “some of your race who acknowledge Jesus is the Messiah but claim that he has a merely human origin”, is asserted by Justin.¹²¹ Skarsaune then proceeds to interweave a number of passages about the Ebionites and passages from Justin to give as complete a picture as he can of their christological views. He argues strongly that they saw Jesus’ baptism as a messianic anointing with the spirit, a point which may well explain Irenaeus’ claim that the Ebionites “do not wish to understand that the Holy Spirit came into Mary and that the power of the most high did overshadow her.” (*Haer.* 5.1.3).¹²² Even though “we cannot be sure” that Tertullian had additional information about the Ebionites, Skarsaune takes seriously his claim that the Ebionites could be seen to entertain a view of Jesus as an end-time prophet;¹²³ and the claim that Jesus is from David’s seed only¹²⁴ and therefore not the Son of God in such a way that it competed with his claim to be from David. He comments: “It could well be that this gives us the reason for Ebionitic denial of the virginal conception of Jesus: for them the Davidic lineage of Jesus through Joseph was indispensable for his Davidic Messiahship.”¹²⁵ In other words, “for the Ebionites, the story of Jesus’ baptism was the story of how Jesus was anointed Messiah, while the story of his birth was the story of how he was born as David’s son through Joseph, the descendant of David.”¹²⁶ For Skarsaune what we see here is one attempt at solving the apparent tension between the idea that Jesus was descended from David and was at the same time born of a virgin.¹²⁷ He goes on to claim that if we understand an insistence on the Davidic descent of Jesus as a central concern of the Ebionites, and he finds

¹²¹ *Dial.* 48.4.

¹²² Skarsaune 2007, 430: “This paraphrase ... clearly transposes the role of the spirit from Jesus’ baptism to his birth.”

¹²³ He takes this to be the implication of the reference to Jesus being obviously more glorious than the prophets, because “an angel is in him in the same way as in Zechariah.” (*De Carne* 14). This claim is understood by Skarsaune to be a reference to Zech 1:14 LXX where the prophet says that “(t)he angel speaking in me said ...”

¹²⁴ *Carn. Chr.* 14.

¹²⁵ Skarsaune 2007, 432.

¹²⁶ Skarsaune 2007, 432.

¹²⁷ For another effort at solving the tension, see Ignatius, *Eph.* 18.2; *Trall.* 9.1; *Smyrn.* 1.1.

additional support for this view in a number of passages in Justin's *Dialogue*,¹²⁸ then this fact can potentially unravel the emphasis on *generatio*, found in Irenaeus' claim in *Haer.* 5.1.3 that "they remain in the old leaven of human *generation*; and do not wish to understand that the Holy Spirit came in Mary"; and his insistence on "God who wrought a new generation." Skarsaune points to one final passage at Hippolytus, *Haer.* 7.34.1, where we find the claim that "they (the Ebionites) live conformably to the Jewish customs saying that they are justified according to the law (κατὰ νόμον ... δικαιοῦσθαι), saying that Jesus also was justified by practising the law."¹²⁹ From this it seems clear that Ebionite obedience to the law was justified by reference to Jesus' own practice and that Jesus' own righteousness may in part have been bound up with his own elevation to a messianic status, a point that we find mentioned by Irenaeus in his description of Cerinthus' Christology (*Haer.* 1.26.1).

Skarsaune's reconstruction is based upon an interweaving of earlier witnesses to Ebionites and their partial elucidation in some passages in Justin. In his reading the Ebionites *become* adoptionists,¹³⁰ keen to retain Jesus' Davidic origin and to attribute his adoption at his baptism to his perfect obedience to the law. Skarsaune excludes from his discussion any consideration of what some have seen as the more orthodox Ebionites, those whom Origen and Eusebius refer to as apparently holding to the virgin birth. Some scholars have wanted to compare these 'Ebionites' with the so-called Nazoreans, that group of Jewish Christians first explicitly referred to by Epiphanius (*Pan.* 29) and subsequently mentioned by Jerome, Augustine and many others, often in connection with the Ebionites.¹³¹ This view¹³² is probably wrong, or at least not obviously right. Two passages are relevant in this context. The first comes from Origen's *Comm. Matt.* 16.12,¹³³ and the second from Eusebius' description of the Ebionites al-

¹²⁸ See especially *Dial.* 68.5: "How does scripture say to David that *of his loins* God would take to himself a son, would establish his kingdom, and would install him upon the throne of glory."

¹²⁹ He supports the authenticity of Hippolytus' claim by pointing to the presence of a similar yet differently expressed sentiment in Pseudo-Tertullian, *Haer.* 3. For a similar claim, see Origen, *Comm. ser. Matt.* 79.

¹³⁰ This is to be contrasted with Goulder's view where the position he attributes to the Ebionites represents Christology at the dawn of Christian origins.

¹³¹ "There are other Ebionites called Nazoreans." (Joseph, *Hypomnestikon* 140.5).

¹³² The view is represented recently by Pritz 1988. For a highly skeptical view of Epiphanius' account of the Nazoreans, which sees them as entirely a construct of Epiphanius' imagination, see Luomanen 2005, 279-314. For a more sober account, see Kinzig 2007.

¹³³ In this passage Origen refers to two types of Ebionites. One, he maintains, does not believe in the virgin birth, the other does. Of the latter he says that they are not, however, of the right theological opinion (οὐ μὴν καὶ μετὰ τῆς περὶ αὐτοῦ θεολογίας). Dorival

ready alluded to, at *Hist. eccl.* 3.27.3. One passage, implicitly,¹³⁴ and the second, explicitly,¹³⁵ seem to assume the existence of Ebionites who, while accepting the virgin birth, do not accept Jesus' pre-existence. The argument here is that such people cannot be aligned with the apparently wholly orthodox Nazoreans.¹³⁶ But we should be hesitant at arriving at any absolute conclusions. Can we be certain, for instance, that the Nazoreans entertained supposedly orthodox opinions on the question of Jesus' pre-existence (we are never told what their views on this subject were)? And can we also be certain that Origen has given us an accurate account of the views of this second type of Ebionite? And in any case, who were they? Could they simply have been people who had read Matthew's Gospel without taking account of John? It is a difficult task to place this latter group in a projected developmental history of the Ebionites, not least because the logic of their position is unclear.¹³⁷

2001, 272, argues that this group must have denied Christ's pre-existence in the way the second group mentioned by Eusebius in *Hist. eccl.* 3.27.3 did. He also refers to another passage in Origen, *Comm. Tit.* 3.11, which seems to imply the existence of a group of people entertaining the same combination of beliefs.

¹³⁴ "Those who are called Ebionites, then, agree that the world was made by God; but their opinions with regard to the Lord are not similar to those of Cerinthus and Carpocrates." (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.26.2).

¹³⁵ Note the description of the second group mentioned by Eusebius as not denying that the Lord was born of a virgin but nevertheless refusing "to confess his pre-existence as God, that is word, and wisdom (προϋπάρχειν αὐτὸν θεὸν λόγον ὄντα καὶ σοφίαν ὁμολογοῦντες)..."

¹³⁶ This point is further supported by the fact at *Cels.* 5.65, Origen asserts that both types of Ebionites reject Paul, something which seems not to have been a part of Nazorean theology.

¹³⁷ Luomanen 2007, 293-4, n. 29, suggests that the two types of Ebionites, introduced by Origen, could in fact be nothing more than the result of a textual difficulty connected with Irenaeus', and subsequently Hippolytus', description of the Ebionites. As we have noted, and as Luomanen points out, in Irenaeus we read that the Ebionites did *not* think of Christ in the same way as Cerinthus and Carpocrates whereas in Hippolytus we read that they did. For Luomanen this is proof that there were two different traditions about the Ebionites available to later writers including Origen. To accommodate them both, Origen has simply invented the idea of two types of Ebionites. "Thus, the distinction that was made between the two types of Ebionites may only reveal the zeal of Origen and others for classifying groups on the basis of christological distinction." (Luomanen 2005, 294 n. 29). This thesis too easily assumes that Origen was dependent upon Irenaeus for his opinions about the Ebionites; and secondly, fails to take sufficient account of the fact that in none of his notices about the Ebionites does Origen attribute to them a Cerinthean Christology.

Conclusion

(i) Most scholars agree that those we call Ebionites held an adoptionist Christology of a kind. They disagree on precisely what form it took.

(ii) Disagreement in part emerges from what scholars understand by Irenaeus' claim that the Ebionites entertained a Christology similar to that of Cerinthus. Goulder's and others' view that this implies 'exactly the same as' does not seem to be supported by the evidence either in Irenaeus or in important witnesses to Ebionite thought like Origen. As we have indicated Epiphianian evidence is too tainted to be of real use.

(iii) The view that Jesus was not born of the virgin but was the son of Joseph who was subsequently adopted at his baptism by the spirit is quite widely attested and probably a core Ebionite belief if the term is understood in Irenaeus' terms (and it may well have been this aspect of their christological beliefs that accounted for Irenaeus' view that they were "like the Cerinthians."). Ebionites may also have emphasised Jesus' Davidic origins, though this is only found explicitly in one passage about them (Tertullian, *Carn. Christ.* 14), and it may have been this which led them to their rejection of the idea of the virginal conception, though this remains conjecture for no one source about the Ebionites makes this connection (it is most clearly evidenced in Justin *Dial.* 68.5, but not explicitly attributed to a Christian, let alone an Ebionite). An emphasis upon Jesus' righteousness (evidenced in Irenaeus on Cerinthus, in Hippolytus and Pseudo-Tertullian), understood in terms of his obedience to the law, may also have been a part of their theology together with an incipient theology of *imitatio Christi*.

Obedience to the law and biblical interpretation

From our first ancient witness to the Ebionites to our last, it is made clear that they obey the law. Origen even speaks about them observing the Passover and Irenaeus seems to imply that they prayed towards Jerusalem, a custom well attested in the Old Testament (see 1 Kings 8:29-30; Dan 6:11). On this point there is almost no disagreement amongst scholars. Most assume that insofar as the Ebionites had a mission to the Gentiles, and this is quite unclear,¹³⁸ they would have required the Gentiles to observe the law. This would appear to be the implication of Tertullian's asso-

¹³⁸ See Origen, *Princ.* 4.3.8, where the Ebionites are portrayed as interpreting Matt 10:6 to indicate that Jesus was only to go "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." It is not clear, however, what precisely the Ebionites deduced from this verse, for this is not explicitly stated by Origen. Bauckham 2003, 166, posits, in an admittedly tentative way, a Gentile mission but this involves him assuming that the so-called *Anabathmoi Iakobou*, thought by some to be the same as the source witnessed at *Ps. Clem. Rec.* 1.27-71, is an Ebionite work. See above for our doubts about this.

ciation of them with Paul's opponents in Galatia, but his (Tertullian's) observations may not be based on any direct knowledge of Ebionites,¹³⁹ and the view, entertained by a good number, that Justin's reference to Jewish Christians who insist on Gentiles observing the law (*Dial.* 47.2) is in fact a reference to the Ebionites.¹⁴⁰ If, of course, as Skarsaune claims, there was built into Ebionite Christology a kind of implicit *imitatio Christi* based upon law observance, this becomes more likely.

Concerning Ebionite interpretation of scripture, on one reading, which would exclude much of the Epiphonian material, we would appear to know almost nothing. In fact only Irenaeus gives us any information. He states that "as to the prophetic writings, they do their best to expound them *curiosius*." One suggested translation of this word is 'diligently', or even 'over-scrupulously'.¹⁴¹ If the latter is right, then it may be connected to the words that follow about the law.¹⁴² Here over-scrupulousness lies in the Ebionites' willingness to practice more Jewish laws than they should. Schoeps, who was keen to support Epiphanius' assertion that the Ebionites rejected most of the prophetic books (*Pan.* 30.15.2 and 18.7, 9) and excerpted passages from their version of the Pentateuch, here making use of *Hom.* 2.4-3.6, as found in the *Pseudo-Clementine* literature, which appeared to attribute to God things that were not acceptable, translated the Latin word by the German 'möglichst merkwürdig', hence giving at least partial support to the decision to include this material in his description of the Ebionites.¹⁴³ But Schoeps' argument is heavily reliant upon his view that Epiphanius is a trustworthy source and the *Pseudo-Clementines*, spe-

¹³⁹ Tertullian, *Praescr.* 18.

¹⁴⁰ See Bobichon 2003, 713-4; and Skarsaune 2007, 439.

¹⁴¹ Unfortunately Hippolytus, who appears to come close to reproducing Irenaeus' brief notice on the Ebionites, does not refer to their biblical interpretation, so we have no Greek equivalent for the Latin *curiosius*, though we might guess that it was ἀκριβῶς.

¹⁴² That prophetic writings could refer to the whole OT is shown by *Haer.* 1.8.1. See also 1.7.2, 3; 1.10.1 for use of term in the context of an interpretation of Genesis. See Skarsaune 2007, 438.

¹⁴³ See also Häkkinen 2005, 259, esp. n. 35. He suggests, without great conviction, that the phrase *exponere curiosius* could refer to Ebionite interpretation of Isa 7:14 as not referring to a virgin but a woman of marriageable age (*Haer.* 3.21.1). Another possibility he suggests could be philosophical exposition, which leads to heresy, here aping the use of the noun *curiositas* in Tertullian's *Praescr.* 8-12, 14. But there is no evidence of the philosophical disposition of the Ebionites, not even from Hippolytus who was only too keen to associate the heretical with a particular philosophical school. Interestingly, Methodius of Olympus, in his only comment on the Ebionites at *Symp.* 8.10, says that Ebionites assert, "out of contentiousness", that the prophets spoke of their own accord (ἐξ ἰδίας κινήσεως τοὺς προφήτας φιλονεικοῦντες λελαλήκαναι) which could indicate that the Ebionites did not value the prophets much. But corroboration of this is nowhere to be found.

cifically the source identified as the *Periodoi Petrou*, are in their entirety legitimate Ebionite material.¹⁴⁴

On the subject of biblical interpretation we should look briefly at the assertion, found in Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 6.17; and *Dem. ev.* 7.1.33), that the translator of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, Symmachus, was an Ebionite, an observation which led H. J. Schoeps in particular to argue for wide-ranging evidence of Ebionite tendencies in extant evidence of Symmachus' translation.¹⁴⁵ Schoeps' view has found very few supporters. Most now think that Eusebius' assertion of the Ebionite origins of Symmachus is the result of a mistake arising out of his knowledge that Ebionites read Isa 7:14 with $\nu\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu\iota\varsigma$, gleaned from Irenaeus (see Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.8, quoting Irenaeus *Haer.* 3.21.1), and the fact that he knew Symmachus to have the same reading (see *Dem. ev.* 7.1.33).¹⁴⁶ These same scholars tend to follow Origen, quoted it would seem in the fifth century *Historia Lausiaca* 64,¹⁴⁷ and Epiphanius, *Mens. et Pond.* 16, who affirm Symmachus' Jewish identity. As to Schoeps' identification of Ebionite-inspired translations in Symmachus, this position has also found few sup-

¹⁴⁴ Luomanen 2007, 90-1, connects Ebionite attitudes to the Old Testament as described by Epiphanius, with the Samaritans, "who were famous for accepting only their version of the Pentateuch as their religious literature." In support of this view he notes how on a number of occasions Ebion is linked with the Samaritans (30.1.3; 2.2-3). However, nowhere does Epiphanius link Ebionite excerpting from the Pentateuch with Samaritan custom, and no one has yet linked anything Epiphanius says about Ebionite interpretation of the Pentateuch with material we find in the Samaritan Pentateuch. It is easier to argue that Epiphanius has simply assumed something he read in the *Pseudo-Clementines* was Ebionite. For the possible influence of Samaritans on earliest Christianity, see Horbury 2003, 63, who emphasises the Samaritan identity of three early here-siarchs (Simon Magus, Dositheus and Menander). Horbury does not, however, go on to adduce any strongly Samaritan characteristics for early Christians.

¹⁴⁵ Schoeps 1949, 350-80.

¹⁴⁶ On this see Salvesen 1991, 289-90, who follows the view of Barthélemy 1974. Skarsaune 2007, 448, thinks that this thesis can less easily explain Eusebius' discussion of Symmachus in *Hist. eccl.* 6.17, where a treatise by Symmachus attacking Matthew's Gospel is mentioned. This assertion is in itself odd for, as we have seen, early witnesses to the Ebionites, beginning with Irenaeus, maintain that Ebionites only used Matthew's Gospel. Skarsaune explains Eusebius' claim by arguing for the possibility that what Eusebius refers to is a defence by Symmachus of his translation of Isa 7:14, possibly against different readings attested in, *inter alia*, Matt 1:23. It is doubtful that Symmachus wrote polemical commentaries on Matthew's Gospel, another way of understanding Eusebius' reference, for if that were the case we would, as Skarsaune notes, have expected extensive reference to such a work in Christian writers from Origen onwards.

¹⁴⁷ "I found these words written in a very old book of verse, in which was written in Origen's own hand: "I found this book with Juliana the virgin in Caesarea, when I was in hiding in her house. She said that she had received it from Symmachus, the translator of the Jews ($\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\epsilon}\rho\mu\eta\nu\acute{\epsilon}\omega\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \iota\omicron\upsilon\delta\alpha\iota\omicron\upsilon\nu$)."

For a discussion of the text and comments on Barthélemy's theory, see Salvesen 1991.

porters. First, Schoeps was wrong to approach this subject assuming the *Pseudo-Clementine* material to be Ebionite; and second, his assumption that Symmachus was an Ebionite unduly influenced his conclusions. For a Symmachian translation to be considered Ebionite, it is not good enough simply to point to similarities with ideas associated with Ebionites – it is necessary, rather, to prove that no other explanation for such a translation will account for it except one that attributes it to Ebionite origins.

Attitudes to Paul

Irenaeus comments that the Ebionites repudiate Paul saying that he was an apostate from the law (*Haer.* 1.26.2). This view is repeated by Tertullian (*Praescr.* 32.5) and Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 3.27.4), probably himself dependent upon Irenaeus. It could be seen to recall words found in Acts 21:20-1,¹⁴⁸ although most agree that the claim associated with the Ebionites need not be derived from this passage and so excluded from any consideration of Ebionism.¹⁴⁹ A slightly different accusation may lie behind the words of Origen found at *Hom. Jer.* 19.12 where we read: “It is written in the Acts that somebody struck Paul by order of Ananias the High Priest. Therefore Paul said: ‘God will strike you, you whitewashed wall.’ And up to the present day the Ebionites strike the Apostle of Jesus Christ with shameful words commanded by the unlawful word of the high priest.”¹⁵⁰ The striking of Paul with shameful words would appear to point to something like a smear campaign against him which possibly involved a polemical rewriting of Paul’s life as we find, at least in inchoate form, in another passage from the *Pseudo-Clementine* corpus, namely *Rec.* 1.70.1-8. Here a certain hostile man seeks to dissuade the High Priest and the Jewish people from being baptised and stirs up violence against the Christians as a result of which many die and James ends up being pushed down the stairs by the hostile man himself and being left for dead. The same person then receives instructions to go to Damascus to persecute Christians there (1.71.4). As we have noted previously, the passage from the *Pseudo-Clementines* is not

¹⁴⁸ “You see, brother, how many thousands of believers there are among the Jews, and they are all zealous for the law. They have been told about you that you teach those Jews living amongst the Gentiles to forsake Moses (ἀποστασίαν διδάσκεις ἀπὸ Μωϋσέως), and that you tell them not to circumcise their children or observe the customs (μηδὲ τοῖς ἔθεσιν περιπατεῖν).” Note how Tertullian appears to assume that the opponents of Paul in Galatia are Ebionites.

¹⁴⁹ Skarsaune 2007, 437, makes this point effectively by refuting a possible syllogism which could have led someone to associate Ebionites with anti-Paulinism.

¹⁵⁰ For translation difficulties see Dorival 2001, 262. The allusion to Matt 23:27 in the words about white-washed walls could be ironic given Ebionite attachment to the Gospel of Matthew which Origen himself affirms.

assuredly an Ebionite source, and some have even contended that the reference to Paul as a hostile person,¹⁵¹ because it occurs elsewhere in the *Pseudo-Clementine* corpus (see the *Epistle of Peter to James* 2.3), may be an addition to the original source from the hand of the redactor. However, the passage does hint at something similar to what we find in Origen, namely the beginnings of a slanderous campaign against Paul. Some might want to argue that this had little or nothing to do with Paul's teaching on the law but this seems unwarranted. As Bauckham has pointed out, the section we have summarised from the *Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions* is taken from Paul's pre-Christian biography and so inevitably does not mention his teaching on the law.¹⁵² Bauckham ingeniously sees this complaint against Paul hinted at, albeit allusively, in the passage in the *Anabathmoi* to which we have already referred, where a hostile person (*homo inimicus*), clearly Paul, prevents James from converting Jews to the Christian faith.¹⁵³ It is possible that this anti-Paulinism arose precisely because Ebionites (and other Jewish Christians) saw Paul's teaching as a considerable hindrance to their proselytic activity among Jews. In this they were responding to a developing tradition amongst Gentile Christians who understood Paul, incorrectly, of course, as advocating the abandonment of the Torah by Jewish converts to Christianity.¹⁵⁴

Origins, history and fate

From the beginnings to Bar Kokhba

When Irenaeus first introduces the Ebionites, he presents us with no account of their origin or history. In fact no such account is to be found in any of the witnesses to Ebionism except Epiphanius, and as we noted, there is no mention of them in the fragments of Hegesippus or in the extant works of Justin. Even the historian Eusebius introduces them out of the

¹⁵¹ This is possibly an allusion to Matt 13:25, 28 where the hostile person is portrayed as one who sows weeds among wheat. Given Ebionite attachment to Matthew's Gospel, the possibility that the allusion is to Matthew is increased, although we have to be aware of the doubts about the Ebionite identification of the source.

¹⁵² Bauckham 2003, 170.

¹⁵³ Bauckham 2003, 169-70: "This is surely a retrojection into Paul's pre-Christian career of a Jewish Christian belief that it was Paul the Christian who, through his scandalous attacks on the Tora, prevented the Jewish people as a whole from recognizing Jesus as the Messiah."

¹⁵⁴ Such a view of Paul could have arisen regardless of Gentile Christian interpretations. See Acts 21:20-1, already mentioned, where it is Jewish believers who perceive Paul as teaching such an opinion.

blue. Scholarship, and in particular scholarship connected with the New Testament, cannot tolerate a vacuum, and scholars have sought to fill this one with their learned reconstructions. Part of the debate has focused on the issue of the relationship of the Ebionites to earliest Christianity as depicted in the New Testament, a debate to which we alluded at the beginning of this article. As we noted, some early patristic sources beginning with Tertullian, had first suggested a link between the Ebionites and the opponents of Paul at Galatia (*Praescr.* 33.3-5);¹⁵⁵ and Epiphanius (*Pan.* 30.17.2), and possibly Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 3.27.1), in different ways, indicate that they received their name in apostolic times. This attribution to the Ebionites of an ancient lineage stretching back to the earliest Christian communities was given scholarly expression by F. C. Baur and his short-lived pupil, A. Schweigler, who had proposed, in contradistinction to Tertullian and other ancient ecclesiastical authors, that the Ebionites reflected the beliefs, not of heretical interlopers, but of the Jerusalem church itself. Recent proponents of the so-called Tübingen theory of Ebionite identity have been Schoeps,¹⁵⁶ Magnin,¹⁵⁷ and Goulder,¹⁵⁸ who seek to identify the Jerusalem church with the Ebionites. The name of the group, their Christology, as reconstructed by Goulder, and their attitude to Paul, point in this direction.

Goulder's arguments (I refer primarily to his work as he is the most recent and consistent proponent of this theory) are not convincing for a number of reasons. It is, as we have seen, unclear that the earliest community in Jerusalem called itself 'poor' in the way suggested by Goulder. There is no good evidence for Goulder's reconstructed Ebionite Christology in the pages of the New Testament, not least because Paul never intimates that he is ill at ease with the christological positions of his opponents,¹⁵⁹ and as we have noted Goulder's reconstruction, even if correct, is not a properly balanced view of what we know of Ebionite Christology (at least according to Irenaeus). Furthermore, anti-Paulinism, which is consistently thought to be a feature of the theology of the Ebionites, is difficult straightforwardly to attribute to the Jerusalem church, at least to its leaders.¹⁶⁰ All of this is not, of course, to say that there were no elements of continuity between

¹⁵⁵ The same appears to be implied in Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 12.2, where it is asserted that the apostles picked corn on the Sabbath "against the Ebionites." See also the fourth century *Hypomnestikon* 140.5, which states that the Ebionites were active during apostolic times.

¹⁵⁶ Schoeps 1949.

¹⁵⁷ Magnin 1973.

¹⁵⁸ Goulder 1994; 1999a and b.

¹⁵⁹ Hurtado 2003, 165-7, makes this point effectively.

¹⁶⁰ See Acts 20-21 for the clear distinction that James makes between his opinion of Paul and that of those who are zealous for the law.

Ebionites and the earliest Christian Jewish community in Jerusalem¹⁶¹ – ongoing commitment to Torah observance would seem to be a clear indication of some form of continuity as well as a commitment to poverty and on the part of some at least, a hostility to Paul. Such continuities should not, however, lead us to suggest that the Ebionites accurately reflected the views of the earliest Christian community in Jerusalem.

Rejection of the thesis of Goulder, itself a revival of a thesis with a much older pedigree, often leads to the view that the Ebionites came into being in the post-70 period.¹⁶² This, interestingly, is one of the routes taken by Epiphanius. In his somewhat muddled presentation he explicitly states that the Ebion got his start “after the fall of Jerusalem.” (*Pan.* 30.2.7). He notes the fact that most Christians had moved to Pella and that Ebion, originally from Kokabe in Basanitis, joined up with these people whom he names Nazoreans, and subsequently broke from them. Much of what Epiphanius writes here is either false (there was, as we have stated, no Ebion), convoluted (the precise relationship between the Nazoreans and Ebionites is unclear),¹⁶³ or raised from other sources (the flight to Pella and the association of the Ebionites with Kokabe in Basanitis are both found in Eusebius).¹⁶⁴ Some scholars, in tentative vein, try to extract from Epiphanius’ account the dim memory of the formation of the Ebionites as a kind of schism from the more orthodox Nazoreans described by Epiphanius at *Pan.* 29. Pritz, who accepts that Epiphanius’ Ebion is fictional¹⁶⁵ and that his knowledge of the relevant source was only secondary, places particular emphasis on the fact that except for one occasion (*Pan.* 19.5.4), and this is a text-critically complex passage, the Ebionites are always portrayed by Epiphanius as coming into existence after the Nazoreans. He then goes on

¹⁶¹ For the view that there is no continuity between the earliest forms of Jewish Christianity and patristic sources, see Munck 1960. He exaggerates matters but in so doing makes a number of important points. For a more measured view, see Horbury 2006, 40.

¹⁶² See Munck 1960 for an early exposition of this view.

¹⁶³ For the relationship with the Nazoreans see Kinzig 2007, 478-82, who shows up how convoluted Epiphanius’ account of the origins of the Nazoreans is and that it probably betrays no personal knowledge of the sect; and Luomanen 2005, 291, for further expressions of skepticism on Epiphanius’ account of Nazorean origins.

¹⁶⁴ The author of the *Chronicon Paschale* dates the time of the appearance of the Ebionites to the Trajanic period. A similar date could be said to be implied by Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 3.27.1f., on which see n. 77 above). Epiphanius (*Pan.* 30.24.6) implies that Ebion operated in the reign of Trajan for, like some other authors, he sees him as actively opposed by the author of John’s Gospel whose writing he explicitly places in the reign of Trajan. Pseudo-Augustine talks about Ebion as operating “after the death of Domitian”. But these and other references are probably the result of deductions based upon views about the identification of the opponents of various New Testament authors.

¹⁶⁵ “We cannot accept ... that a Nazarene named Ebion developed his own doctrines and gathered a following.” (Pritz 1988, 38).

to assert that “(i)t is reasonable to assume that it was a question of Christology which precipitated the split (between Nazoreans and Ebionites), although a struggle for leadership is also a possibility.”¹⁶⁶

Other scholars, while eschewing reference to the less than reliable Epiphanius, have tried to show how Eusebius’ account of conditions in Palestine in the period running from 70 to 135, an account heavily dependent upon Hegesippus, might help to confirm aspects of Pritz’s thesis. Richard Bauckham, for instance, cites the passage in Eusebius, quoting Hegesippus, which refers to the election, after the death of James, of Symeon the son of Clopas as Bishop of Jerusalem (*Hist. eccl.* 4.22.4-6). After mentioning the election, the passage goes on to speak of a certain Thebouthis who “because he had not been made Bishop, began the church’s corruption by the seven heresies to which he belonged.” The heresies are then named (*Hist. eccl.* 4.22.4-6). Bauckham draws attention to the somewhat schematic character of the presentation – seven Jewish sects (Hegesippus names these at 4.22.7), followed by various Jewish and Samaritan groups, followed by Gnostic heresies – and the way in which an attempt is made by Hegesippus, for apologetic purposes, to derive the heresies concerned from Jewish sects opposed to Jesus rather than from Jesus and the apostles. But because these heresies make Christian claims Hegesippus, Bauckham contends, drags in Thebouthis, a probably early opponent of Symeon, and attributes to him the beginnings of heresy. As Bauckham notes, the artificiality of the scheme is shown by the fact that Thebouthis is associated with all seven Jewish sects at the same time, and by the unclear nature of the connection between the Jewish sects and their Gnostic successors and Thebouthis. That Thebouthis’ actions are attributed to his failure to become Bishop, “a standard way of discrediting an opponent”, is also a tendentious claim. Whatever the precise role of Thebouthis, Bauckham conjectures that his split with Symeon, to which he attributes some historical value, might be an indication of the same mooted split implied by Pritz, namely that between Nazoreans and Ebionites.¹⁶⁷ Horbury,¹⁶⁸ picking up the same reference to Thebouthis in Eusebius reporting Hegesippus, and indications elsewhere in both Justin Martyr and Origen of the proliferation

¹⁶⁶ Pritz 1988, 38-9.

¹⁶⁷ “Since Thebouthis was evidently an important name in the tradition Hegesippus received, it is possible – though it cannot be proved – that the split between Ebionite (‘heretical’) and Nazorean (‘orthodox’) Jewish Christianity in Palestine stems from Thebouthis’ split with Symeon” (Bauckham 1990, 90). For a similar attribution of importance to the Thebouthis traditions see Magnin 1974, 231-2, who argues that the latter’s activity weakened the church and made it more susceptible to the influences of outsiders.

¹⁶⁸ Horbury 2006, 70-1. While Horbury draws attention to the tendency evidenced amongst Jews and Christians in this period to form different sects, he also emphasises the tendency towards unity.

of mutually exclusive groups in Judea in this period,¹⁶⁹ notes that many have placed the merging of some Essenes or Qumran sectaries with Ebionism in this period. Such a suggestion found its most extravagant expression in the claim of J. L. Teicher that the texts at Qumran were in fact Ebionite texts,¹⁷⁰ but was taken up in part at least by Cullmann¹⁷¹ Magnin,¹⁷² and slightly more tentatively, by Simon.¹⁷³ All three tended to emphasise the same parallels,¹⁷⁴ and Cullmann in particular was keen to note that both communities, Jewish Christian and Essene, experienced difficulties in the first Jewish revolt (the flight to Pella from Jerusalem and the destruction of Qumran) which probably led to flight to the Transjordan. Essenes, he maintained, became Ebionites during this period, and began to exercise a direct influence upon the Christian sect.¹⁷⁵ This remains a possibility, and as Simon noted, “(t)here must sometimes have been rapprochements, alliances and fusions (between sects), especially where geographical proximity maintained.”¹⁷⁶ Moreover, Cullmann, would no doubt have made much of the fact that the Qumran sectaries, on at least one occasion, referred to themselves as the “community of the poor” (4Q171), though given the importance of the idea of ‘poverty’ in the Hebrew Bible, we should not leap too quickly to drawing a conclusion about Essene/Ebionite relations from this phrase. Much more speculatively, we might argue that Hegesippus’ somewhat clumsy attempt to link the formation of Jewish sects, amongst whom he includes the Essenes (*Hist. eccl.* 4.22.7), with the formation of heretical Christian sects (*Hist. eccl.* 4.22.5), referred to above in our discussion of Bauckham’s ideas about Ebionite development, in broad terms fits a Cullmann-like thesis. However, while we might agree with Simon about the possibility that “rapprochements, alliances, and fusions” took place between sects in the period following 70, it is very difficult proving this.¹⁷⁷ The parallels that Cullmann and others highlight are not so specific

¹⁶⁹ See Justin, *I Apol.* 26.1-4 on Simonians and Dositheans; and Origen, *Cels.* 1.57; 6.11. On all of this, see Horbury 2006, 63.

¹⁷⁰ Teicher 1952 and 1953.

¹⁷¹ See Cullmann 1966.

¹⁷² Magnin 1974, 232-5 and 238-46.

¹⁷³ Simon 1967, 145f.

¹⁷⁴ Magnin 1974, 235-46, distinguishes between pure Ebionites, whom he identifies with those Ebionites described by Origen and Eusebius; and Essene Ebionites whom he identifies with ideas found in the *Pseudo-Clementines*, in particular relating to ablutions, baptistic habits and a prophet-centred Christology. Cullmann highlights similar parallels. Simon 1967, 145, drew attention to strict legalism, a strong hostility to the cult, and a dualistic system of thought.

¹⁷⁵ He had previously posited an indirect influence of the Essenes on the earliest Christian communities mentioned in Acts. See Cullmann 1966, 257.

¹⁷⁶ Simon 1967, 105.

¹⁷⁷ See Simon 1967, 105.

as to prove that this occurred between Essenes and Ebionites, and some concern themselves with material in the *Pseudo-Clementines*, which, as we have stated, have no straightforward claim to be Ebionite, beyond the questionable assertion of Epiphanius. In truth Cullmann's and others' claims about an Essenic transformation of Ebionism remain nothing more than hypothesis.¹⁷⁸

Oskar Skarsaune has a different tale to tell. As we have already reported, he argues that the name 'Ebionim' (אֵבְיוֹנִים) came into existence after 70, a period which in his opinion was marked by oppressive measures taken against Christians by Jews, possibly evidenced in the so-called *Birkath ha-minim* and in some rabbinic passages, and by a general atmosphere of tension between Christian and non-Christian Jews.¹⁷⁹ As we recall, for Skarsaune, the term itself, taken from the Hebrew Bible, gives voice to the sense of oppression felt by the poor, and equally to the hope that they would be vindicated, and was, therefore, a term appropriately applied, quite generally, to Christians in Palestine. While not positing a straightforward split amongst Christian Jews, he attempts to show, through citation of certain Jewish apocalypses and Justin, the growing importance in debate with Jews of the subject of the human and in fact Davidic origin of the Messiah. "Justin's Trypho", he writes, "is a credible witness that most Jews in his time believed the Messiah should be a man from men, and not a man born from God." And Justin knows of Christian Jews who believe this (*Dial.* 49.1f; 68.5). Such people may have come to think that a straightforwardly Davidic Christology was more successful amongst those Jews they proselytised than a higher, more speculative Christology.¹⁸⁰ Bauckham, in a more recent publication, comes to a similar conclusion, here positing the view that Ebionism arose as a reform movement within orthodox Jewish Christianity.¹⁸¹ As with Skarsaune's theory, reform is

¹⁷⁸ When Cullmann writes: "Im einzelnen sind wir hier auf Hypothesen angewiesen", he accurately describes the character of his claims. When he goes on to assert that "Dagegen dürfte die Behauptung, dass nach dem Jahre 70 Reste der Qumransekte im Judentum aufgegangen sind, mehr als eine Hypothese sein", he is exaggerating (Cullmann 1966, 259).

¹⁷⁹ Skarsaune 2007, 425-7.

¹⁸⁰ Horbury 1998, 87, suggests that Justin's depiction of Jewish messianic opinions in which the "merely human" aspect of the Messiah's origin came to be insisted upon possibly reflected "attempts by Jewish communal authorities to divert attention from angelology and messianism in this period, or to shift the emphasis of messianic hope."

¹⁸¹ Bauckham's case (see Bauckham 2002, 173-5) is dependent upon his view that second century Jewish Christianity before the Ebionites was orthodox, a point he finds supported by a number of texts in which Gospel material is used uncritically (see *Apocalypse of Peter*; Hegesippus' account of the death of James; and Africanus' *Letter to Aristides* in which implicitly at least, both genealogies in Matthew and Luke and the virgin birth are accepted). On the idea that the so-called *Gospel of the Ebionites* is a harmonis-

seen in a revised Christology in which Jesus was assumed to have been born in normal circumstances, and not of a virgin, and in an emphasis on Jesus' messianic identity.¹⁸² Also significant is the development of an anti-cultic ideology, understood as a response to the fall of Jerusalem and the subsequent Bar Kokhba revolt. Relying heavily upon his own view that both the *Gospel of the Ebionites* and the source found in *Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions* 1.27-71, and sometimes referred to as the *Anabathmoi Iakobou*, are in fact Ebionite sources, Bauckham goes on to posit a reform movement which sought to expound its views by rewriting the Gospels and canonical Acts to accommodate its own opinions.¹⁸³ Such a reform movement, Bauckham avers, "offered a form of messianism free both of the tendency to 'two powers' heresy to be seen in the Christian movement generally and of the messianic militancy that the failure of the two revolts discredited. It had both an explanation of the destruction of the Temple and a positive substitute for the sacrificial cult. It may be that the Ebionites began as a small group of Jewish Christians which grew as previously non-Christian Jews were attracted to it."¹⁸⁴

A number of points need to be made:

(i) If we are right to argue that there is no reliable evidence of Ebionite-like views in the New Testament, Ebionite understood in its Irenaeus sense, and that Ebionites should not, therefore, be considered the fossilised remains of earliest Jerusalem Christianity, the implication must be that Ebionites are a later development. And yet for what was probably a vital period in their evolution, that is, the period between the two major Jewish revolts of 70 and 135, we have almost no relevant information.¹⁸⁵

(ii) Some have argued that the word 'Ebionite' arose as a self-description in the difficult circumstances for Christian Jews which followed the first revolt against Rome and the Bar Kokhba revolt. The term,

ing attempt to replace the canonical Gospels; and *Anabathmoi Iakobou* an attempt to replace Acts, see Jones 1995b; and Bauckham 2002, 172-5.

¹⁸² Note the importance for Bauckham's thesis of the claim found on a number of occasions in *Ps. Clem. Rec.* that Christians only differed from Jews in their claim that Jesus was the Messiah. See esp. 1.43.1-2; 1.50.5-6; 1.50.7b. The first two references come from the Latin version of the source, the third from the Syriac version.

¹⁸³ Bauckham sees the so-called *Gospel of the Ebionites* is a harmonising attempt to replace the canonical Gospels; and *Anabathmoi Iakobou* an attempt to replace Acts [note Jones 1995b]). See Bauckham 2003, 172-5.

¹⁸⁴ Bauckham 2003, 177.

¹⁸⁵ Note the sober observation of the often speculative Bauckham: "That we know so little about so important a figure (in this instance Symeon the son of Clopas) is a salutary reminder of the limits of our knowledge. It is, of course, of a piece with our general ignorance of the history of Christianity in the later decades of the first century, a period which we fill with traditions, theological trends and anonymous authors, but for which there is rather little ... evidence about people and events." (Bauckham 1990, 93).

with its biblical background, would have been double-edged, indicating both a sense of oppression and future vindication. The designation may well have been one which was generally applied to Christian Jews; but could have been applied to the same before 70, for as some have pointed out, this was also a period of difficulty for Christians in Judea, and so possibly an appropriate time to adopt such a name, and one in which the Jerusalem community in particular was known for its poverty.¹⁸⁶ There is, however, no unambiguous evidence for the use of such a term as a self-designation for Judean Christians, or for a group of them, either in the pre-70 or the post-70 period (aside from heresiological writings on the Ebionites).

(iii) If (ii), given our reservations about hard evidence, is correct, then, we should not assume that the term ‘Ebionite’ was first applied to a heretical sect, and that therefore the story of an assumed schism of self-styled Ebionites from Nazoreans is viable, at least in the form we find that in Epphanianus.

(iv) Skarsaune’s suggestion that a strongly Davidic and human-based Christology would have developed in the period running from 70 to 135 is intriguing and may gain some indirect support from the references in Eusebius, citing Hegesippus, to an interest on the part of Christians in Palestine in the Davidic origins of Jesus and his family and the corresponding evidence of oppression of those who claimed such origins by Roman officials.¹⁸⁷ The further claim that the ideas of the Ebionites, understood as Irenaeus’ Ebionites, that is, Ebionites with a form of adoptionist Christology, arose in a potentially proselytic situation in which Jewish Christians were attempting to adapt themselves to Jewish messianic ideas as we find those expressed in the *Dialogue with Trypho*, is not without support. Adoptionist Christology might appear like an essentially defensive, apolo-

¹⁸⁶ See Horbury 2003, 61f. While not himself discussing the origins of the term ‘Ebionite’, he points to the evidence of non-Christian Jewish oppression of Christian Jews. Amongst this evidence we should note 1 Thess. 2:14; the early chapters of Acts where the high priestly family in particular is portrayed as hostile to Christians; John 16:2; and Heb 12:4.

¹⁸⁷ See *Hist. eccl.* 3.32.3-6 where Eusebius, quoting Hegesippus, states that Symeon, the supposed second bishop of Jerusalem, was denounced by heretics as a descendant of David and crucified. Paraphrasing Hegesippus, Eusebius goes on to state that his accusers were also executed once it was discovered that “they were of the royal house of the Jews.” (3.32.4). Note should also be taken of Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.20.1-7, where we find a similar story to the one about Symeon, but this time about the grandsons of Jude. Interviewed by Domitian because of their Davidic descent, they manage to save themselves by pointing to the gnarled nature of their hands, and by extension to their peasant origins. A story about Vespasian searching out descendants of David in the wake of the Jewish revolt is also told by Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 3.12). On all of this, see Horbury 2006, 70-1.

getic construct; and there is in Christian literature prior to Irenaeus almost no explicit polemic against adoptionism, suggesting, perhaps, that it enters the Christian arena at a relatively late stage. We should, however, be cautious about assuming that adoptionism is a late christological manifestation, recalling that an interest in the Davidic origin of Jesus is a strong element in the New Testament. It should also be noted that some would dispute the view that Jewish speculation about the Messiah takes on a more straightforwardly human aspect in the period under review.¹⁸⁸

(v) Bauckham's view that the Ebionites should be understood as a reforming movement within Jewish Christianity is partly, though not completely, dependent upon his view that *Rec. 1.27-71* and the *Gospel of the Ebionites* are Ebionite documents and constitute an attempt to rewrite the standard Christian record. And yet, as we have made plain, we cannot be certain that these two documents were Ebionite. However, as stated above, if we are right to think that the Ebionites, as described by Irenaeus, are a later development, then, some account has to be given of how those developments occurred. The possibility that they came about as a response to a changing set of circumstances, precipitated by the Jewish revolt, is as good a suggestion as any other. However, in the absence of any solid evidence on this matter, it remains nothing more than an educated guess. If we accept the reformist thesis, then the term 'Ebionite' may, as Epiphanius reported some Ebionites asserted, have been a kind of retro-term which suggested faithfulness to the origins of Christianity.

(vi) The view that Ebionism developed in particular ways as the result of the entry into its ranks of Essenes has attracted a number of advocates. It is, of course, not unlikely that some Essenes joined Christians in the Transjordanian region, and that many religious alliances were forged in the traumatic period following the fall of Jerusalem in 70, but such evidence of alliances does not exist. The view that the Essenes constituted a bridge between the Ebionites of Irenaeus and others, on the one hand, and those of Epiphanius, on the other, is precipitated in part by the fact that the parallels normally highlighted between Essenes and Ebionites are mostly between Epiphanius' version of the latter, and those things he tells us about them which emanate from the *Pseudo-Clementines*.

(vii) In any reconstruction of Ebionite thought it is difficult to know where to place the second group of Ebionites mentioned by Origen and then Eusebius, that is those Ebionites who appeared to believe in the virgin birth but not Christ's pre-existence. Were they reforming Jewish Christians who had decided to reform in a way slightly different from other Ebionites? After all, they appear to have retained elements of the theology of

¹⁸⁸ See Horbury 1998, 86-7, although he states his case with some provisos.

the first group of Ebionites including an opposition to Paul and a denial of Jesus' pre-existence.

Beyond Bar Kokhba

If telling the history of the Ebionites up to the middle of the second century is difficult, telling it beyond that point is a forlorn task. How quickly, for instance, did they find themselves excluded from both Jewish and Christian circles? We might, on rather schematic grounds, posit that the rise of the rabbinate, the introduction of the *Birkath ha-minim* as a means of excluding Christian Jews from the synagogue, and the increasingly gentile looking church would have made exclusion from Judaism a reality by at least the end of the second century. And from a Christian perspective, we might cite Irenaeus' discussion of the Ebionites, which presents evidence of their status as heretics (this is to be contrasted with Justin, who, if he is referring to the Ebionites in his *Dialogue with Trypho* seems to accept their presence), a status which would lead to the invention of a founder Ebion, and with the exception of Origen and others who knew his works, a loss of knowledge of the actual origins of the term. Excluded by both groups, and forming their own self-contained movement, they soon disappeared from the scene of history. Such a view would appear to be supported by the fact that none of the church fathers or related sources which refer to the Ebionites, after possibly Origen, betray any personal knowledge of Ebionites, and seem to use the term as a way of describing those one normally terms Jewish Christian. Or should we posit an altogether more complex account? After all, for the Jewish side, it is unclear when the *Birkath ha-minim* would have come into effect, and how widespread its influence would have been.¹⁸⁹ Similarly unclear is the extent to which rabbis ruled the Jewish roost before at least the fifth century.¹⁹⁰ And are not writers like Irenaeus engaged in what all heresiologists are engaged in, that is, the construction of a reality which does not in fact reflect the more complex situation on the ground? Could we not argue, and some have indeed done this, that up until at least the middle of the fourth century, absolute partition between Jews and Christians was by no means a reality, and that in such a situation there existed a kind of grey zone, happily inhabited by a multitude of folk, including the Ebionites (it is interesting to note that Origen is not entirely clear whether to claim the Ebionites as

¹⁸⁹ On all of this, see van der Horst 1994; and for a more robust defence of the early date of the *Birkath ha-minim*, see Horbury 1998, and, most recently, Marcus 2009.

¹⁹⁰ See Hezser 1997.

Christians or Jews)? Such a model might lead us to a somewhat different account of Ebionite history.¹⁹¹

Such arguments are in part speculative for they emerge from a call for a changed perspective. If one does not accept the changed perspective, then one inevitably sticks to the established master narrative. However, according to some there is actual empirical evidence for the ongoing existence of Jewish Christians right up until the Islamic period, and some have even contended that these Jewish Christians were Ebionites.

The evidence comes in two forms and is exclusively eastern rather than western. First, there is the well-known claim of Shlomo Pines that the work by the late tenth century Muslim 'Abd al-Jabbar entitled "The Establishment of the Proofs for the Prophethood of Our Master Mohammed" contains within a particular chapter "views and traditions of a Jewish-Christian community."¹⁹² The material in the relevant chapter can be categorised, Pines argued, under five headings: attacks upon Christians, in particular Paul, for having abandoned the commandments of the Mosaic law; polemics against the Christologies of a number of dominant Christian sects (Jacobites, Nestorians and the orthodox); an outline of the history of Christianity; malicious stories about the habits of monks and priests and Christian laymen; and quotations from canonical and apocryphal gospels.¹⁹³ Pines proceeds to argue on a number of grounds that the original source was Jewish Christian, not least because "they combine belief in Christ with an insistence on the observance of the Mosaic law",¹⁹⁴ characteristics which one cannot call Muslim. In making his case, Pines quotes from church fathers who talk about Ebionites and Nazoreans, and thinks that the group is closer to the latter, asserting that they carry on "the old tradition of the first Christian community of Jerusalem, or of a part of that community."¹⁹⁵ These Jewish Christians, who had gone into hiding in the Byzantine period, particularly as a result of Constantinian policies, felt at liberty some time during the Islamic period to come out of hiding and declare their beliefs openly. Pines' thesis was subjected to a caustic critique by Samuel Stern,¹⁹⁶ who argued that almost all of what Pines had attributed to Jewish Christians in the al-Jabbar text could in fact be found in anti-Christian Muslim traditions or Jewish traditions found in the *Toledoth Ye-*

¹⁹¹ Gager 2003, 361-72, has given one of the most forceful presentations of this alternative model in which he quite explicitly seeks to overthrow what he terms "the master narrative" of Jewish Christian decline. His essay appears in a volume which seeks to advocate a changed view of Jewish-Christian relations in antiquity.

¹⁹² Pines 1996, 211.

¹⁹³ Pines 1996, 213.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 221.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 249.

¹⁹⁶ Stern 1968, 128-85.

shu. But Pines received measured support from Patricia Crone,¹⁹⁷ who, while denying that Pines had shown that the material in al-Jabbar preserved traditions of Christians from the early centuries of Palestinian Christianity, still maintained that it did, in her opinion, give evidence of the existence of Jewish Christians in Mesopotamia and Syria, about whom we do in fact have some evidence, and who, in the Muslim period, Crone maintains, felt free to broadcast far and wide the view that Christianity was a corruption of Christ's religion.

Along not dissimilar lines, others have argued that the religion of Muhammad itself had its origins in Jewish Christian sects who had fled eastward in the face of Byzantine oppression.¹⁹⁸ The case is heavily dependent upon perceived similarities between early Islam and what we know about Jewish Christian ideas, especially those relating to the true prophet, the oneness of God and the Jewish law.

It is very difficult to assess the above. Certainly there is in al-Jabbar a mound of Jewish Christian-like material, although as Crone makes plain, much of this material is derivable from a careful reading of the Christian scriptures and need not be thought to lead us back to early Jewish Christian opinion. Moreover, even if we accept Pines' thesis, it is still unclear whether we should take the contents of the Arabic source to point unambiguously to an Ebionite origin. Pines argued for a Nazorean identification,¹⁹⁹ although the anti-Paulinism and low Christology of the source makes a Nazorean identification unlikely insofar as we know anything about the latter.²⁰⁰ What is clear is that beyond the fourth century, the evidence for the ongoing existence of the Ebionites is ambiguous and there is no mention of them in imperial legislation.²⁰¹ That is not to say that they did not exist – they could have gone underground, and may well have fled east and continued to practise their faith in the Sassanian empire and beyond. The work of Pines and others at least makes us alive to this possibility.

Let me finish by making a final point on the general subject of later Ebionite history. In discussing the sources of knowledge for the Ebionites, we noted, citing the view of the early nineteenth century scholar, J. E. L. Gieseler, the strange fact that it was the late fourth-century Epiphanius

¹⁹⁷ Crone 1980, 59-96.

¹⁹⁸ Schoeps 1949, 334-42, who entitles the relevant section of his work, "Ebionitische Elemente im Islam", and cites other earlier literature, which claimed Jewish Christian roots for Islam. See also Magnin 1978, 220-48, also with relevant literature.

¹⁹⁹ Pines 1996, 275.

²⁰⁰ On this, see Magnin 1977, 259-60. He takes a more positive view of the source as an indication that Ebionites survived beyond the fourth century.

²⁰¹ It is difficult, I think, to argue that any of those patristic writers following Epiphanius knew any Ebionites.

who provided us, ostensibly, with the most information about the Ebionites, and with their most detailed refutation. If, as some assume, the Ebionites, were in an at best depleted state by this date, why the interest? One answer might be that Epiphanius was a heresy hunter, who had acquaintance with those he thought, probably wrongly, were Ebionites. Another, altogether more intriguing, explanation has come from Daniel Boyarin in his recent book, *Border Lines*.²⁰² Boyarin belongs to the second school of thought on the question of Jewish-Christian division, that is, the group that believes that a final partition between Jews and Christians only really came in the fourth century and beyond, and that the partition involved Christian heresiologists in the creation of something that had heretofore not existed, that is, the creation of a new concept of religion, understood not as had been the case up to then, as a way of describing acts of worship which were entirely coterminous with culture and politics, but as a kind of conceptual system at once distinguishable from culture and politics. The creation of such a Christian *religio* was intimately bound up with the creation of a Jewish and indeed Hellenistic *religio* from which Christianity was quite separate. If we examine Epiphanius' and Jerome's accounts of the Ebionites, and of the Nazoreans, what is striking is the degree to which these groups are attacked, not only because they are not Christians, but also because *they are not Jews*. "Suddenly it seems important to these two writers to assert a difference between Judaizing heretics and Jews", as Boyarin puts it.²⁰³ The reason for this, it is asserted, is clear. In the desire to create 'religiones' in the manner described by Boyarin, hybrids like Jewish Christians look dangerous, indeed they look precisely like the sort of people who would deny separation, and could be seen as buffers to a policy of religious apartheid. By pointing out their hybrid character these sects, including the Ebionites, function much as the mythical trickster figures of many religions, in that precisely by transgressing borders that the culture establishes, they reify these boundaries.

Boyarin certainly highlights some features of Epiphanius' account of the Ebionites. So, for instance, at the outset, Epiphanius observes that the mythical Ebion "has the Christians' name alone – most certainly not their behaviour, viewpoint and knowledge" (30.1.3), and, more pertinently, notes, "while professing to be a Jew, he is the opposite of Jews – though he does agree with them in part" (30.1.5); and: "since he is practically midway between all the sects, he is nothing." (30.1.4). It is the hybridity of the sect that Epiphanius opposes and he locates that, at least in part, in the attempt to mix what he sees as Judaism and Christianity.

²⁰² Boyarin 2004, 207-8.

²⁰³ Boyarin 2004, 207.

Boyarin's thesis has the effect of 'disembodying' the Ebionites from any real link to a social reality. They are, in his reconstruction, no more than abstract aids in a hegemonic discourse taken up with defining Judaism and Christianity.²⁰⁴ And to some such a view of things serves merely to endorse regrettable 'master narratives' that assume the non-existence of Jewish Christians relatively early on in the history of the church. This may be one objection to Boyarin's innovative explanation as to why it is that Ebionites are so much the subject of discussion at a relatively late date. But other objections exist, too. Some might want to argue that his thesis is based upon a view of the development of Jewish-Christian relations which too easily downplays "the strong sense of separation that emerges in Christian texts from the end of the first century",²⁰⁵ and possibly attributes both too little and too much influence to the work of heresiologists like Justin. Too little in that Justin's clear view of a division between Jews and Christians appears to have taken so long to become something generally established; and too much in that Justin is too easily assumed to be an innovator in his view that Jews and Christians were two separate entities. Boyarin also fails to take sufficient account of the fact that in his presentation of the Ebionites in particular, Epiphanius is keen to show them to be *generally* hybrid, rather than hybrid only in relation to their Christian and Jewish character.²⁰⁶ So the fictional Ebion's hybridity lies in the fact that he "took any item of preaching from every sect ... and patterned himself after them all" (30.1.2); and when Epiphanius goes on to gloss this observation in the very next sentence, he makes the Jewish aspect of Ebion but a part of the hideous heretical cocktail. "For he has the Samaritans' repulsiveness but the Jews' name, the viewpoint of the Osseans, Nazoreans, the nature of the Cerinthians, and the baldness of the Carpocratians." (30.1.3).²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ See Reed 2008, 211, who puts it slightly differently: "Accepting that the religious landscape of Roman Palestine had long been devoid of any actual 'Jewish Christians', he (Boyarin) reads these figures as a discursive embodiment of the fear of hybridity, produced – as if by thought experiment – by elite efforts to articulate a pure Christianity."

²⁰⁵ See Horbury 2006, 77.

²⁰⁶ See Verheyden 2003.

²⁰⁷ Boyarin might reply by highlighting the end of the section, from 30.32.1 onwards, where Epiphanius is taken up with issues pertaining to Torah observance, in particular the Ebionite view that in observing the laws they are simply imitating Christ. This is true but interestingly Epiphanius does not bring up issues of hybridity, understood as mixtures of Judaism and Christianity, at this point.

Conclusion

Recent research on the Ebionites has broadly followed in the footsteps of those scholars of a much earlier era who first made them a subject of serious study, and this is reflected in the recurrence of the same questions: what sources are relevant to the study of the Ebionites, and in particular what status do the *Pseudo-Clementines* occupy in all of this? Do the Ebionites allow us a glimpse of what Christianity may have looked like in its earliest Palestinian setting? Did Ebionite thought develop, and if so, in what direction? Aside from the material at Qumran (of indirect significance), and possibly the al-Jabbar source brought to prominence by Pines (assessment of which is not without controversy), hardly any new source material has emerged to influence how these questions might be answered.

Most would now agree that the Ebionites are not fossils of an unadorned apostolic faith. Their name, while possibly reflecting an early Christian concern with poverty, more likely arose in a time of oppression and gave voice to a hope that God's chosen ones would be vindicated. Such a name may have evolved in a period following the first Jewish revolt, and have been a general designation for Palestinian Christians rather than one belonging to a particular sect, although no Christian source gives unambiguous support to that view, and it is possible that a situation of oppression, leading to the adoption of the name, preceded the events of the first Jewish revolt. The sources themselves remain extremely difficult to assess and views concerning them vary considerably. One school of thought, in broad terms following the work of Alfred Schmidtke of a much earlier period, tends to think that the relevant sources running from Irenaeus to Eusebius possess potentially reliable information whereas the material in Epiphanius, particularly insofar as this assumes an Ebionite character for much of the *Pseudo-Clementine* material, is to be discarded. Some are a little less skeptical about the information contained in Epiphanius and would count at least some of it reliable, in particular his reference to an Ebionite Gospel. Others are less skeptical still and tend to see the *Pseudo-Clementine* associations of the Ebionites much more positively and to go on to posit complex developments within the movement involving Essene and Elchasaite influences. Others have gone for the more cautious option of talking about the Ebionites of individual writers, a possibly realistic thesis if only because there is no straightforward way of corroborating the witness of the relevant sources we do have. This is the opinion of Alan Koch, and Boyarin has, without explicitly acknowledging the latter, taken up his suggestion by looking closely at the manner in which especially Epiphanius seeks to *present* the Ebionites rather than in using these authors as a source, which provides us with reliable information about the entity they describe.

Obviously, accounts of Ebionite history vary dependent upon which sources an individual scholar deems reliable and, at least in part, upon his or her view of the development of Christian history more generally. It is, for instance, possible that those whom some early church fathers called Ebionite constituted a reform movement within Palestinian Christianity and that aspects of their thinking, in particular their evolving christological ideas and their anti-Paulinism, were inspired by developments in the non-Christian Jewish environment in which they moved. As part of their reformation, they sought to produce an alternative Gospel and Acts of the Apostles. Their separation from what some would regard as the mainstream seemed to reflect a period of tension following the first Jewish revolt. It was only towards the end of the second century that their positions came to be regarded as heretical, at least by some, and knowledge of the origins of their name fell into oblivion. There is certainly a possibility that they continued to flourish, in whatever form, as late as the tenth century, though clear evidence of this is not available. It seems more than likely, for instance, that the majority of sources referring to the Ebionites after Eusebius (and possibly Epiphanius) do not betray actual knowledge of people called Ebionites; and that the name became a general way of referring to what some might designate 'Jewish Christians' (a tendency already visible in Origen in his claim that "those of the Jews who accepted Jesus are named Ebionites" [*Cels.* 2.1]).

Much of what has been posited above is subject to contradiction. In the end the Ebionites, in spite of, perhaps even because of, the plentiful information we potentially have about them, remain a somewhat mysterious witness to an important aspect of early Christian history. Recent research on the subject has served perhaps more clearly than that of a previous generation to clarify the difficulties connected with their study rather than to solve them.

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Section 3

Judaism in the Second Century

Chapter 12

The enigma of the second century

Some typologies

For Judaism, the second century, we suspect, was an important period – two significant revolts, the end of Jerusalem as a Jewish city and of Palestine as a predominantly Jewish land, the rise of the rabbinic movement, the questioning of the priority of the Septuagint, especially seen in the production of significant new versions of the Greek Bible, the beginnings of a revival of interest in Hebrew, and the emergence of Christianity as an entity broadly distinct from Judaism. And yet while it is possible in general terms to portray the century as important, to speak about it in any detail, to understand the ‘whys’ and the ‘hows’ and the consequences of the things mentioned above, is very difficult.

This difficulty, bound up principally with the lack of sources at our disposal, has not dampened learned speculation. Some scholars have argued that the century, particularly in the wake of the Trajanic and Bar Kokhba revolts, witnessed the end of the last vestiges of Hellenistic Judaism, a movement away from an outward-looking disposition seen in figures like the author of the *Letter of Aristeas*, Aristobulus, Philo and Josephus, to something more solipsistic and isolationist, reflected in the rise of the rabbinic movement.¹ In some ways this is a different and often tendentiously Christian form of a Jewish approach to Jewish history famously dubbed “Leidens- und Gelehrten-geschichte”, in which the period after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 is marked by suffering, and by the growth of rabbinic

¹ Harnack 1923, 17-20 (on Harnack’s general presentation and assumptions, see Cohen 1991); and Bousset 1915, 487f., for a summary of the position. See also Kraabel 1982, for a critique of this view, and, from a different perspective, Rajak 2009, 278-313. Barclay 1996, 11-12, in his survey of the western Diaspora, stops his account at the end of Trajanic revolt. His reasons for doing so relate to the lack of literary evidence beyond this point, and the consequent difficulty of addressing in any depth the kind of questions about Diaspora Judaism in which he is interested. While Barclay does not endorse a typology of Jewish history similar to that of Harnack and others, the fact that he ends his account where he does might be taken by a certain type of reader as the implicit endorsement of such a typology. See also Grabbe 1992, who ends his account of the history of Judaism with Hadrian and the Bar Kokhba revolt; and Gruen 2002, who also does not venture beyond a discussion of the Bar Kokhba revolt.

power.² It also in part reflects what could be deemed a ‘rabbini- zation’ of Jewish history in which from the second century onwards the rabbis are perceived as the *de facto* leaders of Jewish society, a view which often has the consequence that the Judaism of the western Diaspora is almost forgotten.³ Others have presented differently framed, but similarly negative, views of the period. Martin Goodman has argued, for instance, that the aftermath of the first Jewish revolt against Rome marked the beginning of a period of strained relations between Romans and Jews, in which anti-Jewishness became something politically respectable, almost necessary, and in which various emperors gave voice in diverse ways to anti-Jewish sentiments, culminating in Hadrian’s provocation, as Goodman sees it, of the Bar Kokhba revolt. In such a context Trajanic and Bar Kokhba revolts were inevitable, and the reputation of Jews took a long time to recover.⁴

² The phrase is sometimes associated with Graetz 1936, and was influentially described by Baron (Baron 1951, 340) as “the lachrymose conception of Jewish history.” It should be noted, however, that as used by Graetz and Baron, the term referred to a conception of all Jewish history, not just the period under consideration. For the generally deleterious consequences of this view of Jewish history on the understanding of the Jews in antiquity, especially in Rome, and especially as this relates to the supposed isolationism of the Jews, see Rutgers 1992, 101-2; and 1995, 45-9. For an older critique of the approach, but here pertaining to the medieval period and beyond, see Roth 1932. His principal concern seems to be with the exceptionalising of Jewish suffering which the approach appears to assume, and which he rejects, although whether he would have retained such a position after 1939 is not clear (my thanks to Prof. William Horbury for this reference).

³ Daniel Boyarin, in conversation with me in Moscow in 2006, made the adroit observation that the ongoing appeal of this model had something to do with the fact that it suited both Christians and Jews. For Christians, and this is explicit in Harnack, it gave eloquent expression to the conjunction as it were between Christian triumph and expansion and Jewish retreat (on which see Cohen 1991); and for Jews it indirectly supported an early date for the hegemony of what came to be regarded as mainstream Judaism, namely rabbinic Judaism. In relation to the second part of Boyarin’s observation, Philip Alexander has stated in correspondence that in this debate he can hear echoes of the contemporary *Kulturkampf* in Israel where for many the acknowledgement of the Talmud as part of the Jewish heritage is seen as a central plank in understanding Jewish identity. “When Jewish society is faced with non-rabbinic Jews such as the Falashas claiming to be Jews, many Jews get troubled and defensive. At stake is the Jewishness of the Jewish state: is the Talmud going to be at the heart of Israelite society? The idea that there might have been a western non-rabbinized Judaism after the rise of the rabbinism, which owed nothing to rabbinism, but was confident in its Jewish identity is potentially disturbing.” (quote from an email dated 4.vii.2009). Edrei and Mendels 2007 and 2008 may be seen to subscribe, at least implicitly, to such a view when they argue that the Jews of the western Diaspora became susceptible to Christian proselytising precisely because they had failed to adopt rabbinic Judaism. For a different perspective on the question of the effect of the Hellenic on modern Israel, see Shavit 1997.

⁴ See Goodman 2007.

Another view, in part also lachrymose, sees the century, particularly within Judea, as marked by a kind of collapse of Jewish identity. In this thesis it is argued that as a consequence of the destruction of the temple, and the annexation of Palestine by the Romans, Jews in Palestine began to lead lives very much like pagans and retained an only minimal sense of their Jewishness. On this view rabbinic authorities are seen as exceptions who were forced to adapt to a new set of circumstances, and not people of influence.⁵ Others, notably Marcel Simon and A. T. Kraabel, question the thesis of cultural retreat, arguing strongly that there is enough evidence, Jewish, Christian and pagan, both literary and archaeological, to support the idea that Jews remained a strongly confident presence within the century and that the vision of the inward-looking Jew, increasingly controlled by rabbinic authorities, and in retreat from the wider non-Jewish society, is an unhelpful caricature, not only of Jews in general but rabbis in particular.⁶ Such a thesis views the century more in terms of a story of continuity with elements of what Simon termed the 'liberal' Judaism which had been so much in evidence before the century began.⁷

None of the typologies described above are presented by their authors as typologies of second century Judaism exclusively. They are more often than not typologies of longer chronological periods. In this respect it is in-

⁵ "Judaism shattered. Its shards preserved in altered but recognizable form by the rabbis, who certainly had some residual prestige and thus small numbers of close adherents ... But for most Jews, Judaism may have been little more than a vestigial identity, bits and pieces of which they were happy to incorporate into a religious and cultural system that was essentially Greco-Roman and pagan. Most Jews may have been Jews in much the same way as people like Lucian of Samosata, the satirical writer of the second century who, despite his mastery of the classical tradition and of Greek style ... nevertheless regarded himself as irreducibly other, were Syrian." (Schwartz 2001, 15). On the rabbis he writes: "we need to keep the rabbis to one side if we wish to understand the character of Jewish society between 70 and 640 – *a fortiori* between 70-350."

⁶ See especially Simon 1986, 33-64; Bousset 1915, 487f., made similar observations, here in response to the implications that some prayers in the 7th book of the *Apostolic Constitutions* were originally Jewish. He writes: "Die Vorstellung, dass das Judentum bald nach 70, oder wenigstens nach 135 sich von der Aussenwelt gänzlich zurückgezogen, sich unter Verzicht auf die griechische Sprache im gottesdienstlichen Gebrauch zu dem Judentum der Mischna und des Talmud verengt habe, wird sich nicht halten lassen." See also Kraabel 1982 and 1987. Trebilco 1991, esp. 186f., repeats views already expressed by Kraabel: "Many scholars have thought that Jewish communities in the Diaspora formed tightly-knit, introverted groups. Faced with a hostile environment, the Jews formed exclusive communities in order to retain their Jewish identity. However, this view is questionable ... we can suggest that ... many members of the communities interacted regularly with Gentiles and were involved to a significant degree in their cities."

⁷ For a recent critique of this typology, particularly as represented by Kraabel, and drawing attention to his use of archaeological evidence, see Rutgers 1998, 20-4, 42, and 227-33.

teresting to note that the Jewish second century has rarely been the subject of a sustained investigation by anyone. It is typical that for the period following the Bar Kokhba revolt, the *Cambridge History of Judaism* Vol. IV views the second century, at least by implication, as a century whose importance is mainly perceived in terms of revolts and the production of the *Mishnah*. Admittedly, a number of articles in the book ostensibly concern themselves with the period running from 70 to 235 C.E.⁸ in different parts of the Diaspora as well as Palestine, but what is actually said about evidence from the second century is strikingly little; and the problem, set out at the opening of this paper, that the century is clearly important but minimally documented, is never addressed. In what follows I will seek to make a few observations, many of which will do little more than state questions which may appear unanswerable. In the process I shall seek to re-examine the typologies I have outlined above.

A dearth of sources

All of these typologies compete for our attention against an apparently threadbare background of Jewish sources. Of course, we possess the *Mishnah*, much of whose material may date from the second century or earlier, but which was probably published in the early part of the third century. But its wider significance to Judaism both within and outside of Judea, and the extent to which it elucidates the second century more generally, are questions that are contested.⁹ A number of scholars have also wanted to argue that some of the Targumim were written in this period but again this remains a matter of considerable debate¹⁰ and it is difficult also to know how we might use such sources to gain access to the wider Jewish population of the Roman Empire.

The apparent lack of much Jewish literature in Greek from the second century onwards can appear strange when compared with the relative profusion of such material in the preceding period. Explanations for this phenomenon range from the assertion that there was in fact very little written (the *realia* accurately reflect things as they were), to the view, expressed

⁸ For the editor's justification of the date of 235, see Katz 2006, 19f. For a critical response to some of his arguments, see Levinskaya 2008, 16-18.

⁹ See Hezser 1997; Schwartz 2001; Kraemer 2006, esp. 308-10. The last of these summarises arguments in favour of seeing the intended audience as other rabbis and their disciples, not the least of which is the fact that it was written in Hebrew, which, as will be argued below, was at this point in history a kind of academic tongue.

¹⁰ York 1974 is a classic rebuttal of those who would date a number of the Targumim early. See also Kaufman 1985 and Drazin 1999.

by amongst others, Martin Goodman, that the religious traditions which eventually triumphed, the rabbinic and the Christian, “had no interest in their preservation.”¹¹ The rabbis only preserved things in Semitic languages, and in any case could be understood to have had a somewhat jaundiced view of the western Diaspora;¹² and “the separation of Judaism and Christianity after the first century rendered Jewish-Greek writings irrelevant to Christians who therefore lacked incentive to copy them.”¹³

The supposed collapse of such centres of Jewish literary activity as Egypt, in particular Alexandria, in the aftermath of the Trajanic revolt, and Palestine after the first revolt of 66-70 C.E., and then again after the revolt of Bar Kokhba, might be taken to support the idea that Jewish literary activity declined very considerably in this period.¹⁴ When we consider extant Jewish-Greek texts thought to have been written the first century C.E. and earlier, many hail from Egypt or Palestine, and apparently very few from Asia Minor or Rome, both of which boasted a large population of Jews. However, the second view, that there was much more literary activity in Greek but, for a variety of reasons, it has not been preserved, can be supported by two arguments, one negative, and one positive. Negatively, it might be argued that those who assert that Alexandria and Palestine were the centres of Jewish literary activity are falling into the age-old trap of responding exclusively to the *realia*. We do, after all, have evidence of Jewish writers from elsewhere (Jason of Cyrene and Paul of Tarsus, for instance), and some have put forward good arguments for situating texts normally thought to have been written in Egypt or Palestine elsewhere (after all, arguments in favour of one provenance rather than another for

¹¹ Goodman 1994a, 209.

¹² See Schwartz 2000, 350-1. The rabbis, he argues, had at best a very dim view of the Jews of the Graeco-Roman west.

¹³ Goodman 1994b, 48. A similar argument is found in Fiensy and Darnell 1985, 673, where it is noted that the middle of the second century C.E. is the latest possible date for the synagogal prayers apparently found in the *Apostolic Constitutions* “since after this time relations between Jews and Christians were not conducive to Christian borrowing of synagogue liturgy.” But Fiensy goes on to note that we should be very cautious about overemphasizing the break between church and synagogue after the Bar Kokhba war, a point he emphasises more strongly in Fiensy 1985, 221.

¹⁴ Seth Schwartz, in an email to me on this question, argued that the conditions that had generated a flourishing Jewish literature in the first place – high and concentrated Jewish populations in Judaea, all centered around the temple (and so either celebrating or reacting against it), and in the main Diaspora communities – no longer existed. It is generally assumed that almost all first century Jewish literature in Greek comes from Palestine and Egypt, in particular Alexandria; and that we struggle, for instance, to find many works written in Asia Minor, a place with a considerable Jewish population.

many Jewish-Greek writings are fragile).¹⁵ Secondly, and positively, attention should be drawn to what evidence we do have for Jewish texts in Greek from the second century and beyond. For example, the probability that the second and early third centuries saw the writing of three major Greek versions of the Bible, Aquila, Theodotion and Symmachus,¹⁶ and that Ecclesiastes¹⁷ and Lamentations¹⁸ were first translated into Greek in the same period, is itself suggestive of much greater activity than we might suspect from the *realia*.¹⁹ Also relevant are the various *Sibylline Oracles* which appear to have had a continuous presence within the Jewish community up to the Arab invasions and been regularly updated, and at least two of which *Sibylline Oracles* 5 and 8, could be said to betray clear evi-

¹⁵ See Buitenwerf 2003, for the view that *Sibylline Oracles* 3 was written in Asia Minor.

¹⁶ Symmachus may have written his translation in the very early part of the third century. On this see Salvesen 1991, 294-6. Of course, attempting either to establish the purpose of these translations (on which more below) or the circumstances in which they were produced is very difficult. Did, for instance, the writing of such translations involve a great deal of assistance and organisation? Alison Salvesen thinks that in the case of Symmachus the undertaking could have been minimal involving a scribe and a small amount of financial support. Alexander, as we will note below, thinks that both Symmachus and Aquila were versions produced by the rabbis to promote the cause of Hebrew in the western Diaspora.

¹⁷ See Aitken 2005, who notes the tendency of scholars to place the translation of Ecclesiastes in the second century because of its Aquila-like qualities. While not denying this characteristic of the translation, Aitken, in seeking to bolster a second century date, draws attention to signs of Greek rhetorical style in the translation, associated with the Second Sophistic. "The translation", he writes, "attests to the continuing importance of Greek as a literary language for Jews in the second century, especially given the translator's desire to write with such rhetorical flourish." (Aitken 2005, 77).

¹⁸ For the most recent expression of this view see Alexander 2009, 79-90. He argues that the emphasis of the text on the fall of the first temple makes the most likely setting for its translation some time in the aftermath of the fall of the second temple, and that its obvious liturgical character make it likely that it was used in Greek-speaking synagogues on the day on which they mourned the fall of the two temples. Alexander further supports his view by pointing to differences of meaning between the MT and LXX of Lam 2:8, in particular the rendering in the LXX of MT "The Lord was determined to destroy" by "The Lord returned to destroy", the Greek translation being taken to imply a second destruction.

¹⁹ It is striking that no space is given to the discussion of Greek Bible versions in volume 4 of the *Cambridge History of Judaism*. On this, and the general absence of interest in Greek amongst Jews in the period covered by the volume, see Levinskaya 2008, 15-16. On the versions and what they tell us about Jewish Hellenistic culture in the second century see Rajak 2009, 310-13. Note especially her comment that "the production of different types of Bible translation is a central element in the small corpus of Jewish-Greek literature which has survived the transition to Christianity and the ravages of time. For us, the consequence is greatly to extend that period of the constructive relationship between Greek-speaking Jews and their Bible ..." (Rajak 2009, 313).

dence of Jewish literary activity in the second century.²⁰ Additionally, some Christian sources may imply the existence of Jewish sources originally written in Greek, either by incorporating parts of such works into their own, or by referring to works written by Jews in Greek. In this context note should be taken of the possibly Jewish identity of what appear to be exegetes, mentioned by Clement of Alexandria, and termed μύσται;²¹ of the Jewish origin of a section from the *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* (4-6);²² and of five prayers from the Christian *Apostolic Constitutions* 7.33-7.²³ Reference should also be made to the view that Celsus' Jew, the figure who appears as an opponent of Christianity in the first two books of Celsus' anti-Christian work *The True Word*, dating from 175, wrote himself, or knew of, a derogatory account of Jesus' life, or possibly a more general critique of the religion.²⁴ The same figure is presented as having know-

²⁰ This is definitely the case for *Sib. Or.* 5, some of whose oracles were updated in the second century during the reign of Hadrian (and certainly collected together at that time). On this, see Collins 1974, 174-5. Some argue that *Sib. Or.* 8.1-216 is Jewish and written around about 175 in Egypt, although this is by no means an uncontroversial assertion. The arguments in favour of seeing the section as Jewish lie in the attack upon Hadrian witnessed in 50-9, and the assertion in 141 that Nero is said to attack "the nation of the Hebrews." Neither of these observations is clinching, and Collins, for instance, seeks to make the case better by contrasting the relative lack of christological assertion in this section when compared with the rest of the book. Even then Collins can only speak of "a slight balance of probability" supporting a Jewish origin. See Collins 1985, 415-17. For almost absolute skepticism on this point, although not argued for at length, see Davila 2005, 189, n. 13.

²¹ See Clement, *Strom.* 1.153.1, where an interpretation attributed to the μύσται is given of Moses' change of name after his ascension; and at 1.154.1 an interpretation of the manner of Pharaoh's death. Clement never explicitly calls these 'mystics' Jewish; but Samuel Krauss 1892-3, 136f., thought them to be on account of parallels between the interpretations attributed to them by Clement and extra-biblical Jewish material. See also in this volume, p. 93, n. 11.

²² For the relevant arguments for the Jewish identity of this text see chapter 13 of this volume.

²³ See Simon 1986, 53-60, here following original observations made by Bousset 1915. He dates the work to not before the middle of the second half of the second century. Fiensy 1985, who engaged in a detailed discussion of Bousset's views (K. Kohler had in fact originally made the claim for a Jewish provenance but Bousset had apparently not read his work), argues for the Jewish origin of some of the material, claiming it comes from an originally Hebrew version of the Seven Benedictions uttered on the Sabbath. He is less confident about a second century date for the Greek translation of these prayers (although he is clear that they are later than the first century), but does not discount it. An analysis of the original Jewish prayers as reconstructed by him leads him to argue that there is nothing distinctively Hellenistic about them. They are no different in their theology from the Hebrew prayers of which they are a translation.

²⁴ On this, see Bammel 1986.

ledge of Greek mythology and poetry, even if Origen expresses himself skeptical that a Jew could be in possession of such knowledge.²⁵

Against this background we should be willing to re-examine a number of assumptions. For instance, the time is ripe to look again at the criteria that scholars have used for dating Jewish-Greek writings earlier than 70, or no later than the Bar Kokhba revolt. In relation to the former tendency, probably too much emphasis is placed on the need for a post-70 text to mention the fall of Jerusalem. And in relation to the latter, scholars have often been overly reluctant to date anything after 135 because of quite specific assumptions they hold about the type of Judaism which emerged in the wake of that disaster. We should also challenge the assumption that almost all of the Jewish pseudepigraphical works which come down to us were preserved and reworked by Christians. How do we *know* that these works were not preserved and reworked by Jews well into the second century and beyond?²⁶ And how do we know that Philo's or Josephus' works did not continue to be transmitted and studied by Jews for many years?²⁷

²⁵ See *Cels.* 1.66, 67; 2.34 and 55. On these references, see p. 418 in this volume.

²⁶ Why should we assume that Jews ceased suddenly to transmit texts in Greek before or early in the second century? We have already indicated the ongoing activity of compiling and adding to in relation to *Sibylline Oracle* 5. Could the same not be said for a text like *4 Ezra*? See Davila 2005 for the difficulty of identifying pseudepigraphical writings as Jewish or Christian, an important discussion in relation to this whole debate. Also note Frankfurter's comments in Frankfurter 2003, 134-5: "What happens in the discussion of these texts if one *abandons* the category 'Christian' – as a distinct stage in these texts' composition and, implicitly, as a distinct religious mentality? What if we were to look at these texts, rather, as the work of *continuous* communities of halakically-observant Jewish groups ... that incorporated Jesus into their cosmologies and liturgies, while retaining an essentially Jewish, or even *priestly*, self-definition?"

²⁷ On the transmission of Philo see Runia 1993, esp. 12-16. He argues that Philo's works were rescued by some Alexandrian Christians from debris of the disastrous Trajanic revolt, later to find their way into the so-called School of Pantaenus, out of which later emerged the figures of Clement of Alexandria and Origen. He does not, I think, exclude transmission by Jews after this period, at least not explicitly, but he seems to suggest an early rejection inspired by rabbinic distaste for Christian usage of Philo. But Runia's arguments, which draw support from the supposed rejection of the LXX by the rabbis for the same reason, a point which is open to dispute (see below), should be questioned. Not only is it an argument from silence with all its weaknesses, but it assumes (a) too great a view of rabbinic power; and (b) a loss of interest in the Philonic perspective on the part of Jews. However, as Goodman perceptively noted, "The factors which encouraged a Diaspora Jew in the mid-first century like Philo of Alexandria to evolve his curious blend of Platonic philosophy and allegorical exegesis of the bible were just as potent after the destruction of the temple as before: indeed, since Philonic types of theology were to become popular among some Christians during the late-Roman period, it was evidently possible for Jews also to continue thinking in such ways." (Goodman 1994a, 212).

Again assumptions about Judaism in the second century often exclude the possibility of taking seriously such questions.

If there was more literature in Greek than some have posited, explaining why we do not have more of it is difficult. It is possible to attribute this, at least in part, to the habits of second century Christians (it was Christians who collected what material we do have in Greek by Jews) and later rabbis,²⁸ but the fact that we do possess some Jewish-Greek material dating from the century and preserved by Christians implies that other factors were at work as well. Moreover, we should, I think, be cautious about assuming the inappropriateness or impossibility of Christians collecting Jewish material after 150 C.E. The argument against such a thing is based upon a view of the ‘parting of the ways’ as being absolute and wide-spread at a relatively early date, a thesis which does not sit easily with what evidence we have.²⁹ To the evidence cited we should add Christian and pagan literature which refers to Jews, even if it is uncertain just how much actual knowledge of Jews is betrayed here.³⁰ Archaeological and inscriptional evidence is also available but generalising from such evidence can be risky, as is interpreting it.³¹

Some subjects for discussion

The shadow of the revolts

One could see the second century as standing in the shadow of the Trajanic and Hadrianic revolts. But how did Jews outside the immediate areas affected respond to these calamities? And how did these revolts affect the character and nature of Romano-Jewish relations?

Reaction to the Trajanic revolt, in terms of its geographical extent and its sheer brutality the most significant of the three Jewish revolts against Rome, is difficult to gauge. Relevant pagan and Christian sources,³² which emphasise the devastation of the revolt for the communities involved, tell us very little of Jewish reaction. How did Jews in Asia Minor, or Rome,

²⁸ Goodman 1994a, as quoted above.

²⁹ For various objections to such a thesis, see Becker and Reed 2003, esp. 1-33; and from another perspective, Davila 2005. For a helpful account of evidence for non-separation, see Lieu 2001.

³⁰ For a judicious and careful analysis of the relevant Christian material and its role as a source for our understanding of Judaism, see Lieu 1996.

³¹ See our brief discussion below of S. Schwartz and Belayche’s approach to a number of pieces of archaeological evidence from Palestine. As will be seen, they view the implications of the same artefacts very differently.

³² These are brought together in a single volume by Zeev 2005.

for instance, feel about the decimation of significant Diaspora communities, in particular those of Egypt, Cyprus and Cyrenaica?³³ And did the revolt have any effect on their morale or their relations with the Roman power? Certainly there is evidence in a number of pagan authors of a memory of the revolt, from which possibly negative conclusions could be drawn;³⁴ and we know that Greeks in Egypt went on commemorating the defeat of the revolt into the third century,³⁵ and we find some memory of it in Jewish sources, in particular rabbinic ones.³⁶ But while Jewish life in the lands directly affected by the revolt was pretty much decimated, especially in Egypt, there is no clear evidence that Jews outside of those areas found themselves the victims of oppressive measures,³⁷ but the available evidence is minimal. Interesting in this respect is an inscription from Smyrna which can be dated with relative certainty to 123 or 124 C.E.,³⁸ where we read of those who were formerly Jews (οἱ ποτὲ Ἰουδαίοι) contributing a small sum of money to public works. Such an inscription could be taken to convey a positive vision of Jews as integrated within their city and willing and confident participants in its public life.³⁹ However, it could be read differently so that those concerned are understood as apostates from Judaism, possibly inspired by their feeling that the revolt had made their position as Jews precarious, and their donation, therefore, viewed as a means of giving unambiguous voice to their loyalty to their adopted city. Far from implying confidence, the inscription could be taken to indicate a sense of social and cultural fragility. Such an interpretation may be deemed by

³³ See Kraabel 1987, for the view that communities in the parts of the Diaspora where there had been no revolt continued to lead normal lives.

³⁴ See Appian, *Bella civilia* 2.90.380; Arrian, quoted in the Suda; Artemidorus, *Onirocritica* 4.24; and more tangentially, Claudius Ptolemaeus, *Apotelesmatica* 2.3.65-6. There is an odd lack of interest in the revolt in Christian authors outside of Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 4.2.1-5) which may have arisen from the fact that the Bar Kokhba revolt, which followed so soon afterwards, had such an important resonance for Christians, not least because it is seen as God's final judgment on his own people. See Justin, *1 Apol.* 47; *Dial.* 16.2; 40.2; 92.2; and Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.6.2-4.

³⁵ See *CPJ* 2.450 which indicates that Greeks were celebrating their victory over the Jews almost a century later. Kerkeslager 2006, 66, suggests that such strength of feeling in Egypt greatly slowed down immigration of Jews back into the land. In this context attention might also be drawn to *CPJ* 3.519, dated from the end of the second, or the beginning of the third century, which mentions a Jew in a mime who carries a burden and elicits great amounts of mocking laughter. Some have also highlighted the large number of copies discovered at Oxyrhynchus of the anti-Jewish *Acta Alexandrinorum*. For discussion of these points, see Haas 1997, 412-13.

³⁶ See Horbury 1996 for a discussion of the rabbinic sources.

³⁷ There is no evidence that the revolt spread to Asia Minor, for instance.

³⁸ For the most recent version of the text see Ameling 2004, 177.

³⁹ For such an interpretation, see Trebilco 1991, 33.

some too speculative, and dependent upon an understanding of οἱ ποτὲ Ἰουδαῖοι which many would dispute.⁴⁰ But in the absence of any substantive evidence with which to interpret the inscription, especially in relation to what it betrays about the state of mind of Jews in Smyrna at this time, it remains a possible interpretation.

Concerning reaction to the Bar Kokhba revolt, we are again poorly served. Trypho, who is depicted as a refugee from the revolt in Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*⁴¹ and as having resided in Ephesus and Greece,⁴² is never made to reflect upon the revolt and its consequences, but rather simply responds to Justin's polemical exploitation of the event.⁴³ We might assume, of course, that Rome's brutal reaction to it, its creation of a *colonia* on the site of Jerusalem (something which may have been begun before the revolt had even started), and its renaming of the old Roman province as Syria Palaestina instead of Judea, thereby excluding any association of the province with the people who were once its principal inhabitants, would have elicited a strong reaction on the part of Diasporan Jews ranging from depression to anger.⁴⁴ Were Justin's and other Christian writers' theologi-

⁴⁰ For a recent discussion of the difficult phrase and a helpful bibliography, see Ameling 2004, 178-9. The main reason for not understanding it as referring to apostate Jews lies in asking why, if the inscription was the creation of the donors themselves, would they bother advertising that they were such? In fact why would they have given up their Judaism in any case? In our mooted interpretation, apostatising appears explicable on the basis of the bad reputation the Jews have as a result of the Trajanic revolt. But this remains purely speculative, and possibly unlikely as we have no evidence for the participation of Jews from Smyrna in the revolt. In the face of these difficulties, some have suggested that we should see Ἰουδαῖοι as referring to former inhabitants of Judea, that is, Judeans. But some object to this interpretation on the grounds that it would be a unique instance of an inscription from Asia Minor referring to the place of origin of someone mentioned in it. Ameling 2004, 179, notes that the chief difficulty with the phrase is that it refers to an identity that its subjects would now deny, but they expect to be recognised by referring to it. He also notes that it is unclear who is responsible for the designation. For a similar phrase, see Paul's reference to his ἀναστροφὴν ποτε ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ in Gal 1:13.

⁴¹ See *Dial.* 1.3 and 9.3. See also 16.2 and 108.3.

⁴² See Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 4.18.6.

⁴³ See esp. *Dial.* 16.2; 24.2-3; 92.2; 108.1-3; 133; 114.5. See Lieu 1996, 121f.

⁴⁴ The general view that the post-Bar Kokhba period witnessed a strongly negative, almost isolationist, response from the Jews is seen in many places. See, for instance, Anderson's view in Charlesworth 1985 (2), here as part of a discussion of the date of 4 Maccabees: "... it is barely conceivable that, with its eloquent advocacy of the supremacy of the Jewish law to the ethical systems of the pagan world and of the invincible power of Jewish faith and religion ..., 4 Maccabees could have been written after the Hadrianic persecution, *when the Jews stood apart contra mundum, as it were.*" (Anderson 1985, 533-4: italics my own). Also note my comments below on certain approaches to the dating of *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* 4-6.

cal exploitation of its aftermath reflective in some sense of underlying Jewish anxieties, partially indicated in an earlier work like *4 Ezra* which could be seen to reflect anxieties following the first Jewish revolt? Or should we argue from the fact that the revolt appears not to have involved Jewish communities outside of Palestine, and that even within Palestine participation may have been limited to specific geographic regions, mainly Judea, that its impact was less great than some have thought? In this context it is interesting to note that Trypho is depicted as a keen defender of the ongoing legitimacy of Jewish observance of the law in spite of the claims of Justin that destruction of the temple and expulsion from the land would imply the illegitimacy of ongoing attachment to the law;⁴⁵ and that in general terms he appears confident in tone.⁴⁶ Extrapolating from the reaction to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 is problematic not least because we are not informed about general Jewish reaction to this event (compare and contrast the reaction of the writer of *Sibylline Oracles* 4 and 5 to the destruction of the temple, for instance).⁴⁷ And in any case the aftermaths of the two revolts are not comparable. It is possible that the failure to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, given permanency by Roman reaction to the Bar Kokhba revolt, left a suppurating wound at the centre of Jewish-Roman relations. However, that is difficult to prove in spite of what we read in *Sibylline Oracles* 5 and possibly *Sibylline Oracles* 8.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Schwartz 2006, 32-3, developing observations found in Schwartz 2001, argues that the revolts of 66-73 and Bar Kokhba, would have invalidated a life that had once seemed validated by common sense, and would have led to the creation of a way of life little influenced by the Torah. He sees signs of this in earlier evidence from Suetonius, *Domitian* 12.2, where we hear of individuals denying their Jewishness, probably here for financial reasons, and the *Tosefta* (*t. Šabb.* [16].9), where, at the time of the Bar Kokhba revolt, we hear of Jews who have performed epispasm. For the more developed form of Schwartz's case see our discussion below.

⁴⁶ See Lieu 1996, 141. For at least a hint at a more confident vision of the Jews see Herennius Philo, quoted by Origen, *Cels.* 1.15, who is presented as asserting that the fourth century B.C.E. Hecateus of Abdera's account of the Jews is too positive. If it is authentic, he claims, then, Hecateus was, in his opinion, a victim of the persuasive powers of the Jews.

⁴⁷ Simon 1986, 35-44, is quite clear that there was no soul-searching after 70. In fact for Simon the Diasporan communities saw the temple as a sign of their inequality with Palestinian Jewish communities and of the national and particular of Judaism. He sees this view partially supported in *Sib. Or.* 4 and in some other texts apparently possessing an anti-temple character. But perhaps he takes too little account of evidence in Josephus and Philo, and *Sib. Or.* 3 and 5 for a strong Diasporic attachment to the Temple.

⁴⁸ See Goodman 1986 esp. 231-51; and 2007. *Sib. Or.* 8.73-109 contains a sharp attack upon Rome and 50-67 a similarly sharp attack upon Hadrian but here without reference to the Bar Kokhba revolt. There is also, interestingly, and similar to *Sib. Or.* 5, an encomium to the same emperor.

Some have argued that the failure of one or other revolt, or all of them, beginning with the one in Judea in 66, created amongst some Jews a sense of despair in the power of their God.⁴⁹ This led to the creation of what came to be called Gnosticism, with its strong dislike of the Jewish God and its hope for release from this world. This view assumes that something as radical as Gnosticism, however defined, could only have come into being through a crisis.⁵⁰ In favour of the theory is the fact that many Gnostic systems have negative things to say about the Jewish God, and that the apocalyptic movements, which may have inspired these revolts may, in a variety of ways, have come close to certain Gnostic assumptions.⁵¹ Identifying the specific revolt responsible for such a significant religious movement has proven difficult. The first revolt of 66-70 seems unlikely, if only because it does not fit the dates of the first known Gnostics. In this respect either the Trajanic or the Bar Kokhba revolt would be possible. For Smith, for instance, the former is more likely, not least because of its strong association with Egypt, the place from which some of the founding Gnostics, like Basilides, originated. The scale and violence of the revolt may well have been such as to have created the kind of crisis necessary to generate the radical opinions associated with Gnosticism.⁵²

The suggestion remains an interesting one but impossible to prove. Is it true to assert that Gnosticism could only have originated in a crisis?⁵³ And that the revolts would have engendered the kind of despair these scholars assume? Can we also assume a Jewish origin for Gnosticism?⁵⁴ In the face of the minimal evidence available this can remain no more than a stimulating theory.

⁴⁹ Smith 2004, 44-71, summarises these theories.

⁵⁰ Alexander 1996b, 1066, is clear that Gnosticism arose as the result of direct experience of life, but does not elaborate what that might mean in real terms, although he does go on to say that the movement was Platonist and intellectual.

⁵¹ Grant 1966, puts forward this thesis most vigorously.

⁵² Smith 2004, 113-252.

⁵³ Smith 2004, 138, argues that Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.24.4-6, contains a number of phrases which support his theory. So, at 1.24.4, Irenaeus states that Basilides presents the Jewish God as desiring to render the other nations as subject to his own people with the result that all the other nations were at war with him; and at 1.24.6 Basilides describing himself and his followers as "no longer Jews." The first statement is seen as implying hostility on the part of Jews inspired by their own God, and the second as indicating the Jewish identity of Basilides.

⁵⁴ For a sober assessment of the evidence for the Jewish origins of Gnosticism, see Alexander 1996b, esp. 1065-6. While accepting that there were Jewish Gnostics, he tentatively rejects a Jewish origin for Gnosticism, noting that at the time scholars normally place the beginnings of the movement (late first/early second century), there is nothing within Judaism which closely resembles Gnosticism, and that the diversity of the movement makes a Jewish origin unlikely.

Longer term Roman reaction to these two revolts is also difficult to delineate. Certainly both revolts had been seen as severe threats and this is clear from the immediate reaction of the Romans to both of them.⁵⁵ Moreover, it seems difficult to imagine that these events did not leave a persistent sense amongst some Romans of the potential threat of the Jews, the residue of which is found in a few second century pagan sources where the Jews are perceived as a rebellious people; and possibly in sources, which express more generally negative opinions about Jews.⁵⁶ Martin Goodman, for instance, has argued that the Bar Kokhba revolt was almost provoked by the Romans and such provocation arose from a desire to destroy the Jewish people, a desire, which reflected an ever-growing anti-Jewish tendency amongst the Roman elite, which had its origin in the first Jewish revolt. If Goodman is right it is difficult to see why such negativity would have disappeared after 135 C.E. However, against this view we should note that the Romans seemed to be able to differentiate between different Jewish populations. In this context we might draw attention to Josephus' report that in the wake of the first revolt the Antiochians and Alexandrians asked Titus to deprive their respective Jewish populations of the rights of

⁵⁵ This is an obvious point in relation to the Trajanic revolt but less so, perhaps, for Bar Kokhba. But Eck 1999, has shown very clearly the extent to which Hadrian regarded the revolt as a threat. This is demonstrated by the number of legions and commanders engaged in putting it down, by the fact that the revolt spilt over into the borders of Syria and Arabia, and by the way in which the victory was celebrated (a senatorial acclamation for Hadrian, the *ornamenta triumphalia* for three generals, and a huge arch erected near Tel Shalem, probably by order of the *senatus populusque Romanus*, to commemorate the victory). In one sense it is possible to argue that reaction to the Bar Kokhba revolt was in part inspired by the fact of the Trajanic revolt and the fear that it might escalate into something similar. For further evidence of the significance of the revolt in the minds of the Romans, note the fact that Pausanias, *Graeciae descriptio* 1.5.5, only feels it necessary to mention the Bar Kokhba revolt as an event which disturbed the peace during Hadrian's reign. For this point see Stern 1980, 192.

⁵⁶ See above and our comments on pagan references to Jews arising from the Trajanic revolt. See Fronto, *Bell. Parth.* 2 for comments of this kind resulting from the Bar Kokhba revolt. Note also the comment of Marcus Aurelius, cited by Julian, that as he was going through Palestine, he was heard to say: "O Marcomanni, O Quadi, O Sarmatians, at last I have found a people more unruly than you." On this and other evidence see Goodman 2007, 498-9. Origen, possibly reflecting earlier opinion, speaks of the Jews as a *gens habens seditiones, et homicidia, et latrocinia* (*Comm. ser. Matt.* 121 [GCS 38.256]). The passage is cited by Horbury 1998b, 162. Note should also be taken of what Celsus apparently says about the Jews in *Cels.* 3.6. Generally negative remarks are found in Herennius Philo, quoted by Origen at *Cels.* 1.15; Ptolemy Chennus, quoted by Photius, *Bibliotheka* 190; Claudius Ptolemaeus, *Apotelesmatica* 2.3.65-6; Apuleius, *Florida* 6; and Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 5.33-4, placing some traditional attacks upon the Jews, including the accusation of ἀμείβια, and the claim that Jews are alienated from all other peoples, in the mouth of Euphrates, the enemy of Apollonius.

citizenship but Titus refused.⁵⁷ Some, of course, might say that the imposition on all Jews of the so-called *fiscus judaicus* contradicts that element of differentiation manifest in the actions of Titus. That is true, although we should note that the empire-wide imposition of such a tax may simply have been an example of financial opportunism and a recognition of the fact that Jews in the Diaspora as well as Palestine were regular payers of the temple tax and had now to have their payment redirected. But we may not have simply to rely on extrapolation from an earlier event to support our thesis. Pausanias, referring to the Bar Kokhba revolt, states that Hadrian destroyed the Hebrews beyond Syria (Ἑβραίους δὲ τοὺς ὑπὲρ Σύρων) who had revolted, implying a clear distinction between those Jews who revolted and those who did not.⁵⁸ It is certainly true that we hear of nothing that would contradict the view that Jewish populations outside the zones of revolution were left unaffected – the special arrangements relating to the preservation of a Jewish way of life in certain cities in Asia Minor, for instance seem to have been retained; and Justin gives no hint in his brief discussion of Trypho's flight from the Bar Kokhba revolt that he was experiencing harassment in Asia Minor or Greece, a significant point given the relative frequency with which the revolt is mentioned in the *Dialogue*. It is also significant that insofar as we hear of persecutions during the century, these are carried out against Christians, not Jews;⁵⁹ that the reign of Antoninus Pius possibly witnessed a piece of positive legislation on behalf of Jews;⁶⁰ and that the latter part of the century and beyond witnessed a rapprochement in Jewish-Roman relations.⁶¹ There is, however, also evidence,

⁵⁷ *A.J.* 12.121-2. See also *B.J.* 7.100-11.

⁵⁸ Pausanias, *Graeciae descriptio* 1.5.5.

⁵⁹ The possibility that a persecution of the Jews followed the Bar Kokhba revolt in which it was prohibited to observe the law is supported by some rabbinic sources, but finds no support anywhere else, even in Christian sources, which, as we have noted, emphasise, for anti-Jewish purposes, the negative consequences of the revolt. Schwartz 2004, 37, following Schäfer, suggests that the rabbinic traditions, which are mainly found in the Babylonian Talmud, and not in earlier authorities, may have arisen from the tradition that Hadrian forbade the Jews from circumcising their male children, found in the *Historia Augusta, Hadriani* 14.2. Some doubt the authenticity of this tradition, however.

⁶⁰ The legislation recorded in the *Digest* 48.8.11 is ambiguous in the Latin. It could mean that a piece of legislation which had forbidden circumcision is now being repealed, here referring to a repeal of the Hadrianic legislation, mentioned above; or it could be an attempt to restrict who in fact could legitimately be circumcised. Certainly if the legislation forbidding circumcision had been passed by Hadrian, there is no sign that the prohibition is in force in the time of Justin. For further discussion see Smallwood 1981, 469-70.

⁶¹ Stern 1980, 309, notes that Galen's references to Jews lack "carping remarks about the Jewish way of life or the misanthropy, superstitious customs, or other frequently heard anti-Jewish allegations. This omission may be accounted for in part at least by the

admittedly very fragmentary, that the reign of Antoninus may in fact have witnessed a Jewish rebellion,⁶² that Jews may have been involved in the revolt of the Legate of Syria, Avidius Cassius, against Marcus Aurelius in 175 C.E.,⁶³ and that there may have been a Jewish revolt against the Romans in 197 C.E., during the reign of Septimius Severus.⁶⁴ However, the evidence for rebellious behaviour in the reign of Antoninus is at best vague;⁶⁵ events surrounding Avidius can be interpreted so as not to imply a revolt, but rather an action dictated by political expediency;⁶⁶ and the evi-

period in which Galen wrote. After 160 C.E. the 'Jewish question' had become less acute both in its effect upon Roman policy and in the life of the Greek cities." But it is difficult, on the basis of evidence (Stern cites none) to support this generalised comment. Haas 1997, 104f., takes a similar view, noting that once the Bar Kokhba revolt had been suppressed, "the Roman government seemed content to establish a *modus vivendi* with the Jews of the Empire." He cites rabbinic evidence favourable in particular to Caracalla, and contrasts the tone and content of Dio's account of the Jews (*Hist.* 37.17.1-4) with that of the polemic of Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.2-5. Goodman 2007, 505, notes the existence of a dedicatory inscription dating from 197 C.E. which requests "the safety of our lords, emperors, Caesars, Lucius Septimius Severus Eusebes Pertinax Augustus and Marcus Aurelius [Anton]inus ... [and G]eta, his sons ... [by] vow [prayer?] of Jews." (*CIJ* 972). Such an inscription, Goodman argues, may reflect hopes for the beginning of a new era. Both Jerome, *Expl. Dan.* 11.34/5, and the *Historia Augusta*, *SHA Alex. Sev.* 22.4, indicate positive relations between the Jews and the Severi, as does the decision, recorded by Ulpian, citing a law of Severus and Caracalla, in the *Digest* 50.2.3.3, which allowed those who followed the Jewish *superstitio* to serve on councils and should perform duties "which do not transgress their *superstiti*." For this law and the possibility that it merely confirms an existing law, rather than instituting a new one, see Lapin 1995, 11-12 n. 27.

⁶² See *SHA Ant. Pius* 5.4 which mentions Germans and Dacians and many nations and also the Jews, who were rebelling.

⁶³ Evidence for such involvement is found in Dio, *Hist.* 71.25.1. In the speech attributed to Marcus Aurelius by Dio, he informs his legions that "Cilicians, Syrians, Jews and Egyptians have never been superior to you and never will be."

⁶⁴ This thesis is sustained by noting that Eusebius in his *Chronicon* refers to a *Iudaeicum et Samariticum bellum*, which is dated by Jerome year 5 of Septimius Severus for the year 197, a year in which the *Historia Augusta* for the life of Severus (*SHA Septimius Severus* 9.5) speaks of a Jewish triumph for the young Caracalla "because Severus had been successful in Syria too"; and by noting that Tertullian, in attempting to support the idea that millennium will be enjoyed in a new Jerusalem which will come down from heaven, points to the sight of a heavenly city seen in Judea during the eastern expedition, i.e. Severus' second Parthian campaign of 197 (see *Marc.* 3.24.4). These pieces of evidence are combined to argue that the Jews, sustained by hopes and expectations of some kind, revolted. For a recent defence of this view see Horbury 2002, 285-7; and for relevant bibliography and a helpful report on the state of the question see Lapin 1995, 8-11.

⁶⁵ See Lapin 1995, 8 n. 19.

⁶⁶ This was no revolt but, as Smallwood notes, a sign of prudence in favouring the side locally in power in the impending civil war (Smallwood 1981, 482).

dence for a “Samaritan and Jewish war” is also ambiguous.⁶⁷ Furthermore, though as indicated, there is some evidence for negative attitudes to Jews in the period following the revolts, in particular in the view that they were a rebellious and impious people, we should first note that many of these attitudes should not be distinguished from attitudes during the preceding period; and that some writers could express positive views.⁶⁸ In addition whatever inscriptional evidence there is seems to point to a life marked by normality rather than disaster or strain, and this applies to communities in Africa, Rome and Asia Minor, although such epigraphic evidence cannot be used to draw any wide-ranging conclusions. Christian writers, who were often quick to note the sad state of Jews in Palestine, almost never seek to apply their comments to the state of Jews in the Diaspora. The Romans may have thought that their successful ending of the Palestinian question and their destruction of the Jewish Jerusalem, eradicated the area out of which so much Jewish sedition had emerged. The absence of Jews from the legislative record may point to a kind of indifference encouraged by the fact that they no longer had a land of their own.⁶⁹ Jewish populations throughout the empire may well have been in a position to recover just as it seems Jewish populations in Mesopotamia who suffered so grievously during the Trajanic revolt appear to have recovered afterwards.⁷⁰

In this context, and in part stimulated by our reference to possible disturbances under the Severi, it is also worth considering what happened to Jewish hopes in the wake of these revolts. Both revolts resulted from, or stimulated, messianic hopes and aspirations; and one wonders to what degree these persisted. Those who have concentrated on Mishnaic evidence, in particular Jacob Neusner, have wanted to play down the importance of messianic expectation as a feature of the second and later centuries, in part as a reaction against the failure of Bar Kokhba. But Justin, interestingly,

⁶⁷ Those who would deny the fact of the revolt point to those sources which appear to evidence favour shown by the Severi to the Jews, cited above, and the lack of any rabbinic evidence of the revolt (against this Horbury 2002, quotes *Midrash Zuta* on Canticles 1.6 where the reign of the Severi is seen as one of the three long reigns in which the Jews will have to suffer punishment). For relevant bibliography see Lapin 1995, 8-11. Elements of the chronology have also been questioned (see Smallwood 1981, 488, n. 7), and this has led some to associate it with the war that Septimius fought against Pescennius Niger in 193. Alon, taking a possibly eccentric view of the Latin, reads it as indicating the cooperation of Jew and Samaritan in the war against Pescennius.

⁶⁸ See Numenius’ positive attitude to Moses, quoted by a number of church fathers and cited and commented upon in Stern 1980, 209-16. Rajak 2009, 269-70, sees Numenius’ interest in the Jewish God as reflecting “an age of ... intense engagement between philosophies and religions.” Note also that a number of writers, including Pausanias, mention the Jews neutrally.

⁶⁹ Simon implies that this was the view of some Diasporan Jews.

⁷⁰ See Neusner 1969.

has no trouble depicting Trypho as retaining what one might call millennial hopes;⁷¹ and it is possible, as William Horbury has argued, that Christian millennial expectation, so much a feature of second century texts, reflected tendencies in the Jewish community.⁷² As we noted above, Tertullian seems to appeal to the sight of a heavenly city in Judea in 197 C.E. as support for his conviction that the new millennium would consist in a restored Jerusalem. We might also point to the ongoing transmission and updating of texts like *Sibylline Oracles* 5 and 8, which both pulsate with eschatological passages; and more generally to the fact that the disaster of 70 did not lead to an extinction of messianic expectation.⁷³ The fact that Celsus could famously reduce the arguments between Jews and Christians to a dispute about the Messiah, described by him polemically, as revolving around the shadow of an ass (*Cels.* 3.1; see also 4.2 where Celsus refers to Jews who deny that Christ has come but hope that he will do so), might indicate the widespread character of these hopes. And yet again we should beware of generalising from a small evidential base.⁷⁴

Jewish identity

As we noted, Seth Schwartz has argued strongly for the view that following the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in 70 C.E. and the Bar Kokhba revolt, Jewish identity, marked up to that point by an attachment to God, temple and Torah, and, crucially, supported by successive imperial rulers, was shattered, not least because what had once sustained it, the temple, the ruling Jewish class, and a degree of autonomy, had now disappeared as the Romans annexed the area and ruled it directly. For most Jews in the period following, Judaism may have been little more than a vestigial identity; and it was only the rabbis, whose influence was barely discernible beyond their own circle, who succeeded in preserving a form of the pre-70 identity, and came forward to lead a kind of re-judaisation from the 350s onwards.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Note, *inter alia*, *Dial.* 80-1; 109-10.

⁷² Horbury 2002.

⁷³ See Noy 2006, on the problem of interpreting the symbols on the frescoes at Dura.

⁷⁴ Goodblatt 2006, 204f., while not explicitly discussing millennial and messianic hopes, argues strongly for the ongoing importance for Jews in the period following the first revolt and Bar Kokhba of what he terms nationalistic ideas of territory, temple and kingship, the last of which was given particular expression, he contends, in ideas surrounding the Patriarch and Exilarch in Babylonia, both of which clearly made use of Davidic ideas of monarchy.

⁷⁵ Schwartz's thesis is to be distinguished from that of Mendels 1997, in that he goes beyond Mendels' claim that it was the Jewish state that fell, as well as an active desire to create that state, and argues that it was the cultural and religious expression of Judaism that shattered. On this, see Goodblatt 2006, 206.

Schwartz's thesis, which he describes as "moderately positivistic" (that is, he accepts that generalising about the past is possible, but that it must always be done with cautious skepticism), is based in part upon what he sees as the consequences of direct Roman rule, in other words, annexation; in part upon what is absent from the record (a proliferation of artefacts, inscriptions etc. displaying clear signs of Jewishness), and in part upon what actual evidence exists. In relation to the last of these Schwartz places a lot of emphasis upon the prevalence of pagan iconography both in household decorations and upon coins in towns which are generally held to have a majority Jewish population. Writing about the coinage discovered in Tiberias and Lydda with their images of pagan gods (Zeus in his temple, and Hygeia and Tyche), he states: "It is normally assumed that gods depicted on city coins, especially in cultic situations, were beneficiaries of public worship. If so, the gods of the Tiberian, Sepphorite, and Lyddan coins cannot all be dismissed as metaphors, since all these cities issued coins showing gods seated in temples, which strongly suggests that gods were actually worshipped."⁷⁶ While not arguing for a simple correspondence between the iconography of coins and the identity of the civic religion of the city which issued the coins, Schwartz still argues for what he terms "at least a *rough* correspondence",⁷⁷ conscious, as he is, of the bevy of scholars who have sought, in a variety of ways, to downplay the significance of such evidence for determining the religious predilections of the Jews. Syria Palestine, then, emerges as like any other province in the Roman empire, both socially and culturally.⁷⁸ In all of this the rabbis appear as a beleaguered minority, with a "loose periphery of supporters", forced in part to accommodate themselves to the paganism of their surrounds.⁷⁹

Schwartz's thesis is an arresting one, not least because, although based upon a 'moderate positivism', it arrives at such radical conclusions (admittedly, about Palestine exclusively). Those who have sought to question it have done so on a number of grounds.⁸⁰ First, it is an interpretative hypothesis, for as Fergus Millar has pointed out, "evidence for Jews who did

⁷⁶ Schwartz 2001, 139.

⁷⁷ Schwartz 2001, 140.

⁷⁸ "Now if we approached the archaeology of high imperial northern Palestine without knowing that many of its inhabitants were Jews, some of whom were responsible for that utterly countercultural book, the *Mishnah*, I doubt we would think Palestine was much different from any other Roman province of the second and third centuries." (Schwartz, 2001, 205).

⁷⁹ By setting up a contrast between the massively represented rabbinic evidence and the implications of archaeological evidence, in broad terms Schwartz follows a path trodden with monumental steps by Erwin Goodenough. Schwartz 2001, 7-8, acknowledges this fact, and his indebtedness to Jacob Neusner's understanding of the rabbinic material.

⁸⁰ For two detailed responses, see Millar 2006; and Miller 2007.

not live in a way which was consistently Jewish is by definition difficult to isolate; and furthermore there is relatively little documentary evidence for private or communal life in Syria Palaestina as lived by any ethnic group.”⁸¹ It is precisely this lack of documentary evidence about Jews and the way they lived,⁸² to which Schwartz rightly draws attention, which may in part serve to explain how in the same year two very different accounts of Jewish life in Syria Palestine could appear.⁸³ Secondly, Schwartz may be said not to have taken sufficient account of the level of destruction caused by the Bar Kokhba revolt and the extent of the Graeco-Roman paganisation that followed. Again Millar is worth quoting: “What we actually see is not in fact a ‘Jewish’ world whose Jewishness has become attenuated, but a pagan world in which there were also Jewish communities.”⁸⁴ It is perfectly possible that Jews continued in such an environment to live as Jews but that, unsurprisingly perhaps, not much of a footprint of their lives has been left in the extant evidence.⁸⁵ Interpreting the implications for Jewish cultural and religious life of the presence of pagan iconography on coins in towns like Tiberias or Lydda, or of a pagan mosaic in a Jewish triclinium at Sepphoris, all towns with apparently large Jewish populations, is, as Schwartz himself admits, difficult. However, although he argues for a ‘rough correspondence’ between religious iconography and civic religion, he in fact goes for a generally maximalist interpretation, which many would dispute, although part of his argument when discussing the numismatic iconography of predominantly Jewish towns like Lydda and Tiberias is based upon a strongly held conviction that the *bouleutai* or counsellors of the city would have been Jewish, and so the issuing of such coins becomes more significant.⁸⁶ Schwartz is able to present some evi-

⁸¹ Millar 2006, 144.

⁸² Schwartz does not always make use of what evidence is available. So he fails to mention Lucian’s account of Peregrinus’ activities with Palestinian Christians in *Peregrinus* 11-13. The account, in which Peregrinus is described as being made “head of the synagogue” (συναγωγῆς), and which mentions Christian scribes and priests, and Jesus the lawgiver, depicts a Christianity somewhat Jewish in character, and possibly reflecting the religious environment in which it was located.

⁸³ Contrast Schwartz 2001, as described above, with Belayche 2001, 293: “The Jewish elite, Hellenized but strong in number and surrounded by famous scholars, had nothing to fear from adopting the system of Greco-Roman cultural representation as a common language, knowing its faith and its practices to be safe due to its strict rules.” And further on: “The Jewish community did not suffer any ‘paganisation.’”

⁸⁴ Millar 2006, 144.

⁸⁵ Millar 2006, 146, thinks that the low profile of Jewish communities in this period might be due to the low level of epigraphic habit, to be contrasted with the higher level of such a habit in Asia Minor.

⁸⁶ See Belayche 2001, 91-5, and her discussion of the same coins at Tiberias. She notes that until Trajan’s time, when the city was Jewish, the iconography of the coins

dence of Jews who behaved in a pagan manner (people with Jewish names making pagan dedications in Scythopolis, for instance) but rather than seeing such evidence as proof of a shattering of Jewish identity in Palestine, could we not see this as one of a number of responses to the situation in which Jews found themselves?⁸⁷ Or at least not as implying the level of paganisation he assumes? Service on a pagan council, for instance, need not have led to wholesale abandonment of Jewish identity, as Schwartz proposes. In this context it is worth noting a fact that we have already mentioned that according to Ulpian in the *Digest* (*Digest* 50.2.3.3), Septimius Severus and Caracalla had laid down that Jews could hold public offices and have functions imposed upon them as long as it did not offend their *superstitio*. The passage, which does not refer to Jews in any one region of the Empire, could imply that service on such councils had before this piece of legislation been offensive to Jews, a point which need not support Schwartz's thesis (before this the vast majority of Jews had not wanted to serve on such councils precisely because they found such service offen-

was largely neutral (anchors and palm trees, though also Tyche with a cornucopia), but she notes that after this the representation began to give more sign of its integration into the pagan world (the appearance of Tyche, Hygeia and Zeus seated within a temple). She argues, however, that such "coinage announced firstly a profession of cultural faith, more than an expression of cults on the site." (Belayche 2001, 93-4). Similarly she argues that the representation of a Capitoline triad on coin from Antoninus Pius' reign in Sepphoris is merely an expression of political loyalty and a sign of the "political transformation of the city ..." (Belayche 2001, 89). See also Belayche 2001, 38-44, for a clearer statement of her interpretative approach to coins containing religious iconography. While, as we can see from the two quotations above, her tendency is to politicise the iconography on coins in cities with significant Jewish populations, she also takes more seriously than Schwartz the role of the rabbis in preserving Jewish identity by developing ways of living in pagan environments. *Contra* Schwartz she appears to assume pagan controlled towns.

⁸⁷ See Millar 2006, 147. Miller 2007, 348, accuses Schwartz of a somewhat crude approach to the question of Jewish identity which adopts an either/or approach to the evidence. "... Schwartz's paganized Jews whose Judaism had imploded leave practically no room for Jews (other than the exceptional rabbis and some tag-alongs) who ... might have appropriated pagan material culture *within a Jewish context*. In the end ethnic differences may have resulted in "a complex web of overlapping stylistic boundaries" that reflected material culture and *defies* homogeneity." Schwartz does in fact accept at least an element of what Miller claims he does not, but only for a very small minority of people: "This loose periphery of supporters (of the rabbis) consisted of people who in most respects lived normatively Greco-Roman lives and whose Jewishness was strictly compartmentalised (e.g., perhaps they refrained from eating pork and circumcised their sons but participated without hesitation in public festivals)." (Schwartz 2001, 175-6). Of course, Schwartz does not see these individuals as appropriating their Jewishness in a pagan context in the kind of complex way argued for by Miller.

sive).⁸⁸ Mention here of multiple responses to a situation of intense paganism would, of course, reflect no more than what is witnessed in the Diaspora where Jews responded in a variety of ways to their setting but were often successful in retaining their own sense of identity.⁸⁹

Other criticisms could be made. Some of these relate to Schwartz's interpretation of a number of rabbinic passages as implying a kind of accommodative stance towards paganism brought on by the extremity of its adoption by Jews;⁹⁰ his possible underestimation of the implications for his thesis of the production of the *Mishnah*, which as Millar stresses, is within the context of the Roman Empire remarkable and indicative of the existence of a network of Jewish communities largely "'invisible' in the archaeological and documentary record";⁹¹ and the fact that much of the evidence he produces for his thesis relates to elites and not necessarily to the invisible 'Mr. Average'. To some it might also be difficult to imagine how it was that any form of Judaism arose from the ashes of Jewish identity so brilliantly described by Schwartz.⁹² Schwartz does assume an ongoing sense of Jewish ethnicity amongst Jews, and it is no doubt the survival of this, to be distinguished from Schwartz's essentially ideological understanding of identity, which enables Judaism to revive after about 350 C.E. But Schwartz holds such ethnic self-understanding as 'vestigial'⁹³ and 'mild',⁹⁴ and one wonders whether such would have been sufficient for the kind of revival Schwartz posits.⁹⁵

Schwartz's thesis is restricted to Palestine, and in correspondence he has seemed reluctant to apply it to the Diaspora, even though the Diaspora,

⁸⁸ As we have indicated above, there is no way of telling whether such legislation simply confirms something which had existed before, or institutes something new.

⁸⁹ "In the end, the notion of a near total implosion of Judaism seems far-fetched, a hypothesis based on Schwartz's inability to imagine Jews being Jews within a pagan context." (Miller 2007, 350).

⁹⁰ See Miller 2007, 342-3, and his very different interpretation of the *j. 'Abod. Zar.* 3.42c.

⁹¹ See Millar 2006, 150.

⁹² Miller 2006, 347. We might also wonder, if Schwartz is right, why mass defections from Judaism did not, as far as we know, take place after 70. On all of this see Mason 2007, 502. For the period from 70-135, see Millar 2006, who notes that Schwartz fails to make use of the evidence there is for Jewish life in this period, which points to a mixed response to the post-70 situation.

⁹³ Schwartz 2001, 15.

⁹⁴ Schwartz 2001, 103.

⁹⁵ For a helpful discussion of Schwartz's understanding of Jewish identity and his understanding of the relationship between the ethnic and the cultural, see Goodblatt 2006, 206-9. Goodblatt is keener than Schwartz to link ethnic and cultural factors when he writes "(i)n view of the survival of the kinship factor, one wonders if some cultural factors survived."

as noted above, gives evidence of Jews living in exclusively pagan settings. The situation there does not bear out his thesis. There are no inscriptions which support it, although it is possible that we possess many second century inscriptions which appear to be pagan but are in fact Jewish.⁹⁶ While pagan and Christian sources are difficult to assess, they both seem to assume that Jewish identity was of the kind Schwartz regards as shattered by the revolt in 66 C.E. In Christian comments on Jews their commitment to the law and more generally to scripture loom large as a part of their identity. For instance, Justin's Trypho bases his principal attack upon his Christian interlocutor on the fact that the latter fails to observe the Jewish laws; he insists on the ongoing legitimacy of observing the law in spite of Justin's claim that destruction of the temple and expulsion from the land presents a challenge to it. Of his commitment to scripture and its interpretation there can be no doubt; and Justin seems to assume that such study will take place in synagogues,⁹⁷ a point supported by the frescoes of biblical scenes in the synagogue at Dura Europos, although these date from the middle third century. Pagan sources also fail to support the thesis of a shattered identity. Celsus is explicit on a number of occasions about the fact that the Jews better exemplify the proper way of living in the empire precisely because they have ethnic practices to which they adhere, and from which Christians have apostatised.⁹⁸ The fact that some of these criticisms are placed in the mouth of a Jew is significant. The legitimacy of using

⁹⁶ Schwartz is able to make his argument in relation to Palestine because of the appearance of pagan iconography on the decoration of buildings, or on coins, in cities like Tiberias that we know to be Jewish.

⁹⁷ *Dial.* 47.4; 72.3; 96.2. Our evidence for synagogues in the second century is not great. We have suggested that the synagogue at Stobi could date from that time, but that is by no means the majority opinion. Some of the synagogue at Sardis could date from that time, but not the main structure, as could the synagogue at Thyatira. Rutgers 1998, 132-3, notes that almost all the inscriptions relating to synagogues date to the third century or later, partly because it was only from this period that "synagogues start to assume certain architectural features that made them recognizable as houses of Jewish worship." This means that it is very difficult to identify second century Jewish synagogues, and that the presence of a synagogal inscription will incline the scholar to attributing to it a date no earlier than the third century.

⁹⁸ In a number of publications, Goodman has argued for the view that Nerva's reform of the Jewish tax led to a reassessment of who a Jew was in terms of religion rather than ethnicity. If such a view were true, we might expect to see in the second century a gradual move to a clearer expression of Jewish identity. For an intelligent critique of Goodman's views, which seem to extract rather a lot out of rather a little, see Schwartz 2001, 188. Schwartz makes the good point that (a) ending delation as a means of collecting the tax need not have led to a different understanding of who a Jew was: all that was being ended was an abuse; and (b) all that Nerva appears to have been doing was restoring the situation to what had been the case before Domitian where the determination of liability for this tax was left to the Jews.

these witnesses, and indeed other ones, has been questioned. Are not Christians like Justin simply witnessing to a constructed form of Judaism, extracted from the Bible, and born of their own internal needs? How authentic is Celsus' Jew? And to what extent does Celsus himself display real knowledge of Jews?⁹⁹ Definitive judgement on all of this is difficult precisely because we lack supporting Jewish literary evidence, but the existence of synagogues, admittedly from a slightly later period, which give a prominent place to the permanent Torah shrine (see, for instance, the Torah shrine in the Sardean synagogue),¹⁰⁰ implies the ongoing importance of law and scripture.¹⁰¹ Moreover, Polycharmus, who restored the synagogue at Stobi in Macedonia, possibly, but by no means certainly, some time in the late second century,¹⁰² could speak about having led his life in accordance with Judaism (κατὰ τὸν Ἰουδαϊσμόν), alluding in public to a concept people could be assumed to understand.¹⁰³

We should, however, temper this vision of a confident Jewish presence within the Diaspora with a few cautionary words. First, we should be wary of arriving at too assured conclusions on the basis of archaeological evidence. We have already seen, for instance, that the famous inscription from Smyrna referring to "those who were once Jews" contributing to a public building in the city need not be interpreted as indicating something positive about Jews in that city. Similarly, we should beware of concluding too much about the Jewish community understanding and its relationship to its wider environment. This point is well made by Goodman and Rutgers, who both criticise Kraabel for arguing that the Sardis synagogue, which only became a synagogue in a period slightly later than the one we are interested in, on account of its size and position in the centre of the city, implies a highly integrated Jewish community. We should at least consider the possibility that the location of the synagogue was determined by a quest for status rather than being an expression of it;¹⁰⁴ and the mere size of the syn-

⁹⁹ See a balanced assessment of some of the relevant Christian evidence in Lieu 1996.

¹⁰⁰ Rutgers 1998, 27 and 122, for the development of the Torah shrine.

¹⁰¹ See Lieu 1996, 141.

¹⁰² Hengel, along with a number of other scholars, dates it to the late third century partly because of the heavy fine set by Polycharmus, and the mentioning of the Patriarchate in Palestine. Others, on palaeographic and archaeological grounds, go for a mid-second century date. The relevant arguments and the scholars connected with them are included in the discussion of Noy, Panayotov and Bloedhorn 2004, 70-1.

¹⁰³ See Noy, Panayotov, Bloedhorn 2004, 63f. for the text and comment. How people understood 'Judaism' remains a question. Noy, Panayotov and Bloedhorn 2004, 64, seem to assume a clear reference to Jewish laws, hence their translation "(prescriptions of) Judaism." For a recent discussion, playing up the difficulty of knowing precisely what is meant by the term, but inclining towards an ethnic rather than a religious/ideological understanding, see Mason 2007, 479-81.

¹⁰⁴ See Rutgers 1998, 22.

agogue indicates nothing about the acceptability of Jews to their Gentile neighbours. As Goodman notes, the Jewish community in Alexandria had a large synagogue (*t. Sukkah* 4.6), but this hardly signified good relations with the Greek population of the city.¹⁰⁵ A critical engagement with the ‘lachrymose’ typology described at the beginning of this article is necessary, but it should not be replaced by an uncritical endorsement of its opposite,¹⁰⁶ especially when that is based upon such fragmentary and ambiguous evidence.¹⁰⁷

Relevant to this discussion is the question of regional variation in the position, status, and character of Jewish communities. For instance, it would seem clear that the community of Jews in Alexandria and Egypt, Cyrenaica and Cyprus experienced the century in a manner that was probably different from that of the Jews of Asia Minor, principally as a result of the Trajanic revolt and its aftermath, and that Jews in Palestine experienced it in a manner that was different again. It is also probable that such comments could be made for the Jewish populations of individual cities.

Similarly, Polycharmus’ reference to ‘Judaism’ should not lead us to assume a monolithic Judaism in the Diaspora. Kraabel in a number of publications has sought to promote a view of diversity dependent upon locality particularly as this manifests itself in terms of organisation or wealth.¹⁰⁸ Establishing ideological diversity is more difficult, and made doubly so by the lack of Jewish literature in Greek for the period.¹⁰⁹ The inscriptional evidence is rarely helpful in this respect, not least because we tend to identify an inscription as Jewish only if it has unambiguous Jewish features: there may be many Jewish inscriptions which represent the views of, for instance, Jews at ease with the religious language of their pagan neighbours, which we are unable to identify. It is possible that the Jewish sects, identified by Josephus, and the New Testament, continued to exist well beyond 70. Josephus refers to them in the present as if they existed at the

¹⁰⁵ Goodman 1996, 210. Note his comment: “It is quite possible that in both Alexandria and Sardis the erection of a large, prominent synagogue may have signified bravado by an embattled minority in a hostile environment.”

¹⁰⁶ Rutgers 1998, 22, sees this more positive typology as essentially a reaction to the lachrymose view.

¹⁰⁷ This equally applies to Simon’s view, which is reached by a kind of mirror reading of Christian anti-Jewish literature. So polemic against Jews, for Simon, often implies the presence of a powerful Jewish community. However, such an approach to the evidence is naïve. See my comments on readings of Melito’s *Peri Pascha* in this volume, pp. 69-71.

¹⁰⁸ Note in this respect Trebilco’s attempt to contrast the Jewish communities in Sardis and Priene (Trebilco 1991, 56-7).

¹⁰⁹ See Goodman 2009, 211, who also argues that what he terms the “solipsism of the rabbis” whereby other Jewish opinion was only mentioned insofar as it had “an impact on adult male rabbinic Jew” (*ibid.*, 212), can contribute to this view of an undifferentiated Judaism.

time he was writing towards the end of the first century C.E.¹¹⁰ Justin (*Dial.* 80.4), and a number of later patristic authors, including Hegesippus (quoted by Eusebius at *Hist. eccl.* 4.22.5 and 7), Epiphanius (*Haer.* 1.14f.), the *Apostolic Constitutions* 6.6.1-7, Pseudo-Jerome (*Indic. Haereseorum*), and Isidore of Seville (*Etymolog.* 8.4), mention lists of sects, ranging in number from seven to ten. Justin's list, the most ancient, probably has inspired many of the other lists. Of the sects he mentions two are well-known (Sadducees and Pharisees) but the other five appear for the first time. Who Hellenians and Galileans are is unclear.¹¹¹ 'Meristai' and 'genistai', with their respective derivations from *μερίζω* and *γένος*, could be taken together to refer to separatist groups, who possibly exclude themselves, or are excluded, from the mainstream (here emphasising the meaning of *μερίζω* as separate and *γένος* as the equivalent of the Hebrew 'min'). If the latter is right, it could provide evidence of the synagogue's capacity to exclude, although such a conclusion has to be treated with considerable caution.¹¹² The fact that the list presents so many problems, not the least of which is the fact that all of the sects are presented as heresies (in what sense were the Sadducees and Pharisees heretics?¹¹³), and that it numbers seven,¹¹⁴ thought by some to be formulaic, might lead us to doubt that it describes real sects. But such a view is probably overly skeptical. As Goodman has pointed out, there is no compelling reason to think that Jewish sects ceased to exist after the first revolt,¹¹⁵ even if we lack indepen-

¹¹⁰ See *B.J.* 2.119; *A.J.* 18.12, 16, 18; *Vita* 10.

¹¹¹ Some have seen Galileans as another name for zealots after their apparent founder, Judas the Galilean. Others think it an alternative name for the Christian sect of the Nazoreans, mentioned by Epiphanius at *Pan.* 29. Hellenians have been variously identified with Elchasaites, Helenians in the sense of followers of Simon Magus' companion, Helen (these two on the basis of textual emendations), and Hellenists (Hellenized, Greek-speaking Jews). On all of this with relevant bibliography, see Bobichon 2002, 17-18.

¹¹² Some take either one or both of these terms to be references to Jewish Christians understood as the 'minim' of rabbinic literature. See Bobichon 2002, 15-16.

¹¹³ This problem might be overcome by arguing that Justin is copying a Jewish list in which *αἰρέσεις* is used as it is by Josephus to refer to philosophical schools, and not heresies in the Christian sense.

¹¹⁴ The list might only number six sects if we take *φarisαίων βαπτιστῶν* together to refer to "baptistic Pharisees". This is the view of Bobichon 2002, 17-18, who argues that such a sect could be seen as sub-movement within Pharisaism which was ultra-strict and so possibly viewed as heretical.

¹¹⁵ Goodman 1994c; and most recently, Goodman 2009. He argues for the view, mentioned above, that Josephus assumes the existence of the sects at the end of the first century; and he also attributes some importance to the patristic lists. He cites rabbinic passages referring to Sadducees, and entertains the possibility that the rabbinic term *minuth* may contain within its ambit reference to Jewish sects with whom the rabbis did not agree. He also notes that in the absence of the temple, which before 70 had been a shared

dent evidence for their existence beyond what we read in Justin and later Christian witnesses; and it is difficult to see why Justin would invent the names he does.

Hebrew, Bible versions and LXX

Most agree that the *Mishnah* was compiled at the beginning of the third century, or a little after. This is the beginning point of a great revival of interest in the Hebrew language. But are there other signs of interest in Hebrew in the second century? The first piece of evidence relates to the Hebrew letters of Bar Kokhba found at the Wadi Murabba'at and Nahal Hever. Nicholas de Lange has argued that we should not exaggerate their importance. First, they are composed in a highly charged nationalistic atmosphere in which Hebrew can be seen as an expression of patriotism (notice, for instance, the old jagged characters of the Hebrew found on Jewish coins minted during the revolt). Secondly, only five out of the fifteen letters are in Hebrew (8 are in Aramaic, and 2 in Greek); and in one of the letters in Greek the sender apologises for writing in Greek, stating that there is no one amongst his companions who can write Hebrew. All of this for de Lange leads to the conclusion that "(t)he use of Hebrew in the Bar Kosiba letters ... is likely to be an artificial effort due to nationalistic principles",¹¹⁶ and should not be taken, by extension, to hint at the beginnings of a Hebrew revival. This he associates rather with the writing of the *Mishnah*, which he dates conventionally to the early third century. For him there is no other evidence, outside of the Bar Kokhba letters, for the writing of Hebrew in the second century. Philip Alexander approaches the question from a different perspective.¹¹⁷ He argues that the Greek version of Aquila was written exclusively to promote the study of Hebrew (hence its interlinear character, manifested in its one-to-one approach to translation, affecting word order, syntax and choice of words) in the western Diaspora, and was sponsored by the rabbis (here picking up on Barthélemy's view of Aquila as embodying rabbinic exegetical principles). Its production was the culmination point of a number of literalizing translations (known as *kaige*) going back to the second century B.C.E.¹¹⁸ Alexander goes on to argue that the version associated with Symmachus was similarly sponsored by the rabbis, probably in Caesarea, and had as its intention "to present the meaning of the Hebrew in more fluent Greek." In formulating

public space "about which each group argued", sects could exist in untroubled isolation from each other (Goodman 2009, 211).

¹¹⁶ De Lange 1996, 344.

¹¹⁷ See Alexander (forthcoming). See also for a brief summary of his case Alexander 2009, 85-7.

¹¹⁸ For this thesis Alexander is dependent upon the work of Barthélemy 1961.

this view about Symmachus, Alexander builds on some of the observations of Alison Salvesen who, in her work on Symmachus,¹¹⁹ had noted the extent to which the version reflected known haggadic and halakhic material, found in Targumic evidence. For Alexander “the rabbinic versions were Greek Targums intended to be recited alongside the Hebrew in the public reading of the Torah in the synagogue;” and they are proof that the rabbis made a concerted effort, through their *shelihim* who promulgated in the Diaspora these new aids to Hebrew learning, to ‘win the west’, and this against the claims of some that from an early stage they had given up on such hope and focused their attentions on the east.¹²⁰ Further evidence of such promotion of Hebrew to a Greek-speaking audience is also evidenced, Alexander maintains, in the second column of Origen’s *Hexapla* which consisted of transliterated Hebrew and was clearly an aid to reading the Hebrew text because it supplied the necessary vowels to the unvocalised Hebrew of the first column. Alexander suggestively proposes that this column was originally devised for use by Jews in the Greek-speaking synagogue of Caesarea.¹²¹

A number of points can be made:

(i) If we date the *Mishnah* to the early third century, Nicholas de Lange seems to have made a good case when he states that there is no further evidence of Hebrew writing in the second century beyond the evidence from the documents and coins associated with the Bar Kokhba revolt. Some, however, might want to qualify his observation by noting that the biblical text was somehow transmitted and that writing and study of the language went on, even if in specialised circles. But de Lange’s point relates to what he terms a ‘revival’ in the learning and writing of Hebrew, and that is probably less easy to recognise in the second century.

(ii) Alexander’s proposals, though stimulating and suggestive, are very difficult to prove. We do possess some evidence that Aquila’s translation was warmly received by the rabbis,¹²² and that it was used in synagogues, although the possible evidence for this is late,¹²³ and we also have evi-

¹¹⁹ Salvesen 1991.

¹²⁰ See Edrei and Mendels 2007 and 2008, discussed below. Note also Alexander 2009 for his view that the LXX of Lamentations may have been a rabbinic translation, preceding Aquila, but whose purpose, seen in its somewhat literal translation technique, was, at least in part, to promote the learning of Hebrew.

¹²¹ For some cautionary remarks on this suggestion about the Jewish origins of the second column, see de Lange 1976, 58. Alexander’s view of the provenance of Symmachus, indirectly alluded to here, was originally suggested by Salvesen.

¹²² See *j. Meg.* 1.9.

¹²³ Justinian, *Novellae* 146, permits use of Aquila, along with the LXX, in synagogues. See Fernández Marcos 2000, 112. The view that Aquila actually was used in synagogues is a conjecture based upon the passage in the *Novellae*.

dence of Jewish usage of Aquila from the Cairo Genizah and elsewhere. Alexander's suggestion that Aquila's version acted as some kind of aid to learning Hebrew is as plausible as any explanation about the purpose of Aquila, but whether we can be certain that such an aid was promoted by the rabbis in an attempt to 'win the west' remains a question, in spite of Aquila's strong association in the rabbinic tradition with Akiba. Evidence about Symmachus is much sparser. He is not mentioned by the rabbis at all unless we accept Geiger's argument that he should be identified with Sumkos ben Yosef mentioned in the Talmud as a disciple of Rabbi Meir.¹²⁴ Certainly it is striking if Alexander's view of the purpose of Symmachus is right that we only have the bits of Psalms 68.13-14, 30-3; 80.11-14 published by Wessely as evidence for Jewish usage of the version,¹²⁵ and a raft of possible purposes for the translation have been suggested. Salvesen notes that it could have been written as a response to the difficult Greek style of Aquila, as an updated LXX in terms of style and exegesis, as a translation for cosmopolitan Greek-educated Jews,¹²⁶ or as something directed to non-Greeks; and that it is difficult to choose between these options. Matters are even hazier when it comes to determining the aims and purposes of Theodotion.¹²⁷

(iii) Some want to argue that the second century witnessed the gradual erosion of the authority of the LXX amongst Jews. The production of alternative versions must have had this effect, a point implied by Justin and Irenaeus, the latter of whom is the first to refer to the versions of Aquila and Theodotion (though not to Symmachus).¹²⁸ Justin, although he does not mention by name any non-LXX versions, shows in his *Dialogue with Trypho* that individuals were questioning not only the accuracy of some of his supposedly Septuagintal readings *qua* readings of the LXX, but also the legitimacy of certain Septuagintal readings.¹²⁹ Whether this shows that Justin has knowledge of Aquila or Aquila-like readings is not clear (he ap-

¹²⁴ On this see Fernández Marcos 2000, 123.

¹²⁵ In fact Christian usage of Symmachus is far better attested, and this may account for the tradition, found in Eusebius, that Symmachus was an Ebionite.

¹²⁶ See Fernández Marcos 2000, 126.

¹²⁷ See Fernández Marcos 2000, 142-53.

¹²⁸ See Irenaeus *Haer.* 3.21.1 where, in a discussion of the correct reading of Isa 7:14, the versions of Aquila and Theodotion are mentioned, and the respective translators are described as Jewish proselytes. There then follows a defence of the LXX through a repetition of the story of its origins, broadly based upon the *Letter of Aristeas*. The fact that Irenaeus fails to mention Symmachus has led some to assume an early third century date for this version.

¹²⁹ At *Dial.* 71.1 Justin states that "I am far from putting reliance in your teachers, who refuse to admit that the interpretation made by the seventy elders ... is a correct one." See also 43.8; 67.1; 68.7; 84.3; 131.1; 137.3. On the identification of these teachers and related problems, see Bobichon 2004, 765-7.

pears to betray knowledge of Theodotionic readings).¹³⁰ However, neither he nor any other second century Christian writer, evinces an interest in the original Hebrew, or indeed Jewish interest in promoting such a thing. This was to come with Origen, whose concern with the Hebrew, clear in his *Hexapla*, but also in many places in his homilies and commentaries, is taken by some scholars as reflective of a growing Jewish interest in the same.¹³¹ However, the idea of the abandonment of the LXX by Jews in the second century and beyond, and a Christian take-over of the same,¹³² an idea, which as Tessa Rajak has shown, has a history running from second-century Christian texts to more recent times, needs to be reconsidered.¹³³ Justin's testimony, for instance, need not point to any serious revision of the LXX, not least because, as Oskar Skarsaune has pointed out,¹³⁴ readings which Justin assumed to be Septuagintal but 'corrected' by Jews, were rather 'christianised' readings of the LXX, possibly made available to him in a Christian source, and so "there will have been little need for Jews to distrust the LXX."¹³⁵ Moreover, we cannot be certain how widespread was the popularity of a translation like that of Aquila. Certainly Origen asserts the popularity of Aquila in the third century (*Ep. Afr.* 2), but in the same letter (*Ep. Afr.* 6), he can hint at the use by Jews of a diversity of versions. In fact it is difficult to see how standardization of versions was possible in this period.¹³⁶ Moreover, it is possible to argue, along with Giuseppe Veltri,¹³⁷ that Tannaitic traditions to do with the LXX are much more positive (see *b. Meg.* 9a-b), and that such negative traditions only emerge even later at the time of Justinian, though in this latter observation Veltri is less convincing, not least in its disregard for the testimony about some Jewish attitudes to the LXX noted above in Justin and elsewhere. Inscriptional evidence indicates ongoing use of the LXX, as by implication does Justinian's *Novellae* 146 with its ruling that the reading of both Aquila and the LXX

¹³⁰ Justin's point may not be wholly unfounded as it seems clear that he knows of Jewish revisions of the 12 minor Prophets, which belongs to the so-called *kaige* recension.

¹³¹ See de Lange 1996.

¹³² Note Hengel's thesis that the Christian usage of the LXX stimulated negative feelings towards it amongst Jews, and that the collection of books associated with it, is an essentially Christian one originating in late first century Roman Christian liturgical usage (Hengel 2002). For a helpful summary of Hengel's thesis, and a respectful critique, see Horbury 1998a, 29-33.

¹³³ See Rajak 2009, 278-94.

¹³⁴ Skarsaune 1987, 26-138.

¹³⁵ Rajak 2009, 301.

¹³⁶ Rajak 2009, 305.

¹³⁷ See Veltri 1994.

were permissible in synagogues.¹³⁸ So while it is certainly true that the second century may give the earliest explicit evidence of the beginnings of a gradual erosion of the authority of the LXX (dissatisfaction with the LXX is only implied in the material from Nahal Hever), unambiguous evidence of this thesis is not available.

Rabbinic influence

Relevant to the discussion above is the whole question of rabbinic power and influence. We have already had reason to report Schwartz's thesis that the rabbis until at least the middle of the fourth century remained a beleaguered minority, eccentrically preserving a pre-70 sense of Jewish identity in the land of Israel. And there is much to support this. We lack, for instance, any use of the term 'rabbi' in inscriptional evidence until the epitaphs of the Beth Shearim tombs. It is hard to locate any evidence for Jews in Palestine or beyond following rabbinic rulings, or seeking them out (in Palestine, Schwartz maintains, annexation and the subsequent empowering of pagan councils would have meant that most significant legal decisions would have been taken by the governor and these councils). The Babatha archive, for instance, implies that even matters of halakhic significance were referred to the Roman authorities.¹³⁹ We struggle also to find compelling evidence for the influence of the Patriarchate, at least beyond the Galilee, much before the early to later part of the third century,¹⁴⁰ unless, of course, we date the famous Polycharmus inscription from Stobi, already mentioned above, to the second century.¹⁴¹ Some respond by noting places in Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho* where those termed 'teachers' and others are portrayed as sending out messengers to speak out against the godless heresy of the Christians and forbid Jews to converse with Christians (*Dial.*

¹³⁸ See Rajak 2009, 302-3. She argues that Justinian's granting of permission to read the LXX could only have had any real meaning if that document was still read by Jews.

¹³⁹ See Schwartz 2001, 69-71.

¹⁴⁰ This is broadly the consensus view expressed by Goodman 2000. He accepts the fact that the Gamaliel family, from which the Patriarchs were to come, enjoyed considerable prestige within Palestine before the rise of Judah the Prince at the end of the second century. However, he assumes that their political power only became a reality at the time of the latter, and then only in Galilee, and was only recognised by the Romans at the end of the fourth century, and then for a short period of time (approximately) 390-415 C.E., precisely because it is only from that time that we have explicit legislation on the Patriarch in Roman legal sources. For a critique of Goodman and others who broadly follow his position, and a robust endorsement of the idea of an early Patriarchate associated with the Gamaliel family, see Goodblatt 2001, 176-231.

¹⁴¹ See Goodblatt 2001, 137-8. He does not date the inscription to the second century but uses it as proof that by the middle of the third century the Patriarch's authority was acknowledged by Diasporan Jews.

17; 38; 108; 112; 117; 137), a point which appears to be confirmed by some rabbinic evidence where warnings are issued against interaction with ‘minim’ (*t. Hul.* 2.20-2; and later in *b. ‘Abod. Zar.* 17a and b). They combine this with evidence that rabbis travelled beyond Palestine; and argue that Origen’s reference (*Ep. Afr.* 14) to what looks like a patriarchal figure (he is in fact called an ethnarch by Origen) points to a relatively early influence of such a figure. Such counter-evidence has been thought to be problematic. So, for instance, Justin’s account of messengers being sent out from Jerusalem does not fit the post-70 period, and may be an “elaboration of Acts 28:21.”¹⁴² In addition, it can also be argued that the ‘teachers’ are a vague group of people to whom no real specificity is given, and who could be construed as acting as polar opposites to Christ;¹⁴³ and it has also been suggested that some of the measures against Christians to which Justin refers could well have been the result of local activity on the part of Jewish leaders.¹⁴⁴ Evidence, in late rabbinic passages, for travel need not be reliable, and even if it is, proves little when it comes to the question of determining rabbinic influence. Evidence for the influence of the Patriarch is again limited, although as we have noted, the Polycharmus inscription with its injunction that anyone who damages the synagogue should pay a fine to the Patriarch is often dated to the late third century because it is only then that the Patriarch can be understood to have had sufficient prestige to have received money for such a fine.

Mention of rabbinic power leads us, by a slightly circuitous route, to the recent contention of Edrei and Mendels that the period following the first Jewish revolt witnessed the development of two distinct Diasporas in the east and the west.¹⁴⁵ The former, so these scholars assert, was characterised by a linguistic penchant for Hebrew, the strong influence of the rabbis and literature associated with that movement, the latter by the use of Greek, a lack of institutional control, and an essentially biblical culture with no interest in the Mishnah, Talmud and other rabbinic texts. Such a set of circumstances reflected in broad terms a situation which had prevailed before 70 where, for instance, there are no signs of any Pharisaic influence on the western Diaspora. The consequences of such a ‘split’ for the west were considerable. “The lack of hierarchical and structured communication within the western Diaspora, and its isolation from the east, created a place for early Christianity to establish a foothold, and to build a structured

¹⁴² Lieu 1996, 131.

¹⁴³ Bobichon 2002.

¹⁴⁴ Lieu 1996, 132.

¹⁴⁵ Edrei and Mendels 2007 and 2008.

Christian hierarchy. The people who attached themselves to this hierarchy were Jews who were estranged from their brethren in the east.”¹⁴⁶

Such a statement could be seen to subscribe, albeit implicitly, to the rabbinization thesis of Jewish culture to which we referred earlier. Edrei and Mendels assume that a failure to adopt a rabbinic culture led to the collapse of Jewish culture in the west, resulting in a Christian take-over of a weakened and loosely-structured Judaism. The thesis involves consideration of evidence well beyond the second century, and so cannot be the object of detailed analysis here, but it implicitly attributes importance to this period insofar as it accords significance to the rabbinic movement for the ‘split’. Much of what they argue is based upon arguments from silence. They emphasise the lack of evidence in the western Diaspora for knowledge of Hebrew, *yeshivot*, important western rabbis, or knowledge of Mishnaic traditions. They also note the relative lack of information in the western Diaspora about an important rabbinical liturgical innovation, the Amidah. Interestingly, they invoke the relative lack of participation of the western Diaspora in the Trajanic revolt (aside from the Jews of Cyrenaica and Cyprus) as further support of their thesis of a split.

We have already noted Philip Alexander’s suggestion that the two versions of Aquila and Symmachus indicate an early attempt on the part of the rabbis to introduce Hebrew into the west, to ‘win the west’, as he has put it. Alexander’s work cautions us against a wholesale adoption of the ‘split’ thesis, which itself is based upon little positive evidence. Three other points which might contradict this thesis are: Origen’s interest in the Hebrew; the second column of the *Hexapla*, held by Alexander to be an aid to the pronunciation of Hebrew, and so another sign of interest in teaching Hebrew to those who did not know it; and mention in Jewish inscriptions of officials with a teaching function. The simple truth is that we know so very little about the western Diaspora for any final judgment to be made.

Christianity

We have already mentioned Christian sources which purport to engage with Jews, citing them, perhaps controversially, for the evidence they give us about Judaism. To this section we shall address the problem of the extent to which Christianity intruded upon Jewish consciousness in a century where it seems that Christians began more and more clearly to distinguish themselves from Jews. What does the emergence of a Christian literature specifically aimed against Jews imply?¹⁴⁷ And what of the appearance in

¹⁴⁶ Edrei and Mendels 2007, 130.

¹⁴⁷ Lieu 1996, 4, notes that there is a gap between the anti-Jewish concerns of John and what we find in Justin. She asks: “(W)hen the issue returns in the latter part of the

the same century of the Christian idea of heresy and the Jewish idea of *minuth*? Should we assume that Jews were, for whatever reason, more important to Christians than Christians for Jews? Was Jewish reaction to Christians more developed in Palestine than the Diaspora, a point possibly implied in known reaction to Christians in the Bar Kokhba revolt?¹⁴⁸ Are generalised statements of any kind on this matter possible?¹⁴⁹

Answers to these questions can only be skeletal. First, recent scholarship has made it clear that we should not be too quick to assume such clear distinctions between Christians and Jews as the *adversus Judaeos* literature would imply. Rather we should read these texts as wishing to create a state of separation, which did not exist on the ground where conceptions of religious identity were much more complex.¹⁵⁰ This development is a salutary warning against too literal a reading of ‘separatist’ texts, and serves to highlight material which would serve as evidence for non-separation. A partial moderation of this view lies in noting how a pagan writer like Pliny gives no indication that Christians have anything to do with Jews, how Tacitus, though he knows of Christianity’s origins in Judea, does not imply any ongoing connection with Jews, and how other writers, including Celsus, assume separation and use it to polemise against Christians.¹⁵¹ Secondly, when considering Jewish reaction to nascent Christianity we have to be aware of the absence of any Jewish literature from the second century which straightforwardly mentions Christians. Such silence has much to do with the limited nature of the Jewish material preserved but could also reflect a lack of concern with Christians on the part of Jews. As one scholar has put it: “(T)he relationship between Christians and Jews may generally have been important for Christians as part of their self-definition, but it was much less crucial for Jews, who could ignore what Christians did for most of Antiquity.”¹⁵² The claim that rabbis created a Twelfth Benediction in the *Amidah* (the so-called *Birkath ha-minim*) which cursed Christians, and had the effect of excluding them from the synagogue, continues to be disputed: none of the evidence cited in the New Testament (John 9:22) and elsewhere (Justin, *Dial.* 16; 92; 95; 96; 108; 123; 133; and 137.2) quite conforms with the contents of the relevant rabbinic passage, or the wording of the Twelfth Benediction as that has come down to us.¹⁵³ Even if we ac-

century, are we to speak of the revival of anti-Jewish polemic or merely of its reappearance to our view, and in either case what has provoked this situation?”

¹⁴⁸ See Skarsaune 1987 and 2007.

¹⁴⁹ See Becker and Reed 2003.

¹⁵⁰ See Lieu 2001; and Becker and Reed 2003.

¹⁵¹ For additional discussion of these passages, see pp. 9-11 in this volume.

¹⁵² Goodman 2003, 119.

¹⁵³ Justin comes closest to associating cursing with a prayer when he mentions scorning of Jesus at the behest of “Pharisee teachers” “after the prayer” (*Dial.* 137.2), but such

cept such an interpretation of the curse, considerable questions are raised about its effectiveness, not least because of questions about rabbinic power and influence, already raised above. While evidence does exist for contact, particularly in the form of exegetical traditions, or the transmission of Jewish texts, we should not be too hasty in adopting a reactive view of Jewish-Christian relations in this period. So, for instance, it is by no means self-evident that the creation of Jewish Greek versions different from the LXX was a reaction to Christian preference for the LXX – other explanations of this phenomenon exist; and Jewish attachment to the LXX probably continued throughout the century and beyond. It is also unclear that Jewish conceptions of *minuth* consciously aped Christian ideas of heresy. The Christian effect on Judaism in this period remains very difficult to determine.

A text from the second century?

I want to conclude by looking at a piece of literary evidence relevant to our discussion.¹⁵⁴ This text, claimed as Jewish as early as 1914, but discussion of which has been somewhat haphazard, is *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* 4-6. While the Jewish character of this section of the *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* is still disputed by some, there is little doubt in my opinion that it is Jewish.¹⁵⁵ Not only does this make best sense of the presence within it in a lead role of the figure of Apion, traditionally conceived of as an enemy of the Jews (and never of the Christians), but more importantly such an identification takes sufficient account of the fact that Clement, the hero of the piece, explicitly states that he has been converted to Judaism,¹⁵⁶ rather than as is customary in the *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies*, belief in the true prophet or Jesus. The section is probably datable to the middle of the second century,¹⁵⁷ and it probably forms part of a larger apologetic work. In its surviving part the author lambasts those he calls the Greeks for their immoral beliefs, in particular their myths, at one point attributing all of

scorning does not conform to any known form of the Twelfth Benediction (though on this now see Marcus 2009, 532-3). All the other references simply mention cursing of Christ or Christians in synagogues. For a detailed account of the subject and one which favours an early reference in the Twelfth Benediction to the Christians see Teppler 2007.

¹⁵⁴ For a much more detailed engagement with the source see the final chapter of this volume.

¹⁵⁵ See Strecker 1958.

¹⁵⁶ See *inter alia* 4.7, 13, 22; 5.28.2.

¹⁵⁷ Attempts to date it earlier, that is, before the Bar Kokhba revolt are based on precisely the kind of presuppositions I have referred to above, namely that such a work seemed inappropriate to an era following the Bar Kokhba revolt.

their learning to the most dreadful fabrication of a demon (4.12). He consistently contrasts these beliefs with the Jewish beliefs which, being based upon an ethically charged theism, promote a laudably moral disposition. At the centre of the work is a story from an apparently earlier meeting of Apion with Clement in which Apion had helped the love-sick Clement to write a letter to the girl he pretends to love (in fact Clement has no lover but he wishes to present the Jew-hating Apion with an explanation for his sickness which does not involve mentioning his religious quest) in which it is precisely the Greek myths, with their licentious depiction of the gods, which are used to attempt to persuade the mooted lover to give up her chastity. The work, which betrays much Hellenistic learning,¹⁵⁸ and some literary skill seems to carry a proselytic purpose, not dissimilar to that found in the later, and Christian, Clement of Alexandria's *Protreptikos*. In its radical opposition to Greek culture it stands in contrast to Philo and Josephus, and in the combination of Greek learning and anti-Greek polemic comes close to *Sib. Or.* 5, and to a number of Christian works of the second century. The work is a double-sided witness in our discussion of the disposition of Jews in this century. On the one hand it is strikingly hostile to the Greeks, possibly supporting the isolationism which forms a part of the lachrymose view of Jewish history; and on the other it shows strong evidence of an engagement with Greek culture and can be construed as an attempt to reach out to Greeks.

Is such a Greek work, written in the second century, eccentric? The Jew of Celsus demonstrates definite signs of Greek learning, even if Origen sees his ability to quote from Euripides, *Bacchae*, as evidence that he is a fabricated figure "because Jews are not at all well read in Greek literature" (*Cels.* 2.34),¹⁵⁹ a comment which appears polemically loaded, and may relate to the Jews whom Origen knew in Caesarea.¹⁶⁰ Numenius' positive

¹⁵⁸ See Adler 1993.

¹⁵⁹ See also 1.67 where Origen is subtly skeptical that a Jew could know so much about Greek mythology, commenting that the figure is presented "as though he were some Greek who loved learning, (ὧς φιλομαθῆς Ἕλληνα), and was well read, (πεπαιδευμένος), in matters Greek."

¹⁶⁰ See de Lange 1976, 6. Origen could have been reflecting his own experience of Jews, especially in Palestine. Note also 1.66 (quotation from Homer's *Iliad*); 1.67 (using ancient myths); and 2.55 (series of examples of figures from Greek history and mythology who were said to have been seen alive after their death), here without clear protest from Origen. See also Bammel 1986, 277. And how ought we to assess the figure of Trypho against this background? Justin portrays him as literate in matters Greek, including philosophy and mythology (compatible with both the author of the section from *Pseudo Clementine Homilies* and Celsus' Jew). He also shows himself confident about his own heritage. Bobichon 2003, 96-7, thinks that none of this militates against affirming the verisimilitude of Justin's picture of Trypho as a Jew from Palestine living in the Diaspora, although he goes on to assert that he is a representative of a plurality of Judaism.

views about the Jewish God and Moses may also betray contact with Jews at a deeper and more philosophical level, although we should remain very cautious about asserting that too strongly.¹⁶¹ As we have noted, Symmachus' use of apparently contemporary language has to some suggested an intended audience of Hellenised Greeks,¹⁶² and more recent work on the Septuagintal translation of the book of Ecclesiastes has indicated to some a second century date, in part arising from the translator's knowledge and sophisticated use of contemporary Greek. The possibility that ongoing transmission by Jews of works in Greek like the *Sibylline Oracles* and the writings of Philo and Josephus in the second century and beyond, already mentioned, points in the same direction.

These sporadic bits of evidence do not add up to a great deal, let alone an endorsement of the typical character of *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* 4-6. However, they do hint at least at a richer deposit of Greek Jewish material from this century and at the no doubt complex attitudes which Jews adapted to the non-Jewish world, attitudes which, as Marcel Simon argued many years ago, may have had more in common with the period which preceded than some have tended to think.

Conclusion

I can envisage two fundamental objections to this paper. Why focus on what would appear a rather arbitrary period of time? And why bother engaging in a discussion where the character of the evidence barely allows for any meaningful conclusions? In response to the first question I would appeal to the observations made at the beginning, namely that the century saw a number of significant developments, and while accounting for these may not be easy, reflecting on them may bring its benefits, not the least of which may lie in examining a period in Jewish history which is often the subject of only fleeting study. In answer to the second question, the aim of what we have written above has been precisely to show how little is in fact known in order to debunk, at least in part, theories which, even if only 'moderately positivistic', extrapolate from a very narrow base of fact to arrive at quite wide-ranging conclusions. Becoming aware of what assumptions have motivated such conclusions is itself a useful exercise.

A number of things, however, do emerge from the above:

(i) Many have seen the period running from the fall of Jerusalem in 70 through the second century as the beginning point of a 'lachrymose' account of Jewish history. This view, held by Jewish and Christian scholars

¹⁶¹ See Bohak 2000, for the relative lack of pagan concern with the Jewish God.

¹⁶² Fernández Marcos 2000, 126.

alike, but with different emphases,¹⁶³ tends to posit a growing isolationism against the background of increasing rabbinic power, and a disappearance of what we might term Hellenistic modes of expression seen in the absence of Jewish literature in Greek, and the willing surrender (to Christians) of the ancient Jewish Hellenistic heritage, manifested in the supposed abandonment of the Septuagint and the works of such writers as Philo and Josephus. The effect of such a view can be to erase from our sight the history of the communities of the western Diaspora.

(ii) But all aspects of this vision of second-century Jewish history can be challenged. The revolts were obviously consequential for the Jewish communities directly affected, but the view that they led to a breakdown of Jewish life more generally or ongoing oppression by the Romans is unproven. This is not, it would seem, the implication of the Christian evidence, or of other evidence available to us. It is difficult to demonstrate that the rabbis wielded much power beyond their own circles, at least until the fourth and fifth centuries. Moreover, it is not at all clear that Hellenistic Judaism suddenly disappeared. So the relative absence of Jewish literature in Greek in the second century should not lead us to posit a decline in the literary habit on the part of the Jews. There is evidence to support ongoing interest in Greek, and also of Greek literary activity both of which point to the creation of much more which has now disappeared. The conditions which led to the writings of a Philo or Josephus, still, in broad terms, pertained in the period following the three Jewish revolts. In all of this one should be much more open to the view that Jews continued to write and add to pseudepigrapha, and that the works of Philo or Josephus were transmitted by Jews well beyond the second century. There is some evidence to make us question whether the Septuagint “after serving as a fundamental resource for a large part of the Jewish community for several centuries, stopped doing so within a few years, with a speed altogether unusual in the slow-moving sphere of cultural history.”¹⁶⁴

(iii) While we may challenge the ‘lachrymose’ view of second century Jewish history, it is difficult to know with what to replace it. The evidence we have is too minimal and too ambiguous to enable us to proceed to any certain conclusions. The fact serves equally to undermine those who would posit a Judaism at once confident and integrated into its diasporic environment, a vision which, in its clear contradiction of the ‘lachrymose’ view, can be seen as uncritically reactive. And in all of this we need, as has been stated, to allow for regional variations in Jewish life although local evidence is, if not completely lacking, very meagre. Jewish life in Alexandria and Egypt after the Trajanic revolt was no doubt different from life for

¹⁶³ See Boyarin’s observation, cited at n. 3 above.

¹⁶⁴ Rajak 2009, 281.

Jews in Sardis or Rome at the same time; and attitudes towards Jews would no doubt have varied in these different places.

(iv) The failure of scholars to write much about the second century and the later western Diaspora arises precisely out of the shortage of material, especially after the relative glut of evidence from the previous century. And yet precisely because there is a need to take seriously the fact of the ongoing existence of a Jewish western Diaspora, it is necessary to continue to reflect on it.

(v) Finally we ought to note that the gradual evolution of Christianity during the century is obvious to all, but the effect of this on Jews is less clear (we cannot assume, for instance, that the changing attitude to the LXX on the part of Jews was dictated by Christian attachment to that version). Hostility obviously existed in some communities, and rabbis, whatever their influence, may have banned Christians from synagogues in places where they had some influence. Absolute separation seems unlikely and possibly life on the ground was, from the perspective of identity, more promiscuous than our major Christian sources assume.

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Chapter 13

Pseudo-Clementine Homilies 4-6: rare evidence of a Jewish literary source from the second century C.E.?

Introduction

To a considerable degree the history of *Pseudo-Clementine* research has been the history of the quest for sources. The general view, adopted in its broad outline since the beginning of the last century, has been that the similarities between the *Recognitions* and the *Homilies*, both held in their final form to be fourth century works, are best explained by reference to an independent source, generally known as the ‘Grundschrift’ (or sometimes, in English, as the ‘basic writing’), which both authors used independently. Maintaining that this ‘Grundschrift’ (G) was a composite document, possibly written in the early or middle part of the third century C.E., scholars have busied themselves with the complex task of identifying the constituent parts of this as yet undiscovered work as well as addressing questions relating to sources, which may have been used by either author but were not apparently a part of G.¹

It is the aim of this article to examine a section of the *Homilies* (*Hom.* 4-6), which some have maintained has been directly lifted from an originally Jewish work.² This article will seek to strengthen the arguments for its

¹ For a detailed account of research on the *Pseudo-Clementines* see Jones 1982. For a recent and lucid discussion, see Stanton 2007. Stanton correctly observes that the quest for sources has fallen into some disfavour. In this context see in particular Wehnert 1983; Pouderon 1996 and 2001; and Côté 2001, 7-18. Also note the comments of Kelley 2006, 17-27, who correctly points out that skepticism about sources can be found in much older literature about the *Pseudo-Clementines*. A review of this evolving tendency in *Pseudo-Clementine* studies is found in Reed 2008, 178-80. She notes how attention is falling more and more upon an examination of the fourth century context out of which the *Homilies* and *Recognitions* evolved.

² Waitz 1904 was the first to argue that *Hom.* 4-6 originated in a separate source, although he did not describe it as Jewish. His views were broadly endorsed by Bousset. It was Heintze 1914 who was the first to argue specifically for a Jewish provenance for the section and he was followed by Bousset 1915a; Schmidt 1930; and Cullmann 1930. Rehm 1938a and subsequently Strecker 1958 argued against this view claiming instead that the section was the creation of the Homilist. Schoeps 1949 seems to take Heintze and others’ conclusions for granted. Little interest in the section was shown in the thirty or so

Jewish provenance, and explore the contents of the work against its wider cultural and religious background. It will be argued that the source provides scholars with a very rare, possibly unique, example of Jewish literature written between 115 and approximately 150 C.E. I will also seek to show in what ways the document confirms or calls into question some of the views entertained by scholars about Judaism in this period. An attempt will also be made to account for the presence of the source in the *Homilies* by examining the tendencies of the Homilist and other Christian apologetic literature.

The content of *Hom.* 4-6

Hom. 4-6 begins with the arrival in Tyre of Clement and two friends, Nictas and Aquila (4.1). They have been sent to the city from Caesarea by Peter who wants them to gain information about the activities of Simon Magus (4.2), the persistent enemy of the church throughout the *Pseudo-Clementines*, “so that Peter may prepare himself accordingly” before he arrives in the city (3.73). When Clement and his friends arrive, they lodge with a certain Berenice, as Peter had instructed (4.1), who informs them of the miracles that Simon has performed in the city (4.4). Bracing themselves for an inevitable confrontation with Simon, Clement and his companions eat and go to bed (4.6). When they awake, Berenice informs them that Simon has departed from the city, but that he has left behind one of his followers, a certain Apion Pleistonices, Anubion and Athenodorus (4.6) and thirty others (4.7). Apion, on meeting Clement, and already being acquainted with him, praises his great learning and aristocratic background,

years following Strecker. Jones 1982, 29, comments that “since Cullmann, little has been written on this source” and on the same page, here picking up on the work of Rehm and Strecker, he speaks of “considerable discontent in modern research with Heintze’s theory.” The passage is briefly referred to by Simon 1986 (originally published in 1948), and by Drijvers 1966, 73, the former holding it to be Jewish, the latter not. Horbury 1988, 242, in a review of the Revised Schürer III.1, noted the absence of a discussion of the section in that part of the volume devoted to the subject of Jewish literature in Greek, and expressed the hope that there might be some comment upon it in the next volume (III.2). This was not the case. More recently, Adler 1993, who describes the section as ‘little studied’, and Pouderon 1996 and 2001, have reopened the discussion, with the former in particular making some stimulating observations on the Hellenistic background of the source. Pouderon 2001, 234-5, reports that Jones at a conference had sought to endorse the view of Rehm and Strecker but Jones has informed me in personal correspondence that these were oral communications given in response to Pouderon’s paper and were never published, although a summary of Jones’ opinions can be found in Jones 2003, 159-60, esp. n. 54. Brief summary comments on the matter can be found in Kelley 2006, 22-7.

but notes that Clement has been seduced “by a certain barbarian called Peter to speak and act after the manner of the Jews.” (4.7). Because of this fact (Clement’s apparent conversion to Judaism), Apion demands that those with Clement strive to set him on the right track by convincing him that by forsaking the customs of his country he is acting impiously (4.7). In his reply, Clement attacks the idea that adhering to customs is commendable if the customs themselves are not good. His father, though a good man, was of an evil opinion because he believed the false and wicked myths of the Greeks (4.8). Apion, somewhat shocked by this response, asks what these false and evil myths are. Clement replies: “The wrong opinion concerning the gods, which if you will bear with me, you shall hear with those who are desirous to know.” (4.8). They all then retire to a garden in which a debate begins (4.10). Clement commences the debate by attacking two ideas that he believes many Greeks entertain; that of ‘genesis’ or fate, which states that all things are predetermined, thereby excluding the idea of individual responsibility (4.12); and that of an unforeseen destiny, which, by denying the idea of a God who rules the world and punishes and rewards, encourages licentious behaviour (4.13). As a corollary to these observations Clement remarks: “But the doctrine of the barbarous Jews, as you call them, is most pious, introducing one as father and creator of all this world, by nature good and righteous; good as pardoning sins to those who repent; but righteous as visiting to everyone after repentance according to the worthiness of his doings.” (4.13). Clement then turns to his major objections to paganism, namely its myths concerning the gods (4.15). If gods like Zeus can act in a morally egregious way does this not justify human beings acting in the same way (4.16)? This, claims Clement, is precisely the way philosophers argue (4.17). Apion objects that in fact these myths are nothing more than allegories, veiling profound truths to which only the most learned have access (4.24). But Clement will have no truck with such an argument. Is it not evil, he asks, to conceal noble truths beneath wicked fables (4.25)? Book 4 ends with Clement and Apion agreeing to meet again on the next day to continue the discussion.

On the next day, owing to illness, Apion fails to make an appearance (5.1). Clement decides to inform his audience of a previous meeting with Apion once before when the latter visited Clement’s father in Rome. At the time of his visit, Clement was in bed suffering from a bout of philosophical Angst (5.20). Acquainted with Apion’s hatred of the Jews, Clement decides to play a trick on Apion by feigning love-sickness (rather than revealing the real roots of his sickness). Apion responds to the news of Clement’s pretended plight by first suggesting that he make use of Apion’s magical powers to gain his desire. When Clement objects to such a plan, Apion advises him to write a letter to the woman with whom he is in love.

Apion offers to compose the letter (5.9f.), which, when constructed, constitutes a lengthy attempt to persuade Clement's hoped for lover that by yielding to Clement's desires she will be acting in a manner entirely in accord with the behaviour of the gods. For is not Eros one of the major gods (5.10), and did not Zeus on many occasions commit adultery (5.11)? Clement, pretending to be his lover-to-be, constructs a reply in which he casts aspersions upon Apion's ideas (5.21): Apion's views on the morality of the gods, reflective of Greek views in general, give people a license to act in a morally reprobate way. In fact she (the invented lover of Clement) has become a Jew precisely because the Jewish god punishes such behaviour (5.26). After Apion has bemoaned the fate of the young proselyte, condemned by dint of her conversion to Judaism to a life of chastity (5.27), Clement confesses to the hoax he has played upon Apion (5.28). He, Clement, in fact is a Jew and was converted to Judaism by a Jewish linen trader who professed to him the doctrine of the unity of God (5.28). Apion, much angered, leaves Rome (5.29).

After Clement has related this tale, he and his listeners pay a visit to Apion (6.1). During the visit, Apion defends the myths of the Greeks by means of cosmogonic allegories (6.2f.). Clement, displaying a superior knowledge of such allegorical interpretations, denies their validity (6.11), arguing that they are inconsistent (6.19) and non-sensical, and that in fact the gods are no more than human beings whose graves still exist today (6.21). The section ends rather abruptly with a defence of monotheism by Clement (6.24), the arrival of Peter (6.26), and the withdrawal of Apion, Anubion and Athenodorus from Caesarea.

Hom. 4-6 and the Pseudo-Clementines

A number of details in *Hom. 4-6* support the view that the section is intrusive in its present context.

(i) Charles Bigg first pointed out that in the parallel passage in *Recognitions* 3.69 twelve disciples are sent on from Caesarea to pursue Simon Magus, while Clement, Nicetas and Aquila remain with Peter. In *Homilies*, by contrast, Clement, Nicetas and Aquila are sent in pursuit.³ As Bigg comments: "The object of this arrangement is obviously to provide a clear field for Clement's dispute with Apion, and avoid the awkwardness of making Peter stand by as a mere spectator." But in *Hom. 8.1-3* we read

³ Bigg, 1890, 183 n. 2.

about Peter being rejoined at Tripolis by the twelve brethren who had been sent on in advance as if the Homilist was rejoining his original source.⁴

(ii) While there exist similarities between the Clement of *Hom.* 4-6 and the Clement of the rest of the Homilies (both are well-born, well-educated young Romans in search of the truth, but dissatisfied with the philosophies they have studied, and dismissive of the possibility that magic might remedy their situation⁵), these are outweighed by the strong differences, most of which relate to their conversion experience.⁶ In *Hom.* 1.7.1 Clement listens to an unknown man, clearly portrayed as a Christian missionary, in the Roman forum who speaks of the appearance of the son of God in Judea. He is gradually led to Christianity and belief in the true prophet (*Hom.* 1.19.1-4; 2.4.3; 2.5.2-3; 2.12.1-2; 3.11.1), first through his discussions with Barnabas in Alexandria (1.13), where his boat has been forced to land as it proceeded to Judea, and subsequently through discussions with Peter⁷ in Caesarea (1.15f.).⁸ But in *Hom.* 5.28.2, by contrast, Clement states that in Rome he met by chance (this is surely the sense of *συντυχίας ἀγαθῆς*) an anonymous Jewish linen trader (not a Christian missionary) who set before

⁴ Note also Waitz 1904, 31, who argues that the mention of the sacrifice of the bull by Simon prior to his magical activity at 4.4, 6.26 and 7.3 seems to imply an originally seamless story interrupted by the main part of *Hom.* 4-6. For the same point see Cullmann 1930, 66f. Siouville 1991, 21, states the same point in a positive way: "Les Homélie iv, v et vi, qui nous les rapportent, pourraient être supprimées, sans interrompre la suite de l'ouvrage."

⁵ Compare here in particular the illness that both Clements experience as a result of their quest for philosophical satisfaction (cf. 1.2.10 and 5.2.35); the reference in both accounts to the setting up and knocking down of philosophical doctrines (*δογμάτων ἀνασκευαί καὶ κατασκευαί*) at 1.3.2 and 5.2.3; and fear that they experience at the thought of suffering the same punishments in Hades of Sisyphus, Tantalus and Ixion at 1.4.4 and 5.6.5; and the similarly hostile reference to Egyptian magic at 1.5.12 and 5.3.14. For a helpful list, see Schmidt 1930, 206 n. 1.

⁶ For a detailed account of the differences between the two see Schmidt 1930, 196f.

⁷ As Pouderon states, "la véritable initiation de Clément sera le fait de Pierre à Césarée." (Pouderon 2001, 235). Pouderon notes that at *Hom.* 2.4-5 Clement is initiated by Barnabas into the doctrine of prophecy, but not to that of the true prophet which will be done by Peter. At *Rec.* 1.14-15 Peter suggests that he will initiate Clement into the doctrine of truth, to the rudiments of which Barnabas has introduced him.

⁸ In *Rec.* 1.7.1f. it is Barnabas who arrives in Rome from Judea to preach the good news. In *Hom.* 1.7.1 Clement encounters an anonymous preacher in Rome, and only first meets Barnabas by chance when adverse winds cause his Judea-destined ship to end up in Alexandria. On request Clement is taken to Barnabas, and then the same scenes played out in *Rec.* in Rome, involving Barnabas' preaching and the subsequent scoffing of philosophers and Clement's defence of Barnabas, are played out again in Alexandria (compare *Hom.* 1.8-14//*Rec.* 1.7-11). This set of statistics might lead us to believe that the Homilist has created the anonymous preacher of *Hom.* 1.7.1f. to accommodate the anonymous Jewish linen seller of *Hom.* 5.28.2. If this is the best explanation, his efforts were less than successful.

him the doctrine of the one true God (τὸ μοναρχικὸν φρόνημα), and brought about his conversion to Judaism (although that word for ‘Judaism’ is not used). There is no hint at any further peregrinations, or the need for more instruction, and there is no mention here of the ‘true prophet’ or anything else, which one might term specifically Christian. Furthermore, Apion, who plays a significant part in *Hom.* 4-6, is not mentioned at all in *Hom.* 1.⁹ Discrepancies in relation to chronology are also striking. So in *Hom.* 4-6 after his conversion Clement remains in Rome and encounters Apion and has the famous exchange with him over his feigned adulterous desires. By contrast, the Clement of *Hom.* 1 and *Rec.* 1 hears the good news of the Gospel in Rome and then is inspired to travel to Judea to hear more about it from the mouth of Peter.¹⁰

Two further discrepancies are relevant. First, there is the fact that at *Hom.* 12.5.3, a passage also found at *Rec.* 7.5 (and so, therefore, an observation with a high probability of going back to G), Clement comments that he had never left the side of Peter, a point that obviously contradicts the substance of *Hom.* 4-6, where Clement operates independently of Peter. Secondly, and perhaps more tenuously, in the same passage (*Hom.* 12.5), Clement comments that he stayed with Peter for fear of being overtaken by youthful lust, a possibility which would appear to be excluded by the Clement of *Hom.* 4-6 who denies any acquaintance with such strong desires (5.28).¹¹

(iii) As we have already noted, *Hom.* 4-6 is not the account of a dispute between Simon and Peter. Rather the central element in the *Homilies* is, *uniquely*, a dispute between Clement and Apion, with his two friends, Athenodorus and Anubion, standing by silently. Apion, and by implication his companions, too, confesses to being a follower of Simon Magus. Yet in spite of this fact, and the obvious importance of Apion in these chapters, these characters are not mentioned in the preceding narrative, and only intermittently in the narrative following.¹² This is striking, because not only Peter and his brothers, Nicetas and Aquila,¹³ but also because Athenodorus and Anubion, Epicurean and astrologer respectively, could be taken to be figures with whom Clement was going to debate. So at 4.12, after referring to the wickedness of the myths of the Greeks, Clement comments negatively on the doctrine of fate or genesis and that of unforeseeing destiny, posi-

⁹ These differences are succinctly set out by Strecker 1958, 81.

¹⁰ See Pouderon 2001, 235-6.

¹¹ See Heintze 1914, 48.

¹² Apion appears again at 7.5.9, and then at the end, in the company of Anubion and Athenodorus at the end of the *Homilies* at 20.11f. (parallel at *Rec.* 10.52). Apart from their appearance at the end, Anubion and Athenodorus are mentioned at *Hom.* 14.11 and 16.1 respectively.

¹³ This point is made by Waitz 1904, 252.

tions, which could be associated with astrology and Epicureanism respectively. Moreover, Apion states that he knows that Clement has been converted to Judaism by Peter the barbarian (4.7) and yet there is absolutely no evidence of his (Apion's) presence at Caesarea where we read of Clement's first meeting with Peter. The sentence about Peter's association with Clement, here at least, looks like an uncomfortable addition, as does the attempt to associate Apion with Simon at *Hom.* 5.2 – picking up on the identity of Simon as a Samaritan, he argues that Apion had joined Simon because of their shared hatred of the Jews.

(iv) A number of scholars have commented upon the qualitatively different literary feel of the section,¹⁴ and upon the appearance of a large number of *hapax legomena*.¹⁵ Many of these are the names of pagan gods and philosophers, which adds further to the sense of difference. Insofar as there are quotations from sources, these are non-biblical,¹⁶ which contrasts with almost all of the other material in the *Pseudo-Clementine* corpus.

(v) The section ends rather abruptly with the three followers of Simon disappearing before their hero arrives. We might have expected a continuation of the debate. That is at least what we are led to expect at 4.12-13, where Clement refers disparagingly not only to Greek myths, but teachings on what he terms *genesis*, translated as 'fate', and 'unforeseeing destiny' (ἀπρονοήτων φοράν). And yet it is only Greek myths that are discussed.

There are good grounds, then, for arguing that the bulk of *Hom.* 4-6 is independent from the rest of the *Homilies*. But why might we think that the source was originally Jewish?

We should begin by looking again at the presentation of Clement. At the beginning of *Homilies* we meet a pagan who becomes interested in the message of the son of God, who has appeared in Judea proclaiming the kingdom of the invisible God (cf. 1.6 and 7), hears a Christian missionary in Rome, and after hearing Barnabas in Alexandria, decides to travel to Judea to be with Peter. By contrast, in *Hom.* 4-6 we are presented with a person whose conversion involves only matters Jewish, and makes no mention

¹⁴ See Bigg 1890, 184-5 who writes that the section "was written in much better Greek by a much clearer brain and with a more lively fancy than the rest of the Homilies." In relation to the final point, one might pay particular attention to the 'flashback' in chapter 5 with its use of a love letter; and Heintze's argument (1914, 43) for the presence of 'ekphrasis' at 4.10.

¹⁵ Waitz 1904, 253-4, lists these.

¹⁶ Note citation of a proverb at 4.28; a statement of the Delphic oracle at 5.18; a quotation from the *Iliad* at 6.3, and from Hesiod's *Theognis* at 6.3; a quotation from Chrysippus at 5.18; and from Orpheus at 6.3, 5, 6. Waitz argued for a play on a quotation from Cicero's *de Finibus* at 5.23 (Waitz 1904, 253).

of Jesus (see especially 4.7, 13, 22; 5.2, 26, 27, 28, 29).¹⁷ Admittedly, Peter is referred to at 4.5 and again at 4.7 where he is explicitly associated by Apion with Clement, and is said to have converted Clement “to do and say the things of the Jews.” But the former reference appears in the essentially Christian framework of the text, and the latter looks more like an interpolation, which would originally have referred to an anonymous barbarian who taught Clement to say and do Jewish things (τὰ Ἰουδαίων ποιεῖν καὶ λέγειν).¹⁸ Such a description of what Clement was converted to is compatible with what Clement goes on to tell Apion about the anonymous Jewish linen-seller who converts him to the doctrine of the monarchy of God (5.28) but not with what we read about the Clement of the opening chapter of *Homilies* who is converted to an appreciation of the ‘true prophet’, or the message of the son of God.

This last observation is an important one because if we examine the opening chapters of *Hom.* 1 with its account of Clement’s gradual movement towards religious contentment, it is Jesus, principally as the ‘true prophet’, who is accorded a central place in Clement’s mind. So at *Hom.* 1.19 Peter declares to Clement: “Therefore above all things it is necessary to seek after the true prophet, because without him it is impossible that any certainty can come to men”; and at 2.4 Clement declares: “For apart from him, as I learned from Barnabas, it is impossible to learn the truth.” And Peter again asserts at 3.11: “Whence it must before all things be known that nowhere can truth be found unless from a prophet of truth.” This is not the case in *Hom.* 4-6 where the figure of Jesus is not mentioned except in *Hom.* 4.5 to which reference has already been made, and where the ‘true prophet’ is completely absent. Given the importance accorded the ‘true prophet’ in the pre-conversionary preaching to Peter, absence of any reference to the concept seems very odd; and while we might admit that the Homilist has a respectful attitude to Judaism, manifest in a number of

¹⁷ At 4.7 Apion states that Clement has been taught by Peter how “to do and say the things of the Jews (τὰ Ἰουδαίων ποιεῖν καὶ λέγειν)”; at 4.13 Clement mentions positively “the doctrine of the barbarous Jews (βαρβάρων Ἰουδαίων λόγος)”; at 4.22 he states that “I took refuge (προσέφυγον) in the holy God and law of the Jews (τῷ ἁγίῳ τῶν Ἰουδαίων θεῷ καὶ νόμῳ)”; at 5.2 Clement fears the presence of Apion because he is someone who hates Jews and has written many books against them; at 5.26 Clement states how he has learnt from a Jew “to understand and do the things that are pleasing to God (ἐκ τινος Ἰουδαίου τὰ θεῷ πρέποντα καὶ νοεῖν καὶ ποιεῖν ἐκμαθούσα)”; at 5.27 Apion expresses his hatred of the Jews as a response to what Clement has told him about Judaism; and at 5.28 Clement mentions his conversion to the idea of the divine monarchy by an anonymous Jewish linen trader.

¹⁸ Cullmann 1930, 120, makes this believable suggestion.

places, he still clearly differentiates commitment to Christ from that to Moses (see especially 8.5-8).¹⁹

Another point that speaks powerfully in favour of a Jewish origin lies in the prominence given to the figure of Apion.²⁰ This man was probably born in Egypt some time in the second half of the first century B.C.E. Although Josephus casts doubt on Apion's claim that he was an Alexandrian (*C. Ap.* 2.29, 40), others confirm this identity, and, as Bremmer asserts, he probably became a citizen by special grant.²¹ It seems that he studied in the city under the famous polymath Didymus Chalkenteros and began to make his reputation there as a grammarian,²² later succeeding Theon as the head of the literary school. He taught in Rome under Tiberius and Claudius according to the *Suda*, and was an itinerant lecturer on Homer during the reign of Caligula, attracting large crowds, and being heard by both Seneca (cf. *Epistula* 88) and Pliny the Elder (*Nat.* 30.18). It was during this time that he was honoured with the citizenship of Alexandria, and in 39 C.E. headed up a delegation of Greeks to complain against the Jews in the aftermath of the pogrom in that city (Josephus, *A.J.* 18.257-9). While a popular lecturer, as stated above, he was also known to be conceited and a self-publicist,²³ and his name Πλειστονίκης ('victor in many contests') might hint at a pun on Πλειστονείκης, meaning 'very quarrelsome'.²⁴ He was also known to be the inventor of fabulous tales, not the least of which was the claim that he had conversations with Homer in the underworld (see Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 1.16f-17b). A number of works were attributed to him, including a work on magic,²⁵ a work *On the luxury of Apicius*, one on the language of the Romans, another entitled Γλώσσα Ὀμηρικαί, probably the work which brought him most fame,²⁶ although many of his works seem to have been popular (note Aulus Gellius, *Noct. Att.* 5.14.2 where his books are described as *libri non incelebres*), and one concerned with Egyptian history and entitled *Aegyptiaca*. While there are quotations from his works in a

¹⁹ On this see below and our discussion of the views of Strecker 1958 and others who think the section the work of the Homilist.

²⁰ For recent discussions and much bibliography, see van der Horst 2002; Bremmer 2005; Jones 2005; Barclay 2007a, 170-1.

²¹ See Athenaeus 1.16f, quoted by Eustathius on *Od.* 17.401.

²² This description is found in Seneca *Ep.* 88.40; Josephus *C. Ap.* 2.2, 12, 15; Tatian, *Oratio ad Graecos* 38; Athenaeus 7.294f; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 1.22; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.9.4; *Praep. ev.* 10.10.16; 10.11.14; 10.12.2.

²³ See especially Pliny the Elder, *Nat. Hist.* Praef. 25, where Tiberius is said to have described him as the *cymbalum mundi*.

²⁴ Jacobson 1977.

²⁵ *Suda*, Πασής. Also note Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 30.6.18, who likens two of his statements to the types of lies told by Magi. See further Jones 2005, 286.

²⁶ van der Horst 2002, pays close attention to what remaining fragments we have of this work.

number of ancient writers, including Seneca, Pliny the Elder, Aulus Gellius and Athenaeus, Apion receives greatest prominence in Josephus' *Contra Apionem*. He is presented there as an implacable enemy of the Jews who has contrived to present a number of calumnies against them (his selection as one of the representatives of the Greek community in the delegation to Rome in 39 C.E. was probably based upon his known hostility to the Jews), and in the course of his account Josephus exploits acknowledged negative features of his character. The anti-Jewish calumnies, mainly relating to the Exodus story, Jewish claims to rights within Alexandria, and certain religious practices, were found in Apion's *Aegyptiaca*, probably in the third and fourth books. Subsequent Christian claims that Apion wrote a text or texts κατὰ Ἰουδαίων found in our passage and elsewhere, are mistaken.²⁷

It is the last of these characteristics of Apion, his anti-Jewish tendencies, only mentioned by Jewish and Christian writers, which has caused him to be included in *Hom.* 4-6, a point, which becomes clear when we note the number of places where his dislike of the Jews is commented upon (4.7; 5.2, 27, 28), and how this feature of his personality is intimately linked to the narrative and the kinds of principles he advocates. That is not, of course, to say that the work fails to betray knowledge of other characteristics of Apion to which we have alluded above – he is portrayed in the section as a *grammatikos* (4.6), with an implied expertise in Homeric interpretation (see 6.3 and Apion's reference to *Iliad* 7.99), shown to have a knowledge of magic (the *Suda*'s attribution to him of a book on magic), to possess a boastful and deceitful manner, and to be a strong advocate of Hellenistic *paideia* – and in all of this our anonymous author proves a skilful exploiter of widely disseminated information about Apion. It is rather to assert the central role of the anti-Jewish dimension of Apion for our author; and so to make it plain that the inclusion of such a person in an ostensibly Christian work would make little sense (and this indirectly on the admission of a number of Christian writers who regard him as an anti-Jewish writer, and not someone opposed to the Christians). When one adds to this the fact that, aside from a highly disputed tradition, which we will discuss below, there is no evidence of Apion being used in Christian works as a religious opponent, the case becomes weightier.

²⁷ See Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 1.101.3-4; Ps. Justin, *Cohortatio* 9; and Africanus, quoted by Eusebius *Praep. ev.* 10.10.16. See Schürer III.1, 606-7; van der Horst 2002, 211; Bremmer 2005, 323-4; and Jones 2005, 310-15, for a discussion of the assertion. With the exception of Bremmer, most of these scholars are negative in their assessment of the historicity of the assertion. Jones 2005, 310-15, gives a detailed refutation of any association of Apion with such a work or works, although he does not refer to the claim in *Hom.* 5.2.

The problem of Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 3.38.5

In his discussion of works attributed to Clement, Eusebius, after discussing 2 *Clement*, notes: “A year or two ago (ἐχθές καὶ πρώην) other long and wordy treatises (πολυεπιῆ καὶ μακρὰ συγγράμματα) were put forward as Clement’s work. They contain (περιέχοντα) dialogues between Peter and Apion (Πέτρου δὴ καὶ Ἀπίωνος διαλόγους).” He goes on to assert that they are not referred to by older authorities and contain material that is clearly not apostolic (οὐδὲ γὰρ καθαρὸν τῆς ἀποστολικῆς ὀρθοδοξίας). For those interested in seeking out early references to *Pseudo-Clementine* material, this passage has been the subject of much debate. There are two principal problems with the statement. First in neither the *Recognitions* nor the *Homilies* do we possess any dialogues between Peter and Apion, if this is the most natural way to understand the Greek; and secondly, the dialogue, which does in fact involve Apion, *Hom.* 4-6, here, of course, with Clement, constitutes only a part of the material found in the *Homilies*.

Various solutions to these two difficulties have been suggested. Headlam, possibly taking up a suggestion of J. B. Lightfoot, thought that the difficulty was overcome if we assumed that reference was being made to different dialogues between Peter and Apion respectively, and Clement. “(T)here was no need to mention the latter because he is the subject of the chapter.”²⁸ But this seems an odd reading of the Greek (surely the best way to take it was as a reference to dialogues between Peter and Apion, or possibly dialogues by Peter and Apion). Moreover, even if the linguistic suggestion was correct, it seemed an odd way to describe the dialogues as we find them in the *Pseudo-Clementine* books, where dialogues of Clement with Peter are not as significant as those between Simon and Peter. Waitz argued that the second difficulty was solved if one understood the Greek as referring to only a part of the contents of the work attributed to Clement, and that the first problem was solved if one assumed that Eusebius had a copy of G where the dialogues were actually between Peter and Apion (Apion understood as a follower of Simon Magus). These were particularly emphasised because they occurred at the end of G, precisely the point at which Apion and Peter appear together in both *Rec.* 10.52 and *Hom.* 20.11.²⁹ Heintze argued that such a solution was based upon a possibly dubious reading of the Greek (the Greek περιέχειν refers to the contents of the work described and not to a part of it, as Waitz had argued. This was precisely how Jerome and Photius had understood the passage),³⁰ an un-

²⁸ Headlam 1902, 48. Kirsopp Lake in his Loeb translation appears to support Headlam for he translates the text as “dialogues with Peter and Apion”.

²⁹ Waitz 1904, 254-5.

³⁰ Heintze 1914, 15.

likely characterisation of Peter (he is clearly portrayed in both *Homilies* and *Recognitions* as a man unaccustomed and uninterested in learned argument),³¹ and a problematic argument about the ending of G. After all, for many scholars it seemed best to argue that G did not end with the so-called transformation of Simon, but that was originally only in *Homilies* and had been added to the end of *Recognitions* by Rufinus. Chapman suggested that G was a late composition, and that at first only a portion of it was published. In this published portion a prominent place was given to the dialogue between Apion and Peter. However, such a suggestion was overly speculative, and too easily assumed the presence of Apion in G. Heintze attacked Waitz's and Chapman's proposal, arguing not only that Apion and Clement were too closely bound together in the narrative of 4-6 for it to be reasonable to posit an original Petrine presence. He went on to note that "wir mit dem Zitat des Eusebius gar nichts anfangen können", citing approvingly the judgement of Harnack and Preuschen, the latter of whom had thought it the work of a glossator.³² Schmidt thought that Eusebius was referring to a version of the *Homilies*, and not of G (hence the implied recent date), in which a dialogue involving Apion did appear. He argued that Eusebius had changed the name of Clement to Peter because of the prominence given to Peter in the preceding Caesarean dispute in *Hom. 3*.³³ But Schmidt's solution suffered not only from its speculative character but also possibly from its failure to explain the implication of Eusebius' Greek that the whole work was made up of such dialogues. In some 'untimely' observations on the *Pseudo-Clementines*,³⁴ Schwartz sought to argue for the truth of Eusebius' assertion as it stood. Claiming that the reference in Eusebius was both too detailed and too bold to be dismissed as a fiction, he maintained that Eusebius was referring to the first edition of the *Pseudo-Clementines* in which Peter did in fact debate with Apion. This work, he argued, consisted of an attack by Apion upon the Jewish character of the Christian faith and a defence on the part of Peter in which Christianity was defended as the rightful fulfillment of the Jewish faith. The purpose of the fiction "war in den von Euseb beschriebenen Clementinen durch die Disputation des führenden Herrenjüngers mit dem fanatischen Antisemiten den unlöslichen Zusammenhang der christlichen Offenbarung mit der des ATs darzutun."³⁵ Noting that such a view of the purpose of the work holds together many of the discussions which Simon and Peter have in the extant *Clementines*, and that it would seem very unlikely that Eusebius, with his

³¹ Heintze 1914, 17.

³² See Heintze 1914, 18. For a similar judgement, see Cullmann 1930, 35.

³³ Schmidt 1930, 300-1.

³⁴ Schwartz 1932.

³⁵ Schwartz 1932, 162.

penchant for delineating the views of heretics, would have omitted to refer to a work in which Simon played a major role, Schwartz argued, radically, that originally the published form of the *Clementines* did not contain any reference to Simon – that only occurred at a later date with the Homilist.³⁶ Rehm objected to Schwartz's solution. He noted that it was very difficult to imagine that Simon was added to the *Clementines* so late, and that Schwartz's solution, though dealing very effectively with the difficulties of the Eusebian reference,³⁷ assumed, amongst other things, that the writer of *Recognitions* gleaned all of his material on Simon from *Homilies*, which seemed unlikely (it was also unhelpful to Schwartz's theory that in the one place where Apion did appear in the extant *Clementines* he was not arguing the case Schwartz attributed to him). Rehm argued instead that the best solution to the problem lay in positing the view that in G the dispute with Apion lay at the beginning of the work, and that this could explain the words of Eusebius. In this context he made use of an observation of Heintze,³⁸ namely that there was a contradiction between, on the one hand, the strong assertion that Clement's father was an atheist, found at *Hom.* 14.3 (= *Rec.* 8.2), and the assertion at *Hom.* 4.8, made by Apion, that Clement's father was a believer in the gods. Such a contradiction was best accounted for, so Rehm argued, if one assumed that in the original version the Apion section was at the beginning when the subsequent misfortunes of Clement's father's life had not yet befallen him.³⁹ Strecker read the genitives Πέτρου and Ἀπίωνος as subjective, arguing that Eusebius had access to a copy of the *Pseudo-Clementines*, which consisted of dialogues between Peter and Simon, and Apion and Clement, and that therefore what he was referring to was a copy of the *Homilies*.⁴⁰ But not only would this seem an odd way to summarise the content of the *Homilies* (surely, as Schwartz noted, one would expect a reference to Simon), but Strecker's reading of the genitives seemed fallacious. As Lawlor and Oulton pointed out (writing well before Strecker), it is much easier to take them as objective.⁴¹

The fact that this passage has spawned such a multitude of opinions is an indication of the considerable difficulties it presents. The Greek is ambiguous as it stands. Contrary to Heintze, it is possible to understand

³⁶ Schwartz 1932, 163-4, supported his view that the work to which Eusebius referred was an edition of the *Clementines* by noting the passing character of the reference.

³⁷ "(E)ine Hypothese, die sorgfältige Prüfung verdient, weil sie die Aporien, die die Worte des Eusebius allen anderen Erkläreren bieten, mit einem Schlag aus der Welt schafft." (Rehm 1938a, 135).

³⁸ Heintze 1914, 17.

³⁹ Rehm 1938a, 132-3.

⁴⁰ Strecker 1958, 84.

⁴¹ Lawlor and Oulton 1927, 111.

περιέχοντα inclusively, an observation supported by Eusebius' own use of the verb in *Historia ecclesiastica*.⁴² The phrase Πέτρου δὴ καὶ Ἀπίωνος διαλόγους is unlikely to mean 'dialogues with Peter and Apion', but could mean 'dialogues by Peter and Apion', although this would refer to dialogues written by these two characters (reflecting the well-known *διάλογοι Πλάτωνος*), and so would make little sense in the present context. The use of the particle δὴ might incline one to a translation of dialogues between Peter and Apion. If we opt for this translation, then the contents of the Eusebian tradition only bear a distant relationship to the contents of either the *Recognitions* or *Homilies* as these have come down to us. Attempts to solve the problem by arguing that there is a reference here to a version of G are justified insofar as they note the relatively detailed character of Eusebius' account, and so take its testimony seriously (Schwartz's arguments here seem good ones), but inevitably all solutions based upon this or similar views are speculative because of our limited knowledge of the contents of G. There is, however, no warrant in the textual tradition of Eusebius' *Historia ecclesiastica* for the view that the passage is an interpolation or is somehow corrupt, as Heintze suggested.⁴³ In the end the scholar is forced, if he or she is being honest, into adopting a position of informed agnosticism. This has the consequence that nothing of any import can be based on the passage.⁴⁴

⁴² In an exchange, Professor James Diggle of the University of Cambridge states that περιέχοντα is as ambiguous as its equivalent in English, although he notes that Liddell-Scott-Jones Supp. Vol. I.4 suggests that exclusivity may be the predominant meaning. Eusebius appears to use the word both exclusively (see *Hist. eccl.* 3.10.2, here referring to the contents of the Pentateuch), and inclusively (see *Hist. eccl.* 3.24.13, here referring to part of the contents of the Gospel of John [the early life of Jesus]; and 3.39.17, here referring to a story about a woman who was accused before the Lord in the *Gospel according to the Hebrews*, which must have contained more than just this one story).

⁴³ In conversation, Professor William Horbury of the University of Cambridge suggested that the passage might yet be saved if we assumed that Eusebius, ever the diligent tabulator, had written Πέτρου where he should have written Κλημέντος. But even if this were true, would it not still be an odd way to summarise the content of our extant *Clementine* material?

⁴⁴ One point that no one appears to have made is that Eusebius spells 'Apion' with a single pi, whereas it appears in *Homilies* as Ἀππίων. But this could indicate no more than the Homilist changed the original spelling of what he found in G or his source, and that in the original seen by Eusebius it was spelt in the normal way. Equally, Eusebius could have changed the spelling so it conformed with general orthographic convention.

Arguments against the Jewish origin of the source

The most sustained argument against the view that *Hom.* 4-6 goes back to a source has come from Strecker.⁴⁵ Accepting that the section is distinctive and so not a part of G,⁴⁶ Strecker argued that it was best to see it as nothing more than the Homilist's extensions (he uses the words "Erweiterungen" and "Erläuterungen")⁴⁷ of material already available to him. So taking the discussion of Clement's conversion in *Hom.* 1 to be part of G, Strecker argued that 5.28.2, which refers to Clement's conversion by a Jewish linen seller, is no more than an embellishment upon the unnamed person mentioned in *Hom.* 1.7.1 who draws Clement's attention to the Christian faith. Further embellishments can be seen in Clement's illness (compare *Hom.* 1.2.1 and *Hom.* 5.2.2), the reference to Clement's interest in and rejection of magicians (compare *Hom.* 5.2.2 and 1.5.1), and in the claim that Clement is related to the Emperor Tiberius (*Hom.* 4.7.2) (in this instance the Homilist has combined information apparently contained within G – cf. *Hom.* 12.8.2//*Rec.* 7.8.2 where the imperial origins of Clement's family are asserted; and the idea that Jesus emerged in the period of Tiberius' Principate, also in G [cf. *Hom.* 1.6.1]). The strongly Jewish character of the section is conceded⁴⁸ but is not sufficiently strong, argues Strecker, to warrant the conclusion that it can only be accounted for by reference to a Jewish source. To support this view he notes that Clement's conversion to Christianity is foreseen in *Hom.* 4.7.2, where Peter appears to be the one who has persuaded Clement to turn to Judaism.⁴⁹ In the same context he also notes that Jewish terminology is to be found in G, and that the Homilist is often keen to play up G's Judaizing elements.⁵⁰ In relation to the problem of the sudden introduction of Apion and his friends into the proceedings, he argues strongly for the view that this goes back to the Homilist, maintaining, amongst other things, that the conclusion of both the *Homilies* and *Recognitions*, which are very similar and contain references to Apion and his two friends, Anubion and Athenodorus, does not come from G but ra-

⁴⁵ Rehm 1938a had also objected to the theory and some of Strecker's comments follow his.

⁴⁶ Strecker 1958, 80-1.

⁴⁷ Strecker 1958, 82.

⁴⁸ "Was aber die angebliche jüdische Urheberschaft der Disputation anbetrifft, so wird man zugestehen, dass eine gewisse Affinität der Begrifflichkeit der Apionsdisputationen mit der jüdischen Vorstellungswelt nicht zu übersehen ist ..." (1958, 85). Strecker rejects Rehm's ingenious suggestion that references to Clement's Jewishness are best explained by the "historische Besonnenheit des Verfassers" (1938a, 134).

⁴⁹ Strecker points in particular to *Rec.* 2.38f.; and *Hom.* 11.16.3-4//*Rec.* 5.34.

⁵⁰ Strecker 1958, 85 and 257, 258 n. 1. See our discussion of the question of the 'Judaizing' tendencies of the Homilist below.

ther from the pen of the Homilist whose work has subsequently been added to the *Recognitions* by Rufinus in his own translation.⁵¹ This is an important observation for it is only in *Rec.* 10.52f. that we have any reference to Apion and his companions in *Recognitions*, and so the only evidence that such material would have been in G. There is little doubt in Strecker's mind that the Homilist possessed the skill to construct *Hom.* 4-6. Was it not possible for the individual who constructed the final section of the *Homilies* in which he depicts Peter devising a cunning plan in which he uses to his advantage, through deceit, Simon's transformation of Faustus, to construct the scene in which Clement acts deceitfully with his plea for a love letter to expose the lowly and lying character of Apion? Like Rehm before him, Strecker rejected the idea that there was something particularly distinctive about the language of the section.

While Strecker mounts a robust case against the Jewish source theory, it ultimately fails to convince. If we are to regard *Hom.* 4-6 as essentially the creation of the Homilist a number of pertinent questions arise. Why, for instance, has the Homilist been quite so cumbersome in introducing his extension? Or put another way, would an apparently skilled writer leave such clear evidence of adding something to the original narrative? Strecker is right to point out the similarities between, for instance, the Clement of the beginning of the *Pseudo-Clementines* and the Clement of *Hom.* 4-6, and this had been noted by previous scholars.⁵² In principle this might be taken to support the idea that one account was an extension of the other, although the question here would be where to locate priority, with the mooted Jewish source, which could be taken to have influenced the account of Clement's conversion as recalled in *Hom.* 1, or the other way round.⁵³ But however we answer this question, are the differences between the accounts sufficiently explained on the basis of Strecker's view that the presentation constitutes a kind of extension of the beginning of the *Pseudo-Clementines*, which he attributes to G?⁵⁴ There is not enough evidence of any attempt to integrate the two accounts and too many questions are left unanswered. Why, for instance, would the Homilist have played up the Jewish dimension of Clement's conversion as depicted in *Hom.* 4-6, when he had failed to do such a thing in his earlier account? And why, if he had

⁵¹ This case had been argued by Rehm 1938a, 80-6.

⁵² Note the words of Heintze 1914, 47: "Niemand erkennt die Analogie zwischen diesem römischen Jüngling und unserm Klemens."

⁵³ Pouderon 1996, 73-4.

⁵⁴ See Jones 2003, 159, who notes the differences, in particular the failure of the writer of *Hom.* 4-6 to refer to the frustration with philosophical instruction, so important in *Hom.* 1.3-6 and its parallel in *Rec.* 1.3-6. Jones goes on to assert, without argument, understandably perhaps because this matter is not the subject of his article, that the simplest explanation for this is that the section was added by the Homilist.

decided to do such a thing, would he have made it unclear how the account of Clement's conversion in *Hom.* 4-6 tied in with that of the earlier part of the *Homilies*?⁵⁵ His addition has served simply to create narrational confusion, not least because no attempt is made to bring together his claim that Peter has converted Clement to Jewish ways and the claim that an anonymous Jewish linen seller has done approximately the same.⁵⁶ Secondly, if the section is the work of the Homilist, dependent to some degree upon the opening section of *Homilies*, what grounds would there be for introducing the figure of Apion and his two companions? After all, as we have made clear above, Apion, both in Jewish and Christian literature, was associated with anti-Jewish, not anti-Christian, polemic.⁵⁷ Strecker responds in two ways to this problem. First, he argues that the very fact that Apion played a role in such literature could be used to explain why the Homilist included him in the section, rather than providing grounds for arguing that the section goes back to an originally Jewish Vorlage.⁵⁸ Secondly, he places great weight on his view that the end of *Homilies*, where Apion reappears, is the creation of the Homilist, thus providing further proof of the Homilist's penchant for the figure of Apion (note *Hom.* 7.5.9 for the only other reference), and proving that only the Homilist had an interest in him, adding credibility to the view that his introduction into the novel was the work of the Homilist. The second argument is a powerful one. In his letter to Bishop Gaudentius in which he introduces his translation, Rufinus mentions the fact that there are two Greek editions of the *Recognitions* "differing in some points, but in many containing the same narrative." He then goes on to note that the last part of the work, the so-called "transformation of Simon" is contained in one version but not the other, and that he has decided to include it in his translation. This seems to prove that there existed a copy of the *Pseudo-Clementines*/G without the transformation scene, and therefore without a reference to Apion, Anubion and Athenodorus (for this is the only place where they appear in the *Recognitions*). Rufinus' state-

⁵⁵ Strecker 1958, 81, has no trouble noting the discrepancies between the two Clements. But if that is the case, then, as implied, it becomes more difficult to see why the Homilist should create such discrepancies.

⁵⁶ Note Schmidt's comment: "Er (the Homilist) mutet seinen Lesern grosse Dosis von Unaufmerksamkeit oder Stumpfheit zu, um über die Anstösse ruhig hinwegzubieten." (Schmidt 1930, 229). An easier position, adopted by, amongst others, Schmidt 1930, 229, and Pouderon 1996 and 2001, is to assume that the account of Clement's conversion in the opening section of *Homilies* has grown out of an original Jewish account, such as the one alluded to in *Hom.* 4-6.

⁵⁷ This is the case if we exclude Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.38.5 from our consideration.

⁵⁸ Strecker 1958, 85. The strength of Strecker's point in some sense depends upon the degree to which you accept his view that the Homilist is a conscious Judaizer of his source, or someone who seeks to emphasise a characteristic of G.

ment appears to be confirmed when Rehm pointed out that the Arabic epitomator of the *Pseudo-Clementines* failed to refer to the transformation of Simon in his abbreviation of the work.⁵⁹ However, even if we accept that *Rec.* 10.52-72 is an interpolation, we have not proven that the Homilist is the creator of the *Hom.* 4-6, but only, it would seem, that G might not have known of the source upon which *Hom.* 4-6 was based, although this (G's knowledge of the source) may be proven by the presence of parallel material to *Hom.* 4-6 in *Rec.* 10.17f.⁶⁰ Strecker's other, and first, argument posits a somewhat eccentric and unprecedented usage of Apion on the part of the Homilist. Could he not have thought of a more appropriate interlocutor? Also it needs to be noted that if Strecker is right, and the Homilist is the creator of the Apion of this section, then it would seem odd that such a notable personality upon whose characterisation the Homilist has expended much imaginative effort, should suddenly disappear from the narrative to reappear only two more times.

Related to Strecker's point about Apion are his observations about the Judaising tendencies of the Homilist. If, after all, we can demonstrate that the Homilist is a Judaiser, that term being understood as someone who seeks to emphasise the Jewish character of Christianity, then, we are in a better position to see why he made use of Apion as an enemy of Christianity, and by extension why he wrote *Hom.* 4-6 with the 'Jewish' emphases we have sought to highlight.

A number of points need to be made. First, the Homilist nowhere uses the term 'Christian' to describe those who follow Jesus/the true prophet. Secondly, there are occasions, aside from *Hom.* 4-6, where one might argue that the 'converted' person, however conceived, is understood to be Jewish. So at *Hom.* 13.7.3 we read that the two sons of Faustus were adopted by Justa, a proselyte of the Jews, and how the boys became strongly attached to her religion. The same boys, Nicetas and Aquila, are described as Jews at the end of the *Homilies*, at 20.22.2, where it is stated that Faustus had followed Simon Magus because he did not want to see his sons who had become Jews (τοὺς αὐτοῦ υἱοὺς Ἰουδαίους γεγενημένους), the indication being that that was their status now. Both these details about Justa and Nicetas and Aquila are not found in *Recognitions*.⁶¹ Furthermore, it is interesting to note the relative frequency with which the term 'God of the Jews' appears in the *Homilies* (16.7.3; 16.9.2; 16.14.4), as a description of the God worshipped by Peter and his followers, and to highlight the ref-

⁵⁹ See apart from Rehm 1938a, Jones 2003, 159-60, n. 159. It is generally accepted that *Rec.* 10.65a-72, which is not found in *Homilies*, is later than Rufinus.

⁶⁰ On this, see below, and Pouderon 2001, 256.

⁶¹ For Justa see *Rec.* 7.32. Justa is simply described as someone who treated the boys as sons and educated them in Greek literature and liberal arts.

erence to the Hebrew scriptures as “the books that are current amongst the Jews” (3.38.2; see also 16.21.4).⁶² In a famous passage Peter, alluding to an argument he has already made about the Jews being the only people from whom the demons cower (9.16), notes how there are exceptions to that rule by redefining the term ‘Jew’. “If anyone acts impiously, he is not pious. And, hence, if a foreigner keeps the law, he is a Jew, but he who does not is a Greek. For the Jew believing in God, keeps the law. But he who does not keep the law is manifestly a deserter through not believing God.” (11.16.3-4). Whether we can liken ‘Christian’ to ‘Jew’ here is not clear.⁶³ In the parallel passage in *Recognitions* (*Rec.* 5.34), the question of the definition of the term ‘Jew’ has somewhat receded into the background. Another arresting passage, which is relevant to our present discussion is *Hom.* 8.5-7 and its parallel in *Rec.* 4.5. In the former passage the Homilist is seeking to emphasise the point that the salvation of Gentiles is dependent upon good works. “For there would have been no need of Moses”, he writes, “or the coming of Jesus, if they would have understood of themselves what is reasonable. Neither is their salvation in believing in teachers and calling them ‘Lords.’” Turning to the issue of Gentile salvation in 8.6, the Homilist comments: “For this reason, Jesus is concealed from the Hebrews who have taken Moses as their teacher, and Moses is hidden from those who have believed Jesus. For since there is a single teaching by both, God accepts one who has believed either of these;” and intriguingly a consequence of this view for the Homilist is that neither Jew nor Gentile is culpable if they are ignorant of the other’s message (8.7). Most agree that more than its parallel in *Rec.* 4.5, the Homilist emphasises the absolute similarity of the message of Jesus and Moses;⁶⁴ and that to a greater extent than the writer of *Recognitions*, he adheres to this belief, even on one occasion appearing to endorse the idea of rabbinic succession.⁶⁵

All of the above, then, might be sufficient evidence to support the view that the Homilist would in principle have no difficulty in referring to the conversion of a Gentile to the true religion in terms of Judaism, or to quote

⁶² Τῶν παρὰ Ἰουδαίοις δημοσίων βιβλίων.

⁶³ For a recent discussion of this passage see Reed 2003, 219-20.

⁶⁴ See Reed 2003, 217.

⁶⁵ See the words at *Hom.* 3.47.1: “The law of God was given, though, without writing, to seventy wise men, to be handed down, so that the government might be carried on by successors.” Also note the more positive attitude to the Pharisees at *Hom.* 11.29. For places where the writer of *Recognitions* seems to consider belief in Jesus more important for Gentiles, and to imply the disinheritance of the Jews, see *Rec.* 5.11.4. Reed argues, tentatively, for the view that the Homilist reflects more obviously the tendency of G precisely because of the basic similarities between the sentiments expressed in *Hom.* 8.5-7 and *Rec.* 4.5 (Reed 2003, 223).

the Homilist himself, in terms of the doing and speaking of things Jewish (4.7.2). However, what has been written above about the 'Judaising' tendencies of the Homilist may do no more than explain why he was able to include the source he did rather than proving that he wrote it. A couple of points need to be noted. First, some have considered bits of the evidence cited above as further supporting the existence of the source. So Bernard Pouderon,⁶⁶ commenting on the material relevant to Justa and her two adopted children found at *Hom.* 13.7.2, has argued that Justa's role in the narrative seems almost irrelevant (she is in fact replaced by Berenice),⁶⁷ possibly implying that she was simply borrowed from an originally Jewish novel, along with the boys "who had become Jews" (in relation to Nicetas and Aquila, Pouderon argued that their conversion to Christianity was assumed at *Hom.* 2.20 and 21 and its parallel in *Rec.* 7.33.1). For Pouderon, then, these pieces of evidence are understood as shards from an originally Jewish novelistic source, and support for his thesis that the source the Homilist used was a Jewish source, replete with 'recognitions' and philosophical discussion. Pouderon's observations suffer in part from the fact that the explicit Jewish identity of the boys occurs at the end of the *Homilies*, which, as we have noted, is generally held not to go back to G, and probably to be the work of the Homilist (and added to *Recognitions* by Rufinus). Pouderon's observation about Justa is also problematic. Justa is mentioned in *Recognitions* but there without reference to her proselytic status. This implies that Justa had some sort of a role in G. Has the Homilist 'judaised' Justa, and by extension her children (in *Rec.* their attachment to Judaism, referred to in *Homilies*, goes unmentioned)? Or has the writer of the *Recognitions* 'dejudaised' G? Some would argue for the latter view, not least because of the similarities between *Hom.* 8.5-7 and *Rec.* 4.5, the sentiments of which relating in the main to the equality of the followers of Moses and of Jesus, are contradicted in part by other things we read in the *Recognitions*; and because of the almost circumstantial mention of Justa's status as a 'proselyte' (the word is found nowhere else in *Homilies*). The possible presence of this material in G at least makes Pouderon's suggestion possible, but does not prove it.

A less problematic observation relates to the character of the conversion of the Clement of *Hom.* 4-6. As previously stated, there can be little doubt that in *Hom.* the Gentile Clement is converted to something we would call Judaism; and yet the implication of the Homilist, even when he is at his most Judaising, is that the root to salvation for the Gentiles, or the means by which the proper virtuous life associated with Moses and his law is conveyed to them, is through attachment to Jesus, even if he rarely asso-

⁶⁶ See Pouderon 1996, 71-2.

⁶⁷ *Hom.* 4.1-2.

ciates such attachment to soteriological categories. That would seem to be the implication of *Hom.* 8.5-7; and quite clearly of the conversion story of Clement in *Hom.* 1-2. So in the latter passage Peter has some harsh criticism for pagan philosophy, essentially reducing it to a matter of opinion rather than truth. This differs from Christianity and its message, also depicted in other parts of the *Homilies*, of the one true prophet who alone is able to enlighten the souls of men. "Wherefore", states Peter, "before all things it is necessary to seek after the true prophet, for without him it is impossible that any certainty can come to man." (*Hom.* 1.19//par. in *Rec.*). That is, the true prophet, with his revelation of the true doctrine (*Hom.* 2.12), provides the seeker after religious truths with absolutes where pagan philosophy provides the same person with confusion. In *Hom.* 4-6 we find similarly anti-philosophical arguments, though somewhat differently stated (*Hom.* 5.2), but it is not the true prophet who acts as an antidote to epistemological confusion, but rather the explicitly Jewish doctrine of the one true God who governs the universe justly. Admittedly, the doctrine that the one true prophet brings is not far from the doctrine offered by the writer of *Hom.* 4-6,⁶⁸ but there still remains the striking observation that in *Hom.* 4-6 the Homilist has failed to mention the true prophet in his discussion of the conversion of Clement, a figure to whom he attributes considerable importance.⁶⁹ Strecker's observation that *Hom.* 4.7.2, which mentions Peter, the follower of Jesus Christ, anticipates Clement's final conversion, is a weak response to this observation, not least because there is no indication in *Hom.* 4-6 that Clement's conversion to Judaism is a stepping stone to something else, just as there is no straightforward indication that the conversion experience of *Hom.* 1.1f. involves a movement from paganism to Christianity via Judaism. The sustained insistence, then, in *Hom.* 4-6, on the need for conversion to Judaism, without reference to any Christian component, understood in terms of an attachment to the 'true prophet', even if at a theoretical level, compatible with his acknowledged respect for

⁶⁸ "For if anyone else knows anything he has received it from him (Jesus) or from his disciples. And this is his doctrine and true proclamation, that there is one God (εἷς θεός) whose work the world is; who being altogether righteous, shall certainly at some time render to everyone according to his deeds (πρὸς τὰς πράξεις)." (*Hom.* 2.12). Compare with *Hom.* 4.13: "But the doctrine of the barbarous Jews, as you call them, is most pious, introducing one as the father and creator (δημιουργόν) of all this world, by nature good and righteous; good, indeed, as pardoning sins to those who repent; but righteous, as visiting to everyone after repentance according to the worthiness of his doings." Interestingly, though the sentiments are similar, the language in which they are expressed is different.

⁶⁹ See *inter alia*, *Hom.* 1.19; 2.4, 3.5 11, 12; 7.6, 8, 11; 10.4. Also see Kelley 2006, 135-78, for the importance of the idea of the 'true prophet' for the writer of the *Recognitions*.

Judaism, and his strong sense of the interchangeability of the views of Moses and Jesus seems too obviously out of kilter with things stated elsewhere for one to believe it to be the work of the Homilist.

One final point needs to be made. Strecker argued that *Hom.* 4-6 bore a close relationship to *Hom.* 20.11-23, at least in terms of some of its narrative traits, in particular the decision to have the heroic figure engage in an act of deceit to advance the cause of truth. This is certainly true, and it is also true, as we have indicated, that there are good grounds for thinking that *Hom.* 20.11-23 was not in G. But is that a sufficiently strong observation to support the view that *Hom.* 4-6 is the work of the Homilist? After all, there would seem to me to be good grounds for noting the distinctiveness of *Hom.* 4-6, when compared not only with *Hom.* 20.11-23, but the whole of *Homilies*, both in terms of the skill with which the author deploys his knowledge of the Greek world, and the vocabulary he uses. So, for instance, Adler has carefully demonstrated how in the erotic letter episode in *Hom.* 5, the author takes up and transmutes the famous story of Antiochus who falls in love with his step-mother, and how in the process, the same author engages in discussion of well-known philosophical questions as well as quoting classical sources.⁷⁰ Others, as we have noted, have commented on the large number of words, which occur in this section but nowhere else in the *Homilies*. The latter point can be exaggerated – a fair proportion of the hapaxes relate to the names of gods and these could have been in G.⁷¹ There are, however, some related observations about language, which should be taken seriously. Just a couple will suffice. First, it is striking that at *Hom.* 5.28.2 the author uses the term τὸ μοναρχικὸν φρόνημα to refer to the idea of the rule of the one God.⁷² This is a unique phrase in the *Homilies*, and a striking hapax when we note that the Homilist is much taken up with importance of the doctrine of God's μοναρχία to which he refers on many occasions (see *inter alia* *Hom.* 3.3.2; 3.9.1; 3.10.1; 3.61.4; 7.12.2. 9.2.3; 10.11.1; 10.15.5; 16.1.2; 16.1.3), and the fact that he also uses the term φρονήμα (see *Hom.* 12.3.5; 12.23.5; 16.3.4; 16.4.2).⁷³ Secondly, in *Hom.* 4-6 we find a strong interest in Greek *paideia* (the term occurs some seven times in the three chapters), normally polemically expressed.⁷⁴ In the rest of the *Homilies* the term only appears five times, three of which refer to the same event (that Justa educated the two

⁷⁰ Adler 1993.

⁷¹ See our discussion of *Rec.* 10.17-52 below.

⁷² The translation in the ANF by the words, “the doctrine of the unity of God” seems to miss the sense of the Greek, which probably refers to the rule of the one God.

⁷³ The fact that the Homilist does not use the term μοναρχία in *Hom.* 4-6, given the frequency of his usage of the term elsewhere, and its appropriateness to the theology of the section, may also be deemed significant.

⁷⁴ *Hom.* 4.7.2; 4.12.1; 4.15.2; 4.17.1; 4.18.2; 5.9.5; 6.1.2.

boys, Nicetas and Aquila, in Greek *paideia*), and all of which are neutral references.⁷⁵ Of the other two one is negative (1.10.1), and the other neutral (16.3.3). Again one might argue that there is something strikingly distinctive about *Hom.* 4-6's usage of this term.

Rec. 10.17-52

Towards the end of the *Recognitions*, and in a different context from that in the *Homilies*, we find a discussion of Greek myths. In broad terms at least, it follows on from a discussion of providence and fatalism between Clement and his two brothers, Nicetas and Aquila, and their father, Faustus. The section, in which all three sons speak, as well as Peter, is somewhat artificially introduced through a reference by Clement to comments of Peter at Tripolis on the Greek gods. It contains a large number of parallels with material found in *Hom.* 4-6.⁷⁶ These parallels had been noted in earlier research on the *Pseudo-Clementines*, with scholars undecided as to which author to attribute priority.⁷⁷ Waitz,⁷⁸ following Hilgenfeld, was the first to argue for the independence of both authors, a fact that seemed to be supported by the quite different ordering of the material in both sections,⁷⁹ and by the extent to which no one author consistently appeared more detailed, nor be inference antecedent, to the other.⁸⁰ But if this conclusion

⁷⁵ See 2.22.3, and the repetition of this fact at 13.7.4, where παιδεία appears twice. These references are more or less neutral.

⁷⁶ Strecker 1958, 80, helpfully lists them: *Rec.* 10.5//*Hom.* 4.20f.; *Rec.* 10.17f.//*Hom.* 6.2f.; *Rec.* 10.20//*Hom.* 4.16 and 5.12f.; *Rec.* 10.22//*Hom.* 5.13; *Rec.* 10.23, 27//*Hom.* 5.22f.; *Rec.* 10.23f.//*Hom.* 6.20f.; *Rec.* 10.25//*Hom.* 6.22; *Rec.* 10.28//*Hom.* 4.18; *Rec.* 10.32f.//*Hom.* 6.7f.; *Rec.* 10.33//*Hom.* 6.13; *Rec.* 10.35//*Hom.* 6.17; *Rec.* 10.36//*Hom.* 6.23; *Rec.* 10.40f.//*Hom.* 6.14f.; *Rec.* 10.50//*Hom.* 4.12f.

⁷⁷ Waitz 1904, 31-2.

⁷⁸ Waitz 1904, 31-2.

⁷⁹ Rehm 1938a, 128-9, points out how the Homilist is much freer in his use of material, and tends to place related material in different places in his account. In *Rec.* the material is generally placed in blocks. Compare the material in *Rec.* 10.21-7 with its distribution in *Hom.* – *Rec.* 10.23 = *Hom.* 5.22; *Rec.* 10.24 = *Hom.* 5.23; 6.21; *Rec.* 10.25 = *Hom.* 6.22; *Rec.* 10.26 = *Hom.* 5.17. Rehm also points to places where the Homilist repeats the same material.

⁸⁰ Compare, for instance, *Rec.* 10.20-4 with *Hom.* 4.16, where *Rec.* appears to have much more detail on the misdemeanours of Zeus; or *Rec.* 10.24 on the grave of Hercules or 10.26 on the metamorphosis of Andromeda, where in both cases there is no equivalent in *Hom.* But the situation reverses itself when we compare *Hom.* 6.2f. with *Rec.* 10.17f. Also on a number of occasions it is very difficult to see how one writer could have derived his version of a particular passage from the other. See especially *Hom.* 6.21 and *Rec.* 10.24 on the graves of heroes.

seemed uncontroversial, it appeared more difficult to account for the similarity between the sections. Should it be explained simply by reference to a shared knowledge of G, or by other means? Most agreed that *Recognitions*' account of things was closer to what was in G, not least because it appeared in a context, which fitted better into the general narrative flow of the story. But if this was the case, how was the very different account of things in *Homilies* to be explained? Was *Homilies* a type of adaptation of material in G, or could it only be explained by reference to a mooted source, which G itself adapted? Heintze argued strongly for the view that the material in *Rec.* 10.17-52 was incompatible with the claim that he took to be original to G (see *Rec.* 8.2 = *Hom.* 14.3) that Faustus was an atheist (the material in *Rec.* 10.17-52 assumed that the father of Clement, Nicetas and Aquila was a believer [see *Rec.* 10.2]), and argued that the section was unlikely to have been in G. Heintze went on to argue that the author of *Recognitions* gleaned the material independently from G, probably from the Jewish source.⁸¹ Schmidt thought this an overly-complex theory, suggesting as it did, that the writer of G, the Homilist and the writer of *Recognitions* had independent access to the mooted Jewish source. Instead he argued that in his adaptation of the Jewish source, the writer of G had been forced by his reworking to make Faustus the representative of a number of opinions (astrological, non-providential, and mythological), all represented in the Jewish source (see below), but not mutually compatible. That such a thing involved the writer of G in 'contradiction', in particular in relation to the religious beliefs of Faustus, should not be overplayed, especially when one considered that the writer of G was principally a compiler.⁸² Strecker, somewhat differently, argued that it was difficult to believe that the author of G had changed the lively Apion dispute into the dry, somewhat abstracted, account we find in *Recognitions*, and as noted, argued that *Hom.* 4-6 originated with the Homilist.

Arriving at any cast-iron conclusions from the above is very difficult. A number of points can be made, however. First, the evidence does not support the idea that the similarities between *Recognitions* and *Homilies* are best explained by assuming that one copied from the other. Secondly, what would appear to be one of the alternative solutions, that both copied from G is also problematic, not least because of what I have already said about the independent character of *Hom.* 4-6. It would be wrong, however, to argue that G did not know of the source in *Homilies*. He may well have done, and simply adapted it. If this is the case, then, we are led to posit independent usage by the Homilist and G of the mooted Jewish source. Thirdly, it is more than likely that the writer of *Recognitions* reflects the original or-

⁸¹ Heintze 1914, 29f.

⁸² Schmidt 1930, 223-6.

dering of the material in G.⁸³ Thirdly, the similarities between *Homilies* and *Recognitions* are most acute in the material found in *Rec.* 10.17-41, and less obvious in *Rec.* 10.42-51, where Peter speaks in a straightforwardly hortatory and Christian style.⁸⁴

The extent of the original Jewish source

In his review of Waitz's monograph of 1904, Bousset had first made the suggestion that the source as we have it in *Hom.* 4-6 is incomplete, although at this time he did not identify the source as Jewish. Heintze, apparently independently of Bousset, set out the same case in greater detail. The grounds for seeing the source as incomplete are relatively straightforward. First, the section appears to end somewhat abruptly at 6.25.⁸⁵ Secondly, at 4.12 and 13, Clement appears to posit a four-pronged purpose to his discussion. He will argue against those who have introduced polytheism and the myths of the gods (4.12.2), fate (εἰμαρμένην ... τὴν λεγομένην γένεσιν [4.12.3]), and those who oppose a providential view of the world (referred to as unforeseeing destiny [ἀπρονόητον φοράν]), and he will show that Judaism is the best religion (4.13.3), precisely because it contradicts the presuppositions of the other three positions.⁸⁶ On one reading it appears that Clement accomplishes two of these objectives, that relating to the myths of the gods and the warm endorsement of the Jewish faith (although one has to admit that the latter is a little skeletal), but not the other two. The failure to address these subjects is particularly striking as Athenodorus and Anubion, Apion's two companions, appear well-suited to addressing the issue of 'genesis' (Anubion is an astrologer)⁸⁷ and the non-

⁸³ See Strecker 1958, 81, who draws attention to Clement's statement in *Hom.* 12.5.3 and *Rec.* 7.5 that he has not left the company of Peter. This, however, is contradicted by *Hom.* 4-6 where Clement has been sent forward by Peter to report on the activities of Simon in Tyre. Strecker argues that the Homilist failed to remember this point when he came to write down the words of Peter at *Hom.* 12.5.3.

⁸⁴ On this see Schmidt 1930, 186f.

⁸⁵ Schmidt 1930, 196, puts it well: "Mit diesen Worten des Clemens (the final words of *Hom.* 6.25) bricht die Disputation mit Appion ganz überraschend und völlig unvermittelt ab; vor allem kommt Appion selbst nicht mehr zu Worte, so dass wir nichts von dem positiven Resultat der Unterredung hören. Statt dessen taucht plötzlich während der Unterredung wie ein deus ex machina Petrus aus Caesarea auf."

⁸⁶ He refers to the most pious doctrine of the Jews (Ἰουδαίων λόγος εὐσεβέστατος), which posits one creator who pardons those who repent but punishes those who do not.

⁸⁷ Anubion was modelled on a well-known Egyptian astrologer from the time of Nero. For the meagre remains of his work, see Bremmer 2005.

providential character of the world (Athenodorus is an Epicurean);⁸⁸ and yet both remain strangely silent throughout the chapters under discussion. Their reappearance elsewhere in *Homilies* (Anubion at 14.11-12; and Athenodorus at 16.1; and then both at 20.13f.) is easier to explain if we assume a more prominent presence in an only partially preserved source. This argument appears convincing if one bears in mind the contents of *Rec.* 8-10, which records a debate at Laodicea between Clement, Nicetas and Aquila, the reunited brothers, each possibly critical representatives of a different philosophical school,⁸⁹ and their newly found father, Faustus, who is made to represent a variety of opinions, opinions, which, as we have noted, are not mutually compatible, a further indication perhaps of tinkering with an original source.⁹⁰ Here we find discussions of providence,⁹¹ fate (understood in relation to astrology),⁹² and the gods,⁹³ although the first two appear related to each other.⁹⁴ For Heintze and Bousset, it is in these chapters that we can find signs of the shape of our original Jewish source.⁹⁵

This thesis, then, posits a much longer Jewish source, which presents in dialogical form an educated and robust defence of Judaism's adherence to a providential and moral view of the universe.

There remain a number of outstanding questions.

⁸⁸ We know nothing of the historical Athenodorus. Some suspect that he was chosen because his name conjures up the idea of Athens and so the wide spectrum of ideas represented by Apion and his companions. Some think he might be related to Athenodorus the teacher of Augustus. For all of this see Bremmer 2005.

⁸⁹ Nicetas represents Epicureanism, Aquila, possibly Pyrrhonism, and Clement the schools of Plato and Aristotle.

⁹⁰ See Cullmann 1930, 122: "Faustus devient à la fois épicurien, fataliste et polythéiste. Cette concentration de trois doctrines si différentes dans la pensée d'une seule personne a obligé l'auteur de l'écrit à mélanger aussi le contenu des discussions." See above for the same point made by Schmidt.

⁹¹ See *Rec.* 8.2, 6, 10f., and the main part of book 8.

⁹² *Rec.* 8.8. Note *Rec.* 9.2 ("all things are subject to genesis" [see the parallel to this in *Hom.* 14.3.2 where we read ἀλλὰ γενέσει τὰ πάντα ὑπόκειται]) – this passage is of particular interest in that the Latin reads *te professus es gnarum esse positionis siderum et stellarum cursus*, implying that Faustus is a real expert in astrology, a point, which reflects the claim made by Faustianus of Anubion in *Hom.* 14.11.2 that he is ἀστρολογῶν ἄριστος (for further evidence of expertise see 8.57.5; 9.18.2). On 'genesis' generally see Kelley 2006, 88-9.

⁹³ The participants are, on the one hand, Clement, Nicetas and Aquila, and on the other hand, their father, Faustus. We should note the way in which both in *Hom.* and *Rec.* the philosophical character of the education of these individuals is played up.

⁹⁴ See *Rec.* 8.2 where Faustus is made to say "there is neither any god, nor any worship, neither is there any providence in the world, but all things are done by fortuitous chance and *genesis*."

⁹⁵ See our discussion above of the *Rec.* 10.17-51.

First, to what extent was the original Jewish source presented in the form of a romance, that is, was the Jewish source, of which we appear to have evidence in *Hom.* 4-6, and possibly in *Rec.* 8-10, a narrative similar in shape to the Christian romance of which we have evidence in the present slightly differently constructed *Homilies* and *Recognitions*? Heintze, whose contribution to the discussion of *Hom.* 4-6 is probably the most important seemed to distinguish between “eine jüdische Bekehrungsgeschichte”,⁹⁶ and “ein Disputationsbuch”, also of Jewish origin,⁹⁷ although there was no attempt in what he wrote to differentiate in any detail between these two mooted sources. In fact he appeared to treat them as the same entity, arguing that the romance aspect was an addition of a Christian hand.⁹⁸

In two articles, published in 1996 and 2001, to which reference has already been made, Bernard Pouderon sought to reignite the question. In the first of these, an investigation of the figure of Clement in the *Pseudo-Clementines*, Pouderon posited the existence of an original Jewish novel.⁹⁹ His main grounds for arguing such a case, as we have seen, lay in pointing to a section of the *Homilies* (*Hom.* 13.7) in which the twin brothers of Clement recall how after being shipwrecked they were taken in by a woman of the highest distinction, a “proselyte to the Jews (τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις προσήλυτος)” who treated them as if they were her own children and introduced them to Hellenistic education (πάσῃ Ἑλληνικῇ παιδείᾳ). Elsewhere we appear to receive confirmation of a second conversion to Christianity (*Hom.* 2.20 and 21 and its parallel in *Rec.* 7.33.1). Another indication of the existence of an originally Jewish novel seemed to be at the end of *Homilies* where we find the statement, made by Apion that Faustus no longer wants to see his children because they have become Jews (*Hom.* 20.22, and par. in *Rec.* 10.64).¹⁰⁰ In this article, Pouderon was keen to retain a distinction between a Jewish romance and a Jewish dispute source, featuring Apion and Clement, restricting himself to answering the question as to which source had contributed most significantly to the representation

⁹⁶ Heintze 1914, 45.

⁹⁷ Heintze 1914, 50.

⁹⁸ In fact it is not at all clear that Heintze truly distinguishes between two separate works. Note the sentence in idem 1914, 50: “Das Buch gibt sich als eine jüdische Bekehrungsschrift zu erkennen ...” Bousset 1915a, 533, was clearer on the novelistic origins of the story, describing the work as “die christianisierte Version einer jüdischen hellenistischen Novelle.”

⁹⁹ Pouderon 1996, 71 n. 20, where he cites Heintze, incorrectly, I think, in support of his view, and less controversially, Bousset.

¹⁰⁰ Pouderon 1996, 71-3.

of what he termed “le proto-Clément juif”,¹⁰¹ whom he went on to argue was based upon Flavius Clemens, the Roman aristocrat put to death by Domitian for adopting Jewish ways.¹⁰² By the time Pouderon came to write his second article in 2001, his mind had somewhat changed and he was keener to argue, along narratological lines, for the existence of a single Jewish romance, which, building upon an original pagan narrative, contained all of the Jewish material in the *Pseudo-Clementines*. In support of his view, he appealed again to the existence of the story of the twins and the presence, in a minimally developed role, of the figure of Justa the proselyte. He went on to argue that the figure of Apion, as presented in *Hom.* 4-6, could be taken as central to a novelistic plot – there are clear signs that Apion is attached to Clement’s family as we learn in books 4 and 5 – and he argued against the view that the two stories of Clement’s conversion, both so different yet so similar, could be taken from different sources. Better to take their similarity as evidence of the existence of an original Jewish source, novelistic in character, that a Christian redactor has edited, and so, by extension, evidence for the existence of a Jewish novel containing the dispute. In essence, then, for Pouderon there are enough indicators in the present text of *Recognitions* and, in particular, *Homilies*, to point to the existence of an original Jewish narrative, which itself constitutes a redaction of an originally pagan work, which presented itself in the form of a debate on the monarchy of God, polytheism, fatalism and providence.¹⁰³

In some senses Pouderon’s observations do not substantively change the question of the content of a mooted original Jewish source. The subjects of polytheism as manifested in the myths, divine monarchy, providence and fatalism are still the major areas of discussion. It is simply that these are now seen as part of an original narrative, which itself draws upon a pagan original.¹⁰⁴ Whether the mooted source was originally a novel is difficult to tell. We have already noted above the potential weaknesses in Pouderon’s thesis, not least his failure to accept what would now appear to be established, namely the view that *Rec.* 10.52f. is an addition.¹⁰⁵ The latter point

¹⁰¹ Pouderon 1996, 73-4. Pouderon argues for the greater contribution of the Clement of the Apion section.

¹⁰² For the substance of this argument, see especially Pouderon 1996, 75-9. Part of his argument is based upon the description of Clement as aristocratic (*Hom.* 4.7.2; 12.8.2; 12.15.2; 14.6.2), partly upon his clear association with Judaism, and partly upon rabbinic traditions to do with a certain Ketia bar Shalom whom some identify with Flavius Clemens (see *b. ‘Abod. Zar* 10b).

¹⁰³ Pouderon 2001, 251.

¹⁰⁴ Pouderon 2001, 251.

¹⁰⁵ Also note the difficulty surrounding the Justa story and its relationship to G discussed above.

need not, of course, imply the existence of a fully developed Jewish novel; and it is interesting in this context to note that there is almost nothing in *Hom.* 4-6 that would hint at the existence of a novelistic framework save possibly for aspects of the flashback in *Hom.* 5. In fact one could argue that the changes apparently made to the Jewish source in *Rec.* 8-10 arise precisely from the novelistic framework in which the Christian redactor has placed his work.

Proof that aspects of *Rec.* 8-10 may go back to a specifically Jewish source are difficult to find. As stated above, our best evidence lies precisely in identifying *Hom.* 4-6 as Jewish, or a lightly redacted Jewish source, arguing for its incomplete character and for evidence in the same passage of the content of what we may deduce is missing. Insofar as that content is present in *Rec.* 8-10, then we may be in a position to say that it was a part of an original Jewish source. This must, of course, remain speculative and has to contend with the issue of redaction.

Some have seen positive signs of a Jewish source. In *Rec.* 9.16, and as part of an ongoing discussion of what might broadly be called the subject of fate or genesis (the specific context is a discussion of the freedom of the will), Faustus notes that people become adulterers or murderers as a result of the arrangement of the heavenly bodies. In 9.17, the following chapter, he goes on to describe the properties of the various planets under which people may be born. Clement then proceeds to refute him, arguing from the examples of different people's behaviour that it is laws, not planets, that dictate the way people behave. The Chinese, regardless of what star they are born under, do not commit murder, adultery and other heinous things precisely because they have laws against them. Other examples are then given including examples of peoples whose laws do not in fact forbid heinous crimes and who therefore, accordingly commit such things. In this respect Clement notes that Indians sacrifice and torment their prisoners, the Persians marry their mothers, sister and daughters etc. This argument against astrology, known as the νόμιμα βαρβαρικά, was often refuted by the so-called 'climata' argument, or what some have termed the idea of astrological geography.¹⁰⁶ This stipulates that the world is divided into astrological zones, with the number of zones ranging from five to twelve. Each of the zones appeared to correspond to one of the signs of the zodiac. In this view of things the so-called νόμιμα βαρβαρικά work in favour of the astrologer, not against him. It is this to which Clement refers when he states that "genesis is divided into seven parts, which they call climates, and that over each climate one of the seven heavenly bodies holds sway" (9.26), and he refutes it by noting the presence throughout the world of peoples who perform the same practices and adopt the same rules. So he

¹⁰⁶ On this, see Kelley 2006, 126f.

notes that the Magusaei, Persian magicians, who are witnessed in Persia and beyond, always marry their daughters and mothers. It is then that he goes on to cite the Jews and their custom of circumcision: "I shall add another thing, which may satisfy even the most incredulous. All the Jews who live under the law of Moses circumcise their sons on the 8th day ... But how then shall the account of Genesis stand with this, since Jews live in all parts of the world, mixed with Gentiles ...?" (9.28). The section appears to reach its crescendo in 9.29 where the author points triumphantly to the fact of the spread of the Christian Gospel round the world. But this section, with its statement that Christian missionary activity has brought to an end the lawless activity of Gentiles, looks suspiciously like an addition. This is indicated by (a) the introduction of the idea of the 'true prophet'; (b) the sudden adoption of a strongly judgmental tone about the practices of the various peoples, which had, in the preceding chapters, been described neutrally; and (c) by indications that there are contradictions, or at least tensions, between things claimed in *Rec.* 9.29, and things claimed in 17-28. It seems odd, for instance, that the author should write at 9.29.11 that in Parthia the citizens no longer have many husbands when at 9.24.2, he had claimed precisely the opposite as a reality.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, it seems odd that at 9.29.11 he should refer to the Persians as having ceased from having incest with their wives and marriage with their daughters when at 9.20.14 he had spoken about marriage with mothers, daughters and sisters; and that at 9.29.10 he could state that the Medes no longer throw men who are dead to the dogs but at 9.25.1 he states that the same people throw men who are still breathing to the dogs.¹⁰⁸ If, therefore, as our own reading of the passage demonstrates, the natural point for the section to end is 9.28, then the likelihood of our source being Jewish,¹⁰⁹ albeit a source that has borrowed from a non-Jewish one,¹¹⁰ is increased precisely because the final example, deployed in a manner that is implicitly positive about the Jews,¹¹¹ is a Jewish one.¹¹² Such a hypothesis grows in strength, some assert, when we note that in the only other reference to circumcision, in *Rec.* 8.53, the rite does not appear to be exclusively associated with Jews, al-

¹⁰⁷ *In Parthia multae mulieres unum habent virum.*

¹⁰⁸ See Heintze 1914, 74.

¹⁰⁹ Heintze 1914, 75 n. 2.

¹¹⁰ Heintze 1914, 100, mentions in particular the νόμιμα βαβαρικά of Carneades (214/3-129/8 B.C.E.), a strong opponent of fatalism. The argument from circumcision is an addition to this source.

¹¹¹ Note also what is said about the failure of the Jews to expose their children and their observance of the Sabbath.

¹¹² See Heintze 1914, 75. Note the words of Schmidt 1930, 159: "Das kann nur aus der Feder eines gesetzestreuen Juden stammen ..."

though here the context can be taken to imply a different emphasis from 9.28.¹¹³

The argument above has, however, to contend with the fact that the section for which it claims a Jewish provenance has in fact been attributed to another source, namely *The Book of the Laws of the Countries* (from now on BLC), attributed to the late second/early third century Syrian Christian writer, Bardaisan.¹¹⁴ This observation arises from the fact that *Rec.* 9.19-29 bears a very close relationship to the latter passage and to Eusebius' account of the same passage, attributed to Bardaisan, in *Praep. ev.* 6.10.1-48, and that some scholars, but not all, have wanted to argue that the source in common is a version of Bardaisan's BLC. Matters are complicated because BLC only comes to us by the hand of one of Bardaisan's followers, Philip, and it is unclear how reliable an account Philip's is (scholars are even undecided as to whether the Syriac of Philip's BLC is a translation from Greek).¹¹⁵

All scholars agree that the nature of the agreements and disagreements between the three sources point not to a direct literary relationship among them but rather to dependence upon a common source. While some scholars, particularly those from an earlier period, argued that this common source was the *Grundschrift*, others argued for some version of the BLC,¹¹⁶ and this would seem to be the consensus today.¹¹⁷

The problem is too complex to discuss at length here, and is in some ways not central to the thesis being advanced, but a few points can be made.

Schoeps defended the priority of G on the basis of two observations.¹¹⁸ First, and partially repeating an observation already made above, he maintained that the reference to circumcision on the eighth day, points to a Jewish source; and that it is unlikely that Bardaisan would have used such a source. Secondly, he argued that Bardaisan, a Gnostic on his reckoning,

¹¹³ "Also the Arabian nations, and many others, have imitated the circumcision of the Jews for the service of their impiety." Schmidt 1930, 159, argues that the emphasis in 9.28 lies on circumcision on the eighth day, but that is not the issue in 8.53 where we find reference to the circumcision of Jews and Arabs. In fact the latter passage occurs precisely in a section where the author is attempting to argue for the necessity of the appearance of contraries. Here Arabian circumcision, not Jewish circumcision, is associated with impiety.

¹¹⁴ The most recent summary of the problem is found in Kelley 2006, 22-7.

¹¹⁵ See Drijvers 1966, 60-95.

¹¹⁶ Note Rehm 1938b, 222, who, commenting on the whole problem, notes that "... niemand hält heute mehr die clementinische Grundschrift für älter als Bardesanes ..."

¹¹⁷ See Kelley 2006, 24f. Note that it manifests itself in various forms of complication. So Rehm held G to be dependent upon Bardaisan's *Dialogue on Fate*, and Eusebius and the BLC to be dependent upon another dialogue of Philip.

¹¹⁸ Schoeps 1951.

was unlikely to have recommended himself to the Jewish/Jewish Christian author of G. Drijvers, responding directly to Schoeps' points, noted that the second point was worthless because it was not clear that Bardaisan was a Gnostic, and in any case there is evidence from the middle third century C.E., the traditional date for the writing of G, that Bardaisan was not thought to be a heretic. As to the point about the role of circumcision, this in no way indicates a Jewish source. "Relations are so complex there (in Syria), that often it cannot be determined whether a particular writing is Jewish, Christian or a Jewish-Christian synthesis ... A strong Jewish influence in 'Christian' literature is to be expected, and is indeed found."¹¹⁹ Drijvers, after mentioning a literary-critical point to which we will refer below, goes on, somewhat dismissively, to state, again by way of criticism of Schoeps, that the existence of the mooted Jewish source is in any case "purely hypothetical."¹²⁰

Drijvers is right to argue that in and of itself the fact that the section contains a reference to Jewish circumcision is not decisive in identifying the source as Jewish, and his points about the complex profile of Syrian Christianity are well taken. Perhaps the point he fails to address, and one that could be taken to have a bearing on the question, relates to the fact that the mooted source is thought to have *ended* with a reference to circumcision, that is, the source did not end with a triumphant reference to the spread of Christianity. In part this argument was based upon the observation that the author of G appeared to have introduced a reference to Christianity and the 'True Prophet' rather artificially. The introduction in BLC and Eusebius could be seen as less artificial because both refer to 'climata', implying that in an original source we moved relatively effortlessly from a discussion of the customs of the various peoples to the Christians. However, the perceived contradictions between what it was asserted various races did in the section preceding *Rec.* 9.29, and what the same races were shown to have desisted from since becoming Christians are present in BLC and Eusebius, although possibly in a more muted form in the former. Interestingly, in the section on Judaism, both the BLC and Eusebius, after their comments on Jewish circumcision and Sabbath observance, refer to individuals in "Syria and Osrhoene" (Eusebius) or "Syria and Edessa" (BLC) who mutilated themselves in honour of Rhea (Eusebius) or "Tar'ata" (BLC), and agree in describing Abgar's subsequent order that anyone who did such a thing should have their hands cut off. The fact that BLC and Eusebius agree against *Recognitions* on this point might indicate that the source did not in fact end with a reference to the Jews and their circumcision. So it could be argued that neither Eusebius nor the BLC

¹¹⁹ Drijvers 1966, 72-3.

¹²⁰ Drijvers 1966, 73.

straightforwardly support the existence of a Jewish source because they imply a source which did not end with a reference to Jews, although the reference to Abgar could be taken to reflect the local setting of Bardaisan, which somehow found its way into Eusebius' version of the same; and this point might be further supported by the fact that the observation adds little to the argument. The reference in BLC, found neither in Eusebius nor *Recognitions*, to those in "Judea who are not circumcised" in the section relating to what Christians have refrained from doing is also intriguing. Why does he not refer to Jews everywhere refraining from this, especially when he has just described how Jews everywhere are circumcised, and he has not clearly indicated that there is anything wrong with circumcision? Could this indicate the artificiality of the ending?

The arguments above, which do not unambiguously support our thesis about the Jewish character of the original source out of which the common source of Eusebius, BLC and *Recognitions* may have emerged, might be thought by some to be trumped by indications that G betrays knowledge of Bardaisan-like opinions elsewhere and not just here. Such a point had been made early on in the history of research by Merx,¹²¹ was supported by Rehm,¹²² and has more recently been argued for by Jones, in the latter case in relation to evidence in G of Bardaisan's own teaching on fate.¹²³ The fact that some of these references might be thought to be clumsily integrated into the text, and to stand in contradiction to emphases elsewhere, makes this conjecture more likely.

Intermediate summary

Let us then briefly summarise the substance of what we have written above.

There are good grounds for taking the view that *Hom.* 4-6, which records a discussion between Clement and Apion on the subject of pagan mythology, is a distinctive section of the *Pseudo-Clementine* literature. The grounds for thinking this range from evidence that it is an intrusion into the narrative, to the different manner in which Clement is depicted in

¹²¹ Merx 1863.

¹²² Rehm 1938b, 241-6.

¹²³ Jones 2001, 75, points to two places in particular, *Rec.* 9.32.5, where Mattidia implies that fate was overcome as a result of her chaste behaviour, here presenting Bardaisan's idea that free will can defeat the power of fate, and *Hom.* 19.23.5 where we have the idea that one's life is determined by the stars until baptism. Interestingly, in *Rec.* 9.25.8 a statement about astral determinism found in BLC is excluded by the writer of *Rec.* On this, see Kelley 2006, 84.

the section, to its style and content, to the fact that it bears a close relationship to material in *Rec.* 10 but is clearly independent of it. Related to this conclusion, and more importantly for the purposes of this article, there are good grounds for thinking that the section has been taken from a Jewish source – Clement is depicted as converting to Judaism (the term ‘Judaism’ is never used but such a description fairly represents what happens to Clement), and his opponent, Apion, seems to be deployed precisely because he is known to be anti-Jewish, a characteristic, which both Christian and Jewish sources, which speak of Apion, emphasise. Attempts to argue that the section is the creation of the Homilist are right to emphasise the similarity between the Clement of *Hom.* 1.2-7 and *Hom.* 4-6, and the Judaising tendencies of the Homilist, but fail to convince because they cannot explain, in relation to the rest of the *Homilies*, how and for what purpose the author invented the section and why, in important respects, the depiction of Clement *differs* from what we find elsewhere in *Homilies*. Eusebius’ reference to “dialogues between Apion and Peter”, if that is the right translation of the Greek, is very difficult to explain. Some have wanted to see the passage as referring to a form of G, others, to a version of *Homilies*, and others have simply dismissed it as an interpolation into Eusebius’ text. None of these theories convinces, and so it is best to leave the passage to one side in one’s reflections on *Hom.* 4-6. There are indications that the mooted source may have been longer than the three chapters of *Hom.* 4-6, incorporating a discussion of both astrology and providence, involving Apion’s two companions, Anubion the astrologer and Athenodorus the Epicurean. Some of this ‘missing’ material may be found in *Rec.* 8-9, now adapted to a christianised romance, and there may be at least one indication of its Jewish provenance, namely the reference at 9.28 to Jewish circumcision, although this remains a somewhat fragile conclusion, contradicting the generally accepted view that this section of the *Recognitions* ultimately originates in a work by the enigmatic Syrian Christian writer, Bardaisan. The fact that there is a lot of shared material on mythology and its interpretation between *Hom.* 4-6 and *Rec.* 10.17-52, which cannot be accounted for by asserting the dependence of *Recognitions* upon *Homilies* or vice versa, can be taken to support the idea of a christianised version of an originally Jewish source. Disentangling the precise contents of this missing material from *Rec.* 8-9 is a difficult task. The manner in which it has now been presented in its christianised form, as a debate between Clement and his two brothers, and their father, the somewhat confused representative, it would seem, of the different viewpoints of Apion, Athenodorus and Anubion, is evidence of this, as are other signs of Christian redaction. To some the main evidence for thinking that the source was used by G lies in noting the similarity between the endings of *Rec.* and *Hom.*,

which agree very closely with each other, and, which depict the arrival of Apion and his two friends on the scene. But such an assumption is problematic because there seem to be good grounds for thinking that *Rec.* 10.52f. is an addition to the text copied from the end of *Homilies*.¹²⁴ Such a fact does not prove that the Jewish source was not incorporated into G (note what I have said above), or that *Hom.* 4-6 is not an originally Jewish work.

There may be some evidence that the disputation was originally a part of a longer Jewish novel, although this appears much more hypothetical.

Such a set of conclusions leaves a number of questions unanswered, not least why the Homilist refrained from giving us more of the source as it appeared in G, or in the mooted Jewish ‘Disputationsbuch’. Also the theory seems to posit a rather odd, and to some, overly complex, state of affairs. Insofar as the writer of *Recognitions* shows any knowledge of the source, this is in its christianised form, probably indicating that he is giving us some material from G, implying that the author of G knew the mooted Jewish source. Insofar as the Homilist gives us material from the source, this is in its original Jewish form.¹²⁵ These two observations would appear to indicate that the Homilist, in spite of having knowledge of G, has decided to make independent use of a source already used by G and to reproduce it in a more original form. This implies a well-known source of whose existence we now have no independent evidence. We shall return to the question of the grounds for the Homilist’s inclusion of this source later on in this article.

Some emphases of the source

All the remarks below should be prefaced with the important rider that they are provisional and suggestive. As I have noted, we cannot be certain of the precise content of our mooted source. In what is said, I shall concentrate on *Hom.* 4-6, only at points referring to material contained elsewhere in the Clementine corpus.

The author of *Hom.* 4-6 presents Clement to us as the intellectual in pursuit of the true philosophy. From childhood, we are told, he has been a lover of truth (ἀληθείας ἐρῶν [5.2.1]), a phrase, which clearly plays on the subsequent discussion of Eros and her ways in Apion’s famous “encomium to adultery” (5.10.4). And yet at least for some time, he was unable to find satisfaction in his quest. And this in spite of the fact that he is a man of high culture, thoroughly trained in Greek *paideia* (see 4.7.2 where Clement

¹²⁴ See above for our discussion of this matter.

¹²⁵ Note Heintze’s alternative solution. See Schmidt 1930, 216f. for discussion of various views on this.

is described as a man πάσης Ἑλληνικῆς παιδείας ἐξησκημένος), an observation made by Apion, who is clearly himself a successful representative of the world of *paideia* (4.15.1).¹²⁶ There is a sense in which the claims made are excessive and yet at every point in the section Clement shows himself a master of the world he surveys, at one point outstripping even Apion in his knowledge of pagan mythology and its allegorical interpretation (6.11).

The author's desire to identify Clement as a *pepaideuomenos*, a man of *paideia*, is not pursued with the purpose of commending this world of Greek culture to his audience. Far from it. Clement, precisely in his capacity as the man of learning, as in some sense the *pepaideuomenos* par excellence, wishes to subject that world to ferocious criticism. In what must have seemed to some as a breathless piece of caricature, Clement can reduce *paideia* to lewd tales of mythology,¹²⁷ tales, which he takes to have as their central purpose the encouragement of an immoral mimesis on the part of humans (4.17.2). As he notes: "Therefore I say that the whole learning of the Greeks (τὴν πᾶσαν Ἑλλήνων παιδείαν) is a most dreadful fabrication of a wicked demon (κακοῦ δαίμονος χαλεπτωτάτην ὑπόθεσιν). For they have introduced many gods of their own kind, and these are wicked, and subject to all kinds of passion; so that those who wish to do the same things may not be ashamed ... having as an example the wicked and unquiet lives of the mythological gods." (4.12.1-2). The man who is made to represent that world, Apion, becomes the hypocritical confirmation of this jaundiced view. So, while the latter can object in strong terms to Clement's caricature by first stating that the laws of the Greeks are opposed precisely to the actions Clement associates with that world, and by noting that the mythological tales are cosmological allegories (4.23 and 25), he in fact will come to represent the claim of Clement through his attempts in his so-called "encomium to adultery" to persuade Clement's potential lover to act in an immoral way precisely by referring to the actions of the gods (5.9f.). Precisely Apion's letter can allow Clement to restate his thesis about *paideia*: "This, men, is the instruction of the Greeks, affording a bountiful licence to sin excessively without fear (Αὕτη ἐστίν, ἄνδρες, ἡ τῶν Ἑλλήνων παιδεία, γενναίαν ὑπόθεσιν ἔχουσα πρὸς τὸ ἀδεῶς ἐξαμαρτάνειν)." And it is not Apion alone who is the subject of such a judgement but other representatives of the world of Greek *paideia*. Implicitly, of course, both of Apion's companions come in for harsh judgement, for their respective

¹²⁶ Note also how when Apion greets Clement at the beginning of *Hom.* 6, he is surrounded by many other men of *paideia* (πολλῶν ἄλλων τῶν ἐκ παιδείας ἀνδρῶν).

¹²⁷ "But I return to the foremost doctrine of the Greeks (τὴν πρωτίστην τῶν Ἑλλήνων δόξαν), that which states in stories (μυθολογοῦσαν) that there are many gods that are subject to numerous passions (παντοπαθεῖς)."

views; Anubion's endorsement of fate and Athenodorus' dismissal of providence, are both seen to represent positions, which facilitate immorality (4.12 and 13). The second of these two figures is described as an Epicurean, and our author is equally harsh about philosophers in general. They are presented as moral relativists, men intent upon gain and not the teaching of virtue (4.9), and, like Apion, as ultimately inclined towards sexual immorality (4.20), here referring to some standard polemics against philosophers, including Socrates, Diogenes, Zeno and Chrysippus (5.18). Little wonder that Clement asks that they be absent from his and Apion's debate (4.20); and little wonder, given this highly polemical view of the Greek world, that at one point Clement can call upon those he addresses to flee from the myths, the theatres, the books, and even the cities of that world, a thing that would have been anathema to the aspiring *pepaideuēnos* who wished to share in the privileges of an international Greek culture (4.19).¹²⁸

Such a negative presentation of things Greek, of the world of Greek *paideia*, acts as a counterfoil to the strongly positive presentation of Judaism, the religion to which Clement has converted. The contrast between the latter and the former is again immediately presented to us in Apion's introduction of Clement at 4.7.2. Clement, Apion maintains, a man highly educated in Greek *paideia*, has been deceived (ἠπάτηται) by a certain barbarian to do and say the things of the Jews. Clement makes no attempt to deny his affiliation, presenting it in such a way as to play up its positive moral implications when contrasted with the world in which he has been educated. So where the Greeks tell immoral stories about their gods, advocate doctrines of fate and the absence of providence, and therefore, as noted above, encourage forms of immorality, "the most blessed word of the barbarian Jews" (βαρβάρων Ἰουδαίων λόγος εὐσεβέστατός), puts forward precisely the opposite, "introducing one as the father and creator of all this world (ἓνα πατέρα καὶ δημιουργὸν τοῦδε τοῦ παντός), by nature good and righteous; good, indeed, as pardoning sins to those who repent, but righteous, as visiting to every one after repentance according to the worthiness of his doings." (4.13.3). In the chapter that immediately follows, and in a faintly Pascalian tone, the positive moral implications of this doctrine are made plain "This doctrine, even if it be mythical, being pious, would not be without advantage for this life. For every one, in expectation of being judged by the all-seeing God (τοῦ παντεπόπτου θεοῦ), receives the greater impulse towards virtue (πρὸς τὸ σωφρονεῖν)." (4.14. See also

¹²⁸ "For lessons about their gods are much worse than ignorance, as we have shown from the case of those dwelling in the country (κατ' ἀγρὸν οἰκούντων) who sin less through their not having been instructed by the Greeks (διὰ τὸ μὴ παιδευθῆναι τὰ παρ' Ἑλλήνων). Truly such fables of theirs ought to be shunned, and spectacles and books, and if it were possible, even their cities."

4.22 where the same sentiment is repeated but the contrast between the two worlds is stronger). It is precisely this contrast between virtue and its opposite, which is played out in a skilful and imaginative way in the flashback relayed by Clement of his earlier meeting with Apion in Rome. Apion's advocacy of adultery, arrived at through a simple plea to Clement's invented lover to follow the example of the gods, is contrasted with Clement's commitment to Judaism. "Whence I, having learned from a certain Jew (τινος Ἰουδαίου) both to understand and to do the things that are pleasing to God (τὰ θεῷ πρέποντα), am not to be entrapped into adultery by your lying fables." (5.26.3). This moral contrast is then confirmed by Apion's own words: "Is it without reason that I hate the Jews? Here now some Jew has fallen in with her (συντυχὼν Ἰουδαίος), and has converted her to his religion (εἰς τὴν θρησκείαν μεταγαγὼν), and persuaded her to chastity, and it is henceforth impossible that she ever have intercourse with another man; for these fellows, setting God before them as the universal inspector of actions (τὸν θεὸν ὡς παντεπόπτην τῶν πράξεων προθέμενοι), are extremely persistent in chastity, as being unable to be concealed from him." (5.27). Hatred of the Jews for Apion is hatred of a particular moral world. By contrast, as a lover of truth, there is only one route for Clement and that is the embrace of the doctrine of what he terms "the monarchy of God (τὸ μοναρχικὸν φρόνημα)", conveyed to him apparently by an anonymous linen seller (5.28.2), precisely because of its moral consequences, consequences, which are very different from those, which inevitably arise from a reading of the Greek myths about the gods.

Interestingly, this polarised and essentially ethical presentation of the contrast between the world of the Greeks and the world of the Jews is played out in the context of another debate relating to custom. When Apion first meets Clement at Tyre, after mentioning his decision "to do and say the things of the Jews", Apion upbraids Clement for what he takes to be an act of impiety: "Let him tell me, since he thinks that he has devoted himself to piety (εὐσεβεῖν ἑαυτὸν ἀποδεδωκέναι), whether he is not acting most impiously, in forsaking his ancestral customs (καταλιπὼν μὲν τὰ πατρία), and falling away to those of the barbarians (ἀποκλίνας δὲ εἰς ἔθνη βάρβαρα)." (4.7.3). And again: "Does it seem to you to be ignorance, that one should observe the customs of his fathers, and judge after the manner of the Greeks (τὰ Ἑλλήνων φρονεῖν)?" (4.8.2). Clement responds by noting that whoever desires to be pious is not bound to observe the customs of his fathers. He should only observe them if they are pious and not do so if they are impious (4.8.3). Further on he elaborates a little bit more: "There is a great difference, O men of Greece (ἄνδρες Ἕλληνες), between truth and custom (ἀληθείας τε καὶ συνθηείας). For truth is found when it is honestly sought; but custom, whatsoever be the character of the custom received,

whether true or false, is strengthened by itself without the exercise of judgment; and he who has received it is neither pleased with it as being true, not grieved with it as false. For such a person has believed not by judgment, but by prejudice (προλήψει), resting his own hope on the opinion of those who have lived before him on a mere chance.” (4.11.1-2). Of course, that ‘mere chance’ can be very difficult to be rid of precisely because custom is something with which one is associated from birth “for everyone is pleased to remain in those habits, which he forms in childhood; and thus since custom is not much less powerful than nature”, comments Clement, “they become difficult to be converted (δυσμετάβλητοι) to those good things, which were not sown in their soul (τὰ καταβληθέντα τῆ ψυχῇ καλὰ).” (4.18).¹²⁹ Clement, the lover of truth, has succeeded in achieving such an abandonment of custom, but insofar as he has done this, he has run the risk of being conceived as impious.

In summary, then, *Hom.* 4-6 presents the reader with a harshly polemical view of the Greek world. Much vaunted *paideia*, the central ingredient in a particular reconstruction of Greek identity, and normally a term with a broad range of reference, equivalent perhaps to our English term ‘culture’, is inextricably associated with the immoral fables of the gods, and its expositors appear as immoral purveyors of its bankrupt content. Their allegorical defences of its content are intellectually shabby and disingenuous. In the complete version of our source, it was no doubt also the case that an attack upon mythology was the beginning point of further attacks upon the doctrines of fate, perhaps associated with astrologers, and non-providential readings of the universe, associated with Epicureans, attacks, which again had as their central focus the moral implications of such doctrines, and most fundamentally the issue of God. As the polar opposite to this Greek world lies the ‘barbarian’ world of Judaism, which in positing a divine monarch who rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked, creates a properly moral framework against which to lead one’s life. That the movement to that world will necessarily involve the abandonment of inherited custom should not be a distraction, for the lover of truth cannot afford to judge things on the basis of prejudice.

¹²⁹ For this view of custom see Dio Chrysostom, *περὶ ἔθους* (76th discourse), who, in commenting on the distinction between law and custom, contrasts the imposed character of laws with the natural, voluntary features of custom. Custom, he comments, is written on our hearts, not on tablets of stone, and reflecting the words of Clement written above, notes “it is altogether easier to do away with any written ordinance you please than with custom.”

Cultural origins

As we have noted in our discussion of the contents of *Hom.* 4-6, it is the intent of its author to portray Clement as educated in Hellenic ways and there can be little doubt that both through Clement and in terms of the way he has presented the dispute between his hero and Apion, the author displays his knowledge of the Hellenic world out of which he emerged. There are references to and quotations from a variety of Greek sources; a good, if standard, knowledge of Greek myth is displayed, and of its allegorical interpretation, and it is possible that the author knew mythological handbooks, which listed in alphabetic order the sexual misdemeanours of the gods (cf. *Hom.* 5.13 and its parallel in *Rec.* 10.21, 22).¹³⁰ Much of this material finds its place in our source's near-contemporary, Lucian, admittedly presented in a more humorous and satirical vein, in contrast to our author's censorious and rancorous tone.¹³¹ It is true, of course, that our source hardly reflects the complex and ramified character of the debate about how to deal with this kind of material, particularly as we find this in a writer like Plutarch or Pseudo-Plutarch, who rejected allegory as a right mode of interpretation for such stories, but sought by other means to save them from destabilising the moral balance of their youthful readers.¹³² But in a one-sided, polemical text, which reduces the multiply complex term of *paideia* to nothing more than immoral *mimesis*, the failure to reflect the subtleties of the background hermeneutical discussion is hardly surprising. Heintze, amongst others, has argued that the writer clearly had access to and quoted from a substantive Greek philosophical source, possibly Posidonius. The criticisms that he makes of Greek philosophers, whether from the past or from the present, are also standard. So, for instance, Socrates' supposed

¹³⁰ See James 1932.

¹³¹ See especially *Dialogue of the Gods, de sacrificiis, Lover of lies*. On this, see Jones 1986, 33-45. Note also Achilles Tatius, *Leuc. Clit.* 2.37 for a list of the loves of Zeus.

¹³² See *On the education of children* (usually ascribed to Pseudo-Plutarch); *On listening to lectures* and *How a young man should listen to poetry*. The two final works are explicitly attempts to attack Plato's dismissal of poets from the ideal republic (see especially Plato, *Rep.* 377e-378a). Plutarch, while rejecting allegorical interpretation as a way of saving the morality of the gods, and by extension the morality of the youths reading these works (*Poetry* 19e-f), encourages discernment in ways of reading and careful analysis of the words of poems. For a recent discussion, see Whitmarsh 2001, 47-57. Central to Whitmarsh's discussion is the whole question of *mimesis*, in both literary and moral terms. In *Poetry* 17f Plutarch defines the lures of poetry as μιμητική τέχνη καὶ δύναμις seeing them as a potential threat to the moral life of his two subjects, Marcus Sedatus and his son Cleander. It is precisely this moral threat, which is so central to the author of *Hom.* 4-6, and for him, as for Plato, there is no way in which we can overcome such a threat. The Homilist, however, is not interested in poetry as such (there is no mention of poetry in what he writes).

sexual misdemeanours,¹³³ or Chrysippus' interpretation of a sexually explicit sculpture of Hera and Zeus, were widely cited.¹³⁴ Similarly popular, especially in the period of the *Second Sophistic*, were critical references to contemporary philosophy, in particular to the way in which philosophers exploited their services for high rates of pay, the conflicting character of their opinions, and the manner in which they behaved.¹³⁵ When our author talks in harsh tones of the need to flee from the life of the city and head to the morally more upright countryside, he also picks up on a well-known contemporary trope, even if his own use of it does not reflect the subtleties of some who wrote on this theme.¹³⁶

The author also shows himself conversant with aspects of Greek rhetorical practice and some of the standard theses discussed in the rhetorical schools. William Adler helpfully notes some of these: What are customs and how do we learn from them? Are customs always truthful or only accepted as true through repetition? Under what condition is apostasy from one's ancestral custom warranted (4.7)? Should one always respect and obey one's parents (4.7-8)? Is the world governed by providence, fate, or accidental events (4.12-14)? Are certain acts proscribed by law because they are wrong by nature, or are laws just utilitarian agreements made by the ancients to maintain social stability (4.20. Cf. 5.11)? Does virtue come through training or nature? Is living in the country less corrupting than living in the city (4.18-19; 5.25-6)? Should one marry and bear children (5.24-5)? This knowledge of Greek rhetorical *progymnasta* and a general concern with rhetoric is further manifested in the central chapter of the source. Here Adler argues that the author betrays knowledge of a well-known originally Hellenistic tale of Antiochus, the prince of Stratonice, who becomes lovesick for his step-mother; and his wily doctor, Erasistratus, who succeeds, by a clever lie, in persuading his father to give up his

¹³³ See Lucian, *Philosophus* 15 and 17; Philostratus, *Love Letters* 7, which refers to the rich Alcibiades creeping under Socrates' cloak.

¹³⁴ See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 7.187f, here referring to Chrysippus' interpretation of the story rather than the sculpture. On all of this, see Adler 1993, 40-1.

¹³⁵ For a general critique of philosophers' behaviour, see Lucian, *Symposium* 34; and for the effects of the commercialization of philosophical *paideia* see *Sale of lives* and *Fisherman*. In both of these works, "the declining standards in philosophical ethics are interlinked with the commercialization of *paideia*." (Whitmarsh 2001, 260). For the complex character of Lucian's response to philosophy, see Jones 1986, 24-32. See also Branham 1989, 121, who notes that by the second century philosophy had largely relinquished its adversarial role and had become an accepted element in the self-imaging of the ruling class – hence the commercialisation.

¹³⁶ For the view that the countryside is a morally superior place, see Dio Chrysostom, *Euboean oration*. Whitmarsh 2001, 104-5, shows how Philostratus in his *Heroicus* questions the clear boundaries between the 'pepaideumenos' and the rustic peasant.

wife to his son. This tale¹³⁷ had become very important in the rhetorical schools, raising as it did, a number of significant ethical questions.¹³⁸ The structure of the story is not so very different (love-sick boy is apparently helped to conquer his desired partner through the deceptive advice of an apparently well-intentioned elder) and, uniquely in the literature about Apion, his skills as a practitioner of medicine are referred to, making the parallel even clearer.¹³⁹ Central to the story as it had developed in the rhetorical schools were issues relating to the persuasive skills of the doctor “and the role of secrecy, deceit and dissembling in driving the narrative.”¹⁴⁰ Adler argues that it is precisely these things that loom large in *Hom. 5*. He notes that the Greek word *πείθω* and its cognates appear 14 times in the work and that much of the discourse is meant to show off the vaunted skills of Apion as *rhetor* and *grammatikos*. However, as Adler notes, the ironic twist in the story is that for all Apion’s apparent skill at persuading and/or deceiving, it is the young convert to Judaism, Clement, who succeeds in deceiving Apion and wringing from him a clear endorsement of his own perception of the world of Greek *paideia*; and, admittedly in a jaundiced and polemical tone, an acceptance of Clement’s perception of Judaism (5.27). By the clever exploitation of a well-known tale, which had played a significant part in the Greek rhetorical schools, the convert to Judaism shows up the bankrupt state of the world of *paideia* out of the mouth of the very man who espoused its virtue;¹⁴¹ and indicates that the only true *paideia* is found in Judaism, a Judaism taught to children by their parents, like all good customs, so that it becomes second nature (4.25).

Our author, then, has shown himself to be a *pepaideumenos*, precisely what Apion had declared him to be at the beginning of their discussions;

¹³⁷ For the various versions, see Plutarch, *Demetrius* 38; Lucian, *de dea Syria* 17-18; Appian, *Syrian Wars* 59-61; Valerius Maximus, *Libri novem factorum et dictorum memorabilium* 5.7; Julian, *Misopogon* 347a-348b. For further literature on the subject, see Adler 1993, 17 n. 5.

¹³⁸ On this see Adler 1993, 22f.

¹³⁹ At 5.2.3 Apion is referred to “one not uninitiated into the mysteries of medicine (ὡς ἰατρικῆς οὐκ ἀμύητος).”

¹⁴⁰ Adler 1993, 35.

¹⁴¹ At the end of the first day’s debate, Apion had questioned Clement’s presentation of the world of Greek *paideia*, in particular its supposed moral relativism and the claim that the stories of the gods’ sexual exploits could only be taken literally. And yet by the end of his discussion with Apion, and as the culminating point of the argument of his *encomium on adultery*, he interprets those same myths literally in support of a ‘natural’ defence of adultery (5.10). Also note how comments Clement had made about philosophers and their antics in the first day’s debate (see 4.20) are confirmed by what Apion asserts at 5.18: “Do not the celebrated philosophers extol pleasure, and have not they had intercourse with what women they would?” Amongst other things he mentions Socrates’ theory of holding women in common and Zeno’s pantheism. See Adler 1993, 40-1.

and he has succeeded in unambiguously defeating his opponent in what the author himself implies is a contest (4.7.3).¹⁴² But he rejects the world from which he apparently comes. That world, the world of *paideia*, was based in many ways upon *mimesis*, a kind of imitation of the styles, language and literary genres of the great Attic past, the imitation of which was most fully engaged in by the so-called sophists, and gave birth to the term *Second Sophistic*. But our author, rather than concentrating on that form of *mimesis* (he is uninterested in the past and its refashioning in the present), focuses upon moral *mimesis*, the *mimesis*, which he sees as central to any understanding of *paideia*. And here, in the form of Apion, the *mimesis*, which is seen to be at its core is utterly immoral, something which emerges from bankrupt theology seen in the form of the myths about the gods and bankrupt philosophy, and seen in the behaviour and teaching of the philosophers. Plato's polemic against the poets in the *Republic* has been extended to become a general attack upon *paideia* itself. And where a careful thinker like Plutarch could see such a world as morally salvageable if the reader learnt to be discerning in his approach to the poetic texts in which so much of this material about the gods is contained, our writer dismisses the whole of that world as nothing more than demonic.¹⁴³ Although we might compare elements of what our author writes with the work of his Syrian contemporary, Lucian, who also could be held to have a certain cultural bifocality, the latter has an altogether different vision of the world they both inhabited. For all his mordant skepticism about aspects of the culture in which he had been educated, Lucian's vision is a humorous and ambivalent one. He might laugh at the gods and the philosophers, but he does not denounce them all (for instance, he has a very high opinion of Epicurus). He may at times imply a certain pride in his barbarian origins (note, for instance, his work *On the Syrian Goddess*), but he is not entirely at ease with them,¹⁴⁴ precisely because he aspires to be a man of *paideia*, a point, which comes across most clearly in his work entitled *Dream or Life of Lucian*. *Paideia* appears here as a preferable alternative to the banausic life of the sculptor, a profession to which Lucian's family belonged. Part of this preference arises out of the social and economic possibilities that it will bring, but part of it out of the cardinal virtues it teaches Lucian.¹⁴⁵ Lucian is only too aware of the drawbacks of what he terms "false *paideia*"

¹⁴² Apion calls upon his companions to "struggle together" (συναγωνίσασθαί) to put Clement on the right tracks. Note also that Clement views Apion as trying to "entrap" him (ἀγωνίζεται [4.8.1]). On this see Adler 1993, 32; and on the role of cultural competition in the *Second Sophistic* see Whitmarsh 2005, 38-9.

¹⁴³ See n. 127 above.

¹⁴⁴ See, *inter alia*, *Double Indictment* 27; and *On Hirelings* 10.

¹⁴⁵ See *Dream* 6, 9-13; and the discussion in Swain 1998, 310f.

but he also has a clear view of “true *paideia*” as well.¹⁴⁶ Our author’s is a more polarised, one-sided vision in which Greeks are called upon to abandon their Greekness, understood as wicked *paideia*, and seek salvation in the ‘religion’ of the barbarian Jews.¹⁴⁷

Hom. 4-6 as a Jewish source

The author of our source is not a Greek but a Jew and yet in respect of his Judaism he is more sparing in what he tells us. His conversion is depicted as resulting from a discussion with an anonymous Jewish merchant on the subject of the μοναρχικὸν φρονήμα (5.28.2). This idea, the author asserts, is a most blessed doctrine, introducing one god and father of all, by nature good and just who will give to each according to his deserts (4.13, 22). Such a doctrine, the author contends, encourages virtuous lives and leads to a state of blessedness (4.14). This essentially moral vision of Judaism, arising as it does from a strongly theistic view of the universe and a developed sense of what God is (6.24), is not embellished upon by reference to anything specifically Jewish. The law is briefly referred to at 4.22.2 (ἐγὼ τῷ ἁγίῳ τῶν Ἰουδαίων θεῷ καὶ νομῷ προσέφυγον) but never discussed. There are no biblical allusions, let alone quotations – those all emanate from pagan sources. Clement’s conversion is a conversion to an idea (an idea that at one point he concedes might not in fact be true, but is beneficial regardless of its truth [4.14]); and involves no ritual such as circumcision, at least explicitly. This might to some appear like a sparing and bloodless picture of Judaism, even when compared with a work like

¹⁴⁶ For his comparison of these two forms of *paideia*, see *Picture of Cebes*; and Swain 1998, 319-20; and 324-8.

¹⁴⁷ John Barclay’s helpful discussion of viewing Jewish identity in the Diaspora in terms of assimilation, acculturation, and accommodation (Barclay 1996, 92-8) might be relevant to our discussion of the author’s profile. It has been argued that our author demonstrates a certain level of acculturation, “here used to refer to the *linguistic, educational, and ideological* aspects of a given cultural matrix.” His level of assimilation, understood in terms of social integration, appears less easy to establish, although given his harsh comments about *paideia*, this would appear to be low. As to his level of accommodation, understood in terms of the use to which acculturation is used, he is clearly situated at the more antagonistic point on the spectrum as he uses his ‘culture’ to attack the Graeco-Roman world of which he is a part. This contrasts with someone like Philo who, while being highly acculturated, is more obviously assimilated to the Hellenistic culture of Alexandria, and though hostile to many aspects of it, is, in a complex way, willing to accommodate his Judaism to aspects of that culture.

Pseudo-Phocylides, which most scholars agree at least alludes to the Bible.¹⁴⁸

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to make too much of all of this. It is worth recalling that the source as we have it is probably incomplete. It has been suggested, albeit tentatively, that circumcision may well have been referred to in the complete source (although the context of the reference was not related to conversion). Moreover, if the work was directed outwards to those who called themselves ‘Hellenes’, a failure to mention the Bible may seem at first sight understandable. Philo, for instance, was capable of writing works like *Quod omnis probus, de Providentia* and *de Aeternitate Mundi*, works which have non-Jews or Jewish apostates as their assumed audience and which contain almost no biblical references. If the work took the form of a critique of a variety of positions, theological and philosophical, the absence of biblical references may be more understandable.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, the author’s depiction of the conversion process reflects related material in Philo. For instance, the latter sees proselytic conversion as an abandonment of traditional practices and customs, as a movement from false myths, and a belief in many gods to belief in the one God and an accompanying state of blessedness. So at *Virt.* 102, Philo notes that “he (Moses) holds that incomers (ἐπιλύτας [Philo’s word for a proselyte]) too should be accorded every favour and consideration as their due, because abandoning (ἀπολελοιπότας) their kinsfolk by blood, their country (πατρίδα), their customs (ἔθη) and the temples and images of their gods and the tributes and honours paid to them, they have taken the journey to a better home from idle fables (τῶν μυθικῶν πλασμάτων) to the clear vision of truth and the worship of the one and truly existing God (ὄντως ὄντος θεοῦ).” And again at *Spec.* 1.51, he speaks of the proselyte as one who has spurned “idle fables (μυθικῶν ... πλασμάτων)” and “made the passage to piety (πρὸς εὐσέβειαν)”; and further in the same work he notes that proselytes have “forsaken their ancestral customs (καταλιπόντες ... τὰ πατρία), customs packed with false inventions (ψευδῶν πλασμάτων γέμοντα)”, and “they have crossed over to piety (μετεχώρησαν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν) ... and gain in the help that he gives the fruit of making God their refuge (τὸν θεὸν καταφυγῆς).” (*Virt.* 309).¹⁵⁰ The evidence of a shared vocabulary between

¹⁴⁸ Possible allusions to biblical laws in *Pseudo-Phocylides* are thought to include references to the Decalogue (3-8, 12, 16) as well as other laws (84; 140; 147-8; 179-83). For a discussion of the biblical laws in *Pseudo-Phocylides*, see van der Horst, 1978 and Wilson, 2005. For the claim that none of these passages prove an acquaintance with the Pentateuch, see Davila 2005, 37. For similar points about the apparent ‘bloodlessness’ of our source’s Judaism, see Adler 1993, 46.

¹⁴⁹ See Runia 1981.

¹⁵⁰ See also *Virt.* 179 where Philo, appearing to talk about proselytes, states: “So therefore all those who did not at first acknowledge their duty to reverence the founder

Hom. 4-6 and Philo on precisely this point may indicate the standard character of the representation.¹⁵¹ What the author of *Hom.* 4-6 is presenting is a sort of shorthand for what conversion to Judaism means. We cannot deduce from it anything concrete with regard to the rituals involved or the apparently non-biblical character of the Judaism to which the convert moves.

The author of *Hom.* 4-6 shares much in common with other Jewish-Hellenistic writers – the commitment to a clearly stated providential view of the universe expressed in terms of God’s ‘monarchia’ and a closely bound up idea of the ethical consequences of such a view, expressed again in terms of the *μοναρχία* of God (Philo, *Opif.* 170-2; *Decal.* 51; Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.164); an emphasis upon piety or *εὐσέβεια*; a scornful attitude to idolatry and myth, as mentioned above; a call for a considered view of custom; a strong endorsement of parental education for the moral progress of children (Philo, *Spec.* 4.68-9); a skeptical attitude to many aspects of pagan social life and entertainment (Philo, *Ebr.* 177; *Congr.* 64-6; *Cher.* 80-1; *Prob.* 26; *Opif.* 78); a negative attitude to sophists and so on. But some might feel that the view he takes of the Greek world is, even when compared with this Jewish-Hellenistic tradition, strikingly negative. Philo, for instance, while strongly condemnatory of Greek myth, and constantly using that word in a negative way,¹⁵² in particular in discussions of biblical passages whose mythical character is strongly denied, can still speak warmly of Homer (Philo, *Conf.* 4; *Abr.* 10); and talk of the poets as “educators through our days” (*Prob.* 143). Greek philosophers are also praised (see Plato at *Prob.* 13; Zeno at *Prob.* 59). Admittedly, following Aristobu-

and father of all, yet afterwards embraced the creed of one (*μοναρχίαν*) instead of a multitude of sovereigns, must be held to be our friends.” Note how the change of disposition is seen in terms of a move to the idea of divine monarchy. See also *Virt.* 219-21 where Philo talks about pagans who have converted as individuals “have left the ignobility of strange laws and monstrous customs (*ἐκθέσμων ἔθῶν*)”; and “who have become schooled in the knowledge of the monarchical principle (*παιδευθεῖσαι δὲ τὴν περὶ μοναρχίας ἐπιστήμην*) by which the world is governed”; and goes on to describe Tamar as “deserting to the camp of piety (*πρὸς εὐσέβειαν*).”

¹⁵¹ Note that at 4.7.3 Apion describes Clement as *καταλίπων ... τὰ πατρία*; and at 4.8 and 11 engages in a discussion about the importance of customs (*ἔθος*), and the legitimacy of rejecting them. At 4.13 the author describes the doctrine (*λόγος*) of the Jews as *εὐσεβέστατος*, clearly associating Judaism with *εὐσέβεια* (note also 4.14.1). ‘Lying fables’ are a constant concern of the author, and are mentioned in connection with Clement’s conversion at 5.26.4 (*ψευδῶν μύθων*). The central role of belief in God in the process of conversion is everywhere present in the section but strongly at 5.28.2 where there is mention of the *μοναρχικὸν φρόνημα*.

¹⁵² On many occasions Philo contrasts the Greek myths unfavourably with the stories of the Pentateuch (see *inter alia* *Opif.* 157; and *Gig.* 7 and 70), and as we noted above, often portrays the movement to Judaism as a movement away from idle myth.

lus, amongst others, he can imply or explicitly assert, the priority of Mosaic thought over Greek philosophy, and state that ideas have been stolen from Moses,¹⁵³ and in doing so seek to puncture Greek claims to being original,¹⁵⁴ but he has no difficulty in describing Moses in Greek terms (*Mos.* 1.23), and, therefore, directly associating him with things Greek.¹⁵⁵ Philo can be harshly critical of Greek practices (even as these were evidenced amongst philosophers),¹⁵⁶ customs,¹⁵⁷ and theological beliefs, but he can still advise the new proselyte to refrain from reviling the gods of his previous life (*Spec.* 1.53, citing the LXX of Exod 22:28).¹⁵⁸ Philo, like the author of *Hom.* 4-6, can recognise the deracinated state of the convert to Judaism (*Spec.* 1.52), but his view of the world from which he has come is a less polarised one than what we have in our source.¹⁵⁹

Josephus, like Philo, has a strong sense of the importance of Greek culture, and begins his *Contra Apionem* in defensive mode attacking the unreliability of Greek historians and the relative modernity of Greek culture when compared with its barbarian equivalent. Greeks are presented as inhumane (*A.J.* 16.161), untrustworthy, decadent, and derivative (Josephus on a number of occasions simply asserts that some of their most famous thinkers were dependent for their thoughts upon Moses);¹⁶⁰ and, as in our source, their religious practices are strongly condemned (*C. Ap.* 2.236-49), although Josephus is clear, like Philo, that their gods should not be derided.¹⁶¹ In the same passage that he attacks pagan mythology, however, Josephus admits that there are many Greek philosophers who have attacked

¹⁵³ See *Prob.* 57; *QG* 2.6. Philo is not as clear as Aristobulus on this question. See Aristobulus, *Fragment 3* (Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 13.12.1f.)

¹⁵⁴ See his comments on Heraclitus at *Her.* 214.

¹⁵⁵ *Paideia* frequently appears in Philo as a topic of discussion. In broad terms, it is perceived positively but given a strongly moral interpretation in terms of the virtues, not far from what we find in *Hom.* 4-6. Philo is critical of those who only interest themselves in the so-called *enkuklios paideia*, or curricular education but still believes this has a place in anyone's advancement (see *Congr.*; *Ebr.* 34, 48, 64). Given all of this, it is very difficult to imagine him calling all Greek learning evil, as our source appears to do.

¹⁵⁶ See *Contempl.* 58f. for a strong attack upon the symposiastic habits of Greeks, which manifest themselves in licentiousness and pederasty.

¹⁵⁷ See above. Adler 1993, 47-9, correctly points out that Philo, like Josephus, highlights Jewish devotion to custom as a good quality, but excuses the proselyte his decision to give up his own customs.

¹⁵⁸ On this see van der Horst 1994.

¹⁵⁹ For a recent discussion of this matter see Niehoff 2001, 131-58. In highlighting the double-sided character of Philo's approach to Greek culture, at once positive and negative, he seeks to show that much of what Philo writes in this regard is in continuity with Roman critiques of the Greeks.

¹⁶⁰ See *C. Ap.* 2.168, 257, 281.

¹⁶¹ Josephus similarly quotes the LXX of Exodus 22:28 (*C. Ap.* 2.237; *A.J.* 4.207).

their own mythology precisely for its presentation of the gods. “Who, in fact, is there among the admired sages of Greece who has not censured their most famous poets and their most trusted legislators for sowing in the minds of the masses the first seeds of such notions of the gods?” he writes (*C. Ap.* 2.239), and goes on to show that Jewish criticism is not new but has its roots in a critique stretching very far back. Such individuals, “the genuine exponents of Greek philosophy” (*C. Ap.* 2.255),¹⁶² also criticise attempts to overcome the content of these foul myths by allegory, rightly despising what he calls “the worthless shifts to which the allegorists have resort.” (*C. Ap.* 2.255). In requisitioning the support of the best of Greek philosophers for his own attack upon Greek myth, Josephus is, of course, seeking by subtle means to advance his own argument about the superiority of Judaism.¹⁶³ However, precisely in wishing to align itself with the best that Greek thought can offer (indeed elsewhere Josephus can implicitly praise the Greek world),¹⁶⁴ and in seeking to show how the Greeks wish to emulate Jews (*C. Ap.* 2.280-4), he distinguishes himself sharply from what we find in *Hom.* 4-6 where there is little sense that the author’s own critique of the myths and of their bowdlerising allegorical interpretation emerge from elements of the Greek *paideia* he is keen to attack, or that Jews share anything in common with Greeks. His is a more polarised vision in which Greekness is thought to be wicked.¹⁶⁵ In this he may be considered by some to come closer to the vision of the Greek as an alien, which we find in Daniel 2 and 3 *Maccabees*, and *Sib. Or.* 3 and 5, all of which, except Daniel, are the products of Hellenistic Judaism.¹⁶⁶

Before leaving the subject of the culture of our source, it would be as well to return to the question of its Jewishness, especially in the light of a recent book. James Davila has asked the deceptively simple question how it is that we might establish that supposedly Jewish pseudepigrapha, all

¹⁶² For other warm comments about Greek philosophers see *C. Ap.* 2.281, where Josephus writes that “our earliest imitators were the Greek philosophers who, while ostensibly observing the laws of their own countries, yet in their conduct and philosophy were Moses’ disciples ...”

¹⁶³ This point is well made by Barclay 2007b, 76-7. See also *C. Ap.* 2.168 for Josephus’ praise of Pythagoras, Anaxagoras, Plato and the Stoics for holding to a similar view of God as Moses.

¹⁶⁴ See *C. Ap.* 1.51, 162, 181.

¹⁶⁵ It is interesting that insofar as we can tell, there is no attempt by the writer of *Hom.* 4-6 to point to the derivative character of Greek culture – it is totally other.

¹⁶⁶ For a discussion of these and other texts’ attitude to Jewish ethnicity, see Gruen’s nuanced picture in Gruen 2001. His conclusion that “Jewish intellectuals ... sought simultaneously to strike some form of balance in their depiction of Greek ethnicity and culture. They simultaneously differentiated their nation from that of the Greeks and justified their own immersion in a world of Hellenic civilization”, does not describe the attitude of the author of *Hom.* 4-6.

transmitted by Christians, are in fact Jewish. In the present case we are not dealing with a Jewish pseudepigraphon transmitted by Christians, but with an apparently Jewish document, partially preserved in a Christian composite work. But the fact that *Hom.* 4-6 is not an independent pseudepigraphic work does not detract from the relevance of Davila's remarks for its study.

After admitting that "Judaism and Christianity had such porous borders that the space between them was really a continuum" and therefore "isolating Jewish pseudepigrapha from Christian apocrypha is possible only toward either end of the continuum, the references that focus on boundary maintenance", Davila goes on to enumerate criteria for identifying a document as Jewish. The first two do not apply to *Hom.* 4-6 and are in fact more or less definitive (evidence that the work contains substantial Jewish content and strong internal evidence of a pre-Christian date; and indications that the work is a translation from Hebrew). The next two are also difficult to apply to our text (evidence for sympathetic concern with the Jewish ritual cult; and the Jewish Torah and halakah). The latter may possibly describe Clement's reference to turning to the law of the Jews but there is no indication of the former. It is the last of the five, however, which appears most relevant – a concern with Jewish ethnic and national interests, particularly self-identification as a Jew, and internal Jewish polemics. There seems little doubt that the narrator of *Hom.* 4-6 identifies himself with the Jews insofar as he identifies with Clement, and is opposed to Apion – hence the negative portrayal of the latter. This becomes clearer in Clement's scornful comments about Apion's anti-Jewish attitudes (*Hom.* 5.2); and in his enthusiastic defence of Jewish values in the face of Gentile attack. However, there is little concern with what one might call Jewish ethnic and national interests beyond the advocacy of divine monarchy and its ethical concomitants.

Where does this leave us, then?

Davila, whose approach to this subject is 'polythetic', that is, he does not in principle argue for a non-negotiable single criterion (signature feature¹⁶⁷) as key, but, in identifying a work as Jewish or Christian, talks about the need for individual texts to present clusters of traits he has identified as important, might be skeptical about our text's failure to evidence more than one, and possibly a muted, and somewhat bloodless version of another, criterion; and he might highlight the absence of a particular signature feature, such as sympathetic concern with Jewish law/Torah and *halakah*.¹⁶⁸ The absence of such a signature feature might be important to his analysis of *Hom.* 4-6 because in his work he has wanted to highlight not

¹⁶⁷ Davila 2005, 15-20; 65.

¹⁶⁸ See his discussion of *Sib. Or.* 5 at *ibid.*, 189.

just the possibility that a work might be written by a Jew or Christian, but also by ‘others’, that is, by a proselyte, a God-fearer, a Gentile sympathiser, a Jewish Christian etc., all individuals who represent points on the continuum between Judaism and Christianity. So, for instance, given the ostensible absence of any concern with circumcision, Sabbath, dietary laws and so on, Davila might want to argue for the view that our work was written by a God-fearer, or a Gentile sympathiser, all possibilities he genuinely entertains for a work like *Sib. Or. 3*.¹⁶⁹ The absence of any Christian signature features (explicit evidence, for instance, of a commitment to Jesus) would not impress him as he is clear that the absence of such elements is not enough to prove something to be Jewish.¹⁷⁰

As Davila himself admits, his approach is in some senses minimalist, and is better suited to undercutting certitude, than establishing new, and possibly surprising, origins for texts. The absence in our text of a strong emphasis on the law of Moses is certainly striking, although the role of the law in conversion to Judaism can be overlaid (and as noted there is a passing reference to the law in *Hom. 4.22.2*). Moreover, as Richard Bauckham has argued, the works which Davila thinks it possible to attribute to Gentile sympathisers (in addition to *Sibylline Oracles 3*, he mentions *Sibylline Oracles 5*, *Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides* and the *Wisdom of Solomon*), are addressed to Gentiles and so the failure to mention distinctive Jewish laws might arise from the view that Gentiles were subject to the laws of the Noachide covenant, and need not imply that Jews were not expected to observe the particular and distinctive laws of Moses.¹⁷¹ Such a point would apply to *Hom. 4-6*, which also appears to be addressed to Gentiles, understood as Greeks.¹⁷² Davila could argue that it is not clear that *Hom. 4-6* presents Clement as a proselyte, that is, as a full convert to Judaism. In this context he could mention the absence of the word ‘proselyte’ from our source, and of traditional words for conversion like ἐπιστρέφω as well as the absence of any reference to circumcision. When one adds to

¹⁶⁹ See what Davila writes about *Sib. Or. 3*: “It is pro-Jewish, pro-temple, pro-sacrifice, and sings the praises of the Jewish law ... Although the work repeatedly refers to the law and advocates obeying it when the contents of the law are specified they seem mainly to involve proper worship of God, as opposed to idolatry, and sexual immorality. *Circumcision, the dietary laws, the Sabbath, and the Jewish festivals are ignored*. This viewpoint could reflect a liberal Judaism that was highly assimilated to its surrounding Hellenistic environment, but it could also reflect the perspective of a Gentile God-fearer who was quite familiar with Judaism but who picked and chose what was appealing to his or her own religion ...” (Davila 2005, 184-5).

¹⁷⁰ Davila 2005, 74-119.

¹⁷¹ Bauckham 2008, 481-2.

¹⁷² Bauckham argues that the Gentile s addressed in these texts were not expected to become proselytes and hence the absence of reference to circumcision etc.

that the observation of S. Cohen and others that commitment to Judaism in antiquity could be conceived along a continuum, running from respect to support to actual conversion, expressed in adherence in one's life to the law and practices of the Jews,¹⁷³ and accept that such levels of commitment can serve to create fuzziness when it comes to defining who is a proselyte, particularly in texts where circumcision is not mentioned, the case against the Jewish identity of the source, perceived through the perspective of Clement, can become stronger. And yet to argue such a case would, I think, be pressing things too far. We have already demonstrated the proximity to our source of the way Philo describes the transference of a proselyte's allegiance to Judaism; and it would seem difficult to deny the conversionary force of such verbs as προσφεύγω (4.22.2), νεύω (5.28.2), and μετάγω (5.27.1), and from a polemical perspective, ἀποκλίνω (4.7.2); or the conversionary implication of the phrase τὰ Ἰουδαίων ποιεῖν καὶ λέγειν (4.7.2).

Date

Any attempt to date the original source from which *Hom.* 4-6 was taken can only be approximate. A body of scholars have opted for a time between 100 and 135 C.E. The *terminus a quo* is principally determined by the view that the presentation of Apion as the enemy of the Jews must ultimately derive from Josephus' *Contra Apionem*, a text normally dated between 93 and 96 C.E.¹⁷⁴ The *terminus ante quem* has been determined by a conviction that after 135 C.E. and the failed Bar Kokhba revolt, it would be difficult to conceive of Jews as at all interested in the kind of apologetic writing of which *Hom.* 4-6 appears to give us evidence.¹⁷⁵ Heintze, on the

¹⁷³ Compare what Josephus says about Petronius, the governor of Syria (*Legat.* 245), anonymous individuals who adopt certain Jewish practices (*C. Ap.* 2.282), and what he says about Metilius (*B.J.* 2.454).

¹⁷⁴ See Pouderon 2001, 248-9. He argues that the appearances of Apion as an enemy of the Jews is dependent upon Josephus who had popularised the figure of the Jew-hating Apion. He also, more controversially, asserts that the figure of Clement was based upon Flavius Clemens (see further on this Pouderon 1996), a man whose associations with Judaism seem to be described by Dio in his account of the death of Flavius Clemens under Domitian; and who appears as a significant figure in some Talmudic texts under the name of Ket'ia bar Shalom. The latter identification is controversial.

¹⁷⁵ Something of this sentiment is found in Bousset 1915a, col. 296, although he had changed his thinking on this in Bousset 1915b. Clear expression is given to it in Schmidt 1930, 298. He speaks there about Jewish apologetic being obsolete for some time before 200 C.E. "und von der altchristlichen Apologetik überholt ..." He then goes on: "Ein derartiges Werk konnte nur seine Stosskraft gegen das Heidentum nur solange ausüben, als die Kraft des Diasporajudentums noch ungebrochen war. Gebrochen wurde seine Kraft

other hand, argues that it should be dated to a little before or a little after 200 C.E. He argued his case principally on the basis of Diels' claim in *Doxographici Graeci* of 1879 that the catalogue of philosophers mentioned in *Rec.* 8.15 came from a doxographical school book (Schulbuch) of Stoic origin, dating from a time between Seneca and the Antonines, and that the author of *Hom.* 4-6's opposition to Epicureanism could be connected with the foundation of an Epicurean school in Athens also at the time of the Antonines.¹⁷⁶

Neither position seems convincing. Heintze's view, which has not attracted much support, is dependent upon Diels' conjecture and appears to ignore the fact that Jews opposed Epicureanism from a much earlier period. A date from before 135 C.E., by far the more popular, depends, as noted, upon a view of post-Bar Kokhba Jews as isolated and therefore disinclined to pen broadly apologetic texts. But such a view of things is at best an assumption: what we in fact know about Judaism from 100 C.E. to approximately the beginning of the next century is surprisingly little and certainly does not allow us to indulge in sweeping generalisations about its character and profile. Jewish reactions to the catastrophes of 115 C.E. and 135 C.E. would probably have been more varied just as was the case after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., a period for which for whatever reason, our literary evidence is much more plentiful.¹⁷⁷ Moreover, even if the view taken of the post-135 C.E. age is as noted above, we could still argue that it is precisely the harshly negative view our source takes of the non-Jewish, specifically Greek world, especially when compared with the likes of Philo, Josephus, and others, which so admirably aligns it with a period of retrenchment and retreat.¹⁷⁸

durch den Aufstand unter Trajan im Jahre 115, und vollends werden auch die Diasporajuden durch den letzten Aufstand ihrer palästinensischen Stammgenossen unter Hadrian im Jahre 135 in Mitleidenschaft gezogen sein. Nach dieser Zeit wäre eine propaganda des Judentums ein Anachronismus ohnegleichen gewesen ... Damals hatte das Judentum begonnen, aus Verbitterung gegen die hellenische Welt sich von ihr völlig zurückzuziehen und den Hellenismus radikal abzustossen." See also Simon 1986, 443 n. 101.

¹⁷⁶ Heintze 1914, 112.

¹⁷⁷ On this see Goodman 1994, 48: "No extant Greek literary or religious text written by a Jew in Antiquity can be shown beyond reasonable doubt to have been composed after this date ... the separation of Judaism and Christianity after the first century rendered Jewish-Greek writings irrelevant to Christians who therefore lacked incentive to copy them." On this see chapter 12 in this volume.

¹⁷⁸ In fact, such a view of the source's date could be said to emerge precisely from Schmidt's characterisation of it as marked by a Judaism, which had begun "aus Verbitterung gegen die hellenische Welt sich von ihr völlig zurückzuziehen und den Hellenismus radikal abzustößen." (Schmidt 1930, 298). Simon 1986, 443 n. 100, suggests that the source could have been written either during or just after 135 as an attempt to dampen a mooted upsurge in anti-Jewish feeling. The writing would in this context set out to show

Perhaps another approach to the question of date is to examine the way in which Apion is portrayed.

It has generally been assumed that the author, in his depiction of Apion as anti-Jewish, betrays knowledge of Josephus' *Contra Apionem* and that therefore, as stated above, we should assume a date after about 100 C.E.¹⁷⁹ This is certainly a possibility. But the source's depiction of Apion differs from that of the *Contra Apionem*. So, for instance, its presentation of Apion as having knowledge of magic and medicine has no parallel in Josephus, and in presenting the anti-Judaism of Apion, it does not emphasise the specific issues Josephus does (attacks upon right of Jews to be Alexandrian citizens, on the Exodus story and upon certain Jewish practices). Nowhere in Josephus is Apion's hostility to the ethical worldview of Jews, so important to the Homilist's Apion, emphasised. On the same subject of the author's mooted reliance upon Josephus, we should note his uncritical endorsement at 4.6.2 of Apion's claim to being an Alexandrian man (ἄνδρα Ἀλεξανδρέα) apparently ignoring Josephus' assertion that claims to such an association with the city on the part of Apion were a sham.¹⁸⁰ This point is significant because Josephus exploits to the full his belief that Apion is an Egyptian.¹⁸¹

The independence of our author from Josephus may contribute to the view that the source was written earlier. It is possible that after the events of 38-39 C.E. when Apion acted as a chief spokesman against the Jews, he may have become a sort of stereotypical anti-Jewish figure, especially in Egypt. This would explain Josephus' decision to make use of him in his work. But a date later than Josephus is more convincing. This claim is based upon the Homilist's statement that Apion wrote many books against the Jews (πολλὰ βιβλία κατ' αὐτῶν συγγεγραφέναι [5.2.4]). Such a claim is not found in Josephus, who, while he writes in several places about Apion's attack as a κατηγορία (*C. Ap.* 2.4, 6, 137, 148), never mentions a

that there was no necessary connection between the Palestinian uprising and Judaism. But, as I have indicated elsewhere in my comments on the document's mooted purpose, I would suggest that it would have looked a little different if it had set out to do what Simon suggested.

¹⁷⁹ For instance, see Schmidt 1930, 205: "Aber ... hat ja der Verfasser ... den Judenhasser Apion ohne Zweifel erst aus dem Werke des Josephus kennengelernt." Also see Pouderon 2001, 248, who assumes that it was Josephus who popularised the figure of Apion and the writer of *Hom.* 4-6 could only have written after such popularisation had occurred.

¹⁸⁰ *C. Ap.* 2.29 and 41. The view became quite widespread and is found in Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 1.101.3; and the Suda Ἀπίων. On the falsity of the claim (Apion may have been an Egyptian in terms of his birth but he was culturally a Greek) and Josephus' exploitation of the supposed Egyptian identity of Apion see Jones 2005, 296f.

¹⁸¹ On all of this, see most recently Barclay 2007a, 182f.

book or books written against the Jews.¹⁸² In this context it is worth noting what Jones has suggested that while Apion might have been known as someone who accused the Jews of being fomenters of political disquiet (note his role in the Greek delegation to Rome in 38-39 C.E.), most of Josephus' accusations against Apion appear in the main to have been a misrepresentation of what Apion asserted about the Jews insofar as much of what Apion said was not intended to defame the Jews, but only constituted incidental parts of his *Aegyptiaca*.¹⁸³ Here Jones could be taken to imply that Josephus did not straightforwardly know of an anti-Jewish tradition about Apion and thus sought to create one. If that is true, then we can see the assertion that Apion wrote many books against the Jews, found in *Homilies*, as a later development of a tradition about Apion *initiated* by Josephus. However, even if we cast doubt on the idea that Josephus initiated the anti-Jewish stereotype of Apion (as stated, it could have developed soon after the events of 38-39 C.E., although it probably began after Philo who does not mention Apion in his accounts of the same events), it still remains striking that it is only in traditions *after* Josephus, all of which are Christian, that any book against the Jews by Apion is mentioned. The assertion that Apion wrote *books* in the plural, only found in *Hom.* 4-6, could be taken to be a later development of that tradition.¹⁸⁴ In all of this, however, we cannot exclude the possibility that our source knew a work by Bardaisan (*The Book of the Laws of the Countries*), already discussed above. If that were the case, a date in the early to middle third century becomes a possibility.

Provenance

Almost every scholar who has identified *Hom.* 4-6 as part of an original Jewish source has argued for its Egyptian, and more particularly, Alexandrian, provenance. Support for this argument is found in the explicitly stated Egyptian origin of Apion (associated with Alexandria) and Anubion (associated with Diospolis), in the fact that Anubion and Apion are Egyp-

¹⁸² At *A.J.* 18.257 Josephus, when introducing Apion as one of the three Greek delegates who were sent to Gaius in the wake of the Alexandrian pogrom against the Jews, asserts that he was someone ὃς πολλὰ εἰς τοὺς Ἰουδαίους ἐβλασφήμησεν. But it is difficult to see how the claim in *Hom.* 5.2.4 about "many books written against the Jews" could have arisen from this brief reference.

¹⁸³ Jones 2005, 302f.

¹⁸⁴ Adler's point (Adler 1993, 46) that the author's lampoon of Apion implies that he had long been considered no threat, might also point to a date later than 135 C.E.; but it is possible that one would not have had to wait long for a lampoon to have developed – Apion had no doubt ceased to be a threat soon after he died.

tian names with bestial associations (bull and dog respectively), in the parallels of content found between the source and Philo, and in other aspects of its content.¹⁸⁵ None of these arguments clinches the matter. Apion, and to a lesser extent, Anubion, were well-known figures, and not just in Egypt.¹⁸⁶ Parallels between Philo and the source need not be pressed when it comes to considering provenance – they do not prove dependence on Philo; and we should not assume that Jewish-Hellenistic authors were restricted to Egypt, or that their works were not more widely disseminated. Some may want to add that a work of this kind, written in Egypt after 115, would seem unlikely. Had not the Trajanic revolt and its aftermath put an end, for some time at least, to any notable Jewish presence in Egypt or Alexandria? Possibly. But could not the source's vituperative attitude to the Greek world be more easily explained by reference to a setting in an anti-Jewish Egypt? A Syrian provenance provides a reasonable alternative. First, if we are right to think that the Homilist has made direct use of the Jewish source and that he probably wrote in Syria, then a Syrian provenance would better explain how he obtained the source. Secondly, there is the possible interest our source took in astrology. If we are right to think that the source bears a close relationship to *The Book of the Laws of the Countries*, written by Bardaisan in Edessa, then again a Syrian provenance becomes more likely.¹⁸⁷ Finally we should note the close proximity of our source to the tone and content of the Christian Tatian's *Oration to the Greeks*, traditionally thought to have been written in Syria. The work is, like *Hom.* 4-6, addressed to the Greeks (see chapter 1 and *passim*), and as one scholar has put it, "is a sustained challenge to the superiority of Hellenic culture ..."¹⁸⁸ It contains similarly harsh attacks upon Greek philosophers (*Orat.* 2; 3; 19; 25), upon mythology and its allegorical interpretation (*Orat.* 10f. and 21), upon the idea of fate (*Orat.* 10-11), upon Greek festivals (*Orat.* 22), gladiatorial shows and public amusements (*Orat.* 23 and 24); and Tatian perceives the world he addresses as dominated by demons (*Orat.* 14). Interestingly, Tatian mentions Apion, but here positively as a source of information for the date of Moses (*Orat.* 38).¹⁸⁹ Tatian portrays his conversion as a movement from the doctrines of the Greeks to a life

¹⁸⁵ Pouderon 2001, 248, notes the negative reference to Egyptian zoology at *Hom.* 6.23.1; and others might point to the interest the source shows in Egyptian magic. But both of these are well-known tropes and need not point to an Egyptian provenance.

¹⁸⁶ On Apion see van der Horst 2002; and on Anubion see Bremmer 2005, 313-17.

¹⁸⁷ This point is made by Bremmer 2005, 328.

¹⁸⁸ See Young 1999, 85.

¹⁸⁹ Apion is introduced as "a man most highly esteemed", and the relevant information is taken from his *Aegyptiaca*.

lived in accordance with God (*Orat.* 42; see also 29 and 35¹⁹⁰). The parallels are not exact, of course (note the difference in the attitude towards Apion, referred to above), and Tatian, unlike *Hom.* 4-6, shows a studied interest in demonstrating the antiquity of barbarian culture in relation to that of Greece. And while Tatian's harsh tone might approximate to that of our source, its contents, variously presented, are found in other Christian apologetic sources.¹⁹¹ However, the comparison with Tatian might be taken to demonstrate the view that nothing in our source would exclude its originating in Syria.

Purpose

Of those scholars who have paid any attention to this section of the *Homilies*, a number have argued that it has a proselytic purpose. This is captured in Heintze's description of the source as a 'Bekehrungsschrift'; in Marcel Simon's claim that "(w)hat he (the author of the source) is putting forward is wisdom for pagans, and he puts it forward in an idiom they can understand and in a form acceptable to them";¹⁹² and in Adler's view that the author "wished to exhort potential converts to abandon the depravity of Greek culture and to pursue a higher calling in Judaism."¹⁹³ A number of observations might be said to support such a thesis. First, we should take seriously the unremitting negativity of the portrayal of the Greek world. This need not in and of itself suggest a proselytic purpose but to some it is at least a prerequisite of such a purpose.¹⁹⁴ Secondly, we should point to the prominence of the conversionary *topos* in the work – we are consistently made aware of the movement of Clement from Hellenistic *paideia* to Judaism. It is with reference to this fact that Apion introduces Clement to his friends (4.7.2) and it is the way Clement chooses to conclude his account of his dealings with Apion in Rome, even calling upon Apion to convert to Judaism (5.26.4). Moreover, the piece is so written that the only remedy to depraved Greek culture lies precisely in Judaism. Thirdly, and, more significantly, as Adler noted, the source is much taken up with the

¹⁹⁰ Note the words at 35 in which Tatian apparently quotes some of those who mock him: "Tatian, aspiring to be above the Greeks, above the number of philosophic inquirers, has struck out a new path and embraced the doctrines of the barbarians."

¹⁹¹ Tatian was the pupil of Justin.

¹⁹² Simon 1986, 50.

¹⁹³ Adler 1993, 47.

¹⁹⁴ "A logical prerequisite for a universal proselytizing mission to convert others to a new religion is a belief that their present religious behaviour is unsatisfactory. Only if I believe that something is wrong with the present state of affairs can I persuade myself or others of the need to change." (Goodman 1994, 38).

theme of custom. Apion's first remark about Clement, addressed to his companions, relates to the subject: "This is Clement, of whose noble birth and liberal education I have often told you; for he, being related to the family of Tiberius Caesar, has been seduced by a certain barbarian to speak and act after the manner of the Jews ... Let him tell me, since he thinks that he acting piously, whether he is not acting most impiously, in forsaking the customs of his country and going over to barbarian mores (καταλιπὼν μὲν τὰ πατρία, ἀποκλίνας δὲ εἰς ἔθνη βάρβαρα)." After Clement has accused Apion of ignorance, the latter asks whether "it seem like ignorance to you that one should observe the customs of his father and judge after the custom of the Greeks (Ἀγνωσία σοι εἶναι δοκεῖ, τὰ πατρία ἔθνη φυλάττοντα, τὰ Ἑλλήνων φρονεῖν [4.8.2])?" Clement agrees that in principle it is not ignorance but becomes so when those customs are shown to be impious (4.8.3). The abandonment of those customs need not mean a harsh judgment upon one's parents' character but upon their opinions. As Clement comments, picking up on the idea that by disregarding custom, he shows contempt for his father, "he (his father) was not of an evil life, but an evil opinion. (4.8.3)" Addressing 'Greeks' more generally, Clement goes on to argue, that there is a distinct difference between truth and custom (ὧ ἄνδρες Ἑλληνικες, ἡ διαφορὰ τυγχάνει ἀληθείας τε καὶ συνηθείας) [4.11.1]),¹⁹⁵ custom being nothing more than the aggregate of opinions, which have become a part of one's nature, not on the basis of judgment but on the basis of prejudice. And because individuals have been taught customs from childhood καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ῥαδίως ἀποδύσασθαι τὴν πατριον περιβόλην, κἄν πάνυ αὐτῷ δεικνύηται μωρὰ καὶ καταγέλαστος οὔσα (4.11.2), a point that is repeated at 4.18.3, where the author states that "everyone is pleased to remain in those habits, which he formed in childhood; and thus, since custom is not much less powerful than nature (οὐ πολὺ ἔλαττον πρὸς τὴν φύσιν δυναμένης), they become difficult to be changed (δυσμετάβλητοι), which were not sown in their souls at the beginning." These arguments, which allude to a well-worn discussion going back to Aristotle, reappear at the end of chapter 5, but as Adler notes, in defence of Jewish education. Here Clement, feigning to be his indignant potential lover, states that in order to curb the erotic desire, parents must imbue their children "with instruction by means of chaste books (σωφρονηζόντων βιβλίων) and accustom them by excellent discourses because custom is a second nature (ὅτι δευτέρα φύσις ἡ συνηθία)." (5.25.1). Custom is in principle a good thing, but only if it is the custom of the Jews.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ On the topos of custom and its relationship to truth as this appeared in ancient texts see Adler 1993, 48 n. 122.

¹⁹⁶ Adler 1993, 48-9, notes a similarly complex attitude to custom in Philo.

Such a detailed engagement with the subject of custom in which justification for ceasing to observe customs takes up much of the discussion could be taken to imply a proselytic intent. Such an argument becomes more convincing when one notes that one of the few *explicitly* proselytic works from antiquity, Clement of Alexandria's *Protreptikos*, is similarly concerned to criticise those who would appeal to adherence to custom as the main grounds for not adhering to a new faith.¹⁹⁷ And this is also a text replete with richly furnished and heady criticism of pagan mythology and practice.

Some prefer to see the work as apologetic, that somewhat slippery term being understood principally to mean a defence.¹⁹⁸ If defined in such a way, the purpose of *Hom.* 4-6 could simply be to defend Judaism from external attack (assuming an external audience), or assuming a Jewish audience, it could be intended as a means of convincing Jews at a time of difficulty to remain steadfast in their commitment to their beliefs, and/or even to provide them with arguments in their defence. Given the character of the source (in its present form it does not seem like an answer to a series of criticisms), a defence *externally* directed seems less likely; and we might then hold the works to be a means of persuading Jews to remain faithful to their traditions. For some scholars, the beginning of the second century would have been a difficult one for Jews as witnessed in the anti-Jewish comments of Tacitus, Martial, Juvenal and others, and such hostility might

¹⁹⁷ See *Prot* 72: "But you say that it is not reasonable for us to overthrow a way of life (ἔθος ἀνατρέπειν) handed down to you by your fathers (παραδεδομένον ἡμῖν)"; *Prot.* 74: "Why have they fled to this death-bearing brand ... when they might live a noble life according to God, not according to custom (κατὰ τὸν θεὸν οὐ κατὰ τὸ ἔθος)? For God grants life but wicked custom (ἔθος δὲ πονηρόν) inflicts unavailing repentance together with punishment after we depart from this world"; *Prot.* 79: "Now custom, in having given you a taste of slavery and of irrational attention to trifles, has been fostered by idle opinion (κενῆς δόξης). But lawless rites and deceptive ceremonies have for their cause ignorance (ἄγνοια) ... Be washed you who are defiled and cleanse yourself from the stain of custom by the drops that truly cleanse"; *Prot.* 91: "Let us flee (φύγωμεν) from custom, let us flee it as some dangerous headland or threatening Charybdis, or the Sirens of legend. Custom strangles man; it turns him away from truth; it leads him away from life; it is snare, an abyss, a pit, a devouring evil."

¹⁹⁸ Schmidt 1930, 197, seems to endorse an apologetic aim when he describes the source as a writing "in der ein entschlossener Kampf vom apologetischen Standpunkt gegen das gebildete Heidentum in seinen verschiedenen Schattierungen durchgeführt war" (197), describing the mooted Alexandrian author as "stark vom Hellenismus berührt oder wenigstens mit ihm vertraut ist. Am nächsten läge es, an einen Alexandriner zu denken, der als hellenistischer Jude sich berufen fühlte, für die väterliche Religion in die Schranken zu treten, indem er aus der Verteidigungsstellung zum offenen Angriff übergang und die Überlegenheit der jüdischen Weltanschauung in systematischer Weise und der Nichtigkeit der heidnischen Religion und Weltanschauung illustrieren wollte." (197-8). Note also Cullmann's description of the work as "l'apologie juive".

have grown greater in the period following the Bar Kokhba revolt. The writer's harsh judgment of Greek *paideia* may have had as much to do with deflecting Jews from embracing it as a kind of alternative to Judaism. Philo, writing earlier, had regarded apostasy as a threat, speaking against those "who disregard the holy laws of justice and peace, who have been seduced by the polytheistic creeds (τοῖς πολυθέοις δόξαις ὑπαχθέντας), which finally lead to atheism and have forgotten the teaching of their race (τῆς συγγενοῦς) and of their fathers in which they were trained from their earliest years (ἐκ πρώτης ἡλικίας ἐπαιδεύθησαν) to acknowledge ... the one God ... instead of mythical figments." (*Praem.* 162). And it seems that Philo wrote *De providentia* precisely as a way of responding to the opinions of his apostate nephew, Alexander. In *Hom.* 4-6 Apion is keen to call upon his companions to struggle to correct (πρὸς τὴν διόρθωσιν) the Jewish opinions of Clement (4.7.2). In what appears to be an allusion to the agonistic motif, important amongst the so-called sophists of the Second Sophistic, Apion appears to be defeated.

But such a thesis does not perhaps sufficiently take account of: (a) the fact that Clement is not depicted as a Jew from birth, but a converted Gentile; (b) the lack of a detailed defence of Judaism, although the partially preserved character of our source does not allow us to be certain on this point; and (c) the importance attributed to the discussion of pagan custom, already outlined above. After all, it is precisely the need to adhere to Greek customs, associated in particular with religious belief, that forms a major subject of the source, not a defence of Jewish custom.¹⁹⁹

Some may be tempted to eschew all such quests for specific *Sitze im Leben*. After all, there is a sense in which all such exercises are illusory, especially when so much about the majority of ancient texts, not least the one under study, remains unknown. An alternative approach would be to see our text as witnessing in general terms "to the ongoing process whereby diverse Jewish thinkers endeavoured to express their people's identity in terms borrowed, manipulated, and refashioned from the Hellenic cultur-

¹⁹⁹ We should be aware of making too easy a distinction between texts, which are apologetic and those that are proselytic. As John Barclay has argued (Barclay 2002, 148), "(i)f becoming a proselyte is only one (extreme) form of respect for Judaism, attempts to gain Gentile understanding, appreciation and support might well issue in a Gentile's decision to become a Jew. It is a moot point whether any of our extant literature has this specific outcome in its near or farthest sights, but the possibility cannot be rejected on the grounds that eliciting Gentile 'sympathy' is categorically different from (and even contrary to) encouraging Gentile conversion. If both lie on a single continuum, apologetics could serve both ends, and only specific historical and personal circumstances might determine the actual outcome." Goodman 1994, 3-4, is keener to differentiate between apologetic mission and proselytic mission. He also introduces two other categories into the debate, informative and educational mission.

al corpus.”²⁰⁰ Erich Gruen’s way of viewing Jewish-Hellenistic sources marks a new and significant phase in the study of Hellenistic Judaism, and one that has as its central assumption the thesis that Judaism and Hellenism were not “competing systems or incompatible concepts”,²⁰¹ and that often times the best way to read these texts is as works of literature rather than expressions of an ongoing *Kulturkampf*. Certainly there is a sense in which we can read *Hom.* 4-6 in such a way, especially chapter 5 with its subtle allusions and manipulations of the famous Antiochus story, to which Adler has so effectively drawn our attention. But the endgame of that and other parts of the source would seem precisely to be a careful attempt to distinguish Judaism from *paideia*, understood as a manifestation of Greekness, to engage, then, in some form of *Kulturkampf*.

Some concluding thoughts and questions

The section of the *Hom.* under discussion raises a series of interesting questions both about the development of Judaism after the first century and about the character and concerns of the Homilist.

The Jewish source

It is a curious fact that we cannot be certain that we possess any Jewish literature in Greek after the first century C.E., and, as we have noted in this volume’s immediately preceding essay, there are a variety of explanations as to why this might be the case. Some of these involve the adoption of certain assumptions about Judaism at the time. Some, as we have noted, posit a Judaism in retreat, isolated, and solipsistic, and we have seen how this assumption tended to influence the date some scholars have given to our source. To others, a growing majority, we should assume a self-confident entity, even proselytising, which retained a bold and significant presence in the Roman Empire. Both positions, particularly in the face of the paucity of evidence, might be considered unnuanced and overly generalised. But against this background of scholarly discussion, what might be said to be the contribution of *Hom.* 4-6? Certainly the Jewish author of our source emerges as one fully enmeshed in the Greek world of which he is so critical. His clear knowledge of pagan sources, his wide-ranging engagement with aspects of Greek rhetorical practice, his awareness of wider philosophical debates and his easy use of certain genres of literature, point in this direction. The parallels with pagan literature in Greek from the second

²⁰⁰ Gruen 1998, xviii-xix.

²⁰¹ Gruen 1998, xiv.

century show him up as a participant, admittedly a strongly polemical one, in what Philostratus was to call the *Second Sophistic*, that period in the history of the Roman empire, in which under the influence of those called sophists, but others as well, there was a remarkable revival of interest in the Greek, specifically Attic, culture of the past, in part, some contend, as a form of resistance to Roman rule. *Hom.* 4-6's negative reaction to Greek *paideia* should not be seen to detract from the Greekness of what he writes. Moreover, the possibly proselytic purpose of his work, gives further evidence of a clear engagement with a wider world. We can, of course, deduce little from this single, only partially preserved, Jewish source, but it does give us a tantalising insight into Jewish attitudes in this sparsely documented period of their history. Intriguingly, the proselytism, the polemic and engagement with issues of the time may also be said, by extension, not only to show up Judaism as a movement, which shared much in common with Christianity, but one, which was potentially well equipped, and even eager, to engage in a debate with it.

The Homilist and his world

If we are right in our contention that *Hom.* 4-6 has preserved an originally Jewish source, and done so apparently on the basis of independent knowledge of that source, what does this imply about the Homilist and his aims? For some time there has been a debate amongst scholars as to the Judaising tendencies of the Homilist to which reference has already been made. To some he is a more conscientious preserver of the Judaising tendencies of his sources, which have then been toned down in the *Recognitions*, possibly by their translator, Rufinus. To others he has introduced the emphasis.²⁰² To an extent we could argue that the latter view is best supported by what we have asserted about *Hom.* 4-6. Certainly the presence of these chapters within the writing raises interesting questions about the author's perception of Judaism and its relationship to Christianity. After all he has included in his work a source, which promoted the idea of conversion not to Christianity but to Judaism, and he has only attempted in the mildest of ways to modify this view. Such a thing may not surprise us, of course – the same author, as we have already noted, betrays a penchant for things Judaistic in a variety of places, and comes close on a number of occasions, either by implication, or explicitly, to asserting the essentially similar character of Jewish and Christian teaching.²⁰³ Recently, Annette Yoshiko Reed

²⁰² The most recent to posit such a view is Reed 2003, 223. Lange was a much earlier scholar to support this view. Hort held that the Homilist had simply preserved the sentiments of G; and Uhlhorn believed that *Rec.* had attempted to tone these down.

²⁰³ See especially our discussion of *Hom.* 8.5-7.

has sought to contrast the attitude of the Homilist towards Christianity's Jewish heritage and that of Eusebius. "At the very least", she writes, "the views in the *Homilies* represent a striking departure from the supersessionist ideas current in the Christianity of its time. Like Eusebius, the authors/redactors of the *Homilies* answer pagan critiques by arguing for an authentic Christian claim to continuity and connection with the same past. The result is a surprisingly harmonious picture of Judaism and Christianity, conceived in terms of supplementarity rather than supersession."²⁰⁴ Reed, who adverts on a number of occasions to passages from our source, as well as other evidence in the *Homilies*, in particular to support the negative attitude that the Homilist takes towards Greek culture in general, and this in contrast to Eusebius, uses her conclusion to support the view that, contrary to what might be the general position of the majority of extant Christian sources, and the majority of scholars expert in these sources, the Jewish-Christian nexus was, even as late as the middle of the fourth century a matter of contestation; and that the Homilist is a popular witness to the side of that debate, which was eventually defeated. Such claims cannot be discussed here, but it is certainly intriguing to note that the Homilist could pen some of the sentiments he did and copy the section running from *Hom.* 4-6 at a time when others such as John Chrysostom were penning altogether more hostile comments on the Jews. We may guess as to the influence of such sentiments on those Judaising Christians against whom Chrysostom inveighed. What we may not be able to dispute is that the existence of the *Homilies*, and in particular *Hom.* 4-6, raises important questions about a number of issues to do with developing ideas of Christian identity in the post-Constantinian world.

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²⁰⁴ Reed 2008, 195.

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