

THE "HERETICAL" ORIGINS OF EARLY CHRISTIAN ART

by



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## ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with a paradox: the early Christian Fathers, who were active before the Edict of Milan of 313 CE, were firmly against art, while at the same time, Christians were busy producing a mass of monumental artistic works such as those which are found in the Roman catacombs. An examination of the Fathers' stance in relation to the existence of the artistic monuments led to an investigation of secondary literature on the subject. This revealed that both historians of religion and art unquestioningly accepted the Fathers as orthodox. That is, the Fathers represented the majority of Christians and were the official voice of the Christian church, the centre of which was seen to be at Rome.

But the great mass of art was produced in Rome and, with the exception of Justin Martyr, none of the Fathers were active in the city. Is it possible then, to equate the Fathers with Rome and with orthodoxy? Who were the Roman Christians who produced the art? They obviously did not adhere to the Fathers' aniconic opinions. Because these art-producing Christians did not follow the Fathers' dicta, would this automatically make them heretics as the Fathers intimate?

This problem must be approached from another perspective. The ultimate authority of the Fathers and their iconophobic position in their own time must be re-examined. It will be seen

that they may not have been as influential during their own lifetimes as their writings have been for posterity. By freeing the Fathers from their straight-jacket of dictatorial orthodoxy, they can be perceived as a protesting provincial faction who tried to warn Roman art-producing Christians of the dangers of visual images. At the same time, those Roman Christians who produced the art were not heretics, but were the nucleus of those groups in Rome who, within a century, were to consolidate their control over the various Christian factions in the eternal city. It was this group of Christians who were to become the winning orthodoxy recognized by the Edict of Milan.

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# ABBREVIATIONS

ACIAC	Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Archeologia Cristiana, 1975
Ad Nat.	Tertullian, Ad Nationes
Apol.	Tertullian, Apology
I Apol.	Justin Martyr, I Apology
II Apol.	Justin Martyr, II Apology
Adv. Haer.	Irenaeus of Lyons, Against Heresies or Adversus Haereses
Adv. Praxeas	Tertullian, Against Praxeas
Adv. Sab.	Dionysos of Rome, Against the Sabellians
Adv. Val.	Tertullian, Against the Valentinians
CC	Origen, Contra Celsum
Caes.	Suetonius, The Twelve Caesars
Dial.	Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho
Div. Inst.	Lactantius, The Divine Institutes
Eccl. Hist.	Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History
Ep.	Cyprian, Epistles
Ep. Barn.	Epistle of Barnabas
Ep. Cor.	Clement of Rome, Epistle to the Corinthians
Ep. Diog.	Epistle to Diognetos
Ep. Div. Inst.	Lactantius, The Epitome of the Divine Institutes
Ep. Phil. I.	Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Philippians
Ep. Phil. P.	Polycarp, Epistle to the Philippians
Ep. Smyrn.	Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Smyrneans
Hist.	Tacitus, Histories
Hort. Gr.	Justin Martyr, Hortatory Address to the Greeks
Instr.	Commodianus, The Instructions in favour of Christian Discipline against the Gods of the Heathens

JbAC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
Nat. Hist.	Pliny, the Elder, Natural History
Oct.	Minucius Felix, Octavius
On Idol.	Tertullian, On Idolatry
On Mod.	Tertullian, On Modesty
Paed.	Clement of Alexandria, The Instructor or Paedagogus
Praesc. Haer.	Tertullian, Prescription against Heresies
Prot.	Clement of Alexandria, Exhortation to the Heathen or Protrepticus
Ps. Cl. Hom.	Pseudo-Clementine Homilies
Ps. Cl. Rec.	Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions
Ref.	Hippolytus, Refutation against all Heresies or Philosophumena
Strom.	Clement of Alexandria, Miscellanies or The Stromata or Stromateis
Vita Const.	Eusebius, Vita Constantini

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## Introduction

This thesis deals with a paradox: on the one hand, there is the fact of an art attributable to the Christians of the first centuries of the common era; on the other, there is a negative, hostile, sometimes even prohibitory attitude toward art on the part of the contemporary church Fathers.<sup>1</sup> This paradox, it will be maintained, holds for the earliest Christian period before the Edict of Milan (313 CE). (Later this hostile attitude periodically erupted, climaxing in the eighth- and ninth-century iconoclastic crises<sup>2</sup> of the Byzantine church.) The paradox can be epitomized as a "Christian hostility to art" versus "Christian production of art".

Is this paradox real or is it only apparent? Has it perhaps been created artificially by uncritical analyses of the material found in the Fathers?<sup>3</sup> Or were the Fathers really iconophobic? This study will examine both sides of the paradox (ante-Nicene Fathers condemned art, ante-Nicene Christians produced it) and will propose that the problem holds: the paradox is real.

The Fathers were mainly fighting against idolatry and heresy -- the altogether natural result, in their opinion, of a liking for and creation of artistic objects. Such terms as "artistic objects" or "artifacts" or "(Christian) art" will be used here to refer not only to paintings and statues, but also to sarcophagi, to amulets and manuscripts, to jewelry and hollow ware -- in other words, to all the objects that might fall, because of their shape or decoration, under patristic con-

demnation as idolatrous.

Inasmuch as it can no longer merely be assumed that the paradox referred to above really holds, a major effort of the thesis will be to vindicate the paradox as real; that is, to establish that the Fathers were indeed hostile to art and that a Christian art which dates before the Edict of Milan did, indeed, exist.

But historical paradoxes demand historical resolutions. In consequence, this thesis will examine the principal historical resolutions of the paradox, all of which seem to the writer inadequate. In an effort to conclude constructively, a further solution will be proposed by the writer, one that hinges on an examination of how to identify, how to locate historically, the conflicting camps of patristic writers and Christian sponsors of art. This, ~~in~~ the end, will lead to a deeper enquiry: namely, to the problem of the historic character of the movement (or movements) reflected in the recently discovered Nag Hammadi texts, which appeared to the Fathers to be a dissident and heretical Christianity.

As often happens in historical work, the right posing of the question is of even more fundamental importance than the various answers, including that of the writer. The substance of the thesis is bent on the right posing of the question. The writer will be content if the resolution of the historical paradox between the Fathers and the art is less inadequate, less liable to crippling objections, than previous efforts.

The plan of the thesis is as follows: Chapter One: Was early Christianity as represented by the Fathers hostile to art? Chapter Two: Was there a Christian art before the Edict of Milan? Chapter Three: Solutions to the paradox.

## Chapter I

### The Paradox

The first major question and a persistent one is whether the pre-Constantinian Fathers who represent "official orthodoxy"<sup>1</sup> were in fact characterized by a hostility toward art. But before tackling the question, it may be in order to pause and reflect a moment. First, what sorts of data would serve as evidence? Secondly, what answers have previously been given to the question? And how good are they?

The question "was there or was there not an 'official' hostility toward art?" bears on a matter of fact. The question, then, is historical, and the most direct evidence would be found in the writings of the Fathers themselves as well as other contemporary texts known to be sympathetic to the Fathers' views, (e.g., the Didache). The types of data that might serve as evidence found in the patristic texts themselves are: (1) texts dealing with art in relation to idolatry and its associated practices; (2) texts dealing with specific artifacts and their uses.

Secondly, what answers have already been given to the question of whether the pre-Constantinian Fathers were, in fact, characterized by hostility to art? Though scholarly views have differed on countless particulars, scholarship on this topic from Renan to the present has, on the whole, affirmed that the stance of the Fathers toward art was negative. A recent contributor to this discussion has put it succinctly: "It is universally held to be a fact that the early Church was hostile to art."<sup>2</sup>

But it is this contributor, Sister Charles Murray, who has issued the most trenchant challenge to the consensus. Her argument will accordingly be considered in due course in this chapter.

Past treatments of the matter since the nineteenth century have not been equally detailed or equally cogent. In part this reflects the lacunary state of the data. While in general, the fund of patristic writings is relatively rich, there must have been much that was destroyed. Moreover, not all the Fathers dealt with the issue of art and those that did were hardly concerned with aesthetic and artistic matters. Almost nothing is said of art or artifacts being utilized as a component of ritual.<sup>3</sup> The Fathers are concerned with art as an instrument of the "demons" and a deception of the faithful. Art is condemned particularly by reason of its connection with idolatry. Without art, idolatry would be impossible.

In this chapter the patristic texts will be examined not in chronological order, but according to the order of expository convenience: part i, Art in Relation to Idolatry and Heresy, part ii, The Fathers and Specific Artistic Monuments. (The last part (iii) will deal with Murray's critique.)

#### 1. Art in Relation to Idolatry and Heresy

The Christian Fathers of the ante-Nicene period speak of art primarily in relation to idolatry, which accounts for why their attitude is one of unanimous condemnation. To make the Fathers' perspective intelligible, it should be recalled that from early in the history of the ancient world religious conceptions and practices provided the major function and con-

text of art. It was only in the era roughly contemporary with Christian origins that the plastic arts began to assume importance in profane contexts <sup>1</sup> and even here the break with religion was not total. It was the Fathers' conception of Christianity as a religion which was radically and newly spiritual that led them to deprecate the arts, which had so long and conspicuously served the pagan cults. Thus, Minucius Felix in his third century dialogue between a Christian, Octavius, and a pagan, Caecilius Natalis, has Octavius say:

But do you think that we conceal what we worship, if we have no temples and altars? And yet what image of God shall I make, since, if you think rightly, man himself is the image of God? What temple shall I build to Him, when this whole world fashioned by his work cannot receive Him? And when I, a man, dwell far and wide, shall I shut up the might of so great a majesty within one little building? (Oct. xxxii)

Origen, too, said in response to Celsus's accusation that Christians do not set up altars and images (that is, have tangible evidence of their cult and thus must be a forbidden, secret society):<sup>2</sup>

He does not notice that our altars are the mind of each righteous man, from which true and intelligible incense with a sweet savour is sent up, prayers from a true conscience. (CC VIII.17)

Commodianus, about 240 CE, said quite simply,

If you wish to live, surrender yourselves to the second law. Avoid the worship of temples, the oracles of demons: turn yourselves to Christ.... (Instr. xxxv)

He admonished complete rejection of image worship, temples, oracles and encouraged all who "wish to live" to keep totally the ban of the second commandment (Ex 20:4).

Why must true Christians avoid the worship of temples and not have images and altars? For Minucius Felix the reason was that the godhead could not be contained or confined but was in all things. Origen used the physical objects of pagan worship to contrast with the metaphysical allegory of pure Christian worship -- the righteousness of a true prayer and conscience. And Commodianus recommended complete adherence to the "second commandment". This reference to the second commandment was, in fact, a topos of patristic literature on art. Although few of the Fathers (with the exception of Clement of Alexandria<sup>3</sup> and Tertullian<sup>4</sup>) quote or refer directly to the "second commandment" of Exodus 20, it seems that they all imply the prohibition of creating "graven images" when they write against art and idolatry. But there was much more to the matter than that. The Fathers, living in the Graeco-Roman milieu saw idolatry, its temples, rites and images as a completely man-made abomination which was initiated and perpetrated by "demons".<sup>5</sup> Since art and the other ritualistic arts served these cults and indeed owed their existence to them, the Fathers saw the arts and those who created them as being in league with these "demons". Condemnation fell equally upon the creators of these arts, the craftsmen and image-makers, as much as it did upon the object itself.

Justin Martyr exposed the rationale of the Christian stand against idols:

And neither do we honour with many sacrifices and garlands of flowers such deities as men have formed and set in shrines and called gods....The craftsmen ...making an image of the requisite shape, they make what they call a god. (I Apol. ix)

Furthermore, he added, those who made these idols were morally lax.

...Artificers of these (idols) are both in-temperate, and, not to enter into particulars, are practised in every vice...even their own girls who work along with them they corrupt.  
(I Apol. ix)

The Epistle to Diognetos, in a discussion on the procedures for manufacturing idols, declared it ludicrous that the physical substance of a pot and a god should be the same, adding that those who worship these gods become like them, lifeless, dumb, blind, rotting pieces of corruption. (Ep. Diog. ii)

The Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions echo the Epistle to Diognetos that those who worship idols become like them, further urging by reference to Gen. I:26 that the idolater loses his created likeness in God's image. (Ps. Cl. Rec. V, xv) Origen saw image-worshippers as choosing to look downward. As a result they were mired in darkness.

...All those who look at the evil productions of painters and sculptors and image-makers sit in darkness and are steeped in it, since they do not wish to look up and ascend in their mind from all visible and sensible things to the Creator of all who is light. (CC VI. 66)

Although artists themselves are not condemned in this passage, certain results of their handiwork are. It seems to follow, however, that those who toil for the rewards of idolmaking, even though not intending to worship the object, are equally condemned with those who do worship the idol. This, of course, places all artists under suspicion.

Tertullian takes the final step, connecting manufacture with worship.

God prohibits an idol as much to be made as to be worshipped. In so far as the making what may be worshipped is the prior act. (On Idol. iv)

Nay, you who made, that they may be able to be worshipped, do worship. (On Idol. vi)

Thus those who worship objects made of material matter are as corruptible as that transient material from which the objects are made, liable to become eaten by termites, moths, rust. Since these idolaters are made of senseless matter, they have no senses, are mired in darkness and cannot know the glory of God. But it is not only those who worship idols who are afflicted, those who make these things are as corrupt and wretched even if they do not intend to worship what they produce. They are the initiators of these images and, as Justin notes, are thus open to all sorts of vices and corruption. Tertullian bridges the gap between the making of an idol and the worshipping of it; the very act of creation is worship.

Clement of Alexandria does not condemn the artist but accuses art itself of victimizing the weak of mind. <sup>6</sup>

So powerful is art to delude, by seducing amorous men into the pit. Art is powerful, but it cannot deceive reason, nor those who live agreeably to reason. The doves on the picture were represented so to the life by the painter's art, that pigeons flew to them; and horses neighed to well-executed pictures of mares. They say that a girl became somewhat enamoured of an image, and a comely youth of the statue at Cnidus. But it was the eyes of the spectators that were deceived by art; for no one in his senses would have embraced a goddess, or entombed himself with a lifeless paramour, or become enamoured of a demon and a stone. But it is with a different kind of spell that art deludes you, if it leads you not to the indulgence of amorous affections: it leads you to pay religious honour and worship to images and pictures.

The picture is like. Well and good! Let art receive its meed of praise, but let it not deceive man by passing itself off as truth.... (Prot. IV)



It will be noticed that Clement's allotting to art its meed of praise is confined to the most narrow possible context, technical excellence. This does not, however, exonerate art in any way, nor does it cease to have ill effects. Clement agrees with Justin <sup>7</sup> that artistic deception leads men to moral laxity.

Such frenzy have the mischief-working arts  
created in the minds of the insensate...  
(who) wedded to their impurity, they adorn  
their bed-chambers with painted tablets hung  
up in them, regarding licentiousness as  
religion: and lying in bed, in the midst of  
their embraces, they look upon that Aphrodite  
locked in the embrace of her paramour.  
(Prot. IV)

In these passages Clement is repeating popular legends concerning the works of Classical Greek and Hellenistic artists. The story of horses neighing at a painted mare is found in Pliny's Natural History (Nat. Hist. XXXV. xxxvi. 95), and the doves may refer to a similar story attributed to a painting by Zeuxis, where birds tried to eat the painted grapes. (Nat. Hist. XXXV. xxxvi. 56) From the extant evidence found in the buried cities of Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiae near Naples, trompe l'oeil style of painting, or realism was very popular at this time. <sup>8</sup> Not only was realism in painting looked upon favourably as Pliny attests, but in sculpture as well. Both Clement (Prot. IV) and Origen (CC VIII.17) comment on a story of a youth falling in love with a work of art and the absurdity of the notion. Clement mentions specifically that a youth fell in love with the statue at Cnidus which was probably the Aphrodite. This story has much in common with the myth of Pygmalion, the artist who fell in love with his own handiwork. <sup>9</sup> But it is interesting to note, that neither Clement nor Origen seems to know any artists, or comments on any works which

are contemporary with themselves. All these legends and artists are from the Classical and pre-Christian Hellenistic period.<sup>10</sup> It is fair to say, however, that both Clement and Origen may have been aware of works which were known to have been copies of original masterpieces by these masters, since they were copiously replicated throughout the Graeco-Hellenistic period and well into the Roman one.<sup>11</sup> Abundant evidence of this copying exists in the remains of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Frescoes found in different houses and by different artists, demonstrate a similarity of subject composition and other formal features which all point to some other original from which the Pompeian and Herculanean works were copied. There was then a long tradition of reproducing the constant iconographical vocabulary of Classical art which in turn was based upon the great themes of Classical and religious mythology. It was this close relationship between art and Classical religion that troubled the Fathers. The intimate symbiotic nature of Graeco-Roman art and religion cannot be separated; in the Fathers' eyes they are one and the same entity, idolatry. The unity of pagan art and religion together with the trompe l'oeil realism of this art to which Clement eloquently attests and its ability to tease and deceive the eye and mind, would naturally lead the Fathers to see art itself as a powerful force of the devil.

To counter the deception of art, Clement called upon the second commandment as did Commodianus,<sup>12</sup> and then echoed the Epistle to Diognetos<sup>13</sup> to the effect that those who create images, and

bestow the greatest pains that the image may be  
fashioned with the most exquisite beauty  
possible...exercise no care to guard against  
your becoming like images for stupidity.  
(Prot. IV)

Clement is unable to make a generous concession to art. Even useful crafts are evoked only to compare them unfavourably to the handiwork of God.

Human art, moreover, produces houses, and ships, and cities, and pictures. But how shall I tell what God makes? Behold the whole universe; it is His work. (Prot. IV)

That art is necessary inasmuch as man needs houses to live in, ships to sail, and so forth, is left in the sphere of the implicit. Nevertheless, he seems to approve of those who practice the "common arts", acknowledging that this ability is a God-given talent.

Human arts as well as Divine Knowledge proceed from God....For those who practice the common arts, are in what pertains to the senses highly gifted: in hearing, he who is commonly called a musician; in touch, he who moulds clay; in voice the singer, in smell the perfumer, in sight the engraver of devices on seals.... (Strom. I. iv)

Clement permits those who make the products that are required for daily living, reasonable comfort and enjoyment, to follow their crafts. Those who make clothing, pots and pans, and seals are necessary for the success of society. He even allows perfumers, singers, musicians and engravers of seals to pursue their professions as long as they do not produce or support the worship of idols. His message seems to be one of moderation. Yet in other places he admonishes the "Model Maiden" to stay away from

...the wearisome trouble that comes from the shops of perfumers, and goldsmiths, and dealers in wool. (Paed. III. xi)

Clement, then, in general, seems to concede that utilitarian art or craftsmanship is necessary. But a positive,

practical concern to separate the visually decorative from the idolatrous is not in evidence. The only hint he offers is his discussion of visual motifs permissible for use on seals. In this respect, he is unique; he is the only one of the early Fathers even to broach the subject. He says,

The Word, then permits them a finger-ring  
of gold....

But, he quickly qualifies,

Nor is this for ornament, but for sealing....Other  
finger-rings are to be cast off, since according  
to Scripture, "instruction is a golden ornament  
for a wise man".... (Ben Sirach 21:21)

And let our seals be either a dove, or a fish  
or a ship scudding before the wind, or a musical  
lyre, which Polycrates used, or a ship's anchor,  
which Seleucus got engraved as a device; and if  
possible be there one fishing, he will remember  
the apostle, and the children drawn out of the  
water. (Paed. III.x1)

Although the seals illustrated in Fig. 1 are mostly of a later period than Clement's,<sup>14</sup> they do show that some of his advice was taken to heart. The ship, the dove, the anchor and the fish, with its associative acrostic **IXΘYC** are much in evidence. In addition to Clement's recommendation, the Good Shepherd standing with a sheep on his shoulders, was equally popular, either alone as in Fig. 1 c or with other symbols as in Fig. 1 d and e. It was a common image on sarcophagi and on the walls of the Roman catacombs.<sup>15</sup> It is not certain who Polycrates was who used the lyre as his seal. He may have been Polycrates, tyrant of Samos, who was a great patron of the arts,<sup>16</sup> or may have been a local member of Clement's community whom he was holding up as an example. Clement's second example Seleucus, was probably not a Hellenistic king, but Seleucus Hemericus, an Alexandrian writer, whom Clement admired.<sup>17</sup> If Seleucus was a local

figure, then Polycrates may also have been a local personage, whose claim to fame has been lost to us. The seals illustrated here do not depict "one fishing", (Fig. 1 j shows Peter being aided to walk on water by Jesus), but representations of fishermen were popular on the early sarcophagi and paintings in the catacombs.<sup>18</sup> The "fisherman" usually refers to Peter (Jn 21:3) but also can denote the apostles in general. (Mat 4:19; Mk 1:17) The "children drawn out of the water" probably refers to those who have been baptized, and Acts 10:44-48.

In this passage, Clement seems to be offering suggestions for images which could be utilized on seal-rings as emblems whose symbolic content was somewhat innocuous, or would, like the fisherman, call to mind some Christian notion. It seems that this would not involve any idolatrous acts on the part of the owner or the viewer of the symbol-image. It would be merely a remembrance and at the same time fulfill the utilitarian function of such a device.

In contrast with Clement's attitude toward the symbolic nature and interpretation of images and imagery, the Stele of Abericus of Hierapolis in Phrygia, dating probably from the late second century (and is contemporary with Clement) makes some interesting connections between the Shepherd, the teacher, the church as a queen, and fisherman, the golden seal which is likely baptism, and the fish (ΙΧΘΥC) as food placed before the Friends, along with wine and bread..

My name is Abericus, a disciple of the holy  
shepherd who feeds his sheep upon the hills and  
plains, who has great eyes which see through all,  
who taught me the sure learning of life, and sent  
me to Rome to see the royal city and the queen  
clad in a golden robe and with golden shoes.  
There I saw people who had the gleaming seal.  
I saw also the plains of Syria and all cities,

Nisibis, beyond the Euphrates. Everywhere I found believers, Paul (...), everywhere faith was my guide, and gave me everywhere for food the Ichthys from the spring, the great, the pure, which the spotless virgin caught and even puts before the friends to eat. She has also delicious wine, and she proffers wine mixed with water along with bread.... 19

Although this stele offers references the precise meanings of which are problematic and may or may not be completely "orthodox", it does reveal the depth of the symbolic usage that these images shepherd, dove, fish (ΙΧΘΥC) carried. It must be noted that both Clement and Abericus are using many of the same images, but Clement seems to be offering the symbols for seals as innocuous emblems, while Abericus has apparently imbued them with theological ideas in a way that goes well beyond Clement. Although the religious and theological association is not completely lacking in Clement, it is greatly minimized. But for Abericus, the symbolism and its content is the most important element, for he says:

Let everyone who shares my confession and understands this inscription pray for Abericus. 20

Abericus seems to be offering in his epitaph an occult chain of symbolic images whose meaning is reserved for the initiated. This element of the esoteric as well as being characteristic of the Hellenistic "mystery religions" 21 is attested in Christian 22 and "heretical" (Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. I.iii. 1; The Gospel of Thomas II,2. log. 62) tradition from the start. Presumably, it is only those in the circle of Abericus and followers who could decipher the "true meaning" of these symbols. Abericus, at any rate, makes it clear that he wants only the prayers of those who understand the inscription (and so share in his confession). Although the stele does not speak directly of art or specific visual images,

the "shepherd" motif if presented in visual terms would presumably embody for Abericus the same interpretative content. In contrast, Clement's permissible emblems are altogether innocuous. (It is interesting to note that Clement does not include the "shepherd" among these.) <sup>23</sup>

Tertullian is not as lenient as Clement. Unequivocally, he declares,

The principal crime of the human race, the highest guilt charged upon the world, the whole procuring cause of judgement, is idolatry.  
(On Idol. i)

He explains what constitutes idolatry.

But when the devil introduced into the world artificers of statues and of images, and of every kind of likeness, that former rude business of human disaster attained from idols both a name and a development. Thence forward every art which in any way produces an idol instantly became a fount of idolatry. For it makes no difference whether a moulder cast, or a carver grave, or an embroiderer weave the idol; because neither is it a question of material....To establish this point, the interpretation of the word is requisite. Eidōs, in Greek, signifies form; eidōlōn, derived diminutively from that, by equivalent process in our language, makes formling. Every form or formling, therefore, claims to be called an idol.  
(On Idol. iii)

Tertullian's ingenious hermeneutic implies that the act of formation as well as the outward appearance of the object itself is idolatrous. Not only is it bad to worship idols, the very act of creating them is a form of worship. This is deplorable enough, but he goes on to condemn the mere fact that one's profession might contribute directly or indirectly to anything connected, however remotely, with idolatrous purposes.

There are also other species of very many arts which, although they extend not to the making of idols, yet, with the same criminality, furnish the adjuncts without which idols have no power. (On Idol. viii)

Tertullian then proceeds to list the "adjuncts", such as architects, embellishers of "temple altar, niche," gold leaf layers, plasterers of roofs and walls, cisterns and stuccoes, marble masons, bronze workers, engravers of all materials, both metal and stone, wood-carvers and frankincense sellers. (On Idol. xi) Even those who do not create a material thing directly with their hands come under this suspicion, such as astrologers. (On Idol. ix) If the objection is raised that astrologers are found in the New Testament (Mt 2:1-12) and are thus legitimated,

Tertullian counters:

But, however, that science has been allowed until the Gospel in order that after Christ's birth no one should thence forward interpret any one's nativity by the heaven. For they therefore offered to the then infant Lord that frankincense and myrrh and gold, to be as it were, the close of worldly sacrifice and glory, which Christ was about to do anyway. (On Idol. ix)

With Tertullian the problem of art, idols and idolatry has fragmented into associative ritual practices, astrology in particular. But the idea was not completely new with him, nor the dangers that one exposed oneself to by participating in it.

In order to pursue this new facet of the enquiry, a brief recapitulation of the argument is in order.

In the first section of this chapter which is concerned with the Fathers' attitudes toward art and idolatry, it can be said that if they do not completely condemn art itself, they certainly voice caution and wariness in all cases from Clement of Alexandria, the most "lenient", onward. The fundamental concern, of course, is idolatry which the Fathers saw all around them and its power through art to delude and seduce by



means of the verisimilitude of visual form. Art and idolatry in the Fathers' eyes are not separate entities. Idolatry cannot exist without art; therefore, ideally, in order to extirpate idolatry, abolish art.

Woven within this prohibition is condemnation of both the passive participation of the observer or worshipper in relation to the image and the active creator of the image. Although the creator of the artistic object might not intend to worship it, by the very act of creation, the artist who creates, worships at the same time. By extension, if the creator of the object for worship becomes involved in its worship, then all other related and attendant arts, including astrology and divination fall into the same category. All those who have any remote connection with any art which might be used for idolatrous purposes are under suspicion. Thus the condemnation of art in connection with idolatry becomes extended to include not just the creator of the image itself, but all the other decorative, functional (i.e., buildings) and ritual arts which attend the worship of an image. The concept of idolatry in the Fathers, as synthesized in Tertullian (who probably knew much of the earlier material), contains within it all these arts of art and ritual.

With Tertullian, rituals such as divination and astrology have been implicated, by association with artistic images into the sin of idolatry. Neither this guilt by association nor the threat of danger to which one exposed oneself by participating in them was new to Tertullian.

To arrive at a better hold on the religious mentality of the Fathers and especially their instinctive recoil from art, the connection between art (i.e., cups, amulets) and magic (i.e., incantations, necromancy)

will be examined with a brief account of how the Fathers related magic to both idolatry and heresy (itself a form of idolatry, in Tertullian's view). <sup>24</sup> Astrology, magic and witchcraft were taken by the Fathers to be conducive to idolatry -- indeed, to be practically synonymous with it. Sorcery was seen as a symptom of heresy.

There were two types of magician: the magus who was an astrologer and partaker in a special, privileged occult knowledge which had some authenticity and the goēs or slight-of-hand-trickster. <sup>25</sup> The former, in the Hellenistic world, was respected because of his secret knowledge; the latter was seen, as at best an entertaining fraud, at worst a fool. The Fathers flatly condemned both types as being instruments of the devil. But the magus was looked upon with particular loathing, for in the practice of his profession he was able to call on diabolic forces. The magus set himself up as a surrogate god by his ability to control and manipulate the powers which rule the cosmos. This, however, was not done by the aid of God, but by control of the "demons". This attitude towards the magus will be demonstrated in the discussions of Simon Magus in this section and in the following one as well.

The Didache included the practice of magic and witchcraft among the prohibitions of the "second commandment, to love one's neighbour":

thou shalt not practice magic, thou shalt  
not practice witchcraft.... (Didache II)

Moreover, even observing such things was dangerous.

My child, be not an observer of omens,  
 since it leadeth the way to idolatry;  
 neither an enchanter, nor an astrologer,  
 nor a purifier (exorcist), nor be willing  
 to look at these things; for out of these  
 idolatry is engendered. (Didache III)

Thus the Didache says that these occult sciences lead directly to idolatry and merely watching a practitioner can cause one to err.

Hippolytus too saw astrology as the source for error which he specifically called "heresy". (Ref. IV.11) He noted that heretics seem particularly susceptible to being taken in by the art of sorcery, because they were of a nature that was characterized by curiosity and were easily "astonished".

And the heresiarchs, astonished at the art  
 of these (sorcerers), have imitated them,  
 partly by delivering their doctrines in  
 secrecy of darkness, and partly by advancing  
 (these tenets) as their own. (Ref. IV.xlii)

The heretics then adopted the ideas and methods of the sorcerers.

Tertullian noted that where one found practitioners of magic and their followers, one usually encountered heretics as well.

How extremely frequent is the intercourse  
 which heretics hold with magicians, with  
 mountebanks, with astrologers, with philoso-  
 phers; and the reason is, that they are men  
 who devote themselves to curious questions.  
 (Praesc. Haer. xliii)

These "curious questions" are those "hows" and "whys" asked by philosophers which the astrologer answered by the stars and the magus manipulated by his magic. Although not all heretics were accused of being magi (e.g., Marcion, in Justin Martyr's I Apol. lvi), all were seen as being at least "aided by devils to blaspheme" and many were accused of practicing magic,

the most noteworthy being, the archheretic himself, Simon Magus.

As early as 145 CE Justin Martyr, concurring with Acts 8:9-11, noted that Simon the Samaritan "did many acts of magic", but went beyond the biblical account by adding that he "was considered a god." <sup>26</sup> (I Apol. xxvi) Later in his Apology Justin repeated the accusation against Simon and included his follower Menander, saying that he "did many works by magic, and deceived many, and still keep them deceived". (I Apol. lvi). Irenaeus writing about 180 also singled out Simon for special condemnation.

Simon the Samaritan was that magician of whom Luke (wrote).... This Simon, who feigned faith supposing that the apostles themselves performed their cures by the art of magic, and not by the power of God. (Adv. Haer. I.xxiii.1)

Hippolytus agreed, specifically mentioning that Simon was a sorcerer and a magician three times in his Refutation against All Heresies. (Ref. VI. ii; iv, xiv.) Not only did Simon do these things, but all his disciples (not just Menander as reported by Justin) "celebrate magical rites, and resort to incantations". (Ref. VI.xv) Irenaeus too said of Simon's followers:

Thus, then, the mystic priests belonging to this sect both lead profligate lives and practise magical arts, each one to the extent of his ability. They use exorcisms and incantations. Love-potions, too, and charms, as well as those being who are called "Paredri" (familiaris) and Oniopompi" (dream-senders).... (Adv. Haer. I. xxiii.4)

And Tertullian specifically levels a charge of necromancy against the "dupes" of Simon.

At this very time, even, the heretical dupes of this same Simon (Magus) are so much elated by the extravagant pretensions of their art that they undertake to bring up from Hades the souls of the prophets themselves.  
(Treatise on the Soul, lvii)

The Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions and Homilies also tell of the magical antics attributed to Simon in his competition with Peter.<sup>27</sup> Thus the tradition is long and deep that Simon, the first heretic, was first and foremost an accomplished practitioner of magic, in truth, a magus, and after his "conversion" to Christianity continued that practice. It also appears that Menander and his other disciples were practitioners of all the sorts of magical practices that Simon himself demonstrated as reported in The Pseudo-Clementines as well as the blacker aspects of summoning up the apparitions of long-dead prophets. This magic was likely part of the "ritual" of the group who followed Simon.

But Simon and his followers it seems are not the only heretics who used magic. The followers of Basilides, according to Irenaeus, practiced "magic, incantation, invocations" and "every other kind of curious art". (Adv. Haer. I.xxiv.5). One Marcus, was singled out:

But there is another among these heretics, Marcus by name, who boasts himself as having improved upon his Master. He is a perfect adept in magical impostures, and by this means drawing away a great number of men, and not a few women, he has induced them to join themselves to him as to one who is possessed of the greatest knowledge and perfection....For joining the buffooneries of Anaxilaus<sup>28</sup> to the craftiness of the magi, as they are called, he is regarded by his senseless and cracked-brain followers as working miracles by these means. (Adv. Haer. I.xiii.1)

Hippolytus too mentioned Marcus as being adept at magical, slight-of-hand de-

ceptions, (Ref. VI. xxxiv) as are Carpocrates and his followers. (Ref. VII. xx) Irenaeus gives a little more detail on Carpocrates and his disciples: he accuses them of practicing "magical arts and incantations, philters also, and love potions", having "familiar spirits", and "dream-sending demons", and even using "the name", <sup>29</sup> which could refer to the use of IAW so often seen on amulets, (Adv. Haer. I. xxv. 3) as seen in Fig. 2. With Marcus the magus and the goēs have become one. He used trickery as well as other more "legitimate" potions, incantations and powerful names. This magical behaviour does not seem to have been passed on to his followers, but in the case of Carpocrates, both the originator of the cult and his followers were adept.

Tertullian, as usual, takes the final step, declaring that heretics do not just imitate magic and idolaters; they are idolaters.

He (God) says, then, that there is no God besides Himself in respect to idolatry both of the Gentiles as well as of Israel; nay, even on account of our heretics also, who fabricate idols with their words, just as the heathen do with their hands; that is to say, they make another God and another Christ. (Adv. Praxeas xviii)

From this statement there does not seem to be any danger of misconstruing what Tertullian thought about the subject of art-idolatry-sorcery-heresy: it is all the same and it is wrong. It is not only wrong to serve and worship idols and images; it is wrong to participate in it no matter how remotely or unknowingly. The true believer must always be on guard against false demonic doctrines, teachers, images, sorcerers and practices in general, and beware of making "another God and another Christ".

In the light of the prohibitory orthodox attitude of the Fathers and other contemporary sympathetic material toward art and idolatry and its various dangers and resultant ills, there seems to be little possibility of mistaking their intent; art-idolatry is wrong in that it leads to heresy, which, in turn, is a form of idolatry. Thus far, however, the only passages which have been discussed are those that deal somewhat generally and often indirectly with art in a theoretical manner. The Fathers' case would be much stronger if they also deal with actual objects and artifacts within a "heretical" context. It is true that Clement of Alexandria does mention the types of images which he considered permissible for use on seal-rings of Christians, while condemning the amorous, perhaps even pornographic subject matter of panel paintings found in certain pagan bedrooms. He notes the power of art to delude the eye and mind and warns the "true gnostic" to be on guard. But all his discussion, in spite of its apparent specification, is in reality, rather vague and general. As a result, it is difficult to determine precisely what Clement thought about art except that it should be approached and used with caution and care. Although it is Tertullian who synthesizes all the ideas involving art-idolatry-sorcery-heresy, it seems that these thought connections are at the base of many pronouncements found in other texts such as Irenaeus and Hippolytus. The underlying current maintains that art and idolatry are the same thing, are themselves equal to heresy and those who participate in any of these things are heretics who have been corrupted by "demons" away from the worship of the "true God". This blanket condemnation includes even the pagans, but the Fathers' primary concern was with "heretics" or those who had once been within their respective Christian communities, but because of dissidence

and association with magicians and "mountebanks" were seen by the Fathers as outside. Their invective was aimed at those who had willfully left, or had involuntarily been seduced away from "the fold", or in revealing the cancer spreading within.<sup>30</sup> Not all astrologer-sorcerer-magicians were heretics, (many were pagans), but where these adepts practiced one could always find a heretic or two, according to the Fathers. This was because heretics seemed to possess a "restless (philosophical) curiosity" which the Fathers interpreted as a particular fascination for and interest in magical arts. The questioning procedure characteristic of philosophical enquiry was lumped into these arts along with divination, incantation and the like. That this "curiosity" is probably identical with a "philosophical" questioning of the Fathers' authority to govern, interpret and dictate ritual behaviour and theological dicta has not, of course, specifically been discussed by the Fathers. This problem of the real overall authority of the Fathers and the extent of the "heretical" or dissident resistance to them will be dealt with in the final chapter of this study. Nevertheless, the Fathers saw these people whose behaviour was demonstrated thus as outside their communities and therefore in opposition to themselves.

On the equation of heretic with magician, it seems that in Simon Magus a clue is presented. Simon was already a famous magus before his conversion to Christianity, but afterwards he did not give up practicing magic. In fact, it seems that he became a Christian in order to increase his thaumaturgical ability. (Acts 8:13, 18-19) As the Fathers perceived it, Simon, after becoming a Christian, reverted to his "pagan" state through ambition and pride by attempting to be like the apostles in their ability



to bestow the Holy Ghost through the laying on of hands. In reality, he had never given up his magical (pagan) practices, but wanted to add to them. In his attempts to be like the apostles for the wrong reasons (i.e., offering money) he thus became the first heretic. To the Fathers he demonstrated all the classic symptoms of heresy: pride, ambition, curiosity, and an interest in and practice of thaumaturgy. This equation heretic=sorcerer was also applied to the most notable of Simon's followers Menander, who seems to have been a contemporary of Justin Martyr's since he noted that Menander "still deceives many". (I Apol. lvi) But other heretics too were accused of practicing magic, the followers of Basilides especially Marcus and the Carpocratians. All these latter were of Egyptian provenance. The connection with magic-ridden Egypt may have contributed to their reputation for facility and ability with magic. But it may also have been that they were heretics in the Fathers' opinion and Simon's taint was applied by extension. In fact, both factors were likely influential. Nevertheless, (according to the Fathers); they were all heretics, who were led away from the true faith by the wiles of sorcery and magic perpetrated by "demons". They were condemned by the ambition and curiosity involved in pursuing the art of practicing these things and their manifestations in the use of incantations, amulets, thaumaturgical rituals and the like. It will be seen below that these heretics were also accused of utilizing images after the manner of pagans as well, but this is merely more ammunition for the Fathers' artillery. They were already condemned in the Fathers' eyes; they were idolaters by their very use of magic and witchcraft which was forbidden along with the use of images and art. These heretics, by not being obedient to the dictates of the

Fathers and humbly following their teachings, taught of "another Christ", thus setting up a counterfeit Christ, an idol.

#### 11. The Fathers and specific Artistic Monuments

The first conclusion has been that, the Fathers in their general treatment of art, tie it to idolatry and related errors in religion. Is it possible to find in these same Fathers a confirmation of this conclusion? Perhaps it is. For, if, in fact, the Fathers firmly tied art to idolatry and/or heresy, then we would expect to find that any discussion of concrete artifacts by these same Fathers would consistently maintain that tie. Is this expectation actually realized?

It is. For there are patristic references to purportedly concrete artifacts and these references invariably associate them with paganism or heresy. This of itself will serve to confirm the first conclusion.

But there is a further point to be made. If the "purportedly" concrete artifacts that figure in the texts were actually concrete entities, then we have, for the first time, evidence of a more than theoretical hostility to art on the part of the Fathers. Real artifacts argue to real producers of art against whom the Fathers wrote.

The patristic references to purportedly concrete artifacts which will be discussed presently are the following: (a) the "Simon" statue reported by Justin Martyr (repeated by Irenaeus, Tertullian and Eusebius), (b) the report of the Simon and Helen group statue given by Irenaeus (repeated by Hippolytus with additions), (c) the images of Christ attributed to Pilate discussed by Irenaeus, (d) the report in Hippolytus of the Carpocratians' making counterfeit images of Christ, which they claimed were

made by Pilate, (e) the report in Lampridius of the Alexander Severus lararium which contained among other images, one of Christ, (f) the discussion in Hippolytus of the relics of Noah's ark, (g) the report in Eusebius that Caius (c. 180) claimed to be able to show "trophies of the apostles", i.e., Peter and Paul, (h) Tertullian's discussion of the brazen serpent and the Ark of the Covenant, (i) the report in Hippolytus of the Naassenes' use of a statue of phallic Hermes and other images, (j) and illustrated manuscript attributed by Hippolytus to the Sethians, (k) the statue of Hippolytus himself, (l) Origen's Ophite diagram, (m) Tertullian's disgust for the Good Shepherd image found on chalices, and (n) his horrified report of the Onocoetes. These patristic references -- they practically constitute the sum-total of the Fathers' significant allusions to concrete or purportedly concrete artifacts -- all fulfill the expectation that the Fathers not only in their general discussions of art but in their more specific references to it, firmly tied art to idolatry or heresy. In the entire lot there is not one kind word for a concrete artifact.

But, as has been stated above, there is a further point to be made in this discussion to follow: real artifacts argue to real producers of art and artifacts against whom the Fathers wrote. This additional point will particularly occupy us in the treatment of the first two artifacts: the "Simoni" statue and the Simon-Helen group statue. In other instances, the reality of the artifact in question is a known fact although in some cases the actual object under discussion no longer exists.

It would be most useful if it could be established that those accounts found in the Fathers have an historical significance and are not merely

inventions of rhetorical polemic. Many scholars write about "gnostics" or "Ophites" or "Carpocratians" as if they were concrete historical entities, while others deny any historicity whatsoever and relegate all tirades of the Fathers against heretical factions to their polemic on a theoretical plane. An example of this, is the controversy surrounding Justin Martyr's report of a statue of Simon Magus which he saw at Rome.

This account is usually

dismissed as a "mistaken identity" or sheer fabrication, but is rarely accepted as a historical fact. Somehow, Justin is credible when he writes of theological matters, but as an observer and recorder of visual and historical fact he is not. But Justin Martyr claimed that the Romans had erected on the banks of the Tiber River a statue of Simon Magus.

The devils put forward certain men who said that they themselves were gods; and they were not only not persecuted by you, but even deemed worthy of honours. There was a Samaritan, Simon, a native of the village called Gitto, who in the reign of Claudius Caesar, and in your royal city of Rome, did mighty acts of magic, by virtue of the art of the devils operating in him. He was considered a god, and as a god was honoured by you with a statue, which statue was erected on the river Tiber, between two bridges, and bore this inscription

SIMONI DEO SANCTO  
(I Apol. xxvi)

The information in this story about the statue was utilized by both Irenaeus (Adv. Haer. I. xxiii.1), and Tertullian (Apol. xiii), and is repeated almost verbatim by Eusebius. (Eccl. Hist. II. xiii) From Justin's description, the statue seems to be of a single, male figure, but no further details are given, except that he accepts it as a statue of Simon. His report, however, in spite of the lack of visual detail, does have an authoritative ring to it, as if he had actually seen the statue and was genuinely surprised and disgusted by it. The reports by Irenaeus, Tertullian and Eusebius seem simply to reiterate Justin's account. None add to the description and from their passages, one does not perceive that they had first-hand knowledge of the statue. Irenaeus especially, who was in Rome around 177 CE, not ten years after Justin's martyrdom in 165 and who was

so thorough in his investigations of the "haereses", <sup>1</sup> would surely have described the statue in minute detail if he had seen it. He wrote Adversus Haereses about 180 and could have easily added his own eye-witness report, but does not. Does his brief repetition of Justin's account indicate that although he was not going to argue with Justin that the statue might have existed, by the time when Irenaeus himself was in Rome, he found no evidence of it? It is interesting to note that Hippolytus fails to mention the "Simoni" statue altogether. He was born about 170 and died about 236, and although a Greek by birth, as bishop of Portus, a sea-port of Rome, would certainly have known of the existence of such a statue. What does his omission mean? There are several possibilities, first, the statue no longer existed, that is, it stood during the time of Justin and had been destroyed before even Irenaeus appeared on the scene. Secondly, the statue still existed but was not recognized by either Irenaeus or Hippolytus as that of which Justin spoke. The third possibility is that there never was such a statue and Justin's entire account is the result of his polemic. Lastly, Hippolytus might have mentioned the statue in a part of his works which are no longer preserved, but this, of course, can neither be proven nor disproven at this point and must be discarded.

The third possibility too can be eliminated as improbable. Justin would accomplish little in the eyes of the Romans with an accusation such as this. The Romans set up statues of gods, of emperors and of people whom they honoured or to whom they owed a debt of gratitude on a regular basis and would see nothing unusual about this occurrence. Justin then must have known of the existence of a statue that he perceived as Simon Magus.

The first and second possibilities are more likely, but the first one is difficult to substantiate archaeologically.

There is as yet no physical evidence of remains of a statue dedicated specifically to "SIMONI DEO SANCTO". The second possibility seems the more fruitful avenue of approach to the question: was there a statue of Simon Magus, the archheretic, in Rome, as Justin reports?

Assuming that Justin saw a statue which he took to be of Simon Magus and that this statue still existed at the time when Irenaeus or Hippolytus might have seen it but did not recognize it as Justin's statue of Simon, what might that statue have depicted? Is there any evidence for such a statue in situ near the Tiber in Rome that could qualify for the case of Justin's "mistaken identity", if this is the case? Did Justin mistake another statue or inscription for one of Simon? Or perhaps Simon's followers pointed out a statue to him as dedicated to their founder? <sup>2</sup>

Although there is no parallel of an exact inscription to coincide with Justin's "Simoni" one, Dessau in his collection of Latin inscriptions, records four inscriptions to a "Semoni Sanco" and one to a "Sanco deo Fidio". <sup>3</sup> Cook, in his massive work Zeus, notes that these may be literary allusions to Zeus in the guise of Πίσταος. <sup>4</sup> He explains that it seems that the full name of the god is Semo Sancus Dius Fidius; the Semo Sancus should not be seen as a separate divinity blended with Dius Fidius. <sup>5</sup> Dessau's inscription #3472 <sup>6</sup> occurs on the base of a marble statue found at Rome in 1879. <sup>7</sup> It reads:

Semoni/ Sanco/ sancto deo Fidio/ sacrum/  
decuria sacerdot./ bidentalium.

Dessau also records another inscription #3474, whose first four lines are identical with the 1879 inscription, except that this one was found on a statue base on an island in the Tiber River in Rome in the year 1574.<sup>8</sup> Fig. 3 is an illustration of this inscription and Dessau notes that the inscription (and original site) is remarkably similar to the inscription that Justin read erroneously as in honour of Simon Magus. Thus there seem to be five references to "Semoni Sanco" extant, two of which are known to have been upon statue bases found in the environs of Rome. But was Justin "erroneous" in his reading of the inscription? Did he read "Simoni" for "Semoni"?

It seems that at this time, there was some confusion among Latin speakers as to the pronunciation of the Greek "ζ" and "η". For example, Tertullian says

Yes, and even when it is wrongly pronounced by you "Chrestianos" (for you do not even know accurately the name you hate), it comes from sweetness and benignity. (Apol. iii)

His pun on *χρηστός* meaning "sense of moral good, kindness, and loving benevolence" and *χριστός* for "anointed"<sup>10</sup> and as a title for Christians as those who are anointed in Jesus Christ, is ingenuous. He turns even a mispronounced mockery into a theological truth describing Christ. Lactantius too notes,

But the meaning of this name must be set forth on account of the error of the ignorant, who by the change of a letter are accustomed to call him Chrestus. (Div. Inst. IV. vii)

In light of Lactantius's and Tertullian's observations, is Suetonius<sup>11</sup>



who wrote the Life of the Caesars about 112 CE indeed referring to Christ, or simply reporting subversive activities in Rome of a certain Jew called Chrestus? <sup>12</sup> Lactantius goes on to explain,

But since the ancient Greeks used the word Χρισθαι to express the art of anointing ...on account we call Him Christ, that is, the anointed.... (Div. Inst. IV. vii)

If Lactantius is correct and the word incorrectly pronounced and/or written in the transliteration from Greek to Latin, it is easy to see how this mistake could occur, that is, changing the Greek "χ" to an "c" in Latin.

Returning to Justin's inscription, however, the situation seems to be the reverse. From the visual and textual evidence, the original "Semoni" inscriptions are in Latin. Cook notes that according to Wissowa these date from the period of the Antonines and are dedicated to a lightning god. <sup>13</sup>

Jupiter Iuarius was worshipped at Rome on the island in the Tiber...(and) was perhaps akin to Dius Fidius, who is known (from the foregoing inscriptions) to have had a cult on the Tiber-island. <sup>14</sup>

Justin probably had seen an inscription in Latin identical with or similar to the above "Semoni" inscriptions and was very aware of the confusion between "χ" and "η" in the transliteration from Greek to Latin as he himself attests when he makes a verbal play on the words "Chrestos" and "Christos" much like Tertullian. (I Apol. iv) Knowing that Simon's name was spelled with an "χ" in Greek, Justin would simply correct the error. Thus the Latin "SEMONI" becomes Justin's corrected Latin version "SIMONI". <sup>15</sup>

Therefore, Justin is probably giving an eye-witness description of a statue which stood on a base similar to those described above. It is tempting to equate his account with the one that stood on the base found on the Tiber Island in 1574, since he says the statue stood "on the River Tiber, between two bridges". (I Apol. xxvi) But Justin does not say that the statue stood on the island itself. There were in Justin's time approximately seven bridges across the Tiber River and since a statue base with an inscription of the exact word sequence reported by Justin (even with "Semoni" instead of "Simoni") has not been found "between two bridges" on either the banks of the river or on the island, the precise location of the statue must be left an open question.

It is known that the Christian community were clustered largely on the river side of the Aventine hill<sup>16</sup> and that the Jews had settled along the banks of the Tiber as well,<sup>17</sup> probably not too far from the Aventine. Would this mean that Samaritans gathered there too? Could it be postulated that in roughly the same area of Rome one could find Jews, Christians and Samaritans? This would be a direct contributing factor in the frequent boiling over of tensions between Christians and Jews as recorded in Suetonius.<sup>18</sup> And the presence of Samaritans in the same area would add to the possibility that a statue of Zeus, "on the Tiber, between two bridges" could be claimed to be a statue of the Samaritan magus. That Justin did not seem to travel much in the city itself<sup>19</sup> and that he believed the statue to be of Simon suggests that the statue may have been located between the Sublician Bridge and the Bridge of Probus not too far from the Circus Maximus within the area where the Aventine district borders on the Tiber, as indicated on the Map of Imperial Rome.

But it is not likely that Simon, whom Justin notes was active in Rome "during the reign of Claudius" (41-54 CE) was still active when Justin arrived in the capital around 145-150 CE. Nevertheless from this and other accounts, Justin seems to have known much about Simon, both personally and by reputation, and seems to have had more than passing interest in the activities and subsequent influence of this heretic.

Both Simon and Justin were natives of Samaria. Their villages were less than 10 km. apart; Simon's was the village of Gitto or Gitta while Justin's village Flavia Neapolis was situated to the south-east near the town of ancient Samaria itself, as shown on the Map of Samaria.<sup>20</sup> Did Justin know Simon and/or his reputation in Samaria? Is this why he was so shocked by the raising of a statue in Rome itself to a local Samaritan priest-magician? As Justin insinuates, Simon must have been a powerful magus to dupe the mighty Romans into thinking he was a god. Would this intimate knowledge of Simon imply that Justin may have been more familiar with the Samaritan magician than might normally concern a Christian apologist writing generally against heretics and heresies? At any rate, Justin never doubted that the statue which he reported in his Apology was raised in honour of and dedicated to Simon Magus.

But what of the identification of "SEMONI" with Jupiter noted by Cook? Justin surely would not have been so isolated within his Christian circle to be totally ignorant or unaware of local gods and their dedications in the area of Rome. If, as Justin reports, Simon considered himself a god and was considered by others as a god, then that a statue of Jupiter or Zeus in the form of Semo Sanco Dius Fidius could also be claimed to be of Simon would not be surprising or unusual.<sup>22</sup> Although Justin in his extant works

does not claim that Simon equated himself with Zeus, but only claimed to be a "god", Irenaeus does in his report of the statue group of Simon in the likeness of Jupiter (or Zeus) and Helen in the likeness of Minerva (or Athene) to be discussed presently. Justin then did not make a mistake when he identified the statue of Simon Magus in Rome. As far as Justin was concerned, here was a statue of a heretic who considered himself a god, and was represented as such. The problem was that those who so honoured him spelt his name wrong!

There is, as mentioned above, a second tradition of a statue of Simon with Helen which is recorded by Irenaeus but not mentioned by Justin in any of his extant works.

They (i.e., the followers of Simon) also have an image of Simon fashioned after the likeness of Jupiter, and another of Helene in the shape of Minerva, and these they worship.  
(Adv. Haer. I. xxiii. 4)

Hippolytus echoes the content of these words found in Irenaeus almost exactly,<sup>23</sup> but adds that the images were never referred to by their correct names by adherents to the sect.

And they have an image of Simon (fashioned) into the figure of Jupiter, and (an image) of Helen in the form of Minerva; and they pay adoration to these. But they call one Lord and the other Lady. And if any one amongst them, on seeing the images of either Simon or Helen, would call them by name, he is cast off, as being ignorant of the mysteries. (Ref. VI. xv)

It is not likely that these reports are of the same statue as that which Justin et al. recorded as being on the banks of the Tiber in Rome. The "Simoni" statue seems to have been a single figure. The statue of Helen and Simon consisted of two figures, in the shape of Athene and Zeus respectively.

It also seems safe to say that the reports of Irenaeus and Hippolytus are of the same group, even though Hippolytus seems to have had more information about it. It is unfortunate that neither author mentions where this statue group is situated, but its being in Rome can probably be eliminated. Both Irenaeus and Hippolytus were acquainted with Rome, the former visited there at least once and the latter was bishop of Portus, a sea-port of Rome. Both would certainly have described the grouping in much more detail if they had seen it themselves.

Irenaeus reported bare facts. Most if not all his information on Simon seems to derive from secondary written sources. His discussion of Simon and his followers seems to intrude abruptly into his exposition of the Valentinians and their sympathizers as if it had been inserted in toto with no attempt to harmonize it with the surrounding material. Hippolytus, in his turn, owed much of his information to Irenaeus. But it was he who added the detail concerning the occult nature of the figures in which their apparent identities were sublimated into all-embracing cosmological epithets. If Irenaeus recorded all the information he had at his disposal, then Hippolytus must have had an additional source. This type of information by its intrinsic nature may have come from an adherent of the cult and is likely early in date. Since Hippolytus copied Irenaeus and post-dates him by approximately fifty years, it is not likely that such privileged information originated with him. It probably came from another, non-Irenaeian source. Whether Irenaeus knew of the occult interpretation of the statue group and decided not to use it in Adversus Haereses is unanswerable, but it seems that there must have been an earlier source or sources which he and Hippolytus drew upon.

Since the great bulk of our information on Simon Magus, the Samaritan and archheretic, comes

from Justin Martyr, because Justin himself was a Samaritan and seemed to know Simon and his reputation well (if not the man himself), could Justin (maybe his lost Syntagma), be the source for this report of the statue group and its interpretation? He appears to be the only possible source for reasons which will be presented presently.

If it can be suggested that Justin is the original source for the report of the statue group, does this add any further dimension to a possible site for the statue-group? The most probable place would be in Samaria itself. If the statue was in Samaria it is unlikely that either Irenaeus or Hippolytus would have seen it since, to our knowledge and from their writings, neither of them had ever been there. But this is still conjecture. The discovery of some tangible evidence in Samaria of a statue or artifact which could be postulated to have a connection with the Simon-Helen statue would add plausibility to the hypothesis. Fortunately, there is.

L.-H. Vincent in his article "Le Culte d'Hélène à Samarie" <sup>24</sup> notes that in Samaria, specifically at Sebastiyeh, the ancient city of Samaria itself, there has been found archaeological evidence for a cult which involved the worship of a Helen-type goddess who seems to have assimilated iconographical imagery and content from Kore-Persephone. She is also associated with the Dioscuri, the divine twins who are in myth her brothers. <sup>25</sup> Vincent draws a connection between Simon's Helen as "L'Idée-*Ἐννοια*" and Minerva-Athene as the thought of Zeus who is sublimated with Kore-Persephone as the breath (life-source) of god. <sup>26</sup> He focuses upon Justin Martyr's

Apology:

...the devils...asserted that Persephone was the daughter of Jupiter, and instigated the people to set up an image of her under the name of Kore at spring heads....In imitation

therefore, of what is here said of the Spirit of God moving on the waters, they said Persephone was the daughter of Jupiter. And in like manner they craftily feigned that Minerva was the daughter of Jupiter, not by sexual union, but, knowing that God conceived and made the world by the Word, they say that Minerva is the first conception (~~Ennoia~~ *Ennoia*); ...bringing forward the form of the conception in a female shape. (I Apol. lxiv)

Here Justin brings together the ideas of Persephone as the life-breath moving over the primal source (water) and Kore, the name for Persephone used at the mysteries of Eleusis, <sup>27</sup> with Minerva-Athene as the ennioa of Zeus, who according to the archaeological evidence of the presence of the Dioscuri, is also Helen. Would Justin be noting a "female shape" similar to the one found at Sebastiyeh, Fig. 4, which Vincent illustrates? If this is so then Justin may be recording information which he knew first hand from his home environment in Samaria.

G. Lüdemann agrees with the Ennoia-Helen tradition, noting that within this is embedded a Sophia myth as well, involving the adoration of an image of Athene (as related by Justin). Lüdemann sees the Helen myth as an ancient symbol of the fall and salvation of the soul, noting,

Der Bericht von der Hure Helena ist wahrscheinlich christliche Kontralegende, die sich an der griechischen Tradition der zuchtlosen Helena inspirieren konnte, auf der anderen Seite aber gewissen Anhalt an dem Bericht des Mythos über der Ennoia/Helena zugefügten Schmach hatte...Zusammen mit dem tragischen Ennoia-Mythos veranschaulicht sie die Dialektik gnostischer Existenz. <sup>28</sup>

Thus the Helen of Simon, Helen of myth, <sup>29</sup> Persephone-Kore, Athene-Ennoia-Sophia as manifest in those mythical stories attributed to gnosticism, are all intertwined in a gigantic, herculean knot.

The statue illustrated in Fig. 4, according to J. W. Crowfoot who excavated the site at Sebastiyeh,<sup>30</sup> "is an agreeable work of the Roman period" and cannot date later than the year 200 CE. It was found in a fragmentary state at the bottom of a large cistern and has been reconstructed. With it, however, Crowfoot notes,

Fragments of two other statues were found in the same cistern, a headless draped goddess and the torso of a youthful nude god, both earlier in style than Kore.<sup>31</sup>

It seems that the "draped goddess" may have been an earlier rendition of the Kore figure illustrated, but Crowfoot does not give any further details. Would these two statues of the headless "draped goddess" and the "nude god" be the remains of earlier cult statues of the "Helen cult" predating the illustrated figure of Kore? If the "draped goddess" is the Helen in the guise of Athene of the Irenaeus-Hippolytus (and lost Justin?) accounts, could the "youthful nude god" be Simon in the guise of Zeus? If these statues predate Kore who cannot be later than the year 200, then they may come from the period around the year 100 CE. This would coincide temporally with the confrontation in Acts between Christian missionaries and Simon and Justin might have known the statues as a boy, since he was born about 100 CE. According to Cook, the statue reported by Justin on the Tiber Island was probably a nude, young, well-muscled god holding a thunderbolt<sup>32</sup> and this description is similar to that of the Crowfoot fragment. Could it be that both figures looked similar enough to Justin that he assumed that the "Semoni" statue was the same subject as that which he knew in Samaria? that is, a statue of Simon in the guise of Zeus?

Found with these fragments in the cistern was a small marble tablet



with an inscription in red letters which Crowfoot translated:

God is one the Lord of all,  
Great is Kore the unconquered. 33

This inscription dates from the fourth century according to Crowfoot.

If Simon-Zeus is "Lord" and Kore is Helen and "Lady", then this inscription although late, may indicate a survival of the occult tradition found in Hippolytus.

Thus it seems that there is specific archaeological evidence for the existence of a statue group consisting of two figures, a male and a female, whose identities could have been Simon in the guise of Zeus and Helen in the guise of Athene. The site of these statues was in the ancient city of Samaria, the date is approximately the first two centuries of the Christian era and other textual and archaeological data indicate that the female was probably Kore-Helen and the other god "Lord". If this male god was indeed Simon, then he was honoured as a god and was depicted nude as Zeus both in Samaria and Rome. But in Samaria, the centre of the cult, he was depicted with Helen, his ennoia. That Simon was not only considered as a god by others but claimed to be a god is reported by Irenaeus who reveals Simon's "Christian" side when he claims to be the Trinity.

This man, then, was glorified by many as if he were a god; and he taught that it was himself who appeared among the Jews as the Son, but descended in Samaria as the Father, while he came to the other nations in the character of the Holy Spirit. (Adv. Haer. I. xxiii. 1)

If these hypotheses can be accepted, that Justin is the originator of both these reports of Simon alone in statue form and in association with Helen, of the occult nature of the cult and that these are historical

entities and not polemical inventions, then they are the earliest reports of a "Christian" heretic involved in idolatry. But the idolatry does not just manifest itself in the worshipping of an idol, the heretic claims to be the object of worship, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, the Christian Trinity. That he was a heretic out of the Christian fold made his hamartia the most horrible that any of the Fathers could imagine and they continually reiterate Simon's error and make him responsible for all subsequent heresies since the others merely followed in Simon's misguided footsteps.

Turning now to other evidences of the usage of images, amulets and other forms of visual as well as ritual paraphernalia, Irenaeus notes that the heretic Basilides and his followers also used images, as well as magic, invocations and incantations, "and every other kind of curious art" (Adv. Haer. I. xxiv. 5). The Carpocratians too used magic and images. (Adv. Haer. I. xxv. 3) It is also from this tradition that the idea that Pilate had a portrait of Christ seems to have arisen. Irenaeus reports of Marcellina, a follower of Carpocrates:

They (Marcellina and her followers) also possess images, some of them painted, and others formed from different kinds of material, while they maintain that a likeness of Christ was made by Pilate at the time when Jesus lived among them. They crown these images, and set them up along with images of the philosophers of the world.... (Adv. Haer. I. xxv. 6)

Hippolytus says,

And they (the Carpocratians) make counterfeit images of Christ, alleging that these were in existence at the time (during which our Lord was on earth, and that they were fashioned) by Pilate. (Ref. VII. xx)

In both reports, Pilate seems to have been the maker of an image or images of Christ. These are the only passages to attribute the manufacture of a portrait of Christ to Pilate.<sup>34</sup> Most later stories claim that Pilate was cured and/or converted by a portrait of Christ which he managed to acquire by various devious means.<sup>35</sup> Irenaeus reported that Marcellina had images and that the justification for this practice was that Pilate had made a portrait of Christ while the latter was still alive. He does not say whether or not Marcellina's images were of Christ, but he seems to imply this when he notes that "these images" were honoured along with the images of the philosophers. Hippolytus, on the other hand, states that contemporary Carpocratians of his time forged images of Christ claiming that they were antique images, that is, genuine portraits of Christ made by Pilate at the time when Christ was still alive. The supposed antiquity of these images and their pretext to be "true likenesses" taken from life adds an interesting dimension to these images. Does this indicate that there is something more powerful in the truth of physical resemblance? But this passage does not claim that Pilate made the images; only attributes the Carpocratians' counterfeits to him.

Here Irenaeus and Hippolytus disagree substantially in their reports, and seem to have had very different sources. Irenaeus noted that the Carpocratian Marcellina and followers possessed and used images of these "philosophers" and Christ (?) and that these were "set up" together in a manner similar to those found in the lararium of Emperor Alexander Severus.<sup>36</sup> Lampridius wrote that the Emperor had a statue of Christ which was set up in his private oratory beside statues of Abraham, Orpheus and Apollonius of Tyana. (Vita Sev. Alex. xxix. 2) The Emperor seems to be covering all

eventualities. Irenaeus then seems to be saying that although these people claim to be Christians, they are no better than pagans. It seems that it is not the Carpocratians in general who do these things, but only those who follow a woman, Marcellina. This recalls to some extent, that a woman was involved in the Simon-Helen report, Helen the whore who was really, according to Simon, Sophia, the instrument of salvation. (Cf. Hippolytus Ref. VI. xiv. Irenaeus Adv. Haer. I. xxx. 2-3, and I. xxiii. 2) There seems to be an unspoken disapproval of women being involved since it is they who are so easily led astray and are able to lead others. (II Tim. 3:2-7; Origen CC VI. 24)

Hippolytus, simply said that the Carpocratians manufactured fake antique images of Christ, but he does not say what they did with them. There is no hint that they worshipped them or sold them as "antiques" or "relics", but presumably, if the images were manufactured, there must have been a market for them. Hippolytus's report seems to condemn two things, first, that the Carpocratians made images in the first place and secondly, that they were deliberate forgeries calculated to fool people.

It is noteworthy that "relics" as such did not seem to be frowned upon or seen as heretical even at this early period. Precisely what sort of objects or edifices these relics were is not known, but Hippolytus said that

...both the dimensions and relics of this ark (Noah's) are,...shown to this day in the mountains called Ararat which are situated in the direction of the country of the Adiabeni. (Ref. X. xxvi)

Again this report is likely hearsay or from another source. Hippolytus did not actually see the "relics", since he does not describe their appearance and their exact location is a bit confused. It is true that from his viewpoint the general direction is east, but Ararat is a volcanic cone standing alone, north-east of Lake Van on the border present day Turkey shares with Soviet Armenia, while Adiabeni was far to the south of ancient Nineveh near present-day Baghdad in Iraq. However, Hippolytus notes the existence of these relics without rancour or suggestion that they might contain idolatrous overtones.

Eusebius reported that Caius, a presbyter of ~~Rome~~ about 180-217 CE promised,

I can show the trophies of the apostles.  
For if you choose to go to the Vatican or to the  
Ostian Road, you will find the trophies of those  
who founded this church. (Eccl. Hist. II. xxv) 37

It is important to note that although the statement seems to imply that the "trophies" had been there a while, Justin Martyr did not mention them, nor did Irenaeus, nor any other early source familiar with Rome. These "trophies" or relics are objects of some sort, but there is no claim that the body of the apostle is there. Perhaps the existence of such relics were taken for granted, that is not having to be mentioned since they were common knowledge to all. If so, then why does Eusebius record Caius? Argumentum e silentio in this case proves nothing; therefore, one cannot assume that any of the writers besides Caius knew or approved of these things, if indeed the attribution of the information to Caius can be counted upon to be genuine.

Although not a relic, Tertullian defends the image of the brazen serpent (Num 21) of Moses, in spite of his general condemnation of graven images.

Likewise, when forbidding the similitude to be made of all things which are in heaven, and in the earth, and in the waters, He declared also the reasons, as being prohibitory of all material exhibition of a latent idolatry....The form, however, of the brazen serpent which the Lord afterwards commanded Moses to make, afforded no pretext for idolatry, but was meant for the cure of those who were plagued with fiery serpents. (Adv. Marcion xxii)

He saw the brazen serpent as a cure. But the golden cherubim and seraphim of the ark of the covenant had no such claims: They were

purely an ornament in the figured fashion... adapted to ornamentation for reasons totally remote from all condition of idolatry...(since) they are evidently not at variance with the law of prohibition, because they are not found in that form of similitude, in reference to the prohibition given. (Adv. Marcion xxii)

It must be admitted that these explanations sound rather lame. Even Tertullian's fancy verbal footwork almost failed him here. But there are no visual images extant from the early period, if they ever existed, of either of these motifs. Tertullian seems to be countering a criticism based upon the biblical text rather than an actual pictorial embodiment.

Of the Naasseni to whom Hippolytus attributed the use of a statue of phallic Hermes, he confirmed that they did use "images".

For, professing themselves to be wise,<sup>38</sup> they become fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into images of the likeness of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. (Ref. V. ii)

He also mentioned a rather risqué-sounding illustrated manuscript which he attributed to the Sethians, complete with explicit drawings, colours and labels. (Ref. V. xv)

The existence of a marble statue of Hippolytus himself Fig. 5,

is a bit of visual evidence which proves embarrassing for the supporters of the aniconic thesis. Here is a statue of one of the Fathers who is generally considered to be anti-art. Stevenson calls Hippolytus a "pseudo-bishop"<sup>39</sup> and automatically relegates him if not to heresy, at least to the schismatics.<sup>40</sup> The statue was found headless in the catacomb that bears his name in the Via Tiburtina and probably dates from shortly after Hippolytus's death, about 236-7 CE. The identification was positively made from the list of his works carved on the side of the cathedra.<sup>41</sup>

In the case of the Hippolytus statue as with the catacombs, there is not one single reference to any of these objects in any of the contemporary or subsequent writers. What is often quoted as the only early patristic reference to the catacombs given with approval is found in Hippolytus himself. He notes that Callixtus was "appointed over the cemetery" by the new bishop Zephyrinus. (Ref. IX. vii) But when this passage is placed in context, Hippolytus is berating the evil tendencies and power Callixtus demonstrated by his apparent hold over Zephyrinus.<sup>42</sup> Hippolytus did not see Callixtus in a good light, but rather as a heretic that was polluting the purity of bishopric of Rome. If the "cemetery" was indeed that catacomb now known as the Catacomb of Callixtus, Hippolytus might not have known whether it contained frescoes and images. He would not have been granted entrance, being in conflict with the cemetery's administrator. He would only have known of its existence and that Callixtus, to his horror, was appointed its administrator.<sup>43</sup>

La Piana notes that these cemeteries may have had more than ecclesiastical funerary importance.

The propaganda of the conflicting groups (of Christians) in the effort to gain followers from the ranks of their competitors was undoubtedly very active and in many cases even unscrupulous, as we find for instance a few years later in the conflict between Hippolytus and Callistus (sic.). The possession of a cemetery must have been a great advantage and a good instrument for efficient propaganda. <sup>44</sup>

In other words, these groups had to have somewhere to bury their dead for theological as well as political and economic reasons. All the cemeteries until this time were privately owned and unless one knew the owner, that is, belonged to the same group, interment in them was impossible. La Piana proposes that the acquisition of a "public" cemetery for all the members of a certain following, in this case of Callixtus and Zephyrinus, was an astute political move on the part of the Roman bishopric. <sup>45</sup> Would the presence of a statue of Hippolytus in a catacomb bearing his name indicate that his followers also acquired a cemetery to compete directly with Callixtus using his own weapons? In this conflict, who is the "heretic", Callixtus or Hippolytus?

Another example of the existence of pictorial representation used by Christian "heretical" groups is found in Origen's discussion of what he calls the Ophite diagram. In order to refute Celsus's accusations that this diagram represented Christian belief, Origen declared, "after industrious searches we managed to obtain this." (CC VI.24) He implied that he, himself a Christian, did not possess the "impious diagram" (CC VI. 25) but after some effort and search managed to find one. The fact that he was able to acquire one at all intimates that these diagrams may not have been as rare as Origen insinuates when he said that even women and stupid yokels were not fooled by it. (CC VI. 24)

It is not known where Celsus wrote The True Doctrine, but



the presumption seems to be Rome. Origen, on the other hand, probably wrote Contra Celsum about 248 CE in Palestinian Caesarea <sup>46</sup> after his expulsion from the Alexandrian community. He and Celsus could not have utilized the same diagram, but each had his own. There were then, at least two versions of it extant at that time and likely more. Furthermore, for reasons that will be discussed below, the diagram was probably not, as the word is understood in English, a collection of schematic lines, circles and labels, but a fully developed, finely drawn and coloured illustrated manuscript.

Origen and Celsus each had his own diagram, but they were sufficiently similar to allow Origen to compare and refute Celsus's discussion. Origen says that he found seven or ten circles and the label "Leviathan" in Hebrew on his version in agreement with Celsus's description. <sup>47</sup> In his discussion of Gehenna, Origen concludes that neither Celsus nor the Ophites understood the doctrine of Gehenna, for if the latter had, they would not have "solemnly made pictures and diagrams as though they displayed the truth". (CC VI. 26) In view of Origen's admission that the Ophites produced and used pictures, the controversy over whether there were ten or seven circles on the diagram may not be such a problem. <sup>48</sup> If the "ten circles held together by a single circle" (CC VI. 25) were really seven, both numbers could be correct. If the drawing in Fig. 6 can be accepted as a possible visualization of the diagram and if all the black lines are counted including those that delineate earth and Leviathan, there are a total of ten circles; if only the lines representing the seven "daemons" are counted, there are only seven lines. The problem in counting the circles may have been an optical illusion.

It is the vividly described "seven archontic daemons" (CC VI.30) which were probably drawn on these seven circles. Both Celsus and Origen agreed that these "daemons" were on their respective diagrams. Celsus described their attributes and appearance, but did not name them except the last; Origen gave their names and a vivid description of each which corresponded exactly with the descriptions of Celsus. They are as follows: first, Michael, the lion-like, second, Suriel, the bull-like, third, Raphael, the serpent-like, whom Celsus described colourfully as "a sort of double being (that) hissed dreadfully", fourth, Gabriel, the eagle-like, fifth Thauthabaoth, the bear-like, sixth, Erathoth, whom Origen did not describe but seems to agree with Celsus's description that it had the face of a dog, and finally the seventh in the shape of an ass called Onoel or Thartharaoth by Origen or Onoel or Thapharaoth by Celsus. (CC VI. 30). From these descriptions, the beasts must have been elaborately illustrated in a very realistic manner, realistic enough to indicate sound effects. This leads one to suspect that the illustrations were less diagrammatic and more painterly, utilizing a full range of colour perhaps similar to the Sethian manuscript described by Hippolytus in Ref. V. xv.<sup>49</sup> It also seems that these diagrams may not have been as rare as Origen would like one to believe. Celsus certainly implies that they were not unusual and that "Christians", at least those he knew, were in the habit of using them.

Contrary to his defense of Old Testament "images" discussed above, Tertullian condemns the depiction of the shepherd on chalices (On Mod. x) which likely resembled that illustrated in Fig. 7. But it seems that he might have allowed these images if The Shepherd, that is,

the book written by Hermas, had "deserved a place in the Divine Canon". It had, however, been "habitually judged" as "apocryphal and false". This, according to Tertullian, was because it was "itself adulterous and hence a patroness of its comrades." Tertullian sees the association and depiction of a shepherd on a chalice as a "prostitutor of the Christian sacrament" in that it is an "idol of drunkenness" and of the literal and carnal adultery that must follow that drunkenness. Sanctimoniously he declared, "I, however, imbibe the Scriptures of that Shepherd who cannot be broken" like the image upon a dropped chalice.

Tertullian here seems to be giving a slightly different approach to the image-idolatry problem. He has not condemned the image itself, but its content, even admitting that he might have allowed the image if it had been sanctioned by Divine Canon. This presumes, of course, that the image of the shepherd is indeed directly related to Hermas's book; a presumption which is implicit in Tertullian's condemnation. It seems that he saw The Shepherd of Hermas as the only interpretation. Because this book allowed repentant fornicators to reenter the Christian community, he perceived it as a debaucher of the Christian Church. Would this furnish evidence that in Tertullian's day the commonly accepted meaning of the image was a direct reflection of doctrinal ideas in The Shepherd of Hermas?

But what Tertullian seems to be objecting to is the "apocryphal and false" content of the image, not the image itself. He sees it as relating directly to and reflecting this "non-orthodox" novel of Hermas which failed to be named to the canon. Because of his low opinion of the book and the content of the imagery of the shepherd, it would naturally follow that, in his opinion, those who utilized these chalices fell somewhat short of his interpretation of orthodoxy.

Yet there was more. Worse than the content of the image, there was a moral problem in the depiction of the image on a chalice. The chalice itself was an instrument of a sacrament of the church and therefore should not have an image upon it of such questionable content. This content seems to spill over into the use of the chalice which Tertullian sees as holding wine which when drunk makes one inebriated causing one to become sexually promiscuous. That the chalice also holds wine (and water) for the orthodox sacrament as well does not enter Tertullian's argument here. What he seems to be alluding to is that these chalices were used at something similar to the famous orgies of which Christians themselves were accused<sup>50</sup> and implies that these less than orthodox users of these chalices were the real perpetrators of these deeds. Thus the content of the cup, the wine, and the content of the image thereon, the shepherd, were equal in their seductive powers; one seduced the body while the other seduced the mind. This leads Tertullian's argument back around to the "adulterous" nature of The Shepherd of Hermas itself, adulterous in the sense that it so easily beguiles, yet it is "apocryphal and false". What he leaves unsaid, but seems to imply is that to be safe, one must not use any of these images.

Tertullian also gives a strange report of an ass-headed Jewish-Christian god. Persistence of the idea that the Christian's god was ass-headed seems to have begun with Tacitus, who said of the Jews,

Nothing, however, distressed them so much as the scarcity of water,...when a herd of wild asses was seen....Moses followed them, and guided by the appearance of a grassy spot, discovered an abundant spring of water.... (Hist. V. 3)

In their holy place they have consecrated an image of the animal (wild ass) by whose guidance they found deliverance.... (Hist. V. 4)

Tertullian seems to have known of this connection, since he noted,

And as Christianity is nearly allied to Judaism, from this, I suppose, it was taken for granted that we too are devoted to the worship of the same image. (Apol. xvi)

The "same image" is the ass-headed god. He repeated this idea in Ad Nationes I. xi and it is echoed by Minucius Felix in Octavius ix. A graffito found on the Palatine in Rome Fig. 8, probably mocking the crucifixion, shows a crucified ass-headed figure. It also calls to mind an episode which seems to have occurred in Rome of an Onocoetes<sup>51</sup> cavorting in mockery and which is reported by Tertullian.

Not so long ago, a most abandoned wretch in that city of yours, a man who had deserted his own religion... carried about in public a caricature of us with this label: Onocoetes. This had ass's ears, and was dressed in a toga with a book, having a hoof on one of his feet. (Ad Nat. I. xiv)

Tertullian interpreted this episode as a calumny perpetrated by Jews against Christians. He retorted that he was not even going to expend energy on a refutation of such an absurdity. Besides, why do Romans find this episode so amusing when they worship

heterogeneous monstrosities not so very different in appearance. His final shot is full of venom: "Many an Onocoetes is found amongst yourselves" (Ad. Nat. V. xiv).

Nevertheless, the idea that an ass-headed god or image had power remained, for this type of figure is found in magic texts Fig. 9 and on amulets Fig. 10 often in association with the auspicious word IAW. 52

This rather motley collection of reports gleaned from the early Fathers <sup>53</sup> suggests that they never mention visual motifs, paintings or images with approval. Looking more closely at the Fathers' discussions of specific works of art or artifacts, these objects fall roughly into two categories: 1) a statue raised in honour of a heretic, or a statue (of Christ) made and/or honoured by a pagan and/or Jew, and 2) the manufacture and/or use of statues, images, amulets, illustrated manuscripts, etc., by heretics. The statue of Simon Magus at Rome, the statue of Christ allegedly made by Pilate and the one revered by Alexander Severus in his lararium are in the first category, while the statue group of Simon and Helen, the images possessed by Marcellina and her followers, the forgeries of the Carpocratians, general use of amulets, and the illustrated manuscripts of the Naassenes, Sethians and Ophites are in the second category. The shepherd image on the chalice comes quite close to the second category, but the implication upon reading Tertullian is that if these people desist from the practice, there would be no more question of sin. They have not yet fallen into the "heretical" camp. Tertullian sees the book of Hermas and the image with its "Hermas" content together with the wine as the things which in themselves and in collusion with one another, were powerful enough to seduce the "proper" Christian user away from the "correct" manner. This deception seems to be

similar to Clement of Alexandria's warnings of how art can lead the eye and mind astray.

The only item discussed in this chapter which is not found in the Fathers is the statue of a Father--Hippolytus. Although the work likely dates from shortly after his death, it is noteworthy that it is not mentioned by any contemporary or subsequent writer. Hence, one cannot know whether other Fathers approved of the statue or not, or whether they were even aware of it. It must, therefore, be added to those other works, painting, statues, sarcophagi and other artifacts of probable Christian origin upon which the Fathers maintained unbroken silence. But because of Hippolytus's conflict with the Roman bishopric and his condemnation of Callixtus in particular, is it possible that his followers set up a rival "cemetery" in his name to compete with what they saw as a "heretical" faction in Rome? In this "cemetery" they placed a commemorative statue of their champion Hippolytus, in the pose and garb of a philosopher complete with a list of his writings carved on his cathedra.

Tertullian's defense of Moses's serpent in the wilderness and the embellishments on the ark of the covenant as non-idolatrous images leads one to suspect for a moment that he might allow images that were not idols. But among extant works of art and objects there is not one visual representation of either of these subjects. That is not to say that there may have been some, but one suspects, as noted above, that Tertullian is defending criticism directed at the biblical narrative itself, not a pictorial representation of it; he is justifying the Holy Word, not material images. But the issue remains the same, an image is synonymous with idol worship, and it must be admitted that Tertullian's argument when seen in relation

to his other pronouncements on art is rather weak. Nevertheless, he must uphold and defend Holy Writ.

The question of "relics" is equally thorny. If one rejects Caius's report of relics in Eusebius as unreliable, only Hippolytus's vague reference to Noah's ark remains. The "relic" in this case, presumably, is the ark itself (or pieces of it), but the report is obscure and derives totally from hearsay or another written source. In the event that the Caius report is genuine, these "trophies" or "relics" must have comprised something that had belonged to Peter and Paul, or some memorial or inscription set up in their honour. The attitude to both these "relics" is benign acceptance; there is not a hint of the disapproval attached to potentially idolatrous objects. It seems that they are not works of art, but were more often objects or artifacts that dated from the time of the actual happening as in the case of the ark. These would then be antiques, things which came from the actual period of the event, or belonged to the person involved. These "relics", much like the seals of Clement, served to recall a particular incident or person, but did not have the power that led to idolatry. Their useful function may have been to provide a "non-idolatrous" focus for Christians.

### iii. Sister Charles Murray's Critique of the Iconophobia of the Fathers

It seems, then, that the Fathers are iconophobic in the sense that they avoid art because it has the power to deceive and lead one into idolatry. Murray argues that this is not true. She says that the attribution to the



Fathers of an anti-art attitude is an illusion of later scholarship. In the nineteenth century this scholarship initially based its interpretation upon conjecture, which itself rested upon mistranslation and misinterpretation of the evidence. This, in turn, became "fact" by repetition.<sup>1</sup>

She rejects the first of these conjectures that the Jews were aniconic, and therefore Christians were too, by differentiating between "idolatrous images"<sup>2</sup> and those images which were permitted, citing the frescoes found in the synagogue of Dura-Europos as an example.<sup>3</sup> But this synagogue is on the farthest eastern provincial fringes of the Empire, the Jewish community there might not have been "orthodox" themselves,<sup>4</sup> and it seems to be an isolated example in its period having been "destroyed" by being filled with rubble about 250 CE.<sup>5</sup> Most of the rest of the more developed "Jewish art" dates from after this.<sup>6</sup> Murray, however, is correct when she says that the Jews did have art.<sup>7</sup> Noting that her discussion has led to the second commandment of the Decalogue she concludes,

...it has become clear that in the early Christian period the prohibition was regarded in contemporary Jewish circles as definitely modified, while by Christians it was regarded as irrelevant save in matters of Old Testament exegesis.<sup>8</sup>

She maintains that not only was the prohibition of the second commandment considerably softened by the Jews, but was irrelevant to the early Christians. This may be an overstatement. As has already been noted above, Commodianus,<sup>9</sup> Clement of Alexandria,<sup>10</sup> and the Tertullian<sup>11</sup> all call upon the second commandment in connection with their arguments against images and idolatry. The Biblia Patristica<sup>12</sup> lists 134 references in the ante-Nicene Fathers and other contemporary literature which refer to the entire Decalogue, Ex 20: 1-17. If the passages which are parallel to Ex 20:4 are also noted,

there is a total of 27 references calling directly upon the admonition against art and idolatry.<sup>13</sup>

Although one expects our Tertullian to appear often in the list of prohibitors, Clement, who is usually seen as much more lenient, appears almost as often.<sup>14</sup> In Scorpiace, Tertullian calls upon Ex 20:23, Deut 27:15, Lev 19:4 and Lev 26:1, finally summing up

But from the mouth of every prophet in succession, sound forth also utterances of the same God, augmenting the same law of His by renewal of the same commands, and in the first place announcing no other duty in so special a manner as the being on guard against all making and worshipping of idols....  
(scor. ii)

He ends by quoting Ps cxxxiv. Tertullian continues that God demands compliance that the command be kept. (Scor. iv)

Although Murray may be right in her analysis of the theoretical importance of the Decalogue and especially the second commandment,<sup>15</sup> it seems that it was not as neglected as she intimates, especially by Clement and Tertullian. She claims that the attitude of the Fathers toward the Decalogue is "confused at best",<sup>16</sup> and this is certainly true. But it must be kept in mind that many of these writers were isolated from other groups of Christians. Even those who were in Rome often did not know any other Christians outside their immediate community.<sup>17</sup> When regionalism of distance and difficulty of travel is coupled with the illegitimate status of the religion, not to mention the lack of a strong ecclesiopolitical centre,<sup>18</sup> it is not surprising that these early writers were somewhat fragmented in their viewpoints. Murray also notes a lack of

homogeneity within some writer's own works,<sup>19</sup> notably Clement. But she explains that this may be conditioned by the audience for whom he is writing: the Paedagogus for the proselyte, and the Stromateis for the more advanced. It seems that the confusion of exegesis may not be as endemic within the writer's own thinking as Murray indicates, but dependent upon the readers addressed and their place upon the initiatory ladder.

The confusion of opinion in the various Fathers may derive in part, from their physical isolation from other Christian centres and in part, from their addressing the internal concerns of their communities. The Fathers are not a consistent or unified group. Each is unique, has his own sets of problems and solutions, and sees his respective community in a specific way. But they all seem to agree that idolatry is bad, and that art leads to it.

Murray is correct when she says that the Jews were not iconophobic and must have adjusted their interpretation of the second commandment. But it does not follow that the Fathers found the Decalogue "irrelevant". They seemed to call upon it often explicitly and implicitly in their arguments against art and idolatry.

In her argument Murray equates the artistic evidence and the attitude toward it as revealed in Hellenistic Judaism with the attitudes of a group of Christian writers whose ability to represent the "Church" she questions.<sup>20</sup> Can the Christian Fathers be equated with Hellenistic Jews? It seems that there is a discrepancy in numbers, the Fathers were few, and Hellenistic Jews were many. Because the mass of Jews made and used art that was not idolatrous, can it be assumed that the Fathers did

too? And do the Fathers represent the mass of "Christians" who created and used "Christian art"? It seems that Murray is forcing the Fathers to comply with the mass of "Christians" who must have produced and used the art which survives. But if the Fathers' writings are read carefully, they stubbornly refuse to approve of art, since it leads to idolatry, as discussed above. The reason for this forcing, one must assume, for Murray does not state it, is to bring the Fathers in line in order to make the art legitimately Christian, not "heretical" or "popular".

Her next attack is upon the use of material from the iconoclastic controversies and the retrojection of resultant theories and conclusions back upon the earlier material. She quotes the Horos (754 CE) as declaring "the basic sin of mankind is idolatry", <sup>21</sup> noting that here the "heart of the matter" is revealed. The text shows "the reason for assembling" -- idolatry. Apart from the ecclesio-political reasons for these councils, Murray is correct. The concerns were with the use of visual images and with the viewpoint among some of the post-Nicene Fathers that they led to idolatry. But the Horos is not the originator of this statement; Tertullian first voiced it 550 years earlier in On Idolatry 1. <sup>22</sup> Yet, in principle, Murray is right, one must "detach the literary evidence from a pre-conceived notion of Christianity" and remove it from "the Byzantine context in which it has become lodged." <sup>23</sup>

In general, her introductory criticism is correct, many of the same passages are repeated ad infinitum. It does indeed seem that the few passages which are utilized from the Fathers are given weight far beyond their quantity or quality. In addition, there is the supposition that the Fathers form a unified developmental stream of hostility against art,

and any evidence to the contrary is omitted.<sup>24</sup> When conflicting passages are found in the same writer, the problem is usually resolved in terms of "pressure from below".<sup>25</sup> As well as these specific criticisms, Murray adds two more suppositions: 1) that the views of any writer stand for the whole "Church" and 2) that only the church writers represent genuine Christianity.<sup>26</sup> There also seems to be an assumption about "an idea of a monolithic Church which gives no credit to differences of temperament, interest, theological standpoint, geography, or time."<sup>27</sup> Again her criticisms are correct, but it seems that she has herself fallen into the pitfalls. By attempting to show that the Fathers are not against art, she manipulates them to bring them into approval with the mass of material artistic evidence contemporary with themselves. By doing this she is trying to make the Fathers a unified force representing the "Church".

She continues, noting that, as if the preceding assumptions and criticisms were not enough, the very sources are problematic. Many of the texts of the Fathers are relatively complete but much of the iconographically argumentative material is out of context and inundated by "iconoclastic florilegia".<sup>28</sup> Again she is right. For this reason she does not attack the passages in chronological order, but in order of importance as she sees it. She uses material from both the period before and after the Edict of Milan because for her there is no break in the attitudes of the Fathers; they never condemned art in the early period and certainly did not do so in the later one. This study, on the contrary, sees the early Fathers as opposed to art because of the dangers to which it led, and therefore, only those Fathers whose activity covered the years before 313 CE

can be dealt with since the ante-Nicene milieu is very different from the post-Nicene milieu. These Fathers are not treated in chronological order, but in order of subject and theme development. Nor are they treated as a homogeneous unit, although they do have thoughts in common. What this does is reveal, by cumulative effect, a picture of what a certain segment of those people represented by the various early Fathers thought at that time. But it must always be borne in mind that these Fathers represented a very small portion of that segment,<sup>29</sup> and almost certainly did not determine the majority opinion.

But Murray first declared the prohibition of graven images in the Decalogue to be irrelevant to both Christians and Jews. Next she called for the removal as irrelevant of textual material from iconoclastic florilegia. Finally, she analyzed specific texts<sup>30</sup> commonly used to support the hypothesis that the Fathers were hostile to art. She dismissed the Canon of Elvira as evidence for such hostility because of its fragmentary nature, our lack of knowledge of the specific circumstances of its declaration, and its own status as provincial.<sup>31</sup> Tertullian's On Idolatry was not really against art, she argued, but against creating an idol; the prohibitions of the Syriac and Egyptian Didascaliae and the Pseudo-Clementine Church Order were aimed at image makers, not at artists;<sup>32</sup> Clement in Stromateis VI. xvi was not concerned with art but with stealing in connection with the eighth commandment;<sup>33</sup> Tertullian in On Modesty VII.iv was really manifesting his particular hatred of The Shepherd of Hermas because it allowed fornicators to return to the Church once they repented, not because he was against art and symbols;<sup>34</sup> and Clement's discussion of seal-rings was not against art, but "encouragement" to those new converts who "used to the iconographic oddities of

gnostic gems" were confused as to what was permissible. She claimed that what had been lost in wrenching this passage from its context was the tone of Clement's voice, which was conciliatory, not condemning.<sup>35</sup> The rest of the passages she discussed date from after the toleration.<sup>36</sup> Her arguments against authenticity, especially her analysis of the famous "iconophobic" Letter to Constantia attributed to Eusebius, were often cogent. She suggested that this letter was spurious, but in the event that it was authentic, it was concerned with a christological argument, hardly Arian in content, and definitely not against art.<sup>37</sup> Only the ante-Nicene material is of concern here, and it seems that although Murray has presented a persuasive and erudite argument, there are problems.

She concludes:

...if the foregoing analysis of the literary evidence is correct, it seems a reasonable assessment of the case to say that there is very little indication indeed that the Fathers of the early Church were in any way opposed to art.<sup>38</sup>

This is true in accord with her argument, but is not the conclusion premature? Perhaps the conclusion should be that among the often-cited passages used to support the "hostility theory", there are few which can be called upon with certainty or viewed as authentic documents. She has undeniably demolished the assumptions surrounding these passages, while attempting to set up new criteria to differentiate between art as decoration and embellishment and art as manifest in idolatrous images. Murray defends all visual artifacts identified as Christian, no matter what their date,<sup>39</sup> as belonging totally to the fabric of the "Church". The Fathers were, in her opinion as demonstrated by her analysis of the texts, in reality not

iconophobic, just idolophobic. In her argument the dichotomy of the Fathers versus the "popular" movement which produced the art disappears, since there is no conflict.

...It seems far simpler and far more in accord with what they actually wrote, to conclude that there never was a dichotomy between the art and the literature of the early Church; and an apparently insoluble problem proves never to have been a problem at all. <sup>40</sup>

It seems, however, that she has done the exact same thing that she has accused Klauser of doing: that is, crediting "the Fathers with a consistency in the matter that they do not have". <sup>41</sup> She wants to show the Fathers as merely against idolatry, not at all against art. In addition, she seems to deal only with passages cited by those secondary writers whose theories she wishes to refute. It must be acknowledged that as far as it goes, her analysis together with her conclusions on the viability and authenticity of many of these passages is superb. But there are many other passages which she does not discuss, not only about art and idolatry, but about art objects as well.

As has been discussed above and contrary to Murray's thesis, the Fathers are opposed to art. One must concede that they do not discuss art alone, but this is because they did not perceive art as having an existence separate from idolatry. Even Clement, who in his attitude toward art is the most lenient of the early Fathers, warns sternly that one must not be duped by art like those foolish youths who fell in love with statues or like the birds and animals that responded to the realistic images on mere paintings.

Furthermore, the Fathers did not stop at art and idolatry, as has been demonstrated, but saw these as symptomatic of another equally horrendous



evil, heresy. Heretics were those who had been fooled and led away by art through the visual and practical manifestations of idolatry, the art and magico-sorcery of the ritual. To many of the Fathers those who are heretics are also idolaters. But it must also be noted that although the Fathers collectively point in the direction of iconophobia, they do not represent a consistent and unified front. Each has his own particular point which he wishes to stress. Justin Martyr is writing an apologetic for Christianity in which he hopes to defend their interests and uses the "heretics" and Simon for contrast. Irenaeus wants to discredit the Valentinians, who must have been quite powerful and he sees as a lurking threat, by exposing them to the scrutiny of the faithful.<sup>42</sup> (Adv. Haer. I. pref. 2) In his Apology, Justin is writing to pagans and the Emperor, while Irenaeus is writing to his "orthodox" community. Clement of Alexandria in his humanitarian fatherly way advocates moderation and wariness so that one may become a "true gnostic", while Tertullian reveals himself as a rather austere, dour spokesman for total adherence to aniconism. The general consensus of the Fathers, however, is avoidance of art not because it is evil in itself, but because of the power the demons can wield through it, leading the faithful astray by beguiling the eye through its beauty and verisimilitude to reality and seducing the mind and soul through the means of magic and sorcery into heresy. It must be noted that the Fathers were not particularly concerned with those who were pagan idolaters (although they would have liked them to convert), but were preoccupied with those Christians who deviated.<sup>43</sup> They constantly warned the faithful to beware.<sup>44</sup> As Tertullian noted, where there is magic and sorcery, one

is bound to find heretics. To him all heretics were practitioners of magic, sorcery and idolatry, but there were (pagan) magicians who were not heretics. They were, though, still to be seen as among the instruments of the devil. It is only by examining the evidence in all the Fathers' arguments, culminating with those who were the users and creators of these art objects, that a clearer view of the Fathers' attitude is possible.

Murray's use of post-Nicene material from Eusebius on poses no threat to her thesis and in fact strengthens it. She sees no dichotomy; therefore, there is no difference between the literature of the ante-Nicene and that of the post-Nicene period. But if there is a dichotomy between objects and texts -- and it seems that there is -- this blurring of the periods before and after the legitimization of Christianity as the religion of the Empire is problematic. Even in her paper there is a very real difference in the iconophobic content of those passages cited which date before 313 CE and those which date after. From Eusebius onward, although the iconoclastic controversy continues underground so to speak, finally erupting in the Councils of the eighth and ninth centuries,<sup>45</sup> the general tone of the passages to art is positive. Eusebius waxes lyrical in his description of the Church at Tyre (317 CE). (Ecc1. Hist. X. 4. 37-68) He discusses, as Murray notes, Constantine's embellishments of his city<sup>46</sup> (Vita Const. III. 48-50) and notes in his recording of Constantine's Letter to Bishop Macarius of Jerusalem what the Bishop's responsibilities were in the erection of a new church. (Vita Const. III, 29-40) Bishop Eugenius proudly lists on his Epitaph these responsibilities including

attending to the "paintings" and "mosaics" when he, as bishop of Laodicea, rebuilt the Church of Laodicea Combusta about 330 CE.<sup>47</sup> But even here it seems that there are two "schools, one of Eugenius and Eusebius who willingly enjoyed art and its beauty, seemingly not caring about idolatrous overtones, while Macarius, like Tertullian, may not have approved of these things and had to be reminded what his duties were.

Because of this sudden change in the attitude toward art-idolatry, it seems necessary to examine the ante-Nicene Fathers in temporal isolation from the period that follows. The circumstances under which they wrote were very different; one as a forbidden cult, the other as the darling of the Empire. Treating them as parallel phenomena seems dangerous. The ante-Nicene Fathers wrote for their closed respective communities, sometimes crossing into others, but not often.<sup>48</sup> Their religion was unrecognized by the ruling officialdom and at times persecuted by it, while those Fathers who wrote after the time of the toleration were spreading their wings in a whole new free environment bounded only by concerns of heresy. For this reason the ante-Nicene Fathers must be treated within their own milieu and cannot be judged by circumstances and attitudes which date from a later period.<sup>49</sup>

Murray is correct: the Fathers are really against idolatry.\* But she has not perceived that they see art as part and parcel of a much larger problem. Art and idolatry cannot be separated and when utilized by Christians, is heresy. Thus the dichotomy remains, at least for the ante-Nicene period. The Fathers who represent the "orthodox" are iconophobic while a mass of artistic material continues to exist in opposition to their prohibitions. It is art to beware of since art

.creates the image, as Clement states succinctly:

The senseless earth is dishonoured by the makers of images, who change it by their art from its proper nature, and induce men to worship it; and the makers of gods worship not gods and demons, but in my view earth and art, which go to make up images. For in sooth, the image is only dead matter shaped by the craftsman's hand. (Prot. iv).

## Chapter II

### Pre-Constantinian Christian Art

The purpose of this chapter is limited and can be accomplished in a few pages. It is to state the grounds for the common view of specialists today to the effect that there are artifacts which are both pre-Constantinian in date and Christian in content. If the antiquity of the catacombs, the early dating of some of the artifacts, and their Christian character were called to question, the paradox of "Christian art versus patristic prohibition" would collapse. But it will be argued that such doubts are not justified that, consequently, the paradox still holds and still calls for resolution.

For seven hundred years, from approximately the ninth to the sixteenth centuries, the Roman catacombs <sup>1</sup> lay buried and, for the most part, forgotten. These extensive subterranean burial vaults (arcosolia) and galleries (hypogea), followed the highways leading out of Rome just beyond the walls of the city. <sup>2</sup> (No burials could be placed inside the city.) Nor were the catacombs found at Rome unique; others have been found for example, at Naples and Syracuse, as well as other places in Sicily, Malta, North Africa at Alexandria and Susa, Emesa in Syria and Beth She'arim in Palestine, <sup>3</sup> and other areas, especially those inhabited by Jews and Christians. The majority of these catacombs have been discovered since the beginning of the twentieth century.

The Roman catacombs, however, are the primary concern in this paper; it seems that it was in Rome that the first artifacts were produced which survive in any great quantity. Although some of the more accessible underground caverns were visited intermittently during the mediaeval period, the true extent and artistic complexity was "rediscovered" by a late sixteenth century explorer, Antonio Bosio (c. 1576-1629). He was not only curious and tenacious, but learned in the Renaissance manner, and systematically analyzed the textual sources for hints as to where the surface entrances to the subterranean chambers were located. He was surprisingly successful and it is to him that we owe the initial scientific approach to the study of the catacombs. It is known that he worked in the catacombs called "Priscilla" and "Saints Petrus and Marcellinus" for he left there graffiti of his name.<sup>4</sup> He was not to have a worthy successor until Giovanni Battista de Rossi (1822-1894), whose massive work La Roma sotterranea cristiana (1864-1877) in the latter half of the nineteenth century, lay the foundations for the modern scientific study of the catacombs.<sup>5</sup> Joseph Wilpert (1857-1944)<sup>6</sup> as a young man had met de Rossi. Wilpert built his theory of a sui generis Christian art upon the foundations laid by the great archaeologist.<sup>7</sup> Theodor Klauser towards the end of his extensive survey of the history of the origins of Christian art,<sup>8</sup> recalls that opinio communis in Christian archaeology, shaped and supported by de Rossi and Wilpert, affirmed the pre-Constantinian and Christian character of a substantial body of artifacts from the catacombs. This Klauser rightly saw was a result of an uncritical use of patristic texts and comparison with art of a later age. But this opinio communis did not go unchallenged. Hugo Koch in 1917 argued that

until at least 350 CE the patristic use of the Old Testament prohibition of images held the field,<sup>9</sup> pointing out the problem of the paradox with which this study is concerned. Although Koch was largely ignored, his critical strictures were, nevertheless, taken seriously by Klauser himself.<sup>10</sup> Klauser sought to put matters on a more critical footing by beginning with a more careful cataloguing of the artifacts, describing them as precisely as possible, setting them in their contemporary contexts and trying to identify the spiritual and artistic matrix from which they arose.<sup>11</sup> Following this, Klauser admits that there was Christian art pre-dating Constantine.

It would be fair to say that such methodology as that used by Klauser increasingly characterizes the contemporary study of the earliest Christian artifacts (as well as other facets of art historical research). This does not, of course, guarantee a perfect coherence of results.

Although scholars generally agree that there are works which pre-date Constantine's Edict of Toleration, there is little absolute agreement as to precise dating of individual monuments. An example of this divergence is the Catacomb of Domitilla, which Laurent dates in the second century and du Bourguet places in the third.<sup>12</sup> Both agree that it is pre-Constantinian, but as to a precise date there is no consensus. This dating controversy derives from the problems inherent in dating by stylistic criteria alone, as opposed to using more scientific methods. It is unfortunate that in this case the stylistic method is the only one which at this time is available. This is because some of the archaeological

excavations in the catacombs which were carried out in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were collecting forays having a certain dilettante character. Even de Rossi's methods in the nineteenth century, thorough though they were at the time, leave much to be desired. They were too thorough and technologically undeveloped, with the result that little has been left unexcavated for modern scholars to pursue.

Thus, the dating of the catacombs and their paintings is problematic. La Piana notes that Jewish catacombs "began before Christian ones",<sup>13</sup> but that they were not decorated like the Christian ones until the late third century and after.<sup>14</sup> H. Brandenburg claims that the paintings in the so-called Jewish catacombs date late third into the fourth century and that Christian art served as a model for Jewish art, not the other way around.<sup>15</sup> La Piana too sees the use of "symbols" (not art as such) by Jews as evidence that they were influenced by their environment in general not specifically by Christians.<sup>16</sup> Although La Piana rejects the idea that Jewish art influenced Christian, he does see the Christian use of catacombs, beginning with those that were privately owned, as being influenced by the Jewish usage.<sup>17</sup>

U. M. Fasola and P. Testini<sup>18</sup> deal with the question of dating of the Christian catacombs. They note that Callixtus was given the responsibility of administering the "cemetery" during the time Zephyrinus was in office (according to the Philosophumena of Hippolytus).<sup>19</sup> This is the first record of the existence of such a place and an indication of its "official" public nature; that is, it was not privately owned by a family. Whether or not this "cemetery" dates before 199, when Zephyrinus handed



over the duties to Callixtus, is not known. By implication this establishment of a time-point would suggest that private family catacombs might pre-date Callixtus's "cemetery". But most of the catacombs known today are dated from the beginning of the third century onwards, with paintings and decoration beginning about the middle of that century. <sup>20</sup>

One of the more recent studies of objects other than catacomb paintings is Diechmann's Repertorium of sarcophagi in Rome and Ostia. <sup>21</sup> In this work, which includes comprehensive dating data, Breckenridge counted 73 items dating before 300 CE. <sup>22</sup> In addition, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian mention objects of art, which must have been in response to the existence of such objects. Clement's discussion of what symbolic images might be appropriate for use on seal-rings indicate that there must have been many such items with many different images from which to choose, and Clement was indicating which ones might contain fewest "idolatrous" connotations. <sup>23</sup>

Tertullian's demonstration of disgust at the depiction of a shepherd upon chalices which were used in a primarily sacramental manner also leads one to the conclusion that such objects must have existed and were by no means rare. Tertullian intimates that these were numerous. Many may have been made of glass since they were easily broken when dropped. Fig. 7 illustrates in metal what may have been the type of which Tertullian is speaking. <sup>24</sup> That Origen managed to find an Ophite diagram in Caesarea in addition to the one possessed by Celsus in Rome, also suggests that these manuscripts may not have been as rare as Origen intimates. <sup>25</sup> And the statue of Hippolytus, found recently in the catacomb that bears his

name and dates from 236 CE, is another piece of concrete evidence of Christian artifacts dating in the mid to late third century.<sup>26</sup>

There are several more small examples of art, one of which certainly dates before the mid-third century. The first is the Christian baptistry at Dura Europos<sup>27</sup> which was a building situated on the farthest eastern reaches of the Roman Empire. It was filled with mud and rubble and buried by the inhabitants of the town as were all the buildings along the town walls in an effort to reinforce those walls against the invading Sassanians. The Sassanians conquered the city and must have taken all hostage or moved them away because the city was not occupied thereafter. The buildings remained buried until the twentieth century. A coin found on one of the bodies discovered in the ruins dates the destruction to approximately 256 CE.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, the art buried at Dura cannot post-date 256 CE by many years. Whether or not there is a direct connection between the art found at Dura and the art of the catacombs is a much argued question, but it cannot be denied that paintings which contain imagery usually recognized as Christian were found on the walls of a building at Dura which must date before the mid-third century.

Another small but equally important bit of evidence is "The Cleveland Marbles".<sup>29</sup> They consist of eleven statuettes, three male and three female portrait busts,<sup>30</sup> four exquisite statuettes of the story of Jonah and Ketos<sup>31</sup> and a figure of the Good Shepherd.<sup>32</sup> Although Kitzinger admits that these statuettes "do not fit readily into the accepted textbook image of Early Christian art", he acknowledges them as authentic and dates them securely on stylistic grounds, in the last quarter of the third century between 255 and 270 CE.<sup>33</sup>

Finally, the recent publication of the Acts of the Ninth International Congress of Christian Archaeology adds immeasurably to the argument for the existence of art and artifacts of Christian form and content dating before 313 CE; Volume I is subtitled "Preconstantinian Christian Monuments".<sup>34</sup>

There seems, therefore, to be little doubt that there are at least some artifacts, objects, works of art, paintings and sculpture with Christian imagery and content which can be assigned to the period before 313 CE, and that this production was in large quantities. The tangible objects such as the Cleveland Marbles, the remains at Dura-Europos, the statue of Hippolytus and the earlier artifacts (i.e., sarcophagi) and paintings in the catacombs, all point in this direction -- that someone who adhered to recognizable Christian values expressed his faith in artistic terms before the Constantinian toleration.

The other evidence for the existence of the art is found in the writings of the ante-Nicene Fathers themselves; that they wrote against art at all strongly suggests that something did exist. Since these Fathers all wrote before the year 258, the artifacts to whose existence the Fathers are responding must have pre-dated the discussion. Provoost, who has analyzed the number of times that various motifs occur in the catacomb paintings, notes that statistically the most prodigious production of these monuments occurred not after 313, but in the fifty years before that date<sup>35</sup> -- the precise period which is of concern in this study.

In contradistinction to the majority of papers given at the

Ninth International Congress of Christian Archaeology, the present study is not so much concerned with the origins of the visual

motifs of the art and its dating (although this is an important consideration), but with the identity of the makers and users of that art. Whoever they were, they produced and conserved a mass of artistic objects between the second and fourth centuries. The question that will be taken up in the following chapter is how to identify these people. The "orthodox" Christian literature of the pre-Constantinian period, inasmuch as it was opposed to art because of the evils to which it reputedly led, makes this identification problematic. Moreover, the current discussion of the history of early Christian orthodoxy and heresy complicate the matter further. The latter discussion, originating from Walter Bauer's <sup>36</sup> now classic study, has not yet penetrated the discussion of the history of early Christian art. The following chapter is intended to make good this lack and, in so doing, to capitalize on the contribution that this discussion can make toward the resolution of the paradox of "Christian art" in the face of "patristic prohibition".

### Chapter III

#### Solutions

In the light of the first two chapters, the paradox still holds: the Fathers and other "orthodox" writers are iconophobic and yet there is a mass of artistic objects and artifacts that can be identified by their iconography as Christian which was produced during the same period as that in which the Fathers were writing against it. Historians have presented various theories for a resolution to this paradox, from denying its existence to proposing that heretics manufactured the art. The denial that there is a problem is characterized, on the one hand, by Murray and, on the other, by such scholars as W. F. Volbach, J. Beckwith, M. Gough, C. R. Morey and H. Chadwick; but they arrive at their conclusions by means of very different avenues. Murray, as discussed above,<sup>1</sup> approaches the problem through the texts and declares that the Fathers were not anti-art, just anti-idolatry; the others do not seem to perceive that there is a problem at all. A second solution recognizes the dichotomy fully and proposes that the production of Christian art originated with Hellenistic Jews or more probably, with proselytes who were assimilated into the Christian faith with the first Jewish converts. A third theory, too, admits to the paradox, but postulates that the art was produced by the laity, or was a popular folk-tradition, either ignored by the "official" clergy or created in direct opposition to them. Among the scholars who recognize the paradox, this hypothesis proved the most popular.

and includes such scholars as A. von Harnack, R. Bultmann, Th. Klauser and J. D. Breckenridge. A final theory comes from E. Renan who states simply that since the "official Church" was iconophobic only gnostics or heretics could have produced the art. All these attempts to resolve the paradox will be shown to be less than satisfactory for reasons which will be discussed in this chapter.

Before another proposal for a solution to the paradox can be suggested an enquiry must first be made into what constituted the concept of "Christian". Is the word only to be equated with the Fathers and "orthodoxy"? Should the Fathers and "orthodoxy" be equated? Or was the term "Christian" utilized by groups outside the sphere of influence of the Fathers? If this is true, who were they?

This enquiry leads inevitably to the problem of the ultimate authority of the Fathers in relation to other groups of "Christians". After this investigation a fifth and final proposal will be offered in an attempt to proffer a more plausible resolution of the paradox.

The plan of the final chapter will be: i. Four Solutions: Exposition and Critique; ii. Prolegomena to a New Solution; iii. A New Solution.

#### i. Four Solutions: Exposition and Critique

The first proposal to be examined is the nullification of the paradox. Besides the theory presented by Murray that the Fathers are against idolatry, not art, thereby dissolving the paradox, there are many scholars who do not appear to be aware of the problem, or who chose to ignore it. They see Christian art in Eusebian terms, as normative in content and image from the beginning, while at the same time it had proceeded directly

out of the Graeco-Roman artistic environment. According to Volbach, the same motifs were used for Christian sarcophagi as were used on pagan bucolic sarcophagi (e.g., amorini gathering grapes or shepherds); these were only gradually discarded by Christians for more suitably Christian motifs.<sup>1</sup> In their visual vocabulary the pagan images were virtually indistinguishable from the Christian ones. J. Beckwith agrees with this idea, noting that the vine of Dionysos drops all its Dionysiac content when it became the true vine of Christ<sup>2</sup> and the bucolic ideal found in Virgil's Eclogues was adapted to Christian symbolism.<sup>3</sup> M. Gough who speaks of "Paganism Baptized" explicitly agrees that Christians "borrowed" pagan motifs.<sup>4</sup> C. R. Morey concurs, adding that those craftsmen who produced Christian art were themselves Christians, but in these "first works designed for Christian purposes" there was "nothing Christian in their form or decoration".<sup>5</sup> H. Chadwick, agreeing with Morey, notes that before the end of the second century "Christians began to express their faith in artistic terms", that is, they manufactured works of art and the symbols they chose were of "neutral pagan" derivation (e.g., the content of figure of philanthropia transformed into the Good Shepherd).<sup>6</sup>

All these scholars agree that Christians in the earliest period borrowed "neutral pagan symbols" and adapted them to Christian usage. The adaptation seems only to be in the sense of content; the image itself did not change. That many of these images were taken over for Christian use is equally obvious and the historical development of these motifs cannot be denied. This phenomenon might be demonstrated in literary terms by the writings of Justin Martyr who attempted

to justify Greek mythology and philosophy in relation to his Christian belief. <sup>7</sup>

But if there is no difference in the visual vocabulary, how can the pagan image be differentiated from the Christian one? How is the content decided? Yet these seemingly innocuous pagan bucolic images become stripped of all remaining pagan content and somehow acquire in the transformation a much deeper Christian eschatological meaning, while the image itself remains unchanged.

In addition to the problem of separating pagan from Christian content, these scholars seem unconcerned with the paradox of the art versus the Fathers' attitude towards it. The question of what sorts of Christians produced the art against the prohibitions of the Fathers is never formulated.

They are equally unconcerned with the "orthodoxy" of this art. It is assumed that all the art is Christian in a normative sense. All that does not fit the criteria is discarded as not-Christian. These scholars support the existence of an art of a normative Christianity which also produced and used that art; a Christianity which from the earliest period formed a readily identifiable, definable and consistent entity in spite of obvious pagan borrowings. But what criteria are being used? It seems that Wilpert's methodology is all-pervasive. He saw Christian art as a unique and isolated phenomenon — as P. C. Finney puts it, "iconographically sui generis, a historical idiosyncrasy within the history of ancient art." <sup>8</sup> Wilpert used dogma and doctrine from periods as late as the mediaeval and applied these formulations retroactively, so to speak. This methodology would imply that the entire spectrum of both the art and the doctrine remained constant. The dangers of this sort



of enquiry are obvious. Nothing stands still that is alive;

art and doctrine are creations of man and his ongoing society. But many scholars still seem to resort to this type of enquiry, if perhaps unconsciously. But, as Finney notes, Wilpert did draw attention to the importance and problem of an art called Christian. Neither the foregoing scholars nor Wilpert, however, touch upon the problem of the iconophobic Fathers and the art. Because later doctrinal material is used to explain the art and the ante-Nicene Fathers are almost never consulted, the problem does not arise.

A proposal has recently been put forth for a Syro-Palestinian origin of Christian art. This would make Hellenistic Jews or proselytes who became Christians the creators of the art.<sup>9</sup> The assumption that the Jews of the Hellenistic-Roman period were iconophobic has been rejected in the face of the great amount of art extant from the third century onward which utilizes motifs recognized as Jewish. This art has been postulated as the origin of at least some of the Christian imagery, especially the Old Testament motifs. Some scholars then see "Jewish Christianity" as the route through which these motifs reached Christians.<sup>10</sup> E. R. Goodenough would like to propose general Jewish origins for most, if not all, Christian art.<sup>11</sup> But these theories are problematic. The dating of the art is not conclusive in every case and as a result, evidence for a pre-Christian Jewish art is open to debate. Furthermore, although few scholars would argue that the first Christians were not Jews, the problem of "Jewish Christianity" is far from any consensus. Because of the problem of identifying Jewish-Christianity itself, that it could be

proposed at the creator of the Christian art found in Rome, must be discarded for the present. The only inference one can make from the existence of Jewish art side by side with Christian (and pagan) is that the majority of people in the Hellenistic-Roman society liked and used art, whether they were pagans, Jews or Christians.

The third theory proposes popular production of the art. Recognizing the problem of the iconophobic Fathers, Harnack tried to resolve the issue by attributing those elements which deviated from the norm of the Fathers to a "second-class Christianity".<sup>12</sup> This entity seems to have comprised of different groups of Christians of varying "orthodoxies", although they were not identical in their syncretism having brought some of their former (pagan) beliefs into Christianity with them, such as dualism, strange rites, the belief in demons, reverence for pictures, relics and amulets and in some cases, asceticism.<sup>13</sup> But they appeared to have some sort of unity in their belief in Christ. Are these people then, not to be considered "real" Christians, not "orthodox"? Are they similar to Gager's "pagan Christians"<sup>14</sup> of Klauser's "faithful laity" whose "folk-art" was produced contrary to the dictates of the clergy?<sup>15</sup> Although Harnack did not equate "second-class Christians" with heretics or gnostics, they seem to have much in common.<sup>16</sup> The most notable element which they have in common are magical superstition and the use of amulets.<sup>17</sup> In identifying second-class Christianity as provincial he seemed to assume that there was a normative orthodoxy embodied by Roman Christianity. It was these second-class Christians who were responsible for a "reverence for pictures,

relics and amulets" and presumably it was they who created these things. But if Rome was the "orthodoxy" which was contrasted with the provincial "second rank", then why is the great mass of extant visual material found in Rome itself? Either Roman Christianity was not as "orthodox" as has been assumed, or there was a relatively large group of Christians of the "second rank" in Rome, who, it seems, were not under the control of the "orthodox". The point Harnack wished to stress was that the producers and users of art and artifacts per se were not followers of orthodox doctrine, nor was this habit sanctioned by the church Fathers; rather it was a popular crutch which had little to do with "official" belief and practice. Klauser also recognized the paradox and contrary to art historical methodology characterized by Wilpert, tried to place pre-Constantinian art in its proper perspective. He upheld the aniconic stance of the Fathers and agreeing somewhat with Harnack, concluded that the laity produced the art in opposition or disobedience to the Fathers.<sup>18</sup> He saw, for example, the shepherd motif as philanthropia from the pagan humanitas or pietas erga homines and the orant as a symbol of pietas erga deos.<sup>19</sup> But, as Provoost noted, these theories have now been largely abandoned.<sup>20</sup> Klauser, however, did draw attention to a methodological problem, that the art must be analyzed within its own framework and not have external implications forced back upon it. But his solution to the dichotomy, as Murray has pointed out (and this writer agrees), is less than satisfactory.<sup>21</sup>

R. Bultmann, like Harnack, saw early popular Christianity as a syncretistic phenomenon.<sup>22</sup> He set up "Gnosticism" as an invading force, a force that found the ground already receptive because of the syncretistic

nature of "Hellenistic Judaism" through which "Gnosticism" gained access to the "Hellenistic Christian" congregations.<sup>23</sup> Are Bultmann's "Hellenistic Christians" then similar to Harnack's "second-class Christians"? But although Bultmann's "Hellenistic Christians" were made up of different syncretistic groups like Harnack's, they were unified enough to be seen as being invaded by the powerful force of "Gnosticism" and more often than not succumbing. Although he does not explicitly state that "Hellenistic Christians" could or could not have produced art, amulets and all the superstitious dispositions that go with them, can it be deduced that only those Christians who were less than orthodox would be guilty of this production, since it was they who were held in the throes of syncretism?

W. Bauer set up poles of "orthodoxy" versus "heresy". To him, "orthodoxy" was represented by "the form of Christianity supported by the majority in Rome", but at the same time, it was fighting "strenuously with the heretics" throughout the entire second century.<sup>24</sup> He saw Rome as extending its influence outward from about the year 100 CE. But the farther away from Rome one moved, the less "orthodoxy" and more "heresy" one encountered, until "east of the Phrygian Hierapolis" there was virtually no orthodoxy. "Christianity and heresy were essentially synonymous there."<sup>25</sup> It is interesting that he equated "Christianity" and "orthodoxy" with "heresy" as the counter-element, even though "heresy" and "Christianity" were synonymous east of Hierapolis. Unfortunately, Bauer did not comment upon the art which survives in Rome. But since the Fathers were "orthodox" even though they often did not dwell in Rome, and they represent that "orthodoxy" of Rome, Bauer would likely attribute the art which contravenes their prohibitions to those "heretics" that the Roman orthodoxy "still had to contend with".

A suggestion for a resolution of the dichotomy comes from J. D. Breckenridge in his article "The Reception of Art into the Early Church". In his discussion of Eusebius's Letter to Constantia he agrees completely with the view that the early Fathers were against images and art and that the underlying motive was recoil from idolatry.<sup>26</sup> He ~~notes~~ the dichotomy between the "patristic image theology"<sup>27</sup> and the "substantial quantity of art with Christian content"<sup>28</sup> which existed at the same time, and asks, "Were the Fathers of the church blind? or self-deluding? or do their words in fact makes (sic.) sense, in the context of their times and situations?"<sup>29</sup>

For a key to the problem of the production of the art and the anti-art stance of the Fathers, he relies upon Eusebius's Letter to Constantia, which he accepts as genuine and as typifying iconophobia.<sup>30</sup> He looks first at the historical levels of pre-Constantinian discussion of the imagery noting they fall into three groups: (1) writers who had no idea Christian art existed, (2) writers of the first half of the third century who were "hostile" to visual imagery as objects of devotion but saw some uses for it, and (3) writers at the beginning of the fourth century who "declare absolute war on images".<sup>31</sup> How does Breckenridge resolve the issue? He sees the persecutions of the 250's which were aimed at the hierarchy of the church as wiping out group (2) who represent the Fathers with which this thesis is concerned. This, he says, weakened "the authority of the official church" at precisely the same time that "the great expansion of Christian art" occurred.<sup>32</sup> The expansion of the art at this time then "was not the result of a change in the attitude of the church toward religious images, but of the enfeeblement\* of its

\* Author's italics

ability to enforce the rules".<sup>33</sup> He sees Eusebius's Letter as an attempt to reassert those "rules" and proposes that the reason for the final acceptance of the art by the "officialdom" was that it was "forced upon the clergy from below". "Within another century the Church had ceased any formal opposition to it."<sup>34</sup> To this writer Breckenridge's solution is as untenable as it was for Murray.<sup>35</sup> Yet his proposal that the historical catastrophe of the persecutions may have had a hand in silencing a certain vocal element must be considered carefully. Beyond that, his proposal becomes a bit forced. That the "official" church would accept so completely in the short space of a century something which it had looked upon with horror and prohibition, is questionable.

It is indeed unfortunate that many of these scholars, with the exception of Klauser and Breckenridge, did not concern themselves with the literature versus art problem;<sup>36</sup> they only looked to the implications of the literature. What they have done, however, is reveal the bewildering complexity of contrasting primary literary material which temporally surrounds the art.

Ernest Renan attributed early Christian art directly to "gnostics" or "heretics". He noted that Christianity because of its aniconic Jewish roots could never in the beginning produce a visual art.<sup>37</sup> He stated unequivocally:

Les premières images chrétiennes, les premiers portraits du Christ furent gnostiques. L'Eglise strictement orthodoxe fût restée iconoclaste si l'hérésie ne l'eût pénétrée, ou plutôt

n'eût exigé d'elle, pour les besoins de la concurrence, plus d'une concession aux faiblesses païennes. 38

To him, "gnostiques" and "hérétiques" were identical.

Par son origine première, le christianisme était aussi contraire aux développements des arts plastiques que l'a été l'islam. Si le christianisme fût resté juif, l'architecture seule s'y fût développée, ainsi que cela est arrivé chez les musulmans; l'église eût été, comme la mosquée, une grandiose maison de prière, voilà tout. Mais les religions sont ce que les font les races qui les adoptent. Transporté chez des peuples amis de l'art, le christianisme devint une religion aussi artistique qu'il l'eût été peu s'il fût resté entre les mains des judéo-chrétiens. Aussi sont-ce des hérétiques qui fondent l'art chrétien. Nous avons vu les gnostiques entrer dans cette voie avec une audace qui scandalisa les vrais croyants. 39

Renan bases his theory upon two assumptions: (1) the Jews were iconophobic and (2) the Fathers were also iconophobic; Christians as children of Judaism and followers of the dictates of the orthodox Fathers could not have produced the art. But the Fathers themselves reveal who produced it, gnostics and heretics.

That the Jews are known today to have produced art in the first centuries of the common era does not damage Renan's final conclusion since his evidence is found in the Fathers themselves. It only served to bolster his assumption and its resultant conclusion. Murray<sup>40</sup> and Finney<sup>41</sup> attack Renan unmercifully — even, perhaps unfairly; they make no allowance for his having published Marc-Aurèle as long ago as 1891. 42

Renan's theory that heretics produced the first art sounds quite plausible as far as it goes, but how does the acceptance of the practice of art pass from the heretics to the orthodox? Finney notes that Renan

concluded that the gnostics must have influenced the Christians.<sup>43</sup> But Renan also observes that in the cases of the "oriental" and "Greek" churches the antipathy towards images was never resolved.<sup>44</sup> Like Breckenridge's theory this conclusion of ultimate orthodox acceptance of heretical art seems to be forcing the point. How could something which presumably originated among hated and feared heretics be so totally accepted by the orthodox within the short span of a few centuries?<sup>45</sup>

Murray dismissed Renan's theory because it was based upon an iconophobic Judaism which upheld the Decalogue, especially the second commandment.<sup>46</sup> There is no doubt that Renan was wrong in this case, but Murray is so preoccupied with demonstrating that the Decalogue was of no importance that she did not concern herself with the rest of his argument. If she had, she probably would not have accepted his theory in the end, since she sees all the art as produced by and for normative Christians with the Fathers' blessings.

Finney, who is more concerned with the proposal that gnosticism might be the origin of Christian art, deals specifically with Renan's conclusion. He rightly observes that Renan has traced the origin of art to an "unholy and unwholesome source" which was outside the Christianity and running counter to it.<sup>47</sup> But how is this antagonism to be resolved? Finney offers no solution; he simply cannot accept gnosticism as the origin of the art.

He says that the sources make no mention of "gnostic influence" upon Christianity "in matters pertaining to the arts" and denies that any inference of influence could be historical.<sup>48</sup> As noted above, however,



the Fathers do mention "gnostic" problems and while they do not talk in terms of "influence", they must have been concerned enough about the possibility that they warn their faithful to beware and stay away. The Fathers certainly do discuss heretics and their connection with art and artifacts as was discussed in Chapter I. Finney, however, dismisses many of the key "gnostic" passages as unhistorical. He sees the report found in Irenaeus of the "Simon" statue in Rome and the statues of "Elen and Simon" as total inventions having no historical import whatsoever and notes that this tradition "lives on in Justin..." and others. <sup>49</sup>

The tradition does not "live on" in Justin, but as noted above <sup>50</sup> originates with him. He wrote his Apology (and Syntagma) around the years 150-155 and was dead nearly 20 years before Irenaeus wrote Adversus Haereses in about 180. Furthermore, Irenaeus admitted his debt to Justin, quoting directly from his now lost book Against Marcion. (Adv. Haer. IV. 4.2)

Finney also avoids the problem of the connection between the Carpocratians and the art by implying that the entire report is a fake. <sup>51</sup> He says that Irenaeus "feared and detested" these people and was "not above calling them names and delivering allegations (about them) which were impossible to verify". <sup>52</sup> But why would Irenaeus bother to invent stories about people he feared and hated? If they were so terrible, surely they would have done something awful that Irenaeus could point to and not have to invent invective. If they were not so obviously heinous and Irenaeus had to resort to defamatory invention, were they really that bad? If they were not so terrible, why did he hate and fear them? It is hard to believe

that Irenaeus or any of the other Fathers would purposely invent additional problems for themselves when they already had more than enough as it was. Finney, Breckenridge and Murray it seems do not want to admit that the origin and producers of Christian art might be outside the sphere of the orthodoxy of the Fathers and are willing to go to almost any length to preserve the orthodoxy of the art. Finney, however, offers no conclusion except that the art did not originate with the gnostics, by alleging that all the material which points in that direction is unhistorical and therefore of no use. The writer finds the theses of Murray and Breckenridge unacceptable and Finney's argument for the lack of historicity of the Fathers' writings most strange in the face of persuasive evidence to the contrary. The objects and events reported have at least an historical basis.

#### 11. Prolegomena to a New Solution

If none of these solutions to the dichotomy is satisfactory, are there any others? Before proposing another theory, it seems that there are several more questions to be examined. All these writers assume that "Christian" equals "orthodox" and that both equal "Fathers". Consequently the gnostics and heretics stood apart, though impinging upon the Christian-orthodox to the extent that the Fathers had to warn against them. But if those Christians were as loyal to the Fathers as the above writers would have us believe, why did the Fathers have to write exposés of perfidy within, or warn of heretical infiltration into the ranks of the faithful? Where are the records of those who followed the Fathers? Indeed how far-reaching and influential was the Fathers' authority? Who were the people

the Fathers' call "heretics"? Did they too consider themselves Christians? or heretics? or gnostics? And can any of these people be found in the City of Rome at the time when the art was produced?

The problem as to the identity of a "Christian" is not as simple as it first appears. It seems that only those who were within a specific group were "true believers"; everyone else is "other" or "them".

Depending entirely upon one's centre of reference and resultant horizon, there were many types of Christians, all using the name "Christian". For example, Justin Martyr pointed out clearly in his Dialogue with Trypho there were many who call themselves Christians but did not deserve the name. Trypho said,

"I believe, however that many of those who say that they confess Jesus, and are called Christians, eat meats offered to idols, and declare that they are by no means injured in consequence." And I replied, "The fact that there are such men confessing themselves to be Christians, and admitting the crucified Jesus to be the Lord and Christ, yet not teaching His doctrines, but those of the spirits of error.... (Dial. xxxv)

Justin continues,

Many...belong to the pure and pious faith, and are true Christians...(But there are) some who are called Christians, but are godless, impious heretics, teach doctrines that are in every way blasphemous, atheistical, and foolish. (Dial. lxxx)

For some in one way, others in another, teach to blaspheme the Maker of all things, and Christ, who was foretold by Him as coming.... We have nothing in common (with them), since we know them to be atheists, impious, unrighteous, and sinful, and confessors of Jesus in name only, instead of worshippers of Him. Yet they style themselves Christians. (Dial. xxxv)

In his I Apology he noted,

And this we acknowledge...this name (Christian)  
on which accusations are accumulated is the  
common property of those who are and those  
who seem wise. For all are called Christians.  
(I Apol. vii)

All who take their opinions from these men  
(i.e., Simon, Menander, and Marcion) are, as  
we before said, called Christians; just as also  
in their doctrines those who do not agree with  
the philosophers in their doctrines, have yet  
in common with them the name of philosophers.  
(I Apol. xxvi)

This seems to be first-hand information from Justin, since he said twice  
that Marcion "is even at this day alive and teaching", (I Apol. xxvi;  
lviii) and that Menander "still deceives". (I Apol. lvi) Justin is saying  
that the name "Christian" is a category into which all those who confess  
Jesus fit, whether they actually are "wise" or only appear so. But all  
those who call themselves "Christians" cannot be regarded as "true"  
Christians.

It is immediately apparent that textually there is a complexity  
in the word "Christian"; the term cannot be assumed to refer only to what is  
generally accepted as "orthodox" as reflected in the Fathers. There were  
many others who used the title or designation, but, in the opinions of  
the Fathers, did not merit it.

From the so-called "heretical" or "gnostic" codices found at Nag  
Hammadi in Egypt come similar attacks against those who are Christians  
in name only. These attacks are similar to those Justin levels against his  
false Christians. The Testimony of Truth (IX, 3) claims, echoing II Timothy  
3:5, and Justin (Dial xxxix),

The foolish - thinking [in] their heart  
 [that] if they confess, "We are Christians",  
 in word only but not in power, while giving  
 themselves over to ignorance, to a human  
 death, not knowing where they are going nor  
 who Christ is, thinking that they will live,  
 when they are (really) in error - hasten  
 towards the principalities and authorities.  
 They fall into their clutches because of the  
 ignorance that is in them. (IX,3.31: 22-32:9)

This passage condemns those who call themselves Christians, but do not possess the "correct" knowledge of who they are and where they are. They only mouth their belief; they do not know the "power". They are ignorant and do not know they are bound by their ignorance and hasten towards the "principalities and authorities". These entities are not defined, but clearly it is not desirable to fall into their clutches.

The Testimony of Truth (IX,3) is not only against other "Christians" whom the writer perceives as in "error" because they do not follow the teachings of his text, but is also against "those under the Law" (i.e., Jews), (IX, 3.29:23-25) and certain named persons, Valentinus, Isidore and others who are unidentifiable because of lacunae in the text. (IX, 3. 55f) This text exemplifies the exclusive opinion that all who do not agree with the specific thoughts laid down in the text are wrong. Only those in complete agreement are "true" Christians and have "the power". The idea that "power" is inherent in the word "Christian" is also put forth in The Gospel of Philip (II,3):

If you say, "I am a Jew," no one will be moved.  
 If you say, "I am a Roman," no one will be  
 disturbed. If you say, "I am a Greek, a barbarian,  
 [a] slave, a free man," no one will be troubled.  
 [If] you [say], "I am a Christian," the [world]  
 will tremble. (II,3.62:27-32)

The mere name of "Christian" according to this text is a power to contend with. It is a weapon.

This is the person (the Christian) whom the [powers] will not be able to endure [when they hear] his name. (II,3.62:34-36)

This weapon is presumably not worldly, but one that would allow the believer to traverse the dangerous domain of the ignorant and ascend to the Father.

These passages demonstrate the concept of the power inherent in the name "Christian" or "Christ" itself.<sup>1</sup> This power in a name was known to the "orthodox" Christians as well. Both Mark (9:38-39) and Luke (9:49) record that during the time when Jesus was preaching, there was a man casting out demons in Jesus' name, but that he was not a follower of Jesus. It seems that anyone could implement and activate the power in the name "Jesus"; this was not an exclusive right of only the immediate followers of Jesus or those who bear the "name of Christ", i.e., Christian, (Mk 9:41) as Lk 9:1-2 and Jn 14:13-14, 15, 15:16 and 16:23-24, 26 imply. The "name" is clearly a powerful force in itself.<sup>2</sup>

The Gospel of Philip (II,3) explains that the name "Christian" comes from the rite of initiation.

The chrism is superior to baptism, for it is from the word "Chrism" that we have been called "Christians", certainly not because of the word "baptism". And it is because of the chrism that "the Christ" has his name. For the Father anointed the Son, and the Son anointed us. He who has been anointed possesses everything. (II,3.74:12-19)

Tertullian agrees,

But Christian, so far as the meaning of the word is concerned, is derived from anointing. (Apol. 111 = Ad. Nat. 111)

Etymologically, it is true that the word derives from  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha$  which means "anointing", specifically the oil for anointing, and that the word for Christ  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\eta\varsigma$  means "the one anointed".<sup>3</sup> Both the "orthodox" Tertullian (Scorpiace IX) and the "heretical" Gospel of Philip (II,3.67: 23-27) agree, if one is a Christian, one is also a "Christ".

Celsus, as recorded by Origen, saw all those who called themselves "Christians" as an ornery, quarreling lot who, nevertheless, were all designated under the same name, "Christian". He said that "If all men wanted to be Christians, the Christians would no longer want them." (CC III.9) He continued:

When they were beginning...they were few and were of one mind; but since they have spread to become a multitude, they are divided and rent asunder and each wants to have his own party. (CC III.10; 11; 12)

They had one thing in common, the name of "Christian". (CC III.12) He then observed that Christians even had the audacity to say that these factions strengthened their faith. (CC III.14) Celsus seems to have an uncommonly intimate knowledge of all the modes of Christianity -- both the "orthodox" and "heretical". But he did not perceive any "differences" as Origen pointed out. In response to Celsus's discussion of Prunicus, Origen, who never denied the basic "Christianity" of these groups, said:

Here Celsus seems to confuse ideas that he has misunderstood. It seems that he may have heard some catch-phrase of some sect or other, and did not clearly see what was really meant, but heaped up the phrases, in order to show to people who know nothing either of our doctrines or of those of the sects that he knew all the doctrines of the Christians. (CC VI. 34)

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Celsus likely did indeed think that he knew "all the doctrines of the Christians" for to him there was no difference between Origen's group or the "Ophites" or any other group claiming to be Christian. This, as reflected in Celsus, was probably not unusual. Only the "in" of one group could tell who the "others" were. To an outsider, they all looked alike.

In some cases, from the inside it was equally difficult to tell who were the "true believers" as opposed to the "false prophets", as demonstrated by Irenaeus's preface to his Adversus Haereses (I. pref. 2) and Hippolytus's revelation of the heresy of the Peratae. (Ref. V.viii, xiii) This revelation of the root of evil and its subsequent withering upon exposure is also found in The Gospel of Philip (II,3):

For so long as the root of wickedness is hidden, it is strong. But when it is recognized, it is dissolved. When it is revealed, it perishes. (II,3.83:8-11)

The warnings to the faithful of each community for unity, to abhor internal divisions caused by ambition, envy and pride and to beware of false prophets and teachers from without is not found only in "orthodox" writings.<sup>4</sup> It is voiced over and over again in the Nag Hammadi writings as well.<sup>5</sup> For example, the terminology and overall thought within The Gospel of Truth (I,3 and XII,2), The Gospel of Philip (II,3) and The Testimony of Truth (IX,3) is not very different from admonitions found in the Fathers. Each group claimed it was right and the "others" were wrong. Only a given group had the "truth". E. Pagels notes, speaking specifically of the Nag Hammadi codices,

But those who wrote and circulated these texts did not regard themselves as "heretics".<sup>6</sup>



Origen came the closest of any of the Fathers to divining the real reason for the "haereses".

So then, since Christianity appeared to men as something worthy of serious attention, not only people of the lower classes as Celsus thinks, but also to many scholars among the Greeks, sects inevitably came to exist, not at all on account of factions and love of strife, but because several learned men made a serious attempt to understand the doctrines of Christianity. (CC III.12)

Origen's viewpoint is still, "we" are right, and "they" are wrong. He cannot yet come far enough to admit that maybe a little bit of that "other" interpretation might be useful or even correct. But he does offer the most intelligent and rational approach to a delicate debate which involved much subjective and irrational invective as evidence by many of the tirades "against heretics" examined thus far in this thesis. He admits that the proponents of these "other" sects were men of intellectual stature and did not wish to cause friction. They only wanted to interpret the scriptures. One can almost hear Origen's tongue clucking as he adds that it is a pity these men did not know the "truth".

Thus, the term "Christian" cannot refer only to the "orthodox", but must equally apply to those "other groups" who also saw themselves as having "the truth". The specific adherence and resultant Weltanschauung of the believer had a direct bearing on the nature of the "truth" and interpretation of what was "correct".

The Fathers were preoccupied with these "heresies" <sup>7</sup> as their many writings against them indicate. They must have perceived themselves as somewhat beleaguered by these "others". Were these "other" Christians who were outside the Fathers'

sphere of influence the producers of the art? If the amount of art which had been produced allegedly in opposition to the dicta of the Fathers is any indication of the heed Christians paid to the Fathers, it seems that the latter during their life-times had little or no effect upon a large body of art-producing Christians. The Fathers may have wielded authority in their immediate communities, but had almost none at Rome. But if the Fathers were relatively ineffectual in controlling a mass of Christians whose artistic legacy remains in Rome, who were these Christians? Heretics, as the Fathers intimate'

It is true that the Fathers saw the "heretics" as "wrong"; that was because they were perceived as outside the Fathers' camp. But many of their doctrines, as noted above, were the same as or similar to those of the Fathers. Who were these "heretical" groups? How did they differ from one another and from the Fathers? Were any of these groups in Rome in the second and third centuries CE? <sup>8</sup> Were the Fathers at all influential in the direction of the drama?

Justin Martyr lived in Rome twice for a short time during the second century. He seemed aware that there were other groups of Christians in Rome, but was not connected with them. At his trial, the Prefect Rufus asked him where he and his followers assembled. Justin replied,

Where each chooses and can: for do you  
fancy we all meet in the very same place?  
Not so, because the God of the Christians  
is not circumscribed by place....

(Martyrdom of the Holy Martyrs, ii)

Rufus then wanted to know where Justin and his followers met. Justin answered that both times that he had come to Rome, he had lived at the Timiotinian Bath and it was here that he communicated "the doctrines of truth" to those who sought him out. (Martyrdom of the Holy Martyrs, 11) He did not actively seek converts or followers, but taught privately in his own quarters. It is interesting that among his fellow martyrs and followers none claimed that Justin was responsible for his conversion.<sup>9</sup> It seems too that Justin was completely ignorant of any other place to meet besides his own -- although he does not deny that there might be others. His network of Christian contacts must have been extremely small because both times upon arrival in Rome he went straight to the bath knowing that he could secure rental accommodation there. The bath, however, would not necessarily be connected with Christians, but was a gathering place, a place where Justin could find a convenient affordable abode and a suitable atmosphere for his philosophic style. (Dial. 11-111) Except for the others who were tried and martyred with him, Justin seems to have been a somewhat solitary figure who had no real community associated with him; rather he was a teacher in the philosophical vein, who had a few pupils.

Was Simon Magus ever in Rome? Justin Martyr truly believed that he had been there in person "in the reign of Claudius Caesar" (I Apol. xxvi), and

...so greatly astonished the sacred senate  
and people of the Romans that he was considered  
a god, and honoured like the others whom you  
honour as gods, with a statue. (I Apol. lvi)

But Irenaeus in his discussion of Simon, does not mention that he had been in Rome, only that he had done "these things" during the reign of Claudius (Adv. Haer. I.xxiii.1). Hippolytus does note that Simon journeyed to Rome, fell in with the apostles and offered repeated opposition to Peter. (Ref. VI.xv) But this report has a remarkably suspicious similarity to the Pseudo-Clementine romances. \*

If Justin is correct and Simon was in Rome in the 50's, the latter would have been well over 100 years of age if he had survived until Justin's day. But whether or not Simon had ever physically been in Rome, there is reason to suppose that there might have been an active community of his followers in Rome in the 150's when Justin was there.

There is some evidence that such a group may have been active in Rome. In the catacomb of Via Latina is a wall-painting which could be interpreted as being associated with the "Helen cult" in Samaria and postulated to have connections with Simon Magus.

Fig. 11 illustrates a fresco which is situated to the right of the entrance to cubiculum O of the Via Latina Catacomb, as indicated by an \* in Fig. 12. The similarities between this figure and the statue found by Crowfoot at Sebastiyeh, illustrated in Fig. 4, are striking. Both figures stand erect and are well covered by their himation and wrapped in a mantle. Both support a large, flaming torch; the Via Latina figure holds it in her left hand, while the Samaritan has it in her right. Both figures wear a veil with a tiara-like object on the head. Both figures hold a plant, that held by the Samaritan statue is likely wheat, but that in the Via Latina painting is

not readily identifiable. The identification of the Samaritan figure with her torch and wheat as both Kore-Persephone and Helen was established archaeologically by the presence of stone bas-reliefs of the symbols for Helen's brothers, the Dioscuri.

Is there any evidence, other than in the formal visual similarity, that the Roman painting ~~may also~~ be of the Samaritan Helen? Both figures hold a torch called *ἐλένη* in Greek. But there are several other items in the painting which did not appear to accompany the statue in Samaria, a basket and two amphorae. The basket, according to R. Graves, might also be associated with Helen. In Sparta, a festival called the Helenophoria celebrating Helen was held which closely resembled Athene's Thesmophoria in Athens.<sup>12</sup> At the Helenophoria, a special basket called an *ἐλένη* was carried which contained secret objects much like the cista mystica of the Eleusian mysteries.<sup>13</sup> Helen carries this basket when accompanied by the Dioscuri. Could the basket on the floor at the figure's feet in the painting be this basket? If so then there are two items in the painting which can be designated as *ἐλένη*, the torch and the basket. But the identification would be much more secure if there was an indication or a symbol for the Dioscuri in the painting. It happens that there is; the two amphorae are symbols for the Dioscuri.<sup>14</sup> Thus the presence of two objects called *ἐλένη* and the symbol for the Dioscuri seem to indicate that this figure's identity can be none other than Helen (*ἐλένη*).

But what of the plant she holds in her hand? Can it be postulated that this is also *ἐλένη* (*ἐλένιον*) the herb sacred to Helen that repelled snakes?<sup>15</sup> It seems to this writer that this figure is none other than

the Samaritan Helen and just in case the viewer does not instantly recognize her visual clues are given, the symbol for her brothers and three attributes which are the same word as her name, *Ἑλένη*. It seems too that the formal visual similarity between the two figures, in Via Latina and Samaria, is not just coincidence or accident. That a cult of Helen thrived in Samaria has been proven by archaeological and epigraphical evidence. Whether or not Simon Magus was directly associated with it, it seems that the Roman painting must derive from the Samaritan statue fig. 4 (or one like it) since all the Samaritan works pre-date the Roman one. Would this confirm that a Samaritan-(Christian?) cult of the type reported by Justin in association with Simon did exist in Rome.<sup>16</sup>

Confusion among the Fathers as to who was seen as within the community and who was without is exemplified by the attitudes manifested toward Ptolemy. Justin has some very good things to say about a contemporary named

Ptolemaeus, who was also teaching in Rome. Justin tells how Ptolemaeus converted a certain woman to Christianity, and how she, after a short time, divorced her pagan husband. As a divorcée, she was beyond the control of her enraged ex-husband who then decided to avenge himself upon his teacher. He had Ptolemaeus arrested, thrown in prison, tried and condemned for being a Christian. (II Apol. ii) Thus Ptolemaeus, "lover of truth", "disciple of the divine virtue" and "Christian", was martyred. Justin seems to have known this man and the other actors in the drama well. Whether or not Ptolemaeus was a member of Justin's group is not clear, but Justin obviously approved of his belief and piety.

But Irenaeus who by his own admission was greatly indebted to Justin for information on the early heresies, (Adv. Haer. IV.vi.2) selected for

special condemnation,

those disciples of the school of Ptolemaeus,  
whose school may be described as a bud from  
that of Valentinus. (Adv. Haer. I. pref. 2)

He then outlined the cosmology of the school.

(Adv. Haer.

I.xii.1-2) After Irenaeus, one named Ptolemaeus (or Ptolemy) became an infamous heretic. Tertullian stated that the "heresy of Ptolemy arose after Valentinus" (Praesc. Haer. iv) implying a lineal connection between Ptolemy and Valentinus. Hippolytus too saw Ptolemy as a heretic with Heracleon. (Ref. VI.xxx)

Justin's comments on Ptolemy are found in the so-called Appendix (or II Apology) to his (I) Apology and was written about 150-155 CE.<sup>17</sup> In it, he gives the impression that Ptolemy was already dead at the time of writing. Ptolemy, then, must have been "led away to punishment" sometime before 155 at the latest, which means that his martyrdom would have occurred about ten years before Justin's. If Valentinus was in Rome from 139 onward (Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. III.iv.3) then Ptolemy might have known him. But Irenaeus noted that Ptolemy's disciples were a "bud" from Valentinus, not Ptolemy himself, while the other Fathers who discuss the group condemn Ptolemy as well

Is Justin's Ptolemaeus the writer of the Letter to Flora quoted by Epiphanius?<sup>18</sup> It is tempting to identify the rich woman who divorced her husband and precipitated Ptolemy's suffering and death with Flora. The Letter to Flora is included by Epiphanius with the work of a heretic Ptolemy. But as Lüdemann had pointed out, there is little in the contents

of the letter of an "heretical" nature,<sup>19</sup> would this imply that Epiphanius saw him as a heretic? More likely, Epiphanius simply gathered together all material attributed to a "Ptolemy" and entered it under the heading of the heretic.

The proposal that there might have been more than one Ptolemy is somewhat doubtful inasmuch as the name "Ptolemy" was rare in Rome.<sup>20</sup> But the problem of Justin's Ptolemaeus, the Christian teacher versus the heretic remains. There is, unfortunately, little concrete evidence for any points of contact between the writings of Justin and Epiphanius, or the heretic reported in the other Fathers. What this ambiguity does demonstrate is the complete confusion among the Fathers as to who was "in" and who was "out". Irenaeus reports that,

Valentinus came to Rome in the time of Hyginus (139-142) flourished under Pius (142-156), and remained until Anicetus (156-169). (Adv. Haer. III.iv.3)

If this is true then Valentinus, Ptolemaeus and Justin were contemporaries in Rome, all at the same time, despite the fact that Justin does not mention Valentinus. If Justin knew Valentinus and any supposed connection between him and Ptolemaeus, he does not say. When he lists the heresies, he specifically mentions Simon, Menander and Marcion in three places in his first Apology. (I Apol. xxvi; lvi; lviii) But in his Dialogue, he lists Marcians, Valentinians, Basilidians and Saturnilians. (Dial. xxxv) That the followers and not the leaders themselves, are listed and that Marcion-Marcionites is the only group common to the two lists, that Simon and Menander are not included, leads one to suspect the Dialogue list may be a later redaction.<sup>21</sup> At any rate, whether or not Justin condemned



Valentinus, he does not, according to both Apologies and the Dialogue, connect Ptolemaeus with Valentinus and contrary to Irenaeus and the later heresiologists, approves of the faith and piety of Ptolemaeus.

Irenaeus is the first to connect Marcion and Valentinus in the same breath as twin heretic-villains after Simon the arch-heretic. He reports of his old teacher Polycarp that he confronted Valentinus and Marcion upon his arrival in Rome. (Adv. Haer. III.iii.4) Irenaeus himself was in Rome for a short period around 177, after the persecutions at Lyons according to Eusebius. (Eccl. Hist. V.iv) This would mean that Irenaeus's report of Polycarp's visit and triumph over Marcion and Valentinus was not eye-witness, but hearsay, and would spread some doubt upon Polycarp's combating both "heretics". Irenaeus, in true rhetorical style, probably could not resist the literary emphasis of a double threat and triumph. But if Polycarp was in Rome at this time (156-168), Justin does not mention him although he claims to know personally of the activities of Marcion and Menander. (I Apol. xxvi, lviii, and lvi) Conversely, Polycarp in his extant writings, does not mention Justin either.

Perhaps this is another indication of the isolated nature of the small independent nuclei of different groups of "Christians". But, if this is true, then why were Marcion, Valentinus and Simon apparently known to all? Or at least reported to be active by a large number of the Fathers? Could it simply be a case of constant and continuous copying from a small number of written sources, such as (the precursor of) Justin's Syntagma, Irenaeus's several sources and the common source used by him and Hippolytus and so on? In other words, these "heretics" have gained

a notoriety which is because of repetition, tradition and embroidery, not because their doctrines were initially so terrible. Another theory which might explain their conspicuousness and infamy is that they 'community hopped' Unhappy with the teachings of one group, they sought to join another group and these groups, as seen above in Justin, did not seem to interrelate or have much contact one with the other. But this seems far-fetched.

An example of the repetition is seen in Tertullian, who wrote after 200 from secondary sources, not first-hand knowledge:

It is evident that these men (Marcion and Valentinus) lived not so very long ago, - in the reign of Antoninus <sup>22</sup> (138-161), for the most part... (Praesc. Haer. xxx)

He does not use the dating references of the Roman bishops as do the other Fathers who wrote of Marcion and Valentinus. He also does not appear to know any Valentinians himself since he says,

The Valentinians, who are no doubt a very large body of heretics - comprising as they do so many apostates from the truth... (Adv. Val. i)

It must be recognized then that Tertullian is repeating known traditions concerning the Valentinians in particular, culled from other, probably written sources. He continued his report of the activities of Marcion and Valentinus:

...they at first were believers in the doctrine of the Catholic Church, in the church of Rome under the episcopate of the blessed Eleutherus (176-189), until on account of their restless curiosity... they were more than once expelled. Marcion, indeed, (went) with the two hundred sesterces, which he had brought into the church, and when banished at last to a permanent excommunication, they scattered abroad the poisons of their doctrines. (Praesc. Haer. xxx)

Thus Tertullian extends the activity of both men into the 180's. This means that both Valentinus and Marcion were in Rome from about 139<sup>23</sup> and 142 respectively and were still there in 189. He points out that at first they were believers, but because of "restless curiosity" or philosophical enquiry, which resulted in error, they were admonished more than once.<sup>24</sup> Presumably, they made public penance and confession like Cerdo.<sup>25</sup> But Tertullian does not say that Valentinus was expelled, only implicates him with Marcion who he knows was expelled with his money.<sup>26</sup> In another writing Tertullian explains what happened to Valentinus. It seems he was not expelled, but because he failed to attain a bishopric, he broke away by himself.

Valentinus had expected to become a bishop, because he was an able man both in genius and eloquence. Being indignant, however, that another obtained the dignity by reason of a claim which confessorship (martyrii) had given him, he (Valentinus) broke with the Church of the true faith. (Adv. Val. iv)

Tertullian reported that Valentinus was a brilliant man both in intellect and manner, but that envy caused him to break away. This accusation was common among the Fathers as a reason for an apostate to leave the fold<sup>27</sup> and has its roots deep in their Christian consciousness.<sup>28</sup>

Another curious figure at Rome whose "orthodoxy" seems to be much disputed, was Tatian, a student of Justin Martyr. Eusebius includes Tatian among those who wrote against the "heathen and heresies".

There are writings of certain bretheren older than the times of Victor (190-201), which they wrote against the heathen in defense of the truth, and against the heresies of their time: I mean Justin and Miltiades, and Tatian and Clement.... (Eccl. Hist. V.xxviii)


But both Irenaeus (Adv. Haer. I.xxviii.1) and Hippolytus (Ref. VIII.1x; X. xiv) condemned him saying that as long as Justin was alive Tatian behaved himself, but as soon as Justin was in his grave, Tatian "separated from the church" and became "sympathetic" to the followers of Valentinus and Marcion. The Muratorian Canon did not mention Tatian, but condemned the work of Miltiades, whom Eusebius placed with Tatian as a defender of the truth. (Eccl. Hist. V.xvii) Not only is there confusion as to which books were approved but both Hippolytus and Tertullian as well as Cyprian had differences of opinion with the episcopate situated in Rome. Hippolytus ran afoul of Zephyrinus and Callixtus over the Noetian heresy and intimated that the heresy of Elchasai was introduced into Rome by Callixtus. (Ref. IX.ii) Tertullian reported a struggle with one "Victorinus" who was probably the Roman bishop Victor (190-201).<sup>29</sup> (Praesc. Haer. viii) He told how a certain Praxeas influenced the bishop of Rome to recant his recognition of Montanus and his "prophetic gifts". (Adv. Praxeas i)

By this Praxeas did a two-fold service for the devil at Rome: he drove away prophecy and he brought in heresy; he put to flight the paraclete, and he crucified the father.  
(Adv. Praxeas i)

This is very strong language. He then declared that he withdrew himself from the carnally-minded and chose to recognize the "paraclete". From the "orthodox" point of view, this is a testimony of a heretic self-departing from the brethren. Yet Tertullian is recognized as one of the earliest figures of "Latin Christianity". That there is such a great controversy as to which of his works is "orthodox" and which "heretical"<sup>30</sup> only helps to illustrate that the dividing line between such distinctions

is blurred indeed. Cyprian, Tertullian's devoted follower also was in conflict with Stephen (253-256) and Novatian over the re-baptism of heretics and lapsed Christians. (Ep. XLVII; LXVI; LXIX-LXXV) Yet he saw himself and Tertullian as upholding the true values. He even went so far as to call the seventh Council of Carthage in 258 at which he and the other African bishops declared Stephen and the Novatianist adversaries antichrists and heretics.<sup>31</sup> That Rome did not agree with this is reflected in Novatian's tomb marker Frq. 13 declaring him "BEATISSIMO MARTURI GAUDENTIUS DIAC."

These prolegomena to a new solution have aimed at demonstrating that the term and concept "Christian" was not the exclusive property of the Fathers and that the Fathers are not necessarily to be equated with orthodoxy or Rome. Those that the Fathers designated heretics also claimed with reasonable credibility to possess the "name" and the "truth". The Fathers' lack of authoritative weight is vividly shown in their dispute with the Roman bishops. Also, the general confusion in the sources both within the Fathers and without in contemporary sympathetic literature as to who was "orthodox" and upholding the "church" and who was "heretic" (e.g., Tatian), reveals a complex collection of attitudes and points of reference. This many faceted reflection of the multiplicity of opinion in relation to the Fathers and their "protagonists" seems to be in harmony with the relatively solitary condition of the Fathers and their individual insularity and uniqueness in their own spheres of influence.<sup>32</sup>



### iii. A New Solution

It should be noted that between the years 139 and 168, all the actors in the drama sketched above were on stage in Rome: Ptolemaeus before 155, Valentinus from 139 to 189, Marcion from about 142 to 189, Cerdo, Marcion's "teacher" from 129 to 142, Marcellina from about 156 to 168, Tatian, from 150 to 168, Justin Martyr from about 150 to 166, and Polycarp came late in his life before his martyrdom in 155. Hippolytus was a youth in the 170's and Hegesippus was active about the same time. Caius was a boy in the 180's just after Irenaeus visited Rome in 177. About 150 Hermas<sup>1</sup> was compiling The Pastor in Rome. It is no wonder then that there are so many reports that have been preserved of the rivalry between Christian groups not only in the capital but in the provinces as well. What was happening in Rome was a microcosm of the broader situation, instantaneously reflecting the tensions and upheavals both religious and political of not only the Christian groups themselves, but also the ferment within the Graeco-Roman Empire itself. It will not, therefore, be surprising to find this confusion, excitement and controversy reflected in the monuments produced by these groups of Christians. That the majority of the catacombs which are classified as "Christian" were produced by a group or groups of people who believed in the new religion is indisputable. In the light of the confusion among the different Christian groups which thrived at Rome during the period when the paintings were executed and the universal disdain in which the "official" voice of the fathers held art/idolatry, again the question comes forth: who were those Christians who painted the catacombs?

The conflicts between Cyprian, Tertullian and Hippolytus with their Roman bishops offer a clue to the resolution of the paradox. On the one hand are the iconophobic Fathers and on the other are the "heretical" bishops of Rome, one of whom, Callixtus, was in charge of a "cemetery". But Tertullian himself admits that he left the jurisdiction of Roman doctrinal recognition. From the point of view of Rome he was the "heretic". Who then is the heretic and who the orthodox? Tertullian or Rome? That most "heretics" called themselves "Christians" adds to the complexity of the situation.

How can this be resolved? There are several factors to be considered: the ultimate authority of the Fathers, their uniqueness, their time-frame in relation to the production of the art and the sort of opposition with which they had to contend.

The Fathers, quantitatively, formed a very small number of spokesmen (perhaps as small as one per cent or less) in the midst of a fairly large body of Christians. Their voice was likely only authoritative within their own immediate communities and although their opinion might be known outside it, they had no external mandate. In addition, they were probably not representative of other groups of Christians within their own geographical areas. In the main, they concerned themselves with issues that occurred within their own groups, only occasionally aiming their invective outside at other groups which as often as not included practices at Rome. Thus their control and authority was numerically and influentially minor.

Further undermining any possibility of a collective authoritative stance of the Fathers is their seeming lack of homogeneity. Each Father is unique; he wrote primarily to his own community and not always to

the same groups within that community. In other words, what a Father would write to a group of proselytes would be very different to what he would write to accepted and well-indoctrinated presbyters, as evidenced by Clement.<sup>2</sup> If they wrote for external consumption, it was usually aimed at a high Roman (pagan) official in the form of an apologia for the faith.<sup>3</sup> Writings against heretics were likely for internal information. These different reasons for writing the different works are what make the Fathers as a collective group seem uneven. Indeed they are not unified. They were not writing for the convenience of twentieth century scholars, but of the concerns and problems which troubled their communities in their own times. The only point on which they seem to agree is that art and idolatry lead to the evil of heresy and ought to be regarded with suspicion and caution. But even on this point, there are many grades of prohibition, which has already been discussed above.<sup>4</sup>

While the mass of artistic production seems to have been, in Rome, the Fathers who wrote against it with the exception of Justin and perhaps Hippolytus, were not Romans nor did they live in Rome. Some like Irenaeus visited, but did not stay. But although the Fathers were from and primarily working in the provinces, they do not represent a unified provincial voice either. The exception to this observation could be Tertullian and Cyprian who took Rome to task over what they perceived as "heretical" influence in the Roman office. But this unity is because Cyprian was also from Carthage and was a great admirer of Tertullian.<sup>5</sup>

For the most part, however, the active years of the Fathers represent a temporal progression, but it does not necessarily follow that they also represent a succession of cohesive opinion. Irenaeus claimed to have been a



"pupil" of Polycarp, <sup>6</sup> was perhaps a teacher to Hippolytus <sup>7</sup> and freely admitted his literary debt to Justin. <sup>8</sup> Tatian was known to have been a pupil of Justin. <sup>9</sup> The confusion as to his orthodoxy is as complexing as the orthodoxy of Ptolemy of whom Justin speaks with glowing approval, but the rest of the Fathers condemn. <sup>10</sup> Did Clement know Irenaeus's Adversus Haereses? Who knew Clement's works outside his own community? <sup>11</sup> Why did Justin know Marcion and Menander well, but seems to have had no knowledge of Valentinus? <sup>12</sup> All were active in Rome at the same time. Why, if Valentinus "took himself away" from the church, was he not equated with the Father Tertullian who did the same thing? Conversely, why is Tertullian not a heretic with Valentinus?

That Valentinus was in Rome seems well established. Might the Fathers' preoccupation with Valentinus and his followers suggest that he had a strong following and was seen as a real threat to the status quo in Rome? M. Guarducci proposes through epigraphical and archaeological analyses that many of the catacombs seen as Christian-"orthodox" may be Christian-"Valentinian". <sup>13</sup> Can it be postulated that in Rome in the ante-Nicene period the form of Christianity that was most prevalent was a "Valentinian" type? Are the Fathers who wrote against Valentinianism really writing against one of the more prevalent forms of Roman Christianity? <sup>14</sup> Is this accusation of Valentinian heresy then a veiled attempt to discredit a powerful Roman faction? At any rate, the evidence seems to have been passed on somewhat uncritically, <sup>15</sup> with the result that a "mythology" grew up around these "heretical" figures.

Breckenridge's observation that the majority of the iconophobic

Fathers were wiped out in the "great persecutions"<sup>16</sup> is astute. According to Diagram A, the ante-Nicene Fathers do end abruptly about 258 CE; their deaths silencing their protesting voices. Although there was a rise in art production after the 250's,<sup>17</sup> it may not have been a result of an "enfeeblement" of the "official" (i.e., Fathers) authority. The Fathers would have had little real impact outside their immediate communities, but nevertheless, a potentially opposing voice had been silenced. This meant that the Christian Roman party characterized by Victor, Callixtus, etc., won a mandate, which was paradoxically, the result of the persecutions of anti-Christian Emperors. Rome was probably able to survive better than the provinces because of the larger numbers of adherents who were potential "bishop material". It must be noted, that the Roman group seemed to suffer as much as the rest of the communities, if the rapid succession of martyr-bishops between the years 250 and 300 is any indication. But in these persecutions the iconophobic voice was silenced for the moment.

If the Fathers represent a slightly fanatical fringe element standing critically at the edge of the main group (as do the later iconophobic-iconoclastic Fathers), why does their collective iconophobia loom so large? This may be because, unlike the later Byzantine controversies, there are no iconodule texts from the ante-Nicene period refuting their opinions. Indeed the "other" side living within the Hellenistic milieu may not have seen the need to defend art in the service of religion. They may never have thought about it. But is this true? Are there no texts; is there no evidence at all? It must be recalled that the Fathers were not always explicit in their discussion of art and idolatry and perhaps the "lack"

of pro-art material is because the evidence is not seen in the proper perspective.

Of the evidence for the production of art, there is first, the mute manifestation of the art itself. Secondly, there are some texts which, if they do not explicitly discuss art, imply acceptance of motifs evident in the visual works. Tertullian's discussion of the motif of the "shepherd" is an example and alludes directly to the book, The Shepherd of Hermas. The connection between the popularity of the visual motif which exactly coincides with the popularity of the book has already been discussed <sup>18</sup> and indicates a more than plausible connection between the text and the ubiquitous representations of shepherds on walls of catacombs, sarcophagi, as well as the chalices Tertullian discussed.

The next example is the Stele of Abericus, also discussed above. <sup>19</sup> The stress upon the occult symbolic content of the motifs, which incidentally includes the shepherd and other motifs found on Christian objects, has an almost visual quality in its verbal imagery. Abericus says he travelled to Rome and was enraptured by what he saw there. Would the "Queen in the golden robe with golden shoes" and the "people who had the gleaming seal" refer to something, some work of art he saw there? A mosaic perhaps?

Irenaeus himself came from Smyrna not so very far away from Abericus's Hierapolis and he used verbal symbols in a similar manner, although not with the occult intent. His discussion on why there are four gospels and not five or three was illustrated by comparison to the cosmic symbols of the four zones of the world, the four winds, and the four Cherubim with the heads of a lion, a calf, a man and an eagle. (Adv. Haer. III.xi.8)

But Irenaeus also reported the use by heretics of symbols in an occult manner. For example, he explicitly noted that the miracle of Jesus healing the woman with the issue of the blood is a topos for Sophia being saved from her whoredom, the salvation of the twelfth aeon. This is not a passing reference, he refers specifically to this topos three times. (Adv. Haer. I.ii.3; II.xx.1; and II.xxiii.1) This motif is represented visually in the catacombs many times, Figs. 14 to 17 and is often found on sarcophagi in association with other miracles of Jesus. Would Irenaeus have known of these paintings, or some which might have dated earlier? He does not say. Is this occult meaning contained in these images? If so, then Guarducci's thesis has some weight.

Irenaeus also discussed another symbolic interpretation of the "gnostics" that Sophia became the serpent who was the giver of gnosis. (Adv. Haer. I.xxx.7 and 15) A similar idea is expressed in The Testimony of Truth (IX,3.46f), in On the Origin of the World (II,5.114f) and The Hypostasis of the Archons. (II,4.90f) The concepts of the fruit of the tree of knowledge bringing salvation is also found in Valentinus's "own" work, The Gospel of Truth. (I,3.18:21-40) Would this perhaps suggest that in the catacombs and on early sarcophagi, the depiction of Adam and Eve standing between a serpent-wrapped tree, as in Figs. 18 to 20, is not the "fall" of man but his salvation having received gnosis as a result of eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge? <sup>20</sup> Again, if Guarducci's hypothesis is correct then many of those visual monuments and their interpretations will have to be reassessed.

The only text that explicitly mentions the production of objects that could be called art is The Discourse on the Eighth and the Ninth.

(VI,6.16:18-62:20) This text gives instructions for the production of a hieroglyphic book to be engraved upon tablets of turquoise, "the name" upon lapis lazuli and the shapes and positioning of guardian figures. The only other extant text which deals with visual images other than references to illustrated manuscripts by Hippolytus<sup>21</sup> and Origen<sup>22</sup> and the use of amulets as discussed above,<sup>23</sup> and in The Pistis Sophia, is the diagrams found in the Books of Jeu. But the primary evidence for a positive attitude toward art must be seen in the objects themselves that remain as silent testimony of the ultimate impotency of the Fathers' influence or ability to enforce their prohibition.

What then is a resolution of the paradox? The Fathers, in their time, may not have represented the central group quantitatively, that is, the "orthodox" as the majority, but were raised to this status in retrospect. This may be because: (1) they wrote, and (2) their writings with their thoughts in them survived. The Fathers acquired their "orthodox" status because the later church saw in them the seeds of its own orthodoxy. But on the whole, the Fathers were not the main "orthodoxy" of their time. The various producers of the art were the "orthodoxy" of the ante-Nicene period (if such a unity can be hypothesized) and this element followed or was in principle in agreement with the bishopric in Rome itself. This bishopric is known from the time of Zephyrinus to have been in the possession of a "cemetery" or catacomb and Callixtus who was later to become bishop, administered it. There is little direct defense of art or artistic monuments likely because these Roman Christians saw nothing unusual about expressing their faith in visual terms. They were either unaware of the Fathers' iconophobic attitude, or the prohibitions buried

within the Fathers' voluminous writings were not readily apparent to those who were not looking for it, or recognized, but not perceived as applicable.

Since all these people called themselves Christians, perhaps even those whom the Fathers denigrated by the terms "Valentinians" or "Simonians" and the like, would not see themselves in these definitions. Many of the Valentinians, for example, would not differ essentially in habit or doctrine from the "other" Christians of a more "orthodox" mode. Valentinus was certainly within the Roman community and according to Tertullian, had risen to a fairly high status therein, only failing to become bishop.

These other groups of Christians in Rome whom the various Fathers designate as "heresies" formed the central majority cultus from which sprang the "orthodox" unit of the post-Constantinian period. Their "Valentinian" and other milder "heretical" tendencies became modified and mellowed as time passed and Rome consolidated its doctrinal and political hold. The explosion of the production of art from the 250's onward may, as Breckenridge suggests, have proceeded because the prohibitory Fathers were silenced, but it may also be an indication that the Roman party was consolidating its influence by forming greater affiliations with the various "other Christian" groups within Rome itself. This may be reflected in the mass of artistic production in and the physical expansion of the catacombs themselves. The recognitions by the various Roman bishops of other "Christian" groups in Rome was seen by Hippolytus, Tertullian and Cyprian as influence and infiltration of "heretical" elements into the "church". But what the Roman bishops likely were doing by recognizing these Roman "heterodox" groups was drawing them into their fold. It is significant that Victor recognized the provincial Montanist group, but

later withdrew his recognition because of a Roman protest, as reported by Tertullian in Against Praxeas. Thus those whom the Fathers called "heretics" were the producers of the art; but they were not really heretics, they were Christians just as the Fathers were. The difference was that they did not belong to the Fathers' own communities. The Fathers' iconophobia can only be seen in the light of a literal interpretation of the Decalogue which throughout the history of the Christian church has been a contentious point. If the iconoclasts of the eighth and ninth centuries were looked upon as slightly rigid, perhaps the Fathers should also be seen in this light. They certainly were not heeded nor taken very seriously by a large body of Christians as evidenced by the great mass of artistic material which has survived to this day. If the Fathers are not to be seen as "heretical" because they did not agree with the main party of their day, they must be seen as on the fringe of it. It is those whom the Fathers designate as heretic who produced the art, but they are really the orthodox-to-be.

### Conclusion

The conclusion to this study is that the paradox holds: the Fathers were iconophobic while at the same time a mass of art was produced. But this paradox is resolvable. A re-evaluation of what constituted the "orthodoxy" of that time was needed. Answers to the questions of who the "real Christians" were and of how great the ultimate authority of the Fathers was, are crucial for a new perspective on the place of the Fathers within the greater Christian milieu. That the Fathers did not seem to wield much influence outside their immediate communities and, in fact, were in some cases less than "orthodox" themselves, is fundamental for the evaluation of their authority. The question as to who the "real Christians" were must be seen in relation to the cultural and religious environment of the time. Since the art is primarily extant in Rome, but the Fathers were in the provinces, one must look inside Rome itself for its producers and users. The various groups of Christians in Rome, both the "orthodox" and the more "orthodox" of the "heresies" likely constituted the "orthodoxy" of the day and it is they who produced the art. The Fathers are provincial and stand at the edges of the main "orthodoxy" in Rome, literally, numerically and politically.



Of the solutions to the paradox, the most unacceptable is Harnack's. He proposed that the art was produced by "second-class Christians" which implied that these were less than "whole" or "real" Christians. Klauser's proposal that the laity produced the art "in opposition" to the official clergy, Breckenridge's theory that the popular movement forced the enfeebled official church to accept art, and Renan's conclusion that the art was produced by heretics and/or gnostics, are equally unacceptable because they propose that the origin of the art derived from heretical or less-than-orthodox sources and was finally accepted when "official" attitudes changed from prohibition to total acceptance, all in the course of a century. All these proposals including those scholars who did not recognize the paradox, are based upon the assumption that the Fathers were "orthodox" and represented the "official" stance.

But a one-hundred and eighty degree reversal of opinion by the "official" group is unlikely. Therefore, the assumption that the Fathers represent the main "orthodoxy" must be re-examined. Those who produced the art became the architects of the "orthodox" movement (even if there was no real collective "orthodoxy" at the time) and represent the prevailing major party. The Fathers become, not necessarily heretics, but a protesting element on the fringe of the "orthodox" majority in Rome, both figuratively and in reality in the provinces.

Whether or not the Roman groups were "orthodox" at the time when the art was first produced may not be important since the Roman episcopal party was destined to consolidate its hold upon the other groups within and later outside Rome, thereby becoming the ruling "orthodoxy". It was likely after this consolidation that the ante-Nicene Fathers were officially raised to the status of "orthodox" when it was recognized that in their writings were contained the seeds of that "orthodoxy". That the producers of the art, although seen as "heretics" by the Fathers, were the active parties in Rome who were, in reality, the nucleus of the "orthodox" movement, makes the art "orthodox" from the beginning despite some of its possible and probably "Valentinian" content. With the deaths and martyrdoms of the Fathers and the resultant silencing of their protesting faction, the Roman "orthodoxy" was given its head to proceed in whichever direction it chose, with the result that the art continued to develop with Rome's blessing.

In a sense Murray was right; there is a continuity between the ante-Nicene and the post-Nicene production of art, but it is not because the Fathers (who are "orthodox" according to her) are not iconophobic, but idolophobic. The art is a continuous production in that it was produced by the

"orthodox" and continued to be so. Murray, however, was wrong to force the Fathers to become iconodules; they were firmly iconophobic and idolophobic and would probably have liked to have been as iconoclastic as their successors in the iconoclastic crises of the Byzantine era,<sup>1</sup> but circumstances prevented them.

In a sense Renan, too, was correct. The people who produced the art were heretics in the Fathers' eyes, but these "heretics" were really representative of the Zeitgeist and became the winning and "orthodox" party in Rome. Both Renan and Murray were right, for the wrong reasons.

Thus the paradox is resolved: the Fathers remain steadfastly against art while the art was being produced probably with the blessing and encouragement of the party in Rome. This Roman party would be the one recognized by Constantine as representatives of "orthodox" Christianity. It was this group, not the Fathers, that received the benefit of the Edict of Toleration in 313 CE and went on to formulate the doctrines of the various early Councils; it was this group that Eusebius represented. Eusebius approved of art. By removing the Fathers from their centrally dictatorial and prohibitory role, a resolution of the paradox is possible which does not necessitate that the "orthodoxy" change its attitude toward an evil art from total prohibition to total acceptance. The art originated with those who were to become the "orthodox". The camps have not been reversed, but the Fathers are placed in perspective as provincial protesters who were, in actuality, on the fringe of the main "orthodox" art-approving party.

# NOTES

## Introduction

<sup>1</sup> For the relative dates of the ante-Nicene church Fathers and the contemporary literature both "heretical" and "orthodox" in relation to the dates of the bishops of Rome and the Roman Emperors cf. Diagram A. The term "Fathers" will always refer to those church writers whose primary period of activity antedates 313 CE.

<sup>2</sup> Iconoclasm, the actual destruction of images is opposed to iconophobia or an aversion to visual images. Naturally, the latter could lead to the former, but there is no record of the ante-Nicene Fathers practicing iconoclasm. (Probably, they would have liked to, but circumstances related to their belonging to an unrecognized and often persecuted cult would not allow them to express their iconophobia in actual destruction.)

The iconoclastic period lasted just over a century from about 726 to 842 CE, and can be divided roughly into three periods: (1) an appeal to the prohibition of idolatry in the reign of Leo III (717-741) and his son Constantine V (741-754). The iconoclastic Council of Hieria occurred in 754. (2) The apogee of persecution of "image worshippers" together with an attack on monastic asceticism and relic-worship and the cult of the saints stretched from 754 to the death of Constantine V in 775. (3) There was a brief respite under Leo IV, Constantine's son and his widow Irene, but the third and final phase occurred under the Emperors Leo V, Michael II and Theophilus from 815 to 842. Cf. S. Gero, "Byzantine Iconoclasm and the Failure of a Medieval Reformation", in J. Gutmann, ed., The Image and the Word, Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1977, 49-62, p. 52.

For an older viewpoint cf. O. M. Dalton, Byzantine Art and Archaeology, New York: Dover, 1961 (first pub., Oxford: University Press, 1911) p. 13-16.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the argument of Sister Charles Murray in her article "Art in the Early Church", Journal of Theological Studies, NS, XXVIII, Pt. 2, October, (1977) 302-345, and discussion of her theories on p. 54 f. of this study.

## Chapter I

<sup>1</sup> The word "orthodox" or "orthodoxy" with or without quotation marks depending on the sense of the discussion, will refer to that group of Christians traditionally seen as holding the correct religious doctrine, i.e., that established by the ancient church, the 'Catholic' church of patristic times. The Fathers and their opinions represent the orthodox viewpoint. The term will also be utilized to refer to any germ or core of the orthodox ideal which might be discernible in the earliest period of Christianity before any homogeneous doctrine and policy had been officially formulated.

The terms "heresy" or "heretical" will designate those who belong to any group which is not recognized by the orthodox as being orthodox.

It must be noted, however, that these terms do not in any way carry pejorative connotations in this study. They are phenomenological categories which are used to designate opposing camps. Because the Fathers are "orthodox" does not mean that they are "right" (although, of course, in their minds they are), any more than the "heretics" (who also saw themselves as "right") are wrong.

<sup>2</sup> Murray, op. cit., p. 302.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Tertullian's discussion of the use of the chalice on p.48-50 of this study.

## Chapter I, Part 1

<sup>1</sup> Cf. W. H. Gross, "Plastik", Der Kleine Pauly Lexicon der Antike, Vol. IV, K. Ziegler and W. Sontheimer, eds., Munich: Alfred Druckenmüller, 1972, p. 891-893, p. 891.

<sup>2</sup> Celsus is not consistent in his accusations. Here he says that Christians have no images or altars, but later he says that they have magic diagrams. Cf. p. 46-48 of this study.

<sup>3</sup> Cf., p. 10 of this study.

<sup>4</sup> Cf., p. 15 and 56 of this study.

<sup>5</sup> For an indication of the power of the "demons" as instigators of all evil: Cf. Minucius Felix, Oct. xxvii, The Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions IV. xlii, xvi, and xxxi, Lactantius, Div. Inst. II. xviif., and Ep. Div. Inst. xxviii, in which Lactantius sums up eloquently all the horrors of the evils of the "demons".

<sup>6</sup> The following passage from Clement calls to mind Plato's critique of poetry and poets, and his disdain for artists whose handiwork is seen as thrice removed from what is. (The Republic, X, 598a-603c.)

<sup>7</sup> Cf. p. 7 of this study for quote.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. the many volumes written about the paintings found at Pompeii, Herculaneum and Stabiae: L. Curtius, Die Wandmalerei Pompejis, Leipzig, 1929; K. Schefold, Pompeianische Malerei Sinn und Ideengeschichte, Basel, 1952; A. Maiuri, Roman Painting, Geneva, 1953; G. E. Rizzo, La pittura ellenistico-romana, Milan, 1929; O. Elia, Pitture di Stabia, Naples, 1957; A. Maiuri, Ercolano, Rome, 1959; A. Maiuri, Pompei, Rome, 1959; M. Brion, Pompéi et Herculaneum, Paris, 1973; B. Andreae and H. Kyrieleis, Neue Forschungen in Pompeji und dem anderen Vesuvausbruch 79 n. Chr. verschütteten Städten, Germany, 1975; H. G. Beyen, Ueber Stilleben aus Pompeji und Herculaneum, Roma, 1971; M. L. Barré, Herculaneum et Pompei, 8 vols., Paris, 1870-1872; Th. Kraus, Pompeii and Herculaneum. The Living Cities of the Dead, New York, 1975.

<sup>9</sup> Pygmalion made an ivory statue of a woman which was so lovely that he fell in love with it. Venus (Aphrodite) took pity on him and granted him a boon bringing the statue to life to become his bride. (Ovid, Metamorphosis, x. 243-297.)

<sup>10</sup> Origen (CC VIII.17) mentions the Classical artists Phedias, Polycleitos, and the Hellenistic artists Zeuxis and Apelles. The former two are of Greece's Classical age proper, the 5th century BCE, and the latter two of Alexander's time. Apelles was painter to Alexander; who had passed an edict, according to Pliny the elder, that no person was allowed to paint his portrait but Apelles. (Nat. Hist. XXXV. xxxvi. 85-86)

<sup>11</sup> On the copying of the Classical works of art by Hellenistic and Roman artists. Cf. Encyclopedia of World Art, Vol. VII, New York, Toronto and London: McGraw-Hill, 1958, pp. 350-351f.

There are also instances where the original Greek masterpieces were removed from their walls and taken to sites in Rome, for example, and placed in different frames of reference. Cf. Pliny Nat. Hist. XXX. xxxv.173, and Vitruvius, De Arch. II.viii.9 for examples, and how the removal took place. Cf. also Encyclopedia of World Art, Vol. XII, op. cit., p. 188.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. p.5 of this study for the citation of Commodianus. Clement too invokes the second commandment in his condemnation of the use of cosmetics by women to beautify their faces. He says that they then make for themselves a different image from the true person, and that this sort of thing was forbidden by Moses in the second commandment. The implication here again is that women (and men) were made in the image of God, and therefore by making another face with make-up, women are creating another representation of God by art. (Paed. III.ii)

<sup>13</sup> Cf. p.7 of this study for reference to the Epistle to Diognetos. Ep. Diog.

<sup>14</sup> The symbol ✠ with the Latin "SALVS" in Fig. 1a and the Latin inscription "STEFANYS HELENAE" in Fig. 1i are probably of a date after the Edict of Milan. (Helen likely refers to Constantine's mother). Figs. 1h, f, and g, may be of an earlier date. Fig. 1b may be early as well, it bears a stylized fish and the acrostic ΙΧΘΥC. Figs. 1c,d, and e, which include representations of the Good Shepherd may also be of early dates, but Clement does not discuss this image. Cf., p.48-50 of this study for a discussion of the shepherd motif.

<sup>15</sup> For sarcophagi, cf., F. W. Deichmann, ed., Repertorium der Christlichen Antiken Sarcophage, Erster Band, Rom und Ostia. (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut), Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1967, and P. du Bourguet, Early Christian Painting, tr., S. W. Taylor, New York: Viking, 1965, gives a good selection of plates from the catacombs.

<sup>16</sup> The Oxford Classical Dictionary, N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard, eds., Oxford: Clarendon, 1970, p. 855.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 972.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. note 15 above.

<sup>19</sup> W. Lowrie, Art in the Early Church, New York: Norton, Toronto: George J. McLeod, 1969, p. 56-57.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 57

<sup>21</sup> Cf. for an example. C. Kerényi. Eleusis. The Archetypal Image of Mother and Daughter, Bollingen Series LXV.4, tr. R. Manheim, New York: Pantheon 1967.

<sup>22</sup> J. Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, tr., N. Perrin, London: SCM, 1966, p. 125-130.

<sup>23</sup> Could this be because of the importance of the shepherd in "heretical" writings? Note especially Tertullian's objections to the use of the image as decoration on chalices, p. 48-50 of this study. Cf. also note 14 above, Fig. 1 and Fig. 7.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. p. 22 of this study for Tertullian's connection of idolatry and heresy.

<sup>25</sup> For the difference between a goēs and a magus cf., M. Smith, Jesus the Magician, New York: Harper and Row, 1978, p. 68f., and 81f., and J. M. Hull, Hellenistic Magic and the Synoptic Tradition, Studies in Biblical Theology, Second Series #28, London: SCM, 1974, p. 122f., especially p. 125.

<sup>26</sup> Simon in Acts 8:10 is said to be "that power of God which is called Great", but is not explicitly called a god.

<sup>27</sup> This is laying aside the controversy of the identity of Simon in The Pseudo-Clementina. Cf., G. Lüdemann, Untersuchungen zur simonianischen Gnosis, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1975, p. 19f.; cf., also G. Strecker, Judenchristentum in den Psudoklementinen, (Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur. 70 Bd. (5. Reihe, Bd. 15)), Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1958.



28 Anaxilaus was a middle poet, active about the mid-fourth century BCE. In three of his plays he ridiculed Plato according to Diogenes. (Laert. iii.28). The Oxford Classical Dictionary, op. cit., p. 61.

29 For references on the power of the name of a god and specifically the Jewish God (IAW) cf., Hull, op. cit., p. 31f., and J. Trachtenberg, Jewish Magic and Superstition. A Study in Folk Religion, New York: Atheneum, 1977, p. 80f. Although this book deals primarily with Jewish magic, it has numerous references to Graeco-Roman magic as well. Cf. p. 98-100 for a discussion of the use of angelic names, p. 100-102 for borrowed names (i.e., names from other languages or religions), and p. 101 for *nn*.

In primary sources, Tertullian notes in Ad. Val. xvi that Achamoth calls the lord thus: *κίριος χαίρει!*, and in Ad. Omnes Haer. iv, Achamoth calls Horo's by pronouncing the word "IAO". Both words seem to have a power over the one called compelling him to come to her aid.

30 Cf. Irenaeus. (Adv. Haer. I. pref. 2) where he declares he must reveal the Valentinians for the true blasphemers they are, and Hippolytus (Ref. V. viii,xiii) where he wants to expose the root of the peratae heresy, thereby causing it to wither and die. Cf. part iii this chapter, note 42.

## Chapter I, Part II

<sup>1</sup> Cf., Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. I. pref.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson, The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975, p. 171, note 4 and W. Smith and H. Wace, A Dictionary of Christian Biography, Vol. IV., London: J. Murray, 1887, p. 682. They say that Justin made a mistake in imagining the statue dedicated to a Sabine god was erected in honour of the heretic Simon.

<sup>3</sup> H. Dessau, Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae, Vol. II, Berolini (Berlin): Weidmannos, 1902, p. 61-62. The inscriptions are:

#3472

Semoni/ Sanco/ sancto deo Fidio/sacrum/ decuria sacerdot./ bidentalium.

#3473

Sanco Sancto Semon./ deo Fidio sacrum,/ decuria sacerdotum/ bidentalium recipieratis/ vectigalibus.

#3474

Semoni/ Sanco/ deo Fidio/ sacrum/ Sex. Pompeius Spp. f./ Col. Mussianus/ quinquennalis/ decur./ bidentalis/ donum dedit.

#3475

...../ Phileros/ ex decteto XXX virum/ sacellum Semoni/ Sanco de sua/ pecunia fecit.

#3476

Sanco deo/ Fidio/ d. d.

Dessau notes in his commentary to inscription #3474 that this was found on the island in the Tiber River and this is the inscription which Justin read in error.

<sup>4</sup> A. B. Cook, Zeus. Vol. II, Cambridge: University Press, 1925, p. 724 (footnote).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 725.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. note 4. above.

<sup>7</sup> Cook, op. cit., p. 725.

<sup>8</sup> Dessau, op. cit., inscr. #3474, p. 62.

<sup>9</sup> W. Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, tr., and eds., Chicago: University Press, 1957, p. 894.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 895.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Suetonius, The Twelve Caesars. Life of Claudius (Caes V. 25.4) for "Chresto" reference.

<sup>12</sup> C. T. Lewis and C. Short, A Latin Dictionary (based on Andrews' Edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary), Oxford: Clarendon, 1975, p. 328.

<sup>13</sup> Cook, op. cit., p. 726 in the footnote quotes G. Wissowa (in Rocher Lex. Myth. iv. 318) "dass Semo Sancus Dius Fidius in der Kaiserzeit (die Inschriften stammen etwa aus der Zeit der Antonine) besonders als Blitzgott verehrt wurde."

<sup>14</sup> Cook, op. cit., p. 726.

<sup>15</sup> Justin recorded the inscription in Latin. Cf. The Apologies of Justin Martyr, A. W. F. Blunt, ed., Cambridge: University Press, 1911, p. 42. (Dessau, op. cit., p. 62 in his commentary for inscription #3474 notes Justin's inscription in Greek.)

<sup>16</sup> G. La Piana, "Foreign Groups in Rome during the First Centuries of the Empire", Harvard Theological Review, XX.4, Oct., (1927) 183-403, p. 215.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 345.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Suetonius, op. cit., Life of Tiberius (Caes III.36) and Life of Claudius (Caes V. 25).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Justin's statement that he did not know any other Christians in Rome besides his own group, and he always stayed at the same place when he came to Rome, p. 96-97 of this study.

<sup>20</sup> L.-H. Vincent, "Le Culte d'Hélène à Samarie", Revue Biblique, 45 (1936) 221-232, p. 228 note 1: "Gitta est aujourd'hui Qariyet Djitt environ 10 km à l'O. de Naplouse." Cf. Map of Samaria.

<sup>21</sup> Cook, op. cit., p. 724-726.

<sup>22</sup> Emperors were often depicted in the guise of Zeus. They themselves were deified. But common people too had themselves carved as gods; women often had their portrait head placed upon the torso of Venus or Aphrodite. Cf. G. M. A. Richter, "Who Made the Roman Portrait Statues - Greeks or Romans?", in The Garland Library of the History of Art, James S. Ackermann et al., Vol. III, Ancient Art: Roman Art and Architecture, New York and London: Garland, 1976, 177-200, and illustrations 2,3,14,15,21,38-40, 44-47. Cf. also G. M. A. Richter, Ancient Italy, A Study of the Interrelations of its People as shown in their Arts, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1955, fig. 273, shows an "awakening scene" of Mars approaching Rhea Silvia, --both figures on the sarcophagus are portrait heads of Roman citizens.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. also Epiphanius, Panarion, 1.21.3.6.

<sup>24</sup> Vincent, op. cit., p. 221f.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 222. Helen and the twin Dioscuri, Castor and Polydeuces, were all hatched from the same egg. Leda was their mother who was later deified as Nemesis, and Zeus was their father. (Lactantius, Div. Inst. I.xxi; Hyginus, Fabula, 77; First Vatican Mythographer 78 and 204) Cf. R. Graves, Greek Myths, London: Cassell, 1958, 62.c. (All references for Graves's book will be noted under chapter and section, as the author himself does.) Cf. also L. L. Clader, Helen. The Evolution from Divine to Heroic in Greek Epic Tradition, Leiden: Brill, 1976, p. 49.

The presence of the Dioscuri with Helen is attested as Vincent notes by the "bonnets" with stars above them in a bas-relief. These are common symbols for the Dioscuri and likely represent the two halves of the egg from which they hatched. These are surmounted by stars which symbolize their association as gods of light. Cf. M. Narkiss, "A Dioscuri Cult in Sebustiya", Palestine Exploration Fund, Quarterly Statement for 1932, London (1932) 210-212.

<sup>26</sup> Vincent, op. cit., p. 225 and p. 229 note 1. Clader, op. cit., p. 53-54, notes that the epithet Διὸς Θυγάτηρ "belongs" to Aphrodite and Athene, yet is applied to Helen. She goes on to say that this epithet makes Helen "another Greek version of the dawn goddess". Helen is called this when helping mortals (e.g., when mixing the potion for Telemachos, Peisistratos and Menelaos (Odyssey 1 277)). Clader adds that the name links Helen with Aphrodite and Athene who are, like Helen, daughters of Zeus, and applies to her both helping and menacing men.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. C. Kerényi, op. cit., and Clader, op. cit., p. 71 notes that Helen is connected as a fertility goddess at springs at Kenchrai and Chios.

<sup>28</sup> G. Lüdemann, Untersuchungen zur simonianischen Gnosis, op. cit., p. 78.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 72f. Cf. Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. I.xxiii.2 and Hippolytus Ref. VI. xiv, for Helen of Troy and Stesichorus story. For the myth of Helen cf., Graves, op. cit., 28.

<sup>30</sup> J. W. Crowfoot, Palestine Exploration Fund, Quarterly Statement, London, (1933) p. 71 and illustration plate II.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>32</sup> Cook, op. cit., p. 726, fig. 662.

<sup>33</sup> Crowfoot, op. cit., p. 71. Unfortunately, he does not give the inscription in its original form.

<sup>34</sup> In a late report, perhaps gleaned from some other sources, Epiphanius repeats and expands upon both Hippolytus and Irenaeus. He says that the Carpocratians have images in which the likeness is captured "alive" by the use of colour, as well as with gold, silver and other materials. The image of Jesus made by Pilate was in the shape of a man, and there were other images of the philosophers, among them Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle. This intimates that the Carpocratians saw Jesus as one of the great philosophers, and honoured him accordingly.

ἔχουσι δὲ εἰκόνας ἐνὶ χροῶσιν διὰ χρωμάτων ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰ μὲν ἐκ χρυσοῦ καὶ ἀργύρου καὶ λοιπῆς ὕλης ἅτινα ἐκτυπώματα φασὶν εἶναι τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ ταῦτα ὑπὸ Ποντίου Πιλάτου γεγραμμένα, τοῦ ζῆσθαι τὰ ἐκτυπώματα τοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ ὅτε ἐνεδήμει τῷ σὼν ἀνθρώπων γένει.

κρίβδη δὲ τὰς τοιαύτας ἔχουσιν, ἀλλὰ φιλοσόφων ἀνὰ Πυθαγόρου καὶ Πλάτωνα καὶ Ἀριστοτέλους καὶ λοιπῶν μετ' αὐτῶν φιλοσόφων καὶ ἕτερα ἐκτυπώματα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ τιθέντες, ὑποκρινόμενοι τε ἡρώδους καὶ τὰ τῶν Ἀθηνῶν ἀνιζέμενοι μυστήρια.

(Epiphanius, Panarion. 27, 6, 9-10) (Holl)

Epiphanius also mentions a "Gospel of Pontius Pilate," Panarion 29.3.6.

Tertullian interestingly says that Pilate was already a Christian when he did "these things" (i.e., made Christ suffer -- all was preordained)

All these things Pilate did to Christ: and  
now in fact a Christian in his own conviction,  
he sent word to Him to the reigning Caesar,  
who was at the time Tiberias. (Apol. xxi)

<sup>35</sup> In Roberts and Donaldson, op. cit., Vol. 8, there are several late manuscripts relating Pilate's possession of a portrait of Christ. In The Death of Pilate, it is Veronica who has a picture of Christ on a cloth which she brings to Pilate so he could "look upon it" and be healed. The same tradition is reported in another late and historically confused text The Avenging of the Saviour. In this work, Veronica had a portrait of the Lord "on clean linen" which under torture, she was forced to give up.

There is yet another tradition of a portrait of Christ: Abgarus, governor of Edessa commissioned Ananias to entreat Jesus to come to Edessa in order to escape "the Jews", to come to cure him of an incurable disease, and to obtain an accurate description of Jesus' appearance. Jesus washed his face with a towel which left an imprint in much the same way his face became imprinted upon Veronica's linen. This towel Jesus gave to Ananias to take back to Abgarus. The "portrait" miraculously cured the governor, in the same manner as all the other portraits of Christ possessed by Veronica and Pilate.

These stories transform Irenaeus's heretical image into a perfectly acceptable Christian relic.

<sup>36</sup> Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Alexander Severus, by Aelius Lampridius, tr., David Magie (Loeb), Cambridge: Harvard, London: Heinemann, 1976.

<sup>37</sup> The "apostles" usually refer to Peter and Paul, the "Vatican" was traditionally where the relics of Peter were situated, and the "Ostian Road" where those of Paul were.

<sup>38</sup> The connection between "wise" and "gnosis" or knowledge is obvious. The Naasseni, true to their name which comes from "naas" Hebrew for "serpent" considered themselves as wise, that is as wise as the serpent of Eden.

<sup>39</sup> J. Stevenson, The Catacombs, London: Thames and Hudson, 1978, p. 177. Cf. the index under Hippolytus, Roman presbyter and pseudo-bishop.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 109-110.

<sup>41</sup> E. J. Goodspeed, A History of Early Christian Literature, (revised by R. M. Grant), Chicago: University Press, London: George Allen and Unwin, Toronto: University Press, 1966, p. 143-145. He puts the date of the statue between 236 and 237 CE.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. also reference to this dispute on p. 121 of this study.

<sup>43</sup> G. La Piana, "The Roman Church at the end of the Second Century," Harvard Theological Review, XVIII, 3, July (1925), 201-277, p. 255.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 271. U. M. Fasola and P. Testini see the presence of the statue of Hippolytus in the catacomb as a manifestation of the rise of a cult to the martyr. U. F. Fasola and P. Testini, "I Cimiteri Cristiani", in Atti del IX Congresso Internazionale di Archeologia Cristiana, Volume I, I Monumenti Cristiani Preconstantiniani, Città del Vaticano: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 1978, p. 103-139. (Hereafter noted ACIAC)

On the cult of martyrs and burial places cf. A. Grabar, Martyrium. Recherches sur le culte des reliques et l'art chrétien antique, 3 Vols., Paris: College de France (Fondation Schlumberger pour les Etudes Byzantines), 1943.

Cf. also L. Reckmans, "Les Cryptes des Martyrs Romains. État de la Recherche," in ACIAC 276-302, p. 287, and P.-A. Février, "Le Culte des Morts dans les Communautés Chrétiennes durant le III<sup>e</sup> Siècle, in ACIAC, 211-274.

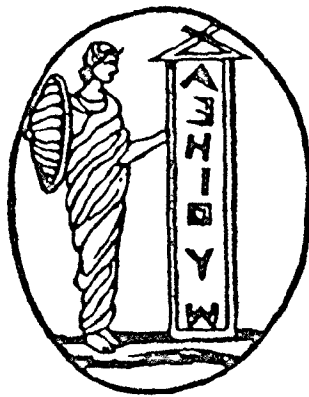
<sup>45</sup> La Piana, The Roman Church at the end of the Second Century, op. cit., p. 254.

<sup>46</sup> H. Chadwick, (tr. and introd.), Origen: Contra Celsum, Cambridge: University Press, 1980. p. xiv-xv. Cf. also Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 134f.

<sup>47</sup> Would this imply that the diagram that Celsus had (assuming he could not read Hebrew) was all in Greek? It is known that Origen could read Hebrew which he demonstrates by reading the Hebrew label on his diagram. If these assumptions are true then Celsus's diagram was likely all in Greek, while Origen's was at least partly in Hebrew.

<sup>48</sup> According to Chadwick, R. A. Lipsius and Hopfner read "seven" (*éped*) to make the passage agree with CC VI.35, but Chadwick reads "ten" (*deka*). Chadwick, op. cit., p. 340, note 1.

It seems to this writer that both numbers may be correct because of an optical illusion, but that the number seven may be more correct and may refer to CC VI. 30.



note fig. 1

Probably a carved gem. This amulet shows a "tower" or column with the seven auspicious Greek vowels displayed upon it. They are shown reversed as if on a seal stone.





note fig. 11

This amulet shows a Harpocrates type figure with a lion's head and "horns" (or rays of the sun) emanating from the top of the head. He is seated on a lotus blossom and holds the whip of authority in his right hand. In his left hand he displays a head which represents the moon. The seven auspicious vowels are arranged above his head. Six birds (doves?) surround him. Below the lotus blossom are further letters OT and IMA arranged to the left and right of the stem of the blossom respectively. The whole design is encircled by the serpent eating its own tail.



note fig. iii

Jade celt, probably a charm or amulet for protection. Likely was not used for sealing. One side is engraved with a wreath of laurel (?) with eighteen leaves. Each leaf is engraved with names of "gnostic" formulae. The other side is engraved with auspicious symbols including the seven magic Greek vowels.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. p.44 of this study for Hippolytus's description of the Sethian manuscript.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Tertullian, Apology, ix. 9-12, Clement of Alexandria, Strom. III.10 and Minucius Felix, Oct. viii-xii and xxxl.1-5.

<sup>51</sup> According to Lewis and Short, op. cit., p. 1266, "onoceotes" comes from ὄνοκετός Greek for "he who lies in an ass's manger". It was used as a mocking epithet for Christ by the heathen. (Cf. Tertullian Apol. 16 and ad Nat. 1, 14) They also note the word "ononychites" from the Greek ὄνονυχίτης "he who has an ass's hoof" which was also applied to Christ. These also would hark back to the idea that the Jews worshipped an ass-headed god, because Christ was recognized by the Christians as the son of that God. This ass-headed god probably owes much to the Egyptian Set-Typhon. Cf. Fig. 10, cf., J. M. Hull, op. cit., p. 30.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 31. "The greatest contribution of Judaism to international magic was the name of the living God. Use of Ia, Iaw and all sorts of variants, of Sabaoth, Adonai, and Jahweh, appear on almost every page of the magical papyri."

<sup>53</sup> Although this entire chapter has been concerned only with the Fathers' attitudes toward art and visual monuments, there is some evidence for the use of art in texts which have been designated by scholars to the "heretical" groups against whom the Fathers wrote. This evidence is explicit in one case, and others are implicit in that charms or formulae imply the use of amuletic objects.

In texts such as The Gospel of the Egyptians (III,2 and IV,2) and Marsanes (X,1) the former tells how to call forth the hidden mystery by the use of "magic vowels" (III,2.44f) and reveals the vowels incorporated in "the great name" (III, 2.66:9f) and the latter discourses on the mystical meaning of the letters of the Greek alphabet. (Both of these texts were written for the edification of full initiates since they likely reveal occult "truths"). The hidden meaning and implied power the manipulation of the letters in these Nag Hammadi texts together with the explicit rites and directions found in the Pistis Sophia and the Books of Jeu strongly suggest that images and amulets with "magic vowels and letters" written upon them were used - images such as those shown in note figs. i, ii and iii below and in Fig. 2.

The only specific mention in any of the "heretical texts that might be interpreted as art is found in The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth. (VI, 6. 61:18-62: 20) The "father" Hermes Trismegistus instructs his pupil or "son" how to preserve and embellish the book which he has just revealed to the initiate.

O my Son, write this book for the temple at  
Diospolis in hieroglyphic characters,  
entitling it 'The Eight Reveals the Ninth'....

The book is to be written on "steles of turquoise" in "hieroglyphic characters". The content is to be "my teaching" and it will be "carved in stone" (i.e., on the steles of turquoise) and placed "in my sanctuary".

Eight guardians guard it with [...] of the Sun.  
The males on the right are frog-faces, and  
the females on the left are cat-faces. And  
put a square milk-stone at the base of the  
turquoise tablests and write the name on the  
azure stone tablet in hieroglyphic characters.

There is astral, astrological and talismanic significance not only in the forms of the guardian figures and the hieroglyphics, but in the very materials out of which the steles are made. Turquoise is a powerful stone which partakes of all the virtues assigned to all blue or greenish-blue stones, and also has influence upon the conjunction of Venus and Mercury. (G. F. Kunz, The Curious Lore of Precious Stones, New York: Halcyon, 1938, pp. 350-1, 108, and cf. p. 226f for Egyptian amulets). The azure stone is lapis lazuli, highly valued and extremely efficacious -- so much so that certain chapters of the Egyptian Book of the Dead (ch. 26) were carved upon tablets of it. (*Ibid.*, pp. 92, 229) The milk-stone is an unknown substance, but may be an opaque white quartz or feldspar.

(On the subject of the 8th and 9th, the On the Origin of the World (II,5) says that "Jesus the Christ who is like the Saviour who is above the eighth and sits at his right..." (II,5.105:25-28) is above the seven heavens, and the church which is in the eighth (II,5.104:30f).

The images of the frog and the cat also have occult significance. The cat in Egypt is associated with the moon and sacred to the goddesses Bast and Isis. (Cf. J. E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, tr., J. Sage, New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962, p. 38) The frog is the antithesis of and protector against the toad, personification of evil. (*Ibid.*, p. 151) It represents the transition of the element earth to water (as in the overflow of the Nile River), and is also associated with the moon in rites invoking rainfall and fertility. The frog, in Egypt is an attribute of Herit, the goddess who assisted Isis in resurrecting Osiris. (*Ibid.*, p. 109)

The numbers are also significant. The number four, the perfection of the cube symbolizes the earth with its four corners, four winds, four elements, etc. (Ibid., p. 222) The number eight is four below and four above, that is an octagon or intermediary form of the square as earth and the circle as heaven. The octagon or 4 x 4 is also the symbol of resurrection or regeneration. (Ibid., p. 223).

## Chapter I, Part iii

<sup>1</sup> Murray, op. cit., p. 315.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 311.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 310.

<sup>4</sup> Murray says they were "orthodox and pious", but by what criteria? Cf. Ibid., p. 310 note 5.

<sup>5</sup> A. Perkins, The Art of Dura-Europos, Oxford: Clarendon, 1973; p.6, p. 32 and plan, fig. 2 on p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> This does not include the "Romanized" production of Herod, which is not usually classed with "Jewish" art with the buildings and objects which demonstrate "Jewish" iconography such as those expounded, for example, by E. R. Goodenough in his Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period, Vols. 1-13, Bollingen XXXVII, New York: Pantheon, 1953-1964.

Most of the Jewish decorative motifs and symbols date beginning in the third century, are later than the initial monuments of Christianity, and most of the synagogue mosaics such as Beth Alpha, date from the fifth century on. Cf. M. Avi-Yonah et al., Archaeology, Jerusalem: Keter, 1974, p. 35, 45, 80-81, 120 and 206-207.

<sup>7</sup> Murray, op. cit., p. 309-311 and notes on those pages.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 311.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. p. 5 of this study for Commodianus quote.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. p. 10 of this study for Clement of Alexandria reference.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. p. 15 and 56 of this study for Tertullian quote.

<sup>12</sup> Biblia Patristica, J. Allenbach et al., eds., Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1975.

<sup>13</sup> The passages break down thus:

Ex 20:4	Clement of Alexandria	(7)
	Tertullian	(8)
	Justin Martyr	(2)
	Minucius Felix	(1)
	Irenaeus	(1)

Ex 20:23	Tertullian	(1)
Ex 34:17	0	
Lev 19:4	Tertullian	(1)
Lev 26:1	Tertullian	(1)
Deut 4:15-19	Clement of Alexandria	(2)
Deut 27:15	Clement of Alexandria	(1)
	Tertullian	(1)
	Epistle of Barnabas	(1)

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 27

<sup>14</sup> Tertullian: 12 times; Clement: 10 times.

<sup>15</sup> Murray, op. cit., p. 308f, p. 332, and 333. The "falling out of use" of the Decalogue by Justin's time is questionable, if, in fact it ever did in the anti-idolatry controversy. Although Justin does not explicitly quote Ex 20:4, he uses it as a pivot in his discussion of Moses and the brazen serpent in his Dialogue with Typho (xciv and cxii). Here he is presumably addressing Jews and using their own law to formulate his argument. That he did not use this sort of material in his Apologies or Hortatory Address to the Greeks (if attributable to Justin) should not be perceived as surprising since those whom he was addressing would not understand the implications of the biblical passage. Instead he stresses "pagan" writers, and how they owe their knowledge to the patriarchs of the Bible, especially Moses who he says was Plato's teacher. (Hort. Gr. xv-xx, and xxix)

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 308.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Justin Martyr's experience in this regard, p. 96 of this study.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. p.105-107 of this study for the conflicts of certain fathers with the bishops of Rome.

<sup>19</sup> Murray, op. cit., p. 308.

<sup>20</sup> For example, Tertullian, ibid., p. 316.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 313, and note 1 on the same page.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Tertullian quote, p. 15 of this study.

- 23 Murray, op. cit., p. 315.
- 24 She includes in this category the Cappadocians whom she sees as pro-art. Ibid., p. 324.
- 25 Ibid., p. 316. Cf. also the discussion of Breckenridge's thesis p. of this study.
- 26 Murray, op. cit., p. 316.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Ibid., p. 317.
- 29 For the minority position of the Fathers and their ineffectiveness cf. p. of this study.
- 30 Murray, op. cit., p. 319.
- 31 Ibid., p. 317-318.
- 32 Ibid., p. 320.
- 33 Ibid., p. 320-321.
- 34 Ibid., p. 322.
- 35 Ibid., p. 322-323.
- 36 Ibid., p. 323f.
- 37 Ibid., p. 330-335
- 38 Ibid., p. 342.
- 39 Cf. p. 67f. of this study for a brief discussion of the problem of dating Christian artifacts.
- 40 Murray, op. cit., p. 342.
- 41 Ibid., p. 309.



<sup>42</sup> Cf. also Hippolytus who wrote that the heresy of the Peratae must be exposed. (Ref. V.viii, xiii) Cf. also Titus 3:11. Interestingly The Gospel of Philip (II,3) puts it perfectly:

For so long as the root of wickedness is hidden, it is strong. But when it is recognized it is dissolved. When it is revealed it perishes. (II,3.83:8-11)

<sup>43</sup> This is perhaps in keeping with I Cor 5:12-13 and the Fathers then concentrated on bringing the outsiders back inside.

<sup>44</sup> This warning to beware of the trouble-makers and dissenters is a thread that runs through all the Fathers' works, beginning with Paul. Cf. Gal 1:6-7; I Cor 1:10, 11:18-19; Phil 3:2. Titus also warns in 1:10 and 3:9-11, as does Col 2:8 and 5:6. Ignatius says the same things in his letters to Smyrna, Ephesus, Magnesia and Thrallia, as does Polycarp in his Letter to the Philippians iii, and xi. On the other side the Nag Hammadi texts The Apocryphon of John (1,2: III,1; IV,1 and BG 8502,2) repeat the same warning (II,2.8:29) and The Interpretation of Knowledge (XI,1) echoes Paul's I Cor 12:12 (XI,1.16:31-35 and 18:28-30) The Teachings of Silvanus (VII,2.62:14-26) warns of him who brings division.

The Didache xi warns of false teachers as does Matthew 7:15, 24:10-11, I John 4:1, I Tim 1:3-4, 4:7 and 6:20-21, Titus 3:9, II Tim 2:16-18 and 3:2-7. The Teachings of Silvanus (VII,4.94:29-95:4; 97:18-34 and 98:5-10 says the same thing and so does a late redactor of Matthew 24:5, 9-11, and 23-24. Tertullian sounds the alarm in Praesc. Haer iv, On Idol. vii, and Adv. Marcion I.1, and Dionysos of Rome notes that Sabellians are among the faithful (Adv. Sab. 1)

But these deviant factions aid in discovering and testing the truly faithful according to I Cor 11; 18-19 and Theodotus the Valentinian as recorded by Clement of Alexandria. (Ex Theo. xxix)

Thus the Fathers and the "orthodox" were not unique in their thinking since the same sentiments, warnings and admonitions are found in the "heretical" literature as well.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. note 2 to the Introduction of this study.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. These selections of Eusebius's Vita Constantini in C. Mango, The Art of the Byzantine Empire. Sources and Documents. 312-1453, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1972, p. 10-14 and 15-16.

- <sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 14 for the Epithaph of Bishop Eugenius.
- <sup>48</sup> Cf. Clement of Rome, Letter to the Corinthians.
- <sup>49</sup> Cf. J. B. Ward-Perkins, "The Role of Craftsmanship in the Formation of Early Christian Art", in ACIAC, 637-652, p. 646-647.

## Chapter II

<sup>1</sup> For a brief discussion of the word "catacomb", cf. Stevenson, op. cit., p. 7f. He notes that the term "ad catacumbas" reveals a Greek original. The Greek *κατὰ κύμβας* meaning "near the hollows" has been suggested as the origin of the Latin term, but that the precise meaning has been lost. The word "catacomb", however, has come to mean any system of (man-made) hollowed-out burial chambers under ground.

<sup>2</sup> For the situation and protection by Roman law of burial societies and their properties, cf., La Piana, "Foreign Groups in Rome during the First Centuries of the Empire", op. cit., p. 271f.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Stevenson, op. cit., p. 7f. On Jewish catacombs, cf. the three volumes on Beth She'arim in Israel, published by Rutgers University Press, New Jersey, on behalf of the Israel Exploration Society and the Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1976.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. The New Catholic Encyclopaedia, F. X. Murray, "Catacombs" (Vol. III), eds., Staff at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., New York, St. Louis, San Francisco, London, Sydney. McGraw-Hill, 1967, 197-201, and P. Testini, Le Catacombe antichi cimiteri cristiani in Roma, Bologna: Capelli, 1966, p. 19-21, Stevenson, op. cit., p. 50f., and G. B. de Rossi, La Roma sotterranea descritta et illustrata, 3 vols., Rome 1864-1877, repub. Frankfurt: M. Minerva. 1966, p. 12-39. Cf. Stevenson, op. cit., figs 54 and 71 and fig. 63 for "BOSIVS" graffito.

- 5 Cf. de Rossi, ibid., cf. Testini, op. cit., p. 26-37.
- 6 Cf. especially J. Wilpert, Die Malereien der Katakomben Roms, Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1903.
- 7 For a discussion of Wilpert's methodology, cf. p.78-79 of this study.
- 8 Th. Klauser, "Studien zur Entstehungsgeschichte der altchristlichen Kunst IX," in Jarbuch für Antike und Christentum. 10 (1967), 82-120, p. 82-83 and 116f. (Hereafter noted, "Studien...", JbAC, etc.)
- 9 H. Koch, "Die altchristliche Bilderfrage nach den literarischen Quellen", Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, NF 10, (1917) referenced in Klauser, "Studien...IX" JbAC, 10 (1967), p. 116, note 90.
- 10 Klauser, in the JbAC Series, 1-10 (1958-1969), and his article "Erwägungen zur Entstehung der altchristlichen Kunst", in Gesammelte Arbeiten zur Liturgiegeschichte, Kirchengeschichte und christlichen Archäologie, E. Dassmann, ed., (JbAC 3 (1974)), Münster, Westfalen: Aschendorff, 1974, 338-346, especially p. 340 and note 19.
- 11 His methodology seems to be similar to that outlined by Panofsky's. Cf. E. Panofsky, Studies in Iconology, Humanistic themes in the Art of the Renaissance, New York, Evanston and London: Harper and Row, 1962, p. 3-17.
- 12 An example of this divergence of opinion on dating can be illustrated in the Catacomb of Domitilla. M. Laurent, in L'Art Chrétien des origines a Justinien, Bruxelles: Societe Royale d'Archaologie de Bruxelles, 1956 who dates it in the second century, and P. du Bourguet, op. cit., who dates it in the third century.
- 13 La Piana, op. cit., p. 365 note 39.
- 14 Ibid., p. 364.
- 15 H. Brendenberg, Discussion on section of "Le arti figurative" in ACIAC, p. 480.
- 16 La Piana, op. cit., p. 367.

- <sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 365 note 39.
- <sup>18</sup> U. M. Fasola and P. Testini, op. cit. Cf. also P. Testini, op. cit.
- <sup>19</sup> Fasola and Testini, op. cit., p. 107 and 125-138. The date when Callixtus took over the management of the cemetery varies by as much as five years. Fasola and Testini on p. 107 use the dates 199 to 217 CE for Zephyrinus, while on p. 125 they use 195 to 217. In Diagram attached to this study the latter date is utilized.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 137-139. Cf. also P. Testini, "Nuove osservazioni sul cubicolo di ampliato in Domitilla," in ACIAC, 143-157, p. 154 and figs. 6 and 7 on p. 150-151 which show the different phases of decoration. The figural phase III he dates to the second half of the third century, p. 154. Cf. also Ward-Perkins, op. cit., p. 644.
- <sup>21</sup> Diechmann, op. cit.
- <sup>22</sup> J. D. Breckenridge, "The Reception of Art into the Early Church" in ACIAC, 361-369, p. 356.
- <sup>23</sup> Cf. discussion on p. 12 of this study and Breckenridge, op. cit., p. 366 notes this too.
- <sup>24</sup> Cf. p. 48-50 of this study for discussion of Tertullian's chalice.
- <sup>25</sup> Cf. p. 46-48 of this study for Origen on the Ophite diagram.
- <sup>26</sup> Cf. p. 44-45 of this study for the statue of Hippolytus.
- <sup>27</sup> Perkins, op. cit.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 1-2.
- <sup>29</sup> E. Kitzinger, "The Cleveland Marbles" in ACIAC 653-675.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid., figs. 1 to 6, p. 654-656.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid., figs 7 to 10, p. 657-660.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., figs 11 and 12, p. 661.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 653 and 656.

<sup>34</sup> The ACIAC itself, Volume 1.

<sup>35</sup> A. Provoost, "Il significato delle scene pastorali del terzo secolo d.C.", ACIAC, 407-431, noting especially p. 413-414. Provoost lists thirty-nine motifs which are most popular in the catacombs in the order of most to least number of appearances. The totals are as follows:

Those which date before 250 . . . . .	144
Those which date between 250 and 320 . . . . .	433
Those which date between 320 and 350 . . . . .	420
Those which date after 350 . . . . .	289
Total	<hr/> 1,286

The number of motifs before 320 is slightly higher than the period immediately after. But on the whole the most active period is between 250 and 350. With the Edict of Toleration in 313 CE and the moving of the political and ecclesiastical capital from Rome to Constantinople the activity whose momentum carried artistic production up to 350, would fall off. Thus, after 350, the catacombs were used less and decorated less, but at the same time the great monumental monuments of Christianity were being raised above ground, e.g., Santa Maria Maggiore and Constantine's foundations in Constantinople and the Holy Land, which date from about 350 on.

<sup>36</sup> W. Bauer, Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity, (trans. by team from Philadelphia Seminar on Christian Origins), second ed., with appendices by G. Strecker, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971.

## Chapter III

- <sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 54 f. of this study.

## Chapter III, Part I

- <sup>1</sup> W. F. Volbach, Early Christian Art, London: Thames and Hudson, 1961, p. 13.

- <sup>2</sup> J. Beckwith, Early Christian and Byzantine Art, Pelican History of Art, Harmondsworth, Baltimore and Victoria: Penguin, 1970, p. 8.

- <sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 9. The description of pastoral or bucolic poetry in Greek is εὐδὸ' ἄλιον βουκολικόν from εὖρος, "outward appearance", and are what we would call today, conceits. (Cf. The Oxford Classical Dictionary, op. cit., p. 786)

Theocritus, active about 284-269 BCE, was the first pastoral poet whose work survives. (Cf. The Oxford Classical Dictionary under his name and sections on "Pastoral Poetry, Greek" and "Pastoral Poetry, Latin". Cf. also A. S. F. Gow, Theocritus, Vol. I and II, Cambridge: University Press, 1950 and A. Rist, The Poems of Theocritus, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978 for original Greek text and translations.) Theocritus placed his subjects in closed landscapes which are filled with peaceful streams, rustling trees beside babbling brooks, glens with effigies of pastoral, rustic gods such as Pan, Priapus and nymphs, and the whole is inhabited by cowherds, shepherds and goatherds. The idylls fluctuate between the mythical and the contemporary and are seen more as myths than a romantic desire to return to the golden age of yesteryear of what could or might have been which characterizes 18th and 19th century romanticism. In the classical idyll, herdsmen are seen as natural poets and songmakers (according to the poets, what else had they to do?) Their instruments were those traditional to the country, the lyre and the pan-pipes.

Theocritus influenced Virgil (70-19 BCE) who produced ten Eclogues (which are extant) on the former's model. Both sets of works praise or protest contemporary socio-political events. (The Oxford Classical Dictionary, op. cit., p. 1123, and under heading "Virgil".)

There are only three other examples of pastoral poetry extant, all after Virgil; Calpurnius Siculus (active about 54 CE), whose seven Eclogues are much influenced by Virgil, the two "Einsiedeln" Eclogues written during Nero's reign, and the four Eclogues of Nemesianus, written in the third century CE. (Cf. J. W. Duff and A. M. Duff, Minor Latin Poets, London: Heinemann and Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1934)

(Loeb Classical Library))

Kittel in the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, under the heading "ποιμήν", states that the life of the shepherd in Hellenistic bucolic literature is glorified as an ideal existence, hence the shepherds are representatives of the "paradisical world". (Cf. G. Kittel, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. VI, Πε-Ρ, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968, trans. and ed. G. W. Bromily, p. 490). I must disagree with such a strong statement. He may have come to this conclusion in an effort to explain the presence of the shepherd motif on sarcophagi. One does not arrive at this conclusion after reading the works themselves, and as The Oxford Classical Dictionary observes, as noted above, the poems and their subjects are conceits and vehicles for political comment. There is, however, no denying that there may have been a type of romantic longing found in the harried city-dweller who yearned for the seeming simplicity of the country. But this could hardly be interpreted as eschatological or "paradisical" in content.

Celsus, as quoted by Origen seems to think that goatherds and shepherds were rather ignorant and dupable (CC I.23-24), and the Eclogues themselves do not paint an exclusively idyllic picture of the life of a herder. There is a definite "pecking order", the cowherd at the top, the shepherd next, and the goatherd at the bottom. (Cf. Rist, op. cit., p. 52, and Gow, op. cit., p. 92). An example is found in Theocritus's Eclogue V where Comatas, a goatherd, and Lacon, a shepherd, who obviously distrust one another, agree to a singing contest after much bickering over the stakes of the contest. One of the points made in the poem is that the herds are not theirs to wager; they are merely hired hands. Calpurnius Siculus, in Eclogue V (lines 82-84), cautions that it is wise for the herder to brand the owner's name on the shoulder of the sheep in order to avoid lawsuits.

<sup>4</sup> Gough, Origins of Christian Art, op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>5</sup> C. R. Morey, Christian Art, New York: Norton, 1958, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> H. Chadwick, The Early Church, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975, p. 277-278.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Justin Martyr, I Apol. xxi, xxii and especially xlvi and lix, lx, and II Apol. viii and x.

<sup>8</sup> P. C. Finney, "Gnosticism and the Origins of Early Christian Art", in ACIAC, 391-405, p. 393.



- <sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 394 note 5.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid. Cf. also note 42 of this section in this chapter.
- <sup>11</sup> Cf. Goodenough, Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period, op. cit., and also by Goodenough, "Catacomb Art" in Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXXI (1962) 113-142.
- <sup>12</sup> A. Harnack, History of Dogma, trans., N. Buchanan, Vol. IV, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1898, p. 304.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>14</sup> J. G. Gager, Kingdom and Community, The Social World of Early Christianity, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1975, p. 49.
- <sup>15</sup> Klauser, Erwägungen zur Entstehung der altchristlichen Kunst, op. cit., p. 343-344.
- <sup>16</sup> A. Harnack, History of Dogma, trans., N. Buchanan, Vol. I, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1901, p. 237.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 235 and 241.
- <sup>18</sup> Cf. Th. Klauser series in the JbAC, 1-10, (1958-1969). Cf. note 15 also above.
- <sup>19</sup> For the Good Shepherd, cf. Th. Klauser, "Studien...I", in JbAC 1 (1958) 20-51; "Studien...V", in JbAC 5 (1962), 113-124; "Studien...VIII" in JbAC 8/9 (1965/1966) 127-170; and "Studien...IX" in JbAC 10 (1967) 82-120. For the Orant, cf. "Studien...II" in JbAC 2 (1959) 113-145; "Studien...III" in JbAC 3 (1960) 112-133; and "Studien...VII" in JbAC 7 (1969) 67-76.
- <sup>20</sup> Provoost, op. cit., p. 407 and notes 2 and 3.
- <sup>21</sup> Murray, op. cit., p. 305.
- <sup>22</sup> R. Bultmann, Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting, trans., R. H. Fuller, New York and Scarborough: Meridian, 1974, p. 177.

23 R. Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, trans., K. Grobel, Vol. I, New York: Scribner's, 1951, p. 171.

24 Bauer, op. cit., p. 229.

25 Ibid.

26 Breckenridge, op. cit., p. 361-363.

27 Ibid., p. 363.

28 Ibid., p. 364.

29 Ibid., p. 365.

30 Ibid., p. 361-362. Cf. Murray's argument for the spuriousness of the Letter; op. cit., p. 326-336, especially p. 331-333 and 335-336.

31 Breckenridge, op. cit., p. 367

32 Ibid., p. 368.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.

35 Murray, op. cit., p. 303.

36 In all fairness to those scholars who have written about art, there are some who have treated the subject of "heretical art". As early as 1854 R. Garrucci published a monograph, Les Mystères du Syncrétisme Phrygien dans les Catacombes Romaines de Prétextat, Paris: Chez Mme Ve Poussielgue-Rusand, 1854. A. Ferrua published Le Pittore delle nuova Catacomba di Via Latina, Città del Vaticano: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 1960, and L. Kötzsche-Breitenbruch, Die neue Katakomben an der Via Latina in Rom. Untersuchungen zur Iconographie der alttestamentlichen Wandmalereien, Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, 4, Münster/Westfalen: Aschendorff, 1976, both on the Catacomb of Via Latina, which some scholars see as containing "heretical" material. C. Cecchelli's Monumenti Cristiano-Eretici di Roma, Rome: Fratelli Palombi, n.d., speaks for itself, being about heretical monuments in general.

<sup>37</sup> E. Renan, Histoire des origines due Christianisme #7, Marc-Aurèle et la fin du monde antique, Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1929, p. 540.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 145 and note 3. For the gnostic origin of art he cites Irenaeus Adv. Haer I. xxv.6 and Origen, CC VI.30.33, and 34.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 540-541.

<sup>40</sup> Murray, op. cit., p. 304-305.

<sup>41</sup> Finney, op. cit., p. 404.

<sup>42</sup> Murray points out that Renan seemed unaware that R. Garrucci had published the "Hebrew" catacomb in the Vigna Randanini in Rome in 1862. (Op. cit., p. 311, note 4) It seems, however, to be the only publication of what could be described as "Jewish art" before Renan's publication of Marc-Aurèle in 1891. (Ibid., p. 304 note 1) It is quite possible that Renan was unaware of Garrucci's paper, or he may have considered it an isolated and, therefore, unimportant incident. Renan obviously could not have known of the mass of artistic evidence for the existence of a Jewish art which has surfaced in the twentieth century as published by H. W. Beyer and H. Lietzmann, F. Wirth, E. L. Sukenik, C. H. Kraeling, E. R. Goodenough (Cf. note 11 this section of this chapter), and A. Perkins, to mention only a few. Cf. also Murray, op. cit., p. 310, notes 1 and 5, and note 4 of Chapter II of this study.

<sup>43</sup> Finney, op. cit., p. 404.

<sup>44</sup> Renan, op. cit., p. 545.

<sup>45</sup> Finney, op. cit., p. 404 puts it in a slightly different way, but the doubt expressed is the same:

Hence a religion which was essentially iconophobic and aniconic was changed; its fundamental character was altered.

<sup>46</sup> Murray, op. cit., p. 304-305 and 309-311.

<sup>47</sup> Finney, op. cit., p. 405..

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

49 Ibid., p. 397, note 8.

50 Cf. p. 39 of this study.

51 Finney, op. cit., p. 401.

52 Ibid., p. 402.

## Chapter III, Part ii

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 91f. of this study for the power in the name and notes 52 and 53 of section ii of Chapter I of this study.

<sup>2</sup> The Gospel of Truth (I, 3 and XII,2) reflecting the New Testament Gospels' attitude toward those who could rightfully possess the name says:

Now the name of the Father is the Son....  
 (38:7) ...the name is the great thing. Who,  
 therefore, will be able to utter a name for  
 him, the great name, except him alone to whom  
 the name belongs and the sons of the name  
 ....(38:24-28)

The text does not indicate what name of "the Son" is utilized, (therein lies the occult significance of this passage), but presumably it would be either "Christ" or "Jesus" or both.

Irenaeus, too reports the power of "a word":

...Alethia looked at him (Marcus), opened  
 her mouth, and uttered a word. That word was  
 a name, and the name was this one which we  
 do know and speak of, viz., Christ Jesus.  
 (Adv Haer., I.xiv.4)

This word "Ἰησοῦς" according to Irenaeus is powerful because it is numerically and symbolically perfect. It adds up to 888. (10 + 8 + 200 + 70 + 400 + 200 = 888) Cf. Roberts and Donaldson, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 337 note 2.

<sup>3</sup> Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon, op. cit., p. 894-895.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Gal 1:6-7; I Cor 1:10; Phil 3:2; Eph 5:6; Col 2:8; I Jn 4:1; Titus 1:10, 3:9-11; I Tim 1:3-4, 4:7, 6:20-21; II Tim 2:16-18, 3:2-7; Mt 7:15, 24:5, 9-11, 23-24. Cf. also Didache xi; Polycarp, Ep. Smyrna v and Ep. Phil. iii, xi; Clement of Rome, I Ep. Cor. i, xlvii; Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. I, pref. 2; Tertullian, Praesc. Haer. iv; Dionysos of Rome, Adv. Sab. i as a few examples.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Apocryphon of John (I,2; III,1; IV,1; BG 8502,2) (I,2.8:29); The Interpretation of Knowledge (XI,1) (XI,1.16:31-35, 18:28-30) which echoes Paul's I Cor 12:12; The Gospel of Philip (II,3) (II,3.83:8-11); The Teachings of Silvanus (VII,4) (VII,4.94:29-95:4); Zostrianos (VIII,1) (VIII,1.131:2-10) and The Second Treatise of the Great Seth (VII,2) (VII,2.59: 19-32 and 62: 14-26) echoes Paul's Gal 3:20 in (VII, 2.64:1-6).

<sup>6</sup> E. Pagels, The Gnostic Gospels, New York: Random House, 1979, p. xix.

<sup>7</sup> Not counting writings such as those by Paul, Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, etc., all of whom wrote to the faithful that they should beware of false teachers and "heresies" there are many of the later Fathers who wrote specifically against heresies. A few of the more representative are listed below, giving both extant works and lost ones. The list is, for the most part, taken from Goodspeed, op. cit.,

Justin Martyr (p. 101-103)

- lost work Against Marcion mentioned by Irenaeus Adv. Haer. IV.vi.2 and Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. IV. xviii, 9.
- lost Syntagma Against Heresies, Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. IV. xi.10 and Justin I Apol. xxvi. 8.

Tatian

- wrote against heresies according to Eusebius Eccl. Hist. V.xxviii

Dionysos of Corinth (p. 123)

- wrote a letter to the Church of Nicomedia against Marcion (Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. IV. xxiii.4)

Theophilus of Antioch (p. 110-117)

- wrote Against Marcion. (Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. IV. xxiv.3)
- Against the Heresy of Hermogenes

Philip of Gortina, a certain Modestus and Rhodo (P. 110)

- all wrote against Marcion (Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. V. xiii.1)

Irenaeus of Lyons (p. 120)

- Adversus Haereses
- Refutation of Gnosticism (?)

Hegesippus (p. 123-124)

- Memiors

Agrippa Castor (p. 123)

- Refutation (against Basilides) according to Eusebius Eccl. Hist. IV. vii.6-8.

Hippolytus (p. 144-147)

- Refutation of all Heresies (Philosophumena)
- Against all Heresies or Against Thirty-Two Heresies
- In Defense of the Gospel of John written against the Alogi.
- Against Marcion
- Against Artemon

Clement of Alexandria (p. 131-132)

- some in Stromateis in which are the Excerpts of Theodotus (Book VIII)
- some in lost Outlines.

Dionysos of Alexandria (p. 156)

- Refutation and Apology Against Sabellius

Tertullian (p. 161)

- Against Marcion
- Against Jews
- Against Hermogenes
- Against the Valentinians
- Against the Followers of Apelles
- Scorpiace
- Against Praxeas

Lactantius (p. 187)

- intended to write Against all Heresies (Div. Inst. IV. xxx.14) and Against the Jews (Div. Inst. VII.i.26) but did not.

Victorinus of Peotovio in Pannonia (P. 187-188)

- Against all Heresies

All these are works written for the most part specifically against heresies. Their relatively large number in relation to other works would indicate a certain preoccupation with heretical groups, and among these Marcion stands out.

<sup>8</sup> For the earliest evidence of Christians in the city of Rome, many scholars cite Suetonius, The Life of Claudius (Caes. V.25) which intimates, that a certain "Chrestus" was in Rome inciting riots. (Cf. p. 30-31 of this study, and note 12 to section ii Chapter I of this study.) Cf. also E. M. Smallwood, The Jews under Roman Rule from Pompey to Diocletian, Studies in Late Judaism in Late Antiquity, Vol. 20, J. Neusner, ed., Leiden: Brill, 1976, p. 210-212, and notes 26, 31, and 34.

The Pseudo-Clementina record a tradition that during the reign of Tiberius (14-27 CE), a man came to Rome, stood in a public place and declared that the Son of God "is even now" in Judaea preaching eternal life. (PsCl. Hom. I. vii; Rec. I.vii) These texts, of course, cannot be counted upon to be trustworthy as historical documents, but if there is, deep beneath the romance of these stories a kernel of "historical" truth, it

is that the Christian message arrived in Rome at a very early date, and that the honour of bringing the news was not given to Peter. The likelihood that Peter did not bring Christianity to Rome is even stronger when it is noted that he is the "hero" in the Pseudo-Clementina who instructs Clement in the true doctrines. (PsCl. Hom. I.xv f.; Rec. I.xv f.) If there was a tradition at the time these texts were written that Peter brought the first news of Christianity to Rome, surely they would claim this, but they do not.

Paul says nothing about Peter being in Rome, although he does list a number of people, male and female known to him personally, who seem to be living in Rome at the time when he wrote his Epistle to the Romans. (Rom 16:1-16) (On the integrity of the Romans list cf. H. Gamble Jr., The Textual History of the Letter to the Romans, Studies and Documents, I. A. Sparks, ed., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977) Since Paul had never been to Rome, he must have known these people from his communities in Asia Minor, Syro-Palestine and Greece. They subsequently moved to Rome. Few if any, would be citizens of or born in Rome. It is almost certain too, that those bretheren known to Paul were not the only people in Rome from the provinces who professed to be Christians.

(On the problem of Peter's presence in Rome, cf. D. W. O'Connor, Peter in Rome. The Literary, Liturgical and Archeological Evidence, New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1969)

<sup>9</sup> Liberianus simply says he was a Christian, Chariton and Charito were Christian "by the grace of God", Xierax says, no, he was a Christian before he met Justin, and Euelpistus and Paeon were second generation Christians having learned from their parents. Euelpistus and Xierax were from Asia Minor, Cappadocia and Iconium in Prygia respectively. It is not known where the others came from, but by this time some could be born Romans. (Martyrdom of the Holy Martyrs, 111)

<sup>10</sup> The symbols for Helen's brothers, the Dioscuri, are two half egg-shell shapes (reminiscent of the eggs from which they hatched?), surmounted by stars which denote their sidereal associations. Cf. Vincent, op. cit., p. 222 and Narkiss, op. cit., and Graves, op. cit., 47 p.

The Dioscuri are also associated with Helen as the moon-goddess. Ibid., 47.3.

<sup>11</sup> Clader, op. cit., p. 68.

<sup>12</sup> Graves, op. cit., 62, 3.

<sup>13</sup> Kerényi, op. cit.



<sup>14</sup> Graves, op. cit., 74.7, and Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines d'après les textes et les monuments, MM. Ch. Daremberg and EDM Saglio, eds., Vol. II.1, D-E, Paris: Hachette, 1892, "Dioscuri", 249-265, p. 255 and fig. 2437.

<sup>15</sup> L. L. Clader, op. cit., p. 39, notes in her discussion of the origin of the name Helen, that ἡλένιον is a plant, and grew in Alexandria. This would connect Helen with Egyptian herbal and magical concoctions and its knowledge of auspicious plants. Clader notes Pliny's reference (NH 21.33) that the plant grew on "the island" from Helen's tears. Hesychius says that it was a plant she sowed to rid the island of snakes. Clader also records Theophrastus's description in Historia Plantarum 6.1.1., 6.1.2, that the plant is woody, has small leaves and a sweet scent. Dioskorides in De Materia Medica 1.29, adds that one of its roots when drunk with wine will help against the bites of wild animals. He does not mention snake-bite, but presumably it is particularly efficacious against this too.

<sup>16</sup> A possible Christian connection between Helen and Christian images is found in the catacomb itself. Helen is standing at the entrance to a chamber with what are commonly recognized as Christian images of resurrection as major decorative motifs within. One of the paintings is of the miracle of Christ raising Lazarus (Jn 11:43-44), a favourite motif found in the catacombs in general, and the other is what appears to be the Old Testament story of the crossing of the Red Sea of Ex 14, but it has become a luminous vision. The situation of both are indicated on the plan in Fig. 12. If the argument for the existence of a "Helen cult" (with or without its association with Simon) in Samaria is acceptable, then this painting of Helen in the context of the other paintings with a Christian content would be strong evidence for the presence in Rome of a Samaritan-Christian cult which might have been associated with Simon Magus, even if he himself had physically never been in Rome.

<sup>17</sup> Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 101.

<sup>18</sup> Epiphanius quotes the Letter to Flora by Ptolemy in Panarion 1.33.7.9 (Holl). English translation, R. Haardt, Gnosis, Character and Testimony, Leiden: Brill, 1971, p. 151.

<sup>19</sup> G. Lüdemann, "The Setting of Ptolemy's Letter to Flora: A Contribution to the History of the Roman Community in the Second Century". Paper read at the SBL Scholia in New York, 1979. (Hereafter noted as SBL (1979)) Epiphanius certainly connects Justin's Ptolemaeus with Ptolemy the blasphemer and writer of the Letter to Flora, which he quotes in full. He does not, however, give us a hint as to the identity of the woman beyond her name. Like the other Fathers, he sees this Ptolēmaeus as a γόης, a trickster and a sorcerer. (Pan. 33,8,1).

... αἱ δὲ περισσότερον ἐλέγον τοῦ ἀπαρτύνου καθ' ἑξῆς ὑποτάξας,  
 παρατήρησαι τὰ δὴ αὐτοῦ φύσει πεδωκαίου φιλία, τὸν γὰρ καὶ  
 γραφέντα δηλονότι τε καὶ δηλητήρια ρήματα, εἴνα μὴ εἰς  
 νομισαίεν ἡμᾶς ἐξ ἀκοῆς μόνον τὸν ἀπαρτύνον ἐλέγχειν, μὴ  
 πρότερον ἐντυχόντα τῇ παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐπαρρησιουργημένη  
 διδασκαλία. πρὸς γὰρ τοῖς ἐρρημένοις καὶ τὸν νόμον τοῦ θεοῦ  
 τὸν διὰ Μωυσέως βλασφημιῶν οὐκ ἀλογύνεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ  
 ἐστὶ ταῦτα.

(Pan. 33,3,6)

<sup>20</sup> G. Lüdemann, "Zur Geschichte des ältesten Christentums in Rom. I Valentin und Marcion, II Ptolemaus und Justin." in Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche, (1970) 86-114, p. 109f.

<sup>21</sup> Lüdemann has argued that Justin's Dialogue list is unreliable in his SBL (1979) paper p.3 (Cf. note 19 above) and thinks that the I Apology list probably originates from the lost Syntagma.

<sup>22</sup> Who was Antoninus? If it were Antoninus Pius, and Marcion and Valentinus were active "for the most part" during his reign, the dates do not work. A. Pius died before Eleutherus took office. No other specific emperor called Antonine corresponds with Eleutherus's dates, unless Tertullian means that these men were active during the time the Antonines as a dynasty were in power, from 138 onward. There is enough historical evidence, not to move Marcion and Valentinus to a later date.

<sup>23</sup> Concerning the date when Marcion came to Rome: Irenaeus says that Cerdo came to Rome in the time of Hyginus (139-142) and that Marcion succeeded him. Justin says that Marcion is even now, while Justin in 150 CE is writing, active. Justin died about 165. Therefore Marcion was active and already successful in Rome before 165 and likely arrived sometime during the post of Hyginus.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. notes 27 and 28 below.

<sup>25</sup> Irenaeus in two places says that Cerdo took his system from the followers of Simon and came to Rome in the time of Hyginus (139-142), (Adv. Haer. I. xxvii.1; III.iv.3) and,

coming frequently into the church, and making public confession, he thus remained, one time teaching in secret, and then again making public confession; but at last, having been denounced for corrupt teaching, he was excommunicated<sup>\*</sup>

from the assembly of the brethren.

(Adv. Haer. III.iv.3)

Irenaeus then adds that succeeding Cerdo, Marcion "flourished under Anicetus" (156-168). (Adv. Haer. III.iv.3) From what Irenaeus says these men were part of a particular Christian community. But Cerdo was not, correctly speaking "excommunicated" or expelled from that community, but after being disciplined a number of times for deviant teaching Cerdo separated himself\* from the community probably taking a few sympathizers with him.

\*This word is closer in meaning to "self-excommunication" or "self separation". Cf. Roberts and Donaldson, op. cit., p. 417, note 6.

<sup>26</sup> Lüdemann, SBL (1979), p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> According to Eusebius, Hegesippus, who claimed to have been in Rome at the time of Anicetus, mentions a certain Thebuthis, who "made a beginning secretly to corrupt it (the church) on account of his not being made bishop." (Ecccl. Hist. IV.xxii) Eusebius adds that Thebuthis was "one of those seven sects among the Jewish people". (Ibid.) Hegesippus's story about Thebuthis is similar to Tertullian's about Valentinus. Since Thebuthis is not mentioned by any other heresiologist, might Tertullian have applied this or a similar story to a known "heretic"? Whatever Valentinus's "heresy" it seems that he was not expelled with Marcion, but left the community of his own accord. He, like Tertullian, left the association of a community which he saw as in "error", seeing himself as upholding the "right".

<sup>28</sup> For biblical passages which explain how to treat a sinner, cf. Titus 3:11; Mt 18:15-17; I Cor 5:9-13; Eph 5:7.

<sup>29</sup> It is certain that the "Victorinus" could not be Victorinus of Peotovio in Pannonia. He died in 304 CE in the Diocletian persecutions. Tertullian died in 230 probably before Victorinus was born. Cf. Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 187-188.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Ibid., p. 159-165, and Roberts and Donaldson, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 56.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., Vol. V, p. 565-572, and Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 172-174.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. p. 63 and 125f. of this study for a discussion of the insularity and uniqueness of the Fathers.

## Chapter III, Part fii

<sup>1</sup> Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 31, says that The Pastor or The Shepherd of Hermas was probably begun in the years 90-100. The Muratorian Canon of about 200 speaks of Hermas as the brother of Pius, and that the book was written during his episcopate (140-155). But parts of it were written long before. Perhaps Hermas was a compiler and not the original writer.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 57 of this study.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 93f.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Chapter I, especially p. 23 f of this study.

<sup>5</sup> Jerome records,

I (Jerome) saw at Concordia, in Italy, an old man named Paulus. He said that when young he had met at Rome with an aged amanuensis of the blessed Cyprian, who told him that Cyprian never passed a day without reading some portion of Tertullian's works, and used frequently to say, "Give me my master", meaning Tertullian.

According to Jerome's report, he saw neither Tertullian nor Cyprian as heretics, nor did Cyprian see Tertullian as one. (Kaye's English translation "Account of the Writings of Tertullian", p. 5-8, of Jerome's Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum quoted from Roberts and Donaldson, op. cit., Vol. IV, p.5.) Cf. also Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 170f.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 119. (Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. III.iii.4).

<sup>7</sup> Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 143.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 120-121 and Irenaeus in Adv. Haer. IV. vi.2 quotes Justin's Against Marcion.

- <sup>9</sup> Cf. p.105-6 of this study for a discussion of Tatian's "orthodoxy".
- <sup>10</sup> Cf. discussion of Ptolemy on p.100 f. of this study.
- <sup>11</sup> That is, who knew Clement's work besides Eusebius? Origen seems to have disapproved of Clement and, therefore, would avoid using his works (although he probably knew them in order to disapprove). Clement travelled widely, but his writings did not seem to have been preserved, quoted or widely disseminated except in Eusebius's Eccl. Hist. Cf. Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 128-130.
- <sup>12</sup> Cf. p.101f. of this study.
- <sup>13</sup> M. Guarducci, "Valentiniani a Roma: Ricerche Epigrafiche ed Archeologiche", Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archaeologischen Instituts. Roemische Abteilung, 80.1, (1973) 169-189, tavv. 47-52.
- <sup>14</sup> Of the Fathers who lived at the same time as Valentinus, only Justin lived in Rome; he does not seem to know Valentinus, he does not mention him in any of his extant writings and, of course, does not list him with the heretics. Would this indicate that the other Fathers who did not live in Rome knew of Valentinus's popularity at Rome, but Justin did not? It seems strange. Surely Justin was not so isolated. Was it only by the time of Irenaeus that the "heresy" of Valentinus came to be recognized? At any rate, Justin does not mention him as either a bretheren or a heretic.
- <sup>15</sup> For example, cf., the discussion of Epiphanius's collecting of information attributed to a "Ptolemy" p.101-102 of this study.
- <sup>16</sup> This probably refers to the persecutions of Decius (250), Gallus (251-253) and Verian (253-260).
- <sup>17</sup> Cf. statistics in note 36 of Chapter II of this study and more information in Provoost's article in ACIAC, op. cit.
- <sup>18</sup> Cf. p.48-50 of this study.
- <sup>19</sup> Cf. p.13-14 of this study.

<sup>20</sup> This "Valentinian" interpretation that the serpent had offered salvation because Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge (gnosis) would resolve the problem of why the "fall" as man's sin was included with other salvation scenes. Now the "fall" is salvation too.

<sup>21</sup> For the illustrated manuscript mentioned by Hippolytus cf. p. 44 and 48 of this study.

<sup>22</sup> For the illustrated manuscript discussed by Origen, cf. p. 46-48 of this study.

<sup>23</sup> For the use of amulets, cf. p. 40 and note 52 and 53 of Section II, Chapter I, of this study.

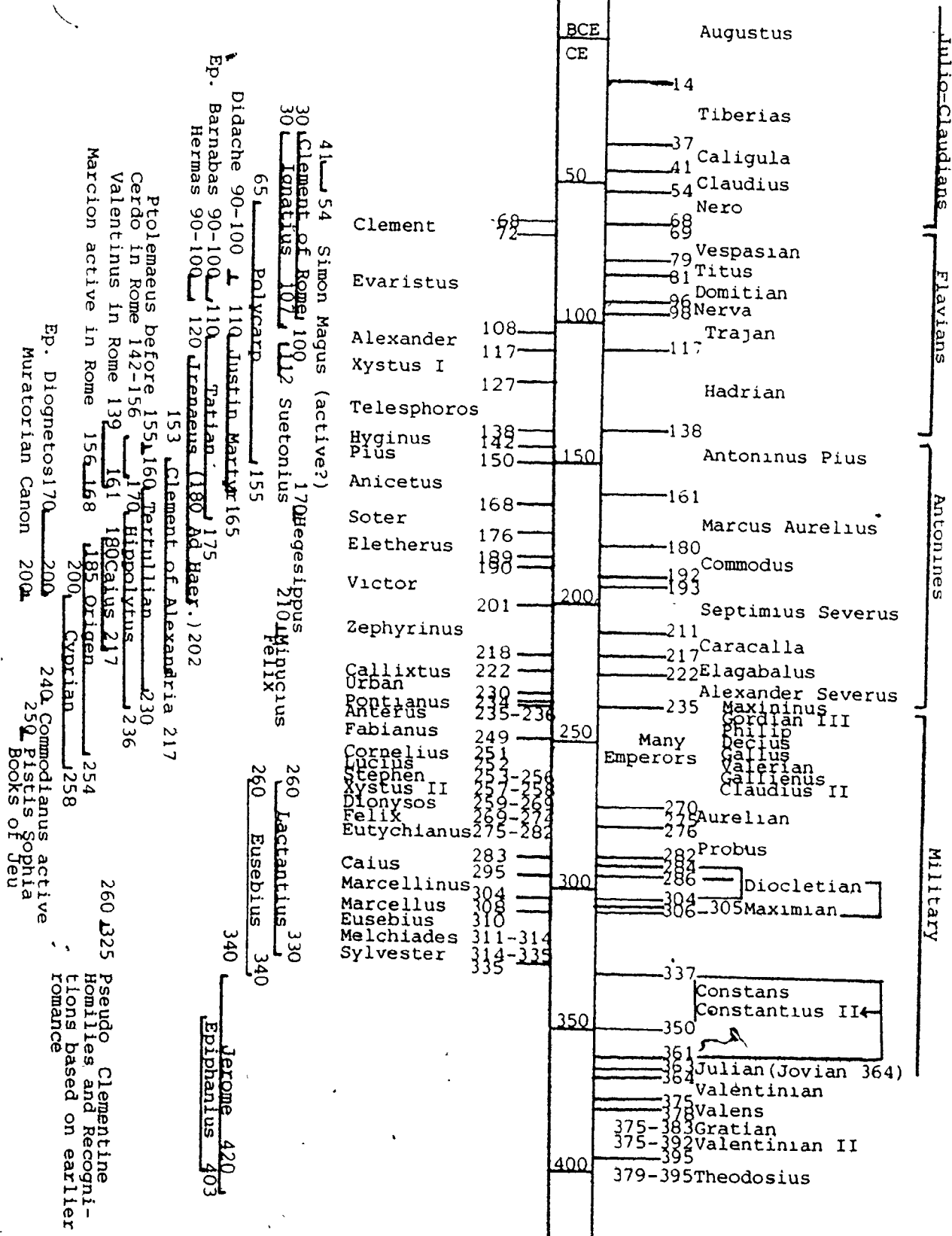
<sup>24</sup> Montanism arose in the middle of the second century in Asia Minor, probably Phrygia. Tertullian championed the Montanists and ultimately joined them later in his life around 220 CE. Léclercq notes that Montanists were readily identifiable because of their use of the formulae *ἔσται αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸν θεόν* and *Χριστιανὸς Χριστιανῶ* on their tombstones. (M<sup>c</sup>Clintock, John, and Strong, James, Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature, Vol. VI, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1969, p. 526-530, and Cabrol, F., and Leclercq, H., Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie, Vol. XI, Paris: Letouzey, 1934, p. 2529-2544.

(There seemed to have been some confusion among the Montanists as well on the spelling and pronunciation of "Christianos" or "Chrestianos" as demonstrated in the above inscriptions. Cf. the discussion in p. 30-31 of this study.

## Conclusion

<sup>1</sup> P. C. Finney, "Antecedents of Byzantine Iconoclasm: Christian Evidence before Constantine" in The Image and the Word. Confrontations in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, J. Gutmann, ed., Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1977, 27-47, p. 27-28.

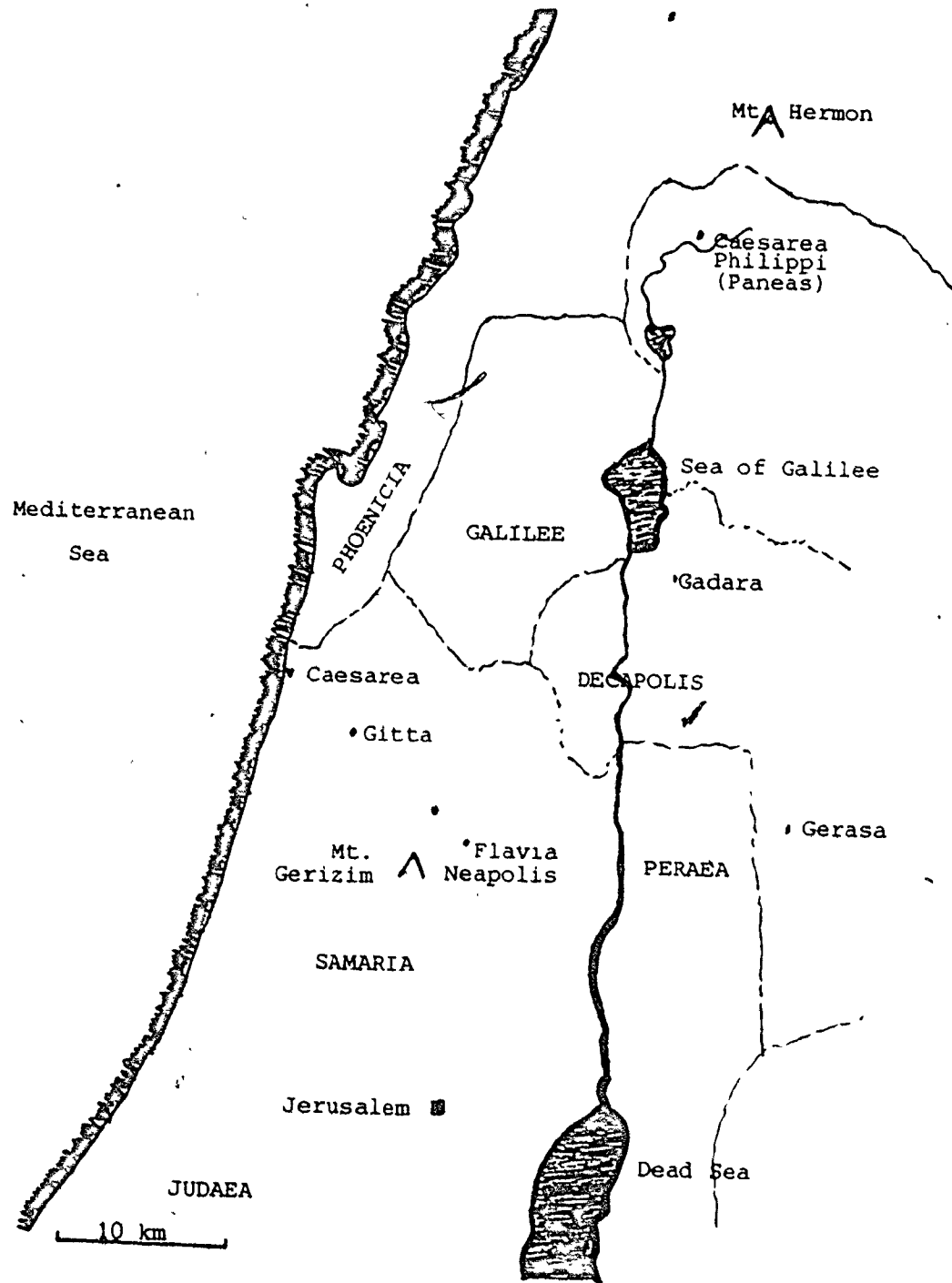
## Emperors of Rome





Map of Samaria

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Map of Imperial Rome  
(Showing the bridges over the Tiber River and  
the Aventine District)

167

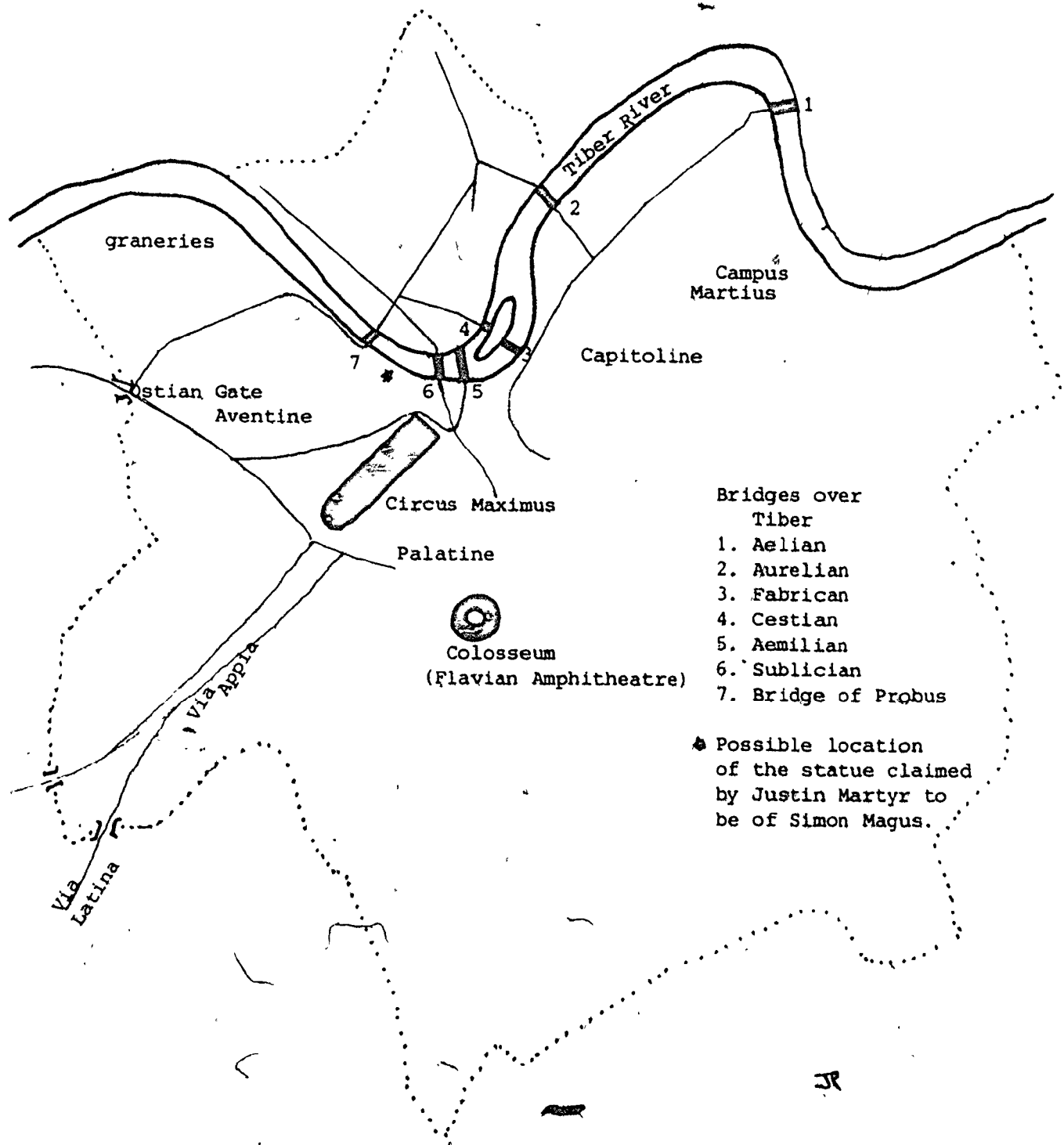




Figure 1

Selection of rings, seals and carved gems with recognizably Christian motifs. They include the ship, anchor and fish mentioned by Clement of Alexandria as well as the Good Shepherd.

1a. Ring with "chi"- "rho" cross encircled by a serpent, flanked by "A" and "W" with "SALVS" inscribed beneath.

1b. Ring with engraving of a stylized fish and acrostic **IXOYC**.

1c. Carved gem of the Good Shepherd flanked by the initials "R" and "V" (of the owner?).

1d. Carved gem with symbols: anchor, fish, dove with an olive leaf in its beak perched on top of a cross beneath which is a lamb, the Good Shepherd, a "shovel-shaped" object and several Greek letters scattered on the ground **X.C.YO**.

1e. Carved gem with symbols in two registers, including the story of Jonah and the Good Shepherd.

1f. Carved gem with a ship's wheel upon which is superimposed a fish.

1g. Carved gem with an anchor flanked by two fish.

1h. Ring with engraving of an anchor and a ship.

1i. Ring with engraving of a ship on water and inscription: **STEFANVS/HELENAE**.

1j. Carved gem of a ship on the water supported by a whale (?). Subject of the two figures outside the ship is Christ helping Peter to walk on the water. Inscription: **IHC/NET**. The presence of the whale would allude to Jonah's salvation from the water.



JR

Figure 2

Engraved amulet in the form of a gem. Obverse: The Nous or serpent biting its own tail surrounds the auspicious words ΙΑΩ and ΠΙΠ. Reverse: Four auspicious words are engraved: ΚΑΒΑΩΟ, ΜΙΧΑΗΛΑ, ΔΩΝΑΙΑ, ΒΡΑÇΑÇ.

All these names were thought to "have power" and are found numerous times on many amulets. Because the words derive from Hebrew does not necessarily mean that these amulets were of Jewish origin or even used by Jews. In magic and sorcery (which is the lesser use of amulets such as these) if the word sounds foreign, it has more efficacy. Hence, the seeming "mumbo-jumbo" found in many magic papyri and amulets.

An example is also seen in the "magic symbols" found in the centre of the obverse of the amulet above.

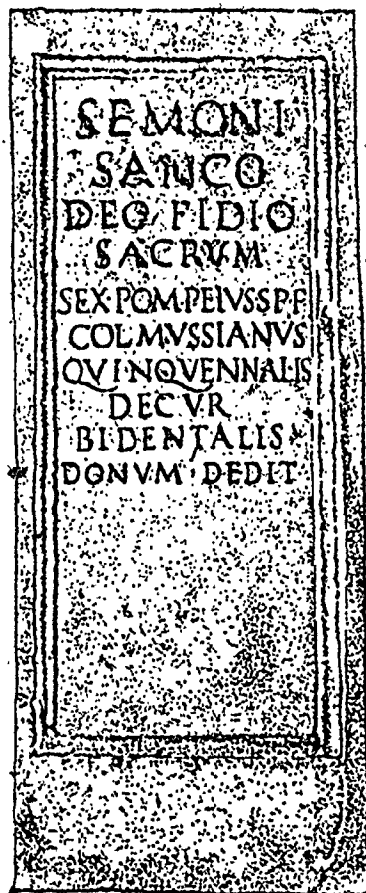


Fig. 3

Marble base for a statue, found on the island in the Tiber River at Rome, in 1574. It dates from the early second century.



Fig. 4

Marble statue of Persephone-Kore-Helen at Samaria. She is heavily clad in a himation and mantle, with a veil on her head. In her right hand she holds a sheaf of wheat and in her left, a large torch, part of which is missing.

This statue was discovered by J. W. Crowfoot during his excavations at Sebastiyeh, the ancient City of Samaria, in 1939. The statue dates from the first century.



Fig. 5

Marble statue of Hippolytus, restored (the head and upper shoulders are modern).  
Lateran Museum, Rome. Early third century.

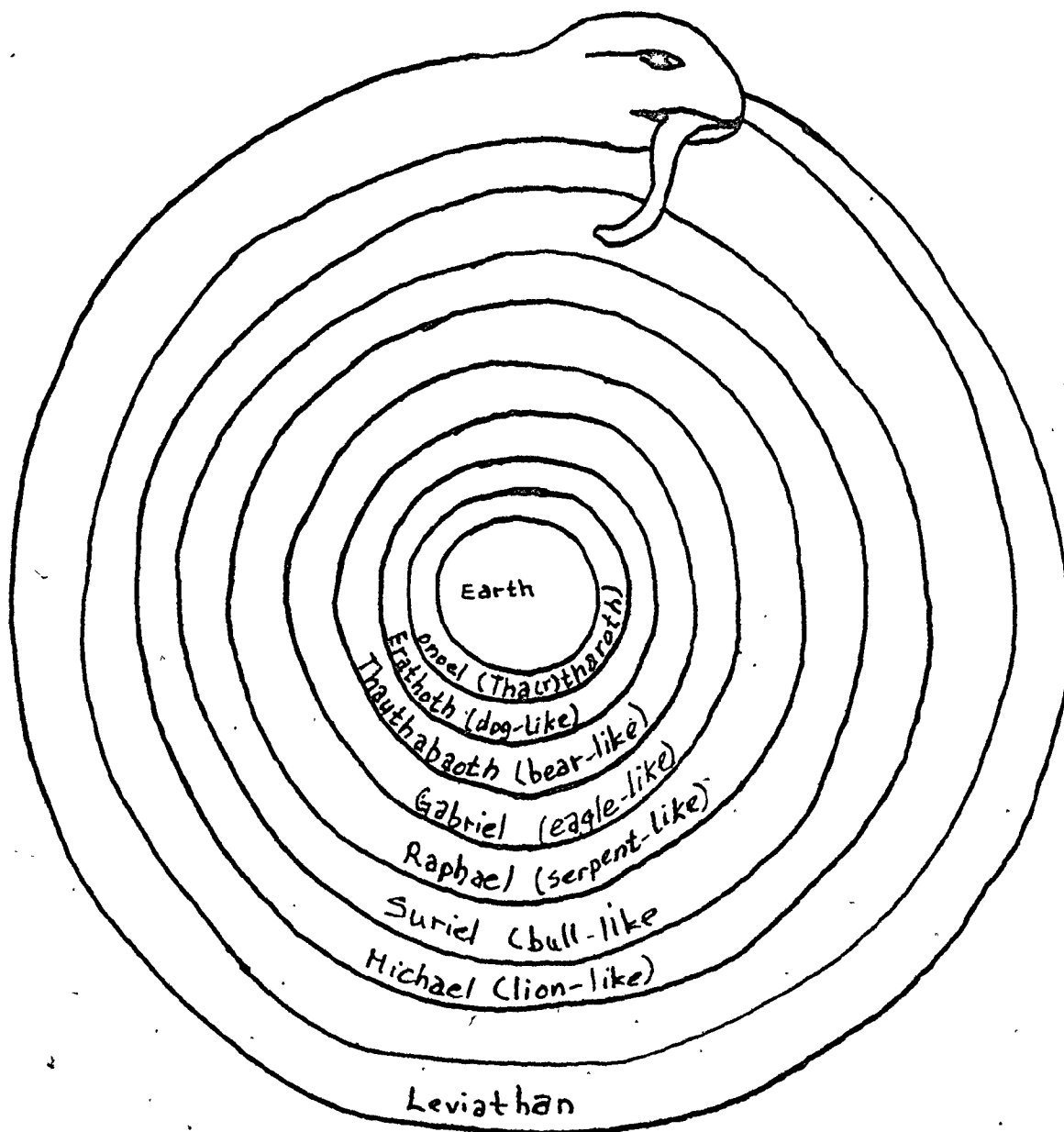


Fig. 6

R

Drawing of possible interpretation of Origen's Contra Celsum VI.30 which gives descriptions of the "daemons".





Fig. 7

So-called Great Chalice of Antioch. Silver-gilt. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. The date is highly debated and ranges from the late first century to the sixth or seventh centuries.

The subject depicted has been interpreted as Christ teaching the apostles. The figures are seated in cathedrae amidst a huge vine bearing grapes and inhabited by birds. There is little doubt that this cup would have been used in an ecclesiastical capacity in spite of the controversy as to its date and specific subject matter.

7

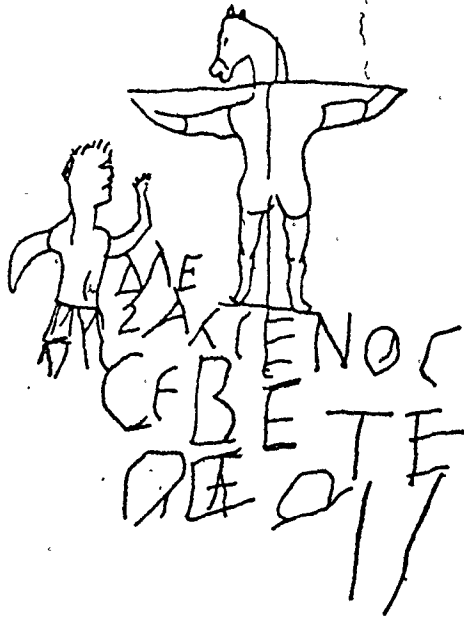


Fig. 8

Graffito found scratched on the wall of a house in the Palatine Hill in Rome. It is likely mocking the crucifixion and Alexander's belief in a crucified man. The asses head would refer to the story found in Tacitus (Hist.V.3-4), that the God of the Hebrews was ass-headed. Since Jesus who was crucified claimed to be the son of this God, the Romans saw him as ass-headed too.  
First to second century (?).



Fig. 9

Amulet drawing from a magic papyrus showing  
an ass-headed man holding two spears (?).  
From papyrus P XII, Kol. xiv, Egypt.  
Third century (?) :



Fig. 10

Carved gem amulet of an ass-headed Typhon-like figure. Present situation unknown. Probably dates from the second-third century.



Fig. 11

Wall painting, entrance to Cubiculum O  
from Cubiculum N, Catacomb of Via Latina,  
Rome. Dates from fourth century (?).  
Subject may be that of the Kore-  
Helen.

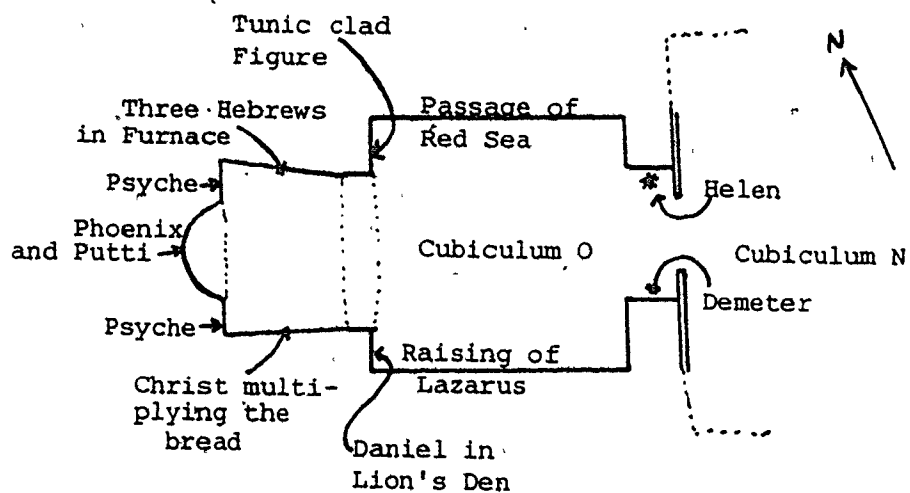


Fig. 12

Ground plan of Cubiculum O in the Catacomb of Via Latina, Rome, showing the placement of the paintings. The "Helen" painting is marked by an asterisk (\*). The dating of this catacomb is debated, but generally is the late third to fourth century.

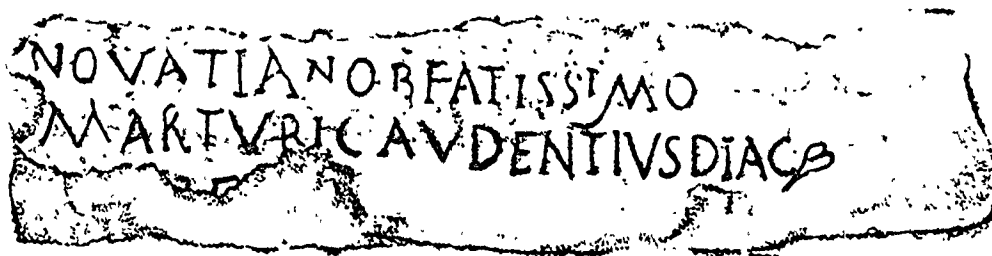


Fig. 13

Marker in situ in the Catacomb of Novatian,  
Rome. Dates from the late third century.  
It is the marker for Novatian's tomb.



Fig. 14

Wall painting, obscure catacomb. Rome.  
Third century. (Photograph of the  
original and Wilpert's reconstruction.)  
Subject is Christ healing the woman  
with the issue of blood.



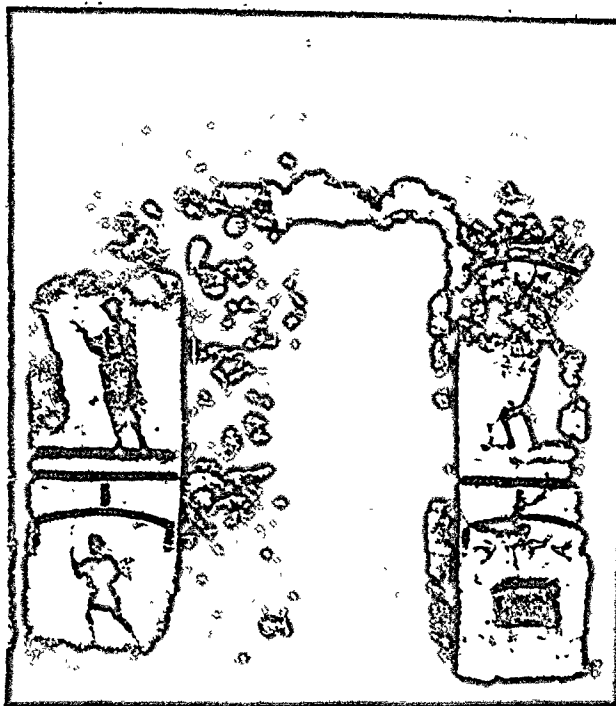


Fig. 15

Wall paintings on an entrance arch to a chamber in the Catacomb of Petrus and Marcellinus, Rome. Dates from about 250 CE.

Subjects are: Upper right and slightly damaged, Christ healing the woman with the issue of blood. Below right, is Noah in his casket-like ark flanked by two doves holding olive branches in their feet. Upper left is the miracle of water struck from the rock (Moses?) except the figure is not the traditional "Moses" iconography. Below left is the lame man healed of his infirmity carrying his bed.



Fig. 16

Wall painting, arcosolium lunette in crypt,  
Catacomb of Petrus and Marcellinus, Rome.  
Dates approximately late third century (?).  
Subject is Christ healing the woman with  
the issue of blood.



Fig. 17

Detail of left side of the front of ivory casket (lipsanoteca), Museum, Brescia.

Date is about 350 CE. (?)

Subject is Christ healing the woman with the issue of blood.



Fig. 18

Wall painting, crypt near entrance of Catacomb of Petrus and Marcellinus, Rome. Date about 290 CE.

Subject is Adam and Eve standing with the tree of knowledge entwined by a serpent between them. They have eaten the fruit, since they hold leaves in front of themselves.

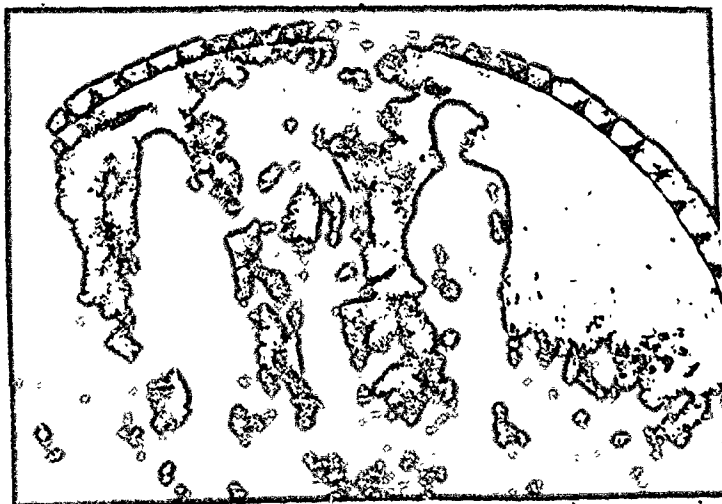


Fig. 19

Wall painting, arcosolium lunette, right side,  
Cubiculum M, Catacomb of Via Latina, Rome.  
Dates from the late third century (?).  
Subject is Adam and Eve standing, with the  
tree of knowledge entwined by the serpent  
between them. They have eaten the fruit, since  
they hold leaves in front of themselves.



Fig. 20

Wall painting near the entrance to Cubiculum A, Catacomb of Via Latina, Rome. Dates from the late third century.

Subject is Adam and Eve standing, with the tree of knowledge entwined by the serpent between them. They have eaten the fruit, since they hold leaves in front of themselves.

Sources for Diagram A, Maps, Figures and Note Figures.

Diagram A, drawn by Author.

Map of Imperial Rome, drawn by author after Shepherd's Historical Atlas, William R. Shepherd, ed., ninth ed., New York: Barnes and Noble, 1975, p. 22.

Map of Samaria, drawn by the author after Shepherd's Historical Atlas, ibid., p. 6-7.

Fig. 1. Selection of rings and seals, after W. Lowrie, Art in the Early Church, New York: Norton, Toronto: G. J. McLeod, 1969, plates 54a and 55d and e.

Fig. 2. Amulet, after E. R. Goodenough, Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period, Vol. III, New York: Pantheon, 1953, #1028.

Fig. 3. Marble statue base, from K. Rudolph, Die Gnosis, Gottingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1977, p. 313.

Fig. 4. Marble statue of Kore-Persephone-Helen, after J. W. Crowfoot's illustration in The Palestine Exploration Fund. Quarterly Statement, (British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem), London, 1933, plate II reproduced in L.-H. Vincent, "Le Culte d' H  l  ne    Samarie", in Revue Biblique, (1936), 221-232, plate VI.3.

Fig. 5. Marble statue of Hippolytus, Lowrie, op. cit., plate 100c.

Fig. 6. Drawing of reconstruction (possible) of the Ophite Diagram with the seven archontic daemons, by the author.

Fig. 7. "The Chalice of Antioch," from J. Beckwith, Early Christian and Byzantine Art, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970, plate 47.

Fig. 8. Graffito of a crucified ass-headed figure, from M. Gough, The Early Christians, London: Thames and Hudson, 1961, p. 89, fig. 9.

- Fig. 9. Drawing of an ass-headed figure, from K. I. Preisendanz, Papyri Graecae Magicae. Die griechischen Zauberpapyri, Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner, 1973, Vol. II, abb. 11, (Tafel II), p. XII, kol. xiv.
- Fig. 10. Amulet, from C. W. King, The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediaeval, London: Bell and Daldy, 1864, frontpiece.
- Fig. 11. Kore-Helen painting in the Catacomb of Via Latina, entrance to Cubiculum O, from P. du Bourguet, Early Christian Painting, New York: Viking, 1965, #104.
- Fig. 12. Ground plan of Cubiculum O of Via Latina Catacomb, drawn by the author after ground plan in A. Ferrua, Le Pittore della nuova Catacomba di Via Latina Citta del Vaticano: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 1960.
- Fig. 13. Tomb marker of Novatian in his catacomb in Rome, from J. Stevenson, The Catacombs. Rediscovered Monuments of Early Christianity, London: Thames and Hudson, 1978, #84.
- Fig. 14. Wall painting of woman with issue of blood, and Wilpert's reconstruction, from Lowrie, op. cit., plate 10a.
- Fig. 15. Entrance to chamber in Catacomb of Petrus and Marcellinus, from E. Bock and R. Goebel, Die Katakomben: Bilder aus der Welt des fruhen Christentums, Stuttgart: Arachhaus, 1961, plate 1.
- Fig. 17. Woman with issue of the blood, detail of left side of front of an ivory casket, called Lipsanoteca, from W. F. Volbach, Early Christian Art, London: Thames and Hudson, 1961, plate 86.
- Fig. 18. Adam and Eve, from du Bourguet, op. cit., #98.
- Fig. 19. Adam and Eve, from Ferrua, op. cit., Tav. LXVIII.
- Fig. 20. Adam and Eve, from ibid., Tav. V.



Figs. to note 53, part ii, Chapter I.

Fig. i. Amulet from Th. Hopfner, Griechischen-Ägyptischer Offenbarungzauber, Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1974, p. 472, Abb. 13.

Fig. ii. Amulet, Ibid., p. 476, Abb. 15.

Fig. iii. Jade celt with magic symbols, from A. B. Cook, Zeus. A Study in Ancient Religion, Vol. II, Cambridge: University, 1925, p. 513, fig. 391.

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Epistle to the Philippians

Pseudo-Clementine Homilies

Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions

The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles or the Didache

Tertullian:

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Against Praxeas  
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