

University of Denver

Digital Commons @ DU

---

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Graduate Studies

---

1-1-2018

## The Power of Resurrection: Early Christian Resistance Through the Rise of Disciplinary Power

Patrick G. Stefan  
*University of Denver*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd>



Part of the [Christianity Commons](#), [History of Christianity Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Stefan, Patrick G., "The Power of Resurrection: Early Christian Resistance Through the Rise of Disciplinary Power" (2018). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 1450.  
<https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd/1450>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Studies at Digital Commons @ DU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ DU. For more information, please contact [jennifer.cox@du.edu](mailto:jennifer.cox@du.edu), [dig-commons@du.edu](mailto:dig-commons@du.edu).

---

# The Power of Resurrection: Early Christian Resistance Through the Rise of Disciplinary Power

## Abstract

This dissertation is an analysis of the spread of Christianity in the first three centuries and the commensurate activation and development of what Michel Foucault calls disciplinary mechanisms of power. It sets out to explore two questions, first, what were the theoretical conditions that led to Christianity's rapid expansion? And second, what were the historical precursors to the mechanisms of disciplinary power? It then seeks to put these two questions together to propose that early Christianity was successful in overtaking the Roman Imperial government because it activated underlying disciplinary mechanisms of power in a world governed and controlled by sovereign power. Through this activation it created a space within which the Christian subject could be formed and envision life outside the sovereign power of Caesar.

To demonstrate this thesis, this dissertation begins with the claim that the idea of resurrection was inherently subversive in nature, and took on a significant, if not primary role in the formation of early Christian identity. Following this claim, it develops through commensurate chapters that show how the idea of resurrection became instantiated in various material and textual forms, and how this instantiation activated disciplinary mechanisms of power. Namely, it looks specifically at the formation of the Christian calendar, adaptation of Christian architecture, theological development of the soul and the nature of the post-resurrected Jesus, and the construction of the Christian martyr. The collection of historically substantive chapters, by necessity, function together. I propose that through their relation they demonstrate a coalescence of mechanisms of disciplinary power on the micro-level of force relations, which thereby constitutes a system that is resistant to Roman sovereign power.

Throughout this dissertation, each point of historical evidence is connected to Foucault's mechanisms of disciplinary power both demonstrate this coalescence and document the long history behind these techniques of power. Further, I demonstrate that each mechanism arises in connection with the idea of the resurrection. This connection, between the mechanisms of power and the idea of resurrection, provides the necessary theoretical foundation to the claim that the resurrection of Jesus is a subversive idea. In short, this dissertation demonstrates that correlative with the rise of the Christian movement was the activation of disciplinary techniques of power which stood in contrast with Rome's sovereign power. It then proposes that this correlation contributes to the explanation for Christianity's early expansion.

## Document Type

Dissertation

## Degree Name

Ph.D.

## Department

Religious and Theological Studies

## First Advisor

Pamela Eisenbaum, Ph.D.

## Second Advisor

Thomas Nail

---

**Third Advisor**

Gregory Robbins

**Keywords**

Christian origins, Foucault, Power, Religious history, Subjectivity

**Subject Categories**

Christianity | History of Christianity | Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion

**Publication Statement**

Copyright is held by the author. User is responsible for all copyright compliance.

The Power of Resurrection: Early Christian Resistance  
through the Rise of Disciplinary Power

---

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the University of Denver and the Iliff School of Theology

Joint PhD Program

University of Denver

---

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

---

by

Patrick G. Stefan

June 2018

Advisor: Dr. Pamela Eisenbaum

© Copyright by Patrick G. Stefan 2018

All Rights Reserved

Author: Patrick G. Stefan  
Title: The Power of Resurrection: Early Christian  
Resistance through the Rise of Disciplinary Power  
Advisor: Dr. Pamela Eisenbaum  
Degree Date: June 2018

### **Abstract**

This dissertation is an analysis of the spread of Christianity in the first three centuries and the commensurate activation and development of what Michel Foucault calls disciplinary mechanisms of power. It sets out to explore two questions, first, what were the theoretical conditions that led to Christianity's rapid expansion? And second, what were the historical precursors to the mechanisms of disciplinary power? It then seeks to combine these two questions to propose that early Christianity was successful in overtaking the Roman Imperial government because it activated underlying disciplinary mechanisms of power in a world governed and controlled by sovereign power. Through this activation it created a space within which the Christian subject could be formed and envision life outside the sovereign power of Caesar.

To demonstrate this thesis, this dissertation begins with the claim that the idea of resurrection was inherently subversive in nature, and took on a significant, if not primary role in the formation of early Christian identity. Following this claim, it develops through commensurate chapters that show how the idea of resurrection became instantiated in various material and textual forms, and how this instantiation activated disciplinary mechanisms of power. Namely, it looks specifically at the formation of the Christian calendar, adaptation of Christian architecture, theological development of the soul and the nature of the post-resurrected Jesus, and the construction of the Christian martyr. The

collection of historically substantive chapters, by necessity, function together. I propose that through their relation they demonstrate a coalescence of mechanisms of disciplinary power on the micro-level of force relations, which thereby constitutes a system that is resistant to Roman sovereign power.

Throughout this dissertation, each point of historical evidence is connected to Foucault's mechanisms of disciplinary power both demonstrate this coalescence and document the long history behind these techniques of power. Further, I demonstrate that each mechanism arises in connection with the idea of the resurrection. This connection, between the mechanisms of power and the idea of resurrection, provides the necessary theoretical foundation to the claim that the resurrection of Jesus is a subversive idea. In short, this dissertation demonstrates that correlative with the rise of the Christian movement was the activation of disciplinary techniques of power which stood in contrast with Rome's sovereign power. It then proposes that this correlation contributes to the explanation for Christianity's early expansion.

## Acknowledgments

This dissertation would never have come about if not for the many people who have influenced, shaped, and inspired me along the way. First, my advisory committee, composed of Gregory Robbins, Thomas Nail, and, most importantly, my advisor Pamela Eisenbaum provided insightful comments, encouraging remarks, a critical eye, and the gift and freedom of curiosity and imagination. Without your guidance, this project would never have become a reality. Thank you for allowing me to undertake such a vast thesis!

I remember also the many professors and students along the way, at the Univ. of Denver, the Iliff School of Theology, and Reformed Theological Seminary, D.C., who counseled, taught, and inspired me, most specifically Peter Lee who encouraged me to pursue a PhD. I also remember the Marines with whom I served in Iraq in 2003, an experience that shaped me and drew me toward the study of religion. I would be remiss to mention the congregations in Longmont, CO and Rochester, NY, whom I pastored through my doctoral process and whose care kept me going and inspired many ideas.

Most importantly, I recognize my family. Thank you to my parents who raised me with love and support. To my boys, Luke, Ian, and Nathan: thank you for bearing with me over the past few years—you three inspire me! In 2005, less than two years removed from combat, my wife, Danielle, sat me down, gave me a gift, and said that she would support me as I pursued my dream of being a scholar. Primarily because of her, I have reached that goal. This work is directly attributable to my wife's support, grace, love, and care over the past 16 years. She patiently waited for me and encouraged me as I discovered myself. This work is dedicated to Danielle, without whom this project would not be possible. – *Soli Deo Gloria*.



## Table of Contents

Abstract .....	ii
Acknowledgements .....	iv
Table of Contents .....	v
List of Figures .....	viii
<b>Chapter One: Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Uncertain Beginnings.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Resurrection as Subversion: The Thesis .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Situating the Method .....</b>	<b>6</b>
The Social-Scientific Approach .....	9
The Postcolonial/Literary Approach .....	10
A Mediate Approach .....	17
<b>Chapter Two: Resurrection as Subversion—A Pauline Trajectory .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Resurrection: The Back-Story.....</b>	<b>22</b>
The Beginnings: Hebrew Bible.....	23
The Development: Post-Biblical, Second-Temple Literature.....	26
The Setting: The Roman Empire .....	30
<b>Paul’s Apocalypse: Confronting the Empire .....</b>	<b>37</b>
The Cross: Rome’s Reality .....	39
Paul on the Cross.....	42
God on the Cross.....	47
A Philosophical Shift.....	55
<b>Conclusion: The Subversive Potential of Resurrection .....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Chapter Three: Foucault and the Power of Resurrection .....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Power: A Primer .....</b>	<b>64</b>
Toward a Definition of Power .....	65
<b>Apparatuses of Power .....</b>	<b>68</b>
Sovereign Power .....	68
Disciplinary Power.....	73
<b>Techniques of Power (or, the characteristics of the individual).....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Instruments of Power (or, how disciplinary power <i>gets going</i>).....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Power and Historical Periodizations.....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Diagnosing Power in the Empire.....</b>	<b>94</b>
The Imperial Body and the Right of Death .....	96
The Roman Body as Target of Punishment.....	100
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>104</b>

<b>Chapter Four: The Shape of Ritual Behavior.....</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Fixing the Time-Table .....</b>	<b>113</b>
Annual Time in the Empire .....	115
Reformatting Imperial Time .....	121
Re-Centering the Week .....	122
Re-Centering the Year .....	126
Time, Power, and Subversion .....	132
<b>Filling the Time-Table .....</b>	<b>134</b>
From Simplicity to Complexity .....	137
Baptism into the Resurrection.....	140
Communal Identity.....	147
Eating with the Resurrected Jesus .....	151
Liturgy, Resurrection, and Discipline .....	155
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>158</b>
 <b>Chapter Five: Movement in the Empire.....</b>	 <b>161</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>161</b>
<b>Temples, Rome, and Society .....</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>The Roman Temple.....</b>	<b>165</b>
<b>Early Christian Space.....</b>	<b>172</b>
The Origins of Christian Architecture.....	172
Partitions and Boundaries at Dura-Europos .....	174
Partitions and Boundaries Beyond Dura-Europos .....	189
<b>Partitioned Space Elsewhere in the Empire.....</b>	<b>199</b>
<b>Architecture and the Movement of Christian Bodies .....</b>	<b>204</b>
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>206</b>
 <b>Chapter Six: The Body and the Theological Imagination .....</b>	 <b>208</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>208</b>
<b>Creating and Watching the Soul .....</b>	<b>210</b>
<b>Theological Adjustments: Fixing the Soul .....</b>	<b>214</b>
The Creation of the Soul and the Rise of the Flesh.....	215
Flesh, Corruption, and the Problem of the Self .....	223
Foucault's Need for the Soul .....	225
<b>Theological Clarification: Understanding the Body (of Jesus) .....</b>	<b>228</b>
With what kind of body did (he) come? .....	230
Theological Clarification.....	240
<b>Narrativial Engagement: Meeting the Body (of Jesus).....</b>	<b>244</b>
The Unexpected Visitor.....	246
The Polymorphic Visitor .....	249
Preparing for an Arrival.....	251
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>257</b>

<b>Chapter Seven: Resurrection in a Hostile Environment .....</b>	<b>259</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>259</b>
<b>The Spectacle of Martyrdom.....</b>	<b>262</b>
Christian Gladiators.....	263
Training for Martyrdom.....	271
Contest of Power .....	276
<b>Care for the Corpse .....</b>	<b>282</b>
Defanging the Resurrection .....	284
Burial Practices .....	287
Talking about the Dead .....	293
Placing the Bodies.....	295
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>300</b>
 <b>Chapter Eight: Summary and Conclusions .....</b>	 <b>303</b>
<b>Summary of the Evidence.....</b>	<b>304</b>
<b>The Challenge for this Conclusion .....</b>	<b>312</b>
<b>Final Conclusions and Contributions.....</b>	<b>313</b>
 <b>Epilogue .....</b>	 <b>316</b>
 <b>Bibliography .....</b>	 <b>317</b>

## List of Figures

### Chapter Four

Figure 1: Temple of Portunus, 3D Scale.....	169
Figure 2: Temple of Portunus, Floor Plan.....	171
Figure 3: Dura-Europos <i>Domus Ecclesia</i> , Floor Plan.....	176
Figure 4: Dura-Europos <i>Domus Ecclesia</i> , 3D Scale.....	182
Figure 5: Dura-Europos Hypothetical Reconstruction .....	185
Figure 6: Aquileia Christian Building, Floor Plan .....	192
Figure 7: <i>Titulus Chrysogoni</i> , Floor Plan.....	193

## Chapter One: Introduction

### Uncertain Beginnings

Early in the first century of the Common Era something radical happened. An idea was formed, a rhetorical strategy was constructed, and a world-changing movement was ignited. The shock in all of this was that the underlying message centered on a man who, condemned to death by the Roman Imperial government, rose from the dead.<sup>1</sup> As with all movements, early Christianity did not germinate in a vacuum. The back-story is a long and painful one of colonization, martyrdom, oppression, taxation, and ruthless imperial rule.<sup>2</sup> The region that spawned this movement was introduced to Roman rule roughly one hundred years before the resurrection; however, the culture of Judaism had been shaped by imperial domination long before Rome arrived on the scene. Consequently, colonization provided the soil in which the idea of resurrection would not only sprout but thrive.

---

<sup>1</sup> My entire project presumes that the authors of the New Testament and the vast majority of early Christian believers thought that the body of Jesus of Nazareth *actually* rose from the dead and walked out of the tomb. However, I will not argue that this is the case, nor is the natural reality of the resurrection necessary for this project. I am not concerned with the limits of religious language and our ability to know whether this event occurred or not; cf. Kai Nielsen, *Naturalism and Religion* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1996), 81. Nor am I concerned with the philosophical debate surrounding the reality of resurrection; cf. Richard Swinburne, *The Resurrection of God Incarnate* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Stefan Alkier, *The Reality of the Resurrection: New Testament*, trans. L. Huizenga (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013). My concerns in this project center on the rhetorical and material instantiation of the belief of resurrection, not its reality.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Richard A. Horsley, *Jesus and the Politics of Roman Palestine* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2014), 54-79; Richard A. Horsley and John S. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements in the Time of Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1985).

## Resurrection as Subversion: The Thesis

How did this happen? How did the idea of a dead man walking out of his tomb gain so much traction in the Roman world? And how did this message foster a movement that would eventually overtake the largest empire of its day? My contention in its most basic form is that the rhetorical force of resurrection contributed to the rise of Christianity and subsequent subversion of the Roman Empire because it challenged Rome's power.<sup>3</sup> But this is not the whole story. The contention that resurrection was a subversive message is not new. Many scholars have claimed *that* resurrection is subversive, as I will outline in the chapter that follows. However, to claim that an idea is subversive and challenges the power of the sitting emperor is not to explain *how* that idea actually functions subversively. This issue is at the core of my project. It is not enough to claim that resurrection is a subversive idea. One must explain how that idea has the ability to function subversively.

As I see it, if we want to be responsible when claiming that the early Christian proclamation of resurrection was a subversive idea, then there are three elements that must be explored. The first is evidence to demonstrate *that* resurrection is subversive; I will argue that evidence comes from the Pauline corpus. The second is the production of a philosophically sound basis to explain, from our sources, *why* the idea is subversive. And the third is a theoretically sound explanation to show *how* the idea can actually

---

<sup>3</sup> By subversion, I am referring to the active replacement of one set of values with another and the subsequent change of government that comes with that replacement. Subversion can be pursued and attempted, and it can be attained—the former does not require the latter. The Christian message and value system was successful in subverting the Roman Empire and its commensurate values, the question is whether or not this success is the result of subversive attempts in the literature of the early Christian movement.

change things in lived reality. In the chapter that follows I will carefully demonstrate how the first two tasks have been ably accomplished by a host of scholars. However, this is not where the major contribution of my project lies. Rather, it is the third task that is absent in scholarship, and it is that missing gap that I will attempt to fill throughout the bulk of this dissertation.

Remaining true to the three elements of a theoretically sound approach outlined above, chapter two will be dedicated to setting the stage for my project by situating it within the scholarship that claims *that* resurrection was subversive and *why* it was so. We will explore the question of resurrection as a subversive idea to see which scholars identify this message as subversive and what justification they provide for this claim. Then, we will take the next step and ask: what, precisely, is subversive about the idea of resurrection? Or, why is resurrection effectively subversive and not, say, the apocalyptic teachings of Jesus? As these two steps have been explored by many respectable scholars, they require only summary and engagement. Only after the stage has been set, and the foundation of scholarship laid can we move into the bulk of this dissertation and engage the missing *how* element, namely, how can (and, as I contend, did) resurrection function in a subversive way?

Ultimately, the pages that follow will present a genealogy of early Christian discourse on resurrection to demonstrate that the resurrection of the body (both Jesus's and the believer's, the latter patterned on the former) served as an effectively subversive message in the patristic period and beyond by activating and employing what Michel Foucault calls mechanisms of disciplinary power in a world dominated by sovereign

power.<sup>4</sup> As such, my thesis is that the activation of a new mode of power (i.e. disciplinary) through the message of resurrection removed the Roman sovereign's right to death. Through this removal and activation of disciplinary mechanisms, resurrection established a space within which inhabitants of the empire would be shaped as individual subjects and enabled to conceptualize their existence outside of the sovereign punishment of the Caesar.

There is of course a lot to unpack in such a thesis. In the third chapter, we will carefully untangle the language of disciplinary power and sovereign power. However, a brief primer is in order, to help situate the introduction in this chapter and survey of resurrection in the next. Foucault's work on power outlines three different modes that, individually, dominate each period of history. Each mode is identifiable by the mechanisms that are used to construct the human self and his or her relation to others and the dominant governing force. The three modes of power are sovereign power, which was dominant through the medieval period to the seventeenth/eighteenth century, disciplinary power, which became dominant in the late-seventeenth/early-eighteenth century, and bio-power, which grew out of disciplinary in the nineteenth century. The first is dependent on the sovereign's honor, represented by his body, and is enforced through corporal discipline, torture, and the sovereign's right to death. The second is dependent on the

---

<sup>4</sup> Colin Koopman, *Genealogy as Critique: Foucault and the Problems of Modernity* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), 2. Koopman helpfully notes that a genealogical approach "at its best involves a practice of critique in the form of the historical problematization of the present." He distinguishes the author of genealogy as a philosopher-historian, rather than a philosopher or a historian. The genealogist is concerned with showing "practices (which are complex compositions of techniques, beliefs, styles, powers, knowledges, and ethics) as emerging in and through problematizations and the reconstructive responses provoked by these problematizations" (101). Through historical analysis, a genealogy demonstrates that present ideas, institutions, forms, and structures are composed out of a complex and contingent history.



corporate body's productivity as they are divided by ranks, and is enforced through internal discipline of the soul. And the third is dependent on the population's health, and is enforced through the control and categorization of life. These three modes of power, along with an analysis of how they relate to one another will be explained in greater detail in chapter three.

My approach to the question of resurrection as a subversive idea will lean on the first two: sovereign and disciplinary. I contend that the Roman Empire was dominated by sovereign power, as exercised through mechanisms intended to restore the emperor's honor lost when an inhabitant of the empire committed a crime. This domination was directly challenged by the message of resurrection and the disciplinary mechanisms of power it activated. But the challenge was not actualized by the message itself, rather, it was actualized when the message became instantiated in early Christian material existence. In other words, resurrection robbed the emperor of his right to death by creating a newly structured sub-group formed through disciplinary mechanisms of power, and in this structure a new human subject was formed—one who did not fear the corporal wrath of Caesar. This is not to suggest that the introduction of these mechanisms led to the institution of a disciplinary society once Christianity gained dominance, it most definitely did not. Rather, these mechanisms provided a space for growth that undermined Roman sovereignty, created a community of disciplined individuals, and, upon Constantinian control, was relegated into the religious life of society in what Foucault calls pastoral power. The rise and spread of these new power relations as an effectively subversive force, through the discourse of resurrection is what my dissertation will labor to demonstrate.

## Situating the Method

The early Christian movement was conceived in the womb of empire, a reality that Edward Said reminds us not to neglect when considering a culture's texts.<sup>5</sup> By this, I borrow Michael Doyle's definition of empire:

“Empire is a relationship, formal or informal, in which one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society. It can be achieved by force, by political collaboration, by economic, social, or cultural dependence. Imperialism is simply the process or policy of establishing or maintaining an empire.”<sup>6</sup>

The origin of Christianity, its texts and practices, is situated nicely between two Jewish revolts, both of which were crushed swiftly and decisively. And yet, out of the rubble of Second Temple Jewish resistance arose a movement that eventually replaced the empire that nursed it and its aspirations of a kingdom of God through the proclamation of a hopeful message.<sup>7</sup> How did a such a small movement take control of the most powerful empire of its time? This question has both vexed scholars and provided fertile ground for theoretical and methodological readings of early Christianity.

---

<sup>5</sup> Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1993), 6–9.

<sup>6</sup> Michael W. Doyle, *Empires* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 45 quoted in Said, *Culture*, 9.

<sup>7</sup> There is a delicate balance to be made here. The Roman Empire provided social and material tools with which the nascent movement could use for its growth. These tools range from travel, relative safety and peace, stability, postal services, maintained roads, religious freedom, etc. But the Empire also produced the society that made the oppressed desire good news and liberation. This balance is captured brilliantly by *Monty Python's The Life of Brian*. In one scene Reg, when explaining the kidnapping of Pilate's wife, proclaims to his group of commandos “They’ve bled us white, the bastards. They’ve taken everything we had, and not just from us, from our fathers, and from our fathers’ fathers . . . And what have they ever given us in return?!” To which members of the group begin to slowly but progressively chime in: “the aqueduct . . . and the sanitation . . . and the roads . . . irrigation . . . medicine . . . education . . . and the wine. . . public baths . . . and it’s safe to walk in the streets at night now,” to which Reg responds “alright, but apart from the sanitation, the medicine, education, wine, public order, irrigation, roads, a fresh water system, and public health, what have the Romans ever done for us?” *Monty Python's The Life of Brian*, directed by Terry Jones (London: HandMade Films, 1979), DVD.

Central to my thesis is the claim that previous scholarship has merely declared resurrection to be subversive without a substantive explanation of how an idea can subvert a living emperor. Or, perhaps better stated, the how question has simply been ignored by jumping from an observation in the New Testament to the historical reality of Christianity's success. But this does not suffice. To answer the how question, we must move beyond the idea of resurrection *qua* idea and ask how this, or any idea is able to form individuals. This, I will argue, moves us out of the realm of ideology and into that of the distribution of bodies and requires a sound theoretical approach to explain how the idea of resurrection can make its way into the material world of early Christianity thereby shaping the early Christian subject in a way that subverts the present powers. Only then can we say that an idea has the power to subvert a real government.

What is important to know at this point is that I am arguing in concert with many scholars who have claimed *that* the message of resurrection was subversive, but I am adding to that claim by showing *how* it functioned subversively; namely, by activating mechanisms of power that Rome did not control and thereby challenging the Roman claim of sovereignty. To get there, however, we must begin by situating my method of explaining Christian expansion within the world of scholarship that has dealt with this question thus far.

Answers to the question of Christianity's expansion can be divided into three main methods: theological, social-scientific, and postcolonial. Theological answers dominated the field of early Christian studies until the nineteenth century. The assumption was that the early Christian movement grew at such an impressive rate because there was something within the message that made Christianity superior to

surrounding groups. This answer was and is, understandably, found among adherents of the Christian faith who see the movement's expansion as evidence for its truth claims. As my work is not a theological work, but a genealogy of power, I will not concern myself with this method. As I worked through the latter two approaches to determine where my method resides, I found myself stimulated but dissatisfied. Each approach, on the theoretical level, contains a flaw that significantly reduces its explanatory power.

For centuries, early Christian scholarship answered the question of Christianity's success by focusing on the movement's internal message and asserting its inherent superiority. It was Edward Gibbon who first carried the torch of explaining Christianity's rise without depending on its theological veracity.<sup>8</sup> And yet in the end even Gibbon resorted to the mystery of divine providence in protecting the early movement until its numbers were sufficient for expansion.<sup>9</sup> With the changing tides of scholarship, new ways of explaining the rise of Christianity have appeared, most notably the social-scientific approach, demonstrated most clearly by scholars such as Rodney Stark and Keith Hopkins.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> H.A. Drake, "Models of Christian Expansion," in *The Spread of Christianity in the First Four Centuries: Essays in Explanation*, ed. W.V. Harris, CSCT 27 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 1–14.

<sup>9</sup> Gibbon's well-known reasons for early Christian success are intolerant zeal of Jesus followers, promise of immortality, miracles, superiority of Christian morality, and organizational success. Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. David Womersley, 7 vols. (London: Penguin Books, 1776–1788), 2:88.

<sup>10</sup> Keith Hopkins, "Christian Number and its Implications," *JECS* 6.2 (1998): 185–226; Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity* (New York: Harper One, 1996). This is not to imply that social-scientific inquiry into the New Testament or Early Christianity was not present before Stark and Hopkins. Rather, the use of the social-scientific method to answer the *how* question of Christianity's rise comes as a fruit of earlier social-scientific research that was employed to nuance Gibbon's early work on Christian expansion.

### *The Social-Scientific Approach*

The social-scientific approach seeks to provide a model that can explain the undeniable success of Christianity that occurred in the third century “*without* having to privilege Christian conclusions about the inherent superiority of their message or the effectiveness of their missionary efforts.”<sup>11</sup> Instead, social-scientific perspectives privilege sociological models of mass movements and de-emphasize what Christians were saying about themselves as a realistic picture of what happened.

The benefit of this approach is found in the heavy emphasis placed on the social and cultural world as evidence for theories of Christian growth. Issues such as organization, leadership, fervor, comparison with other groups, and literacy, to name a few, are used to explain how this small sect grew into an imperial force. However, as Seth Schwartz notes following a comprehensive list of theories about Christianity’s expansion, after we examine Christianity in comparison with other religious groups in the Roman world (e.g. Mithraism, Judaism), we are left to conclude that Christianity grew where its cousins did not because of something within the movement’s structure of beliefs that saw the world as a cosmic battlefield.<sup>12</sup> Sociological trends and observations, by themselves fail to provide explanatory power because they discount the impact of the things Christians were saying about themselves, the ideas. Or, in the critical words of John Barclay, “after all that can be said about social trends and sociological models, a

---

<sup>11</sup> Drake, “Models,” 6, emphasis in the original.

<sup>12</sup> Seth Schwartz, “Roman Historians and the Rise of Christianity,” in *The Spread of Christianity in the First Four Centuries: Essays in Explanation*, ed. W.V. Harris, CSCT 27 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 160.

decisive ingredient in the spread and *impact* of early Christianity is in fact early Christian ideology (dare I say, theology?).”<sup>13</sup>

These critiques, by Schwartz and Barclay, are instructive in our analysis of Christian expansion because they highlight a fundamental flaw in the social-scientific approach, namely, that it too quickly discounts the power of ideas. To be clear, I am not advocating a return to ideology or theology as an explanatory force of social change; however, history seems to demonstrate that we must take ideas seriously when considering the powerful force of the Christian movement in its earliest stages. When we reach the end of the social-scientific road it becomes clear that we must, to some degree, return to the things Christians were saying about themselves to discover a reason for the movement’s success. Our goal is to figure out how that idea made an impact on a social movement.

#### *The Postcolonial / Literary Approach*

Shortly after the rise of the social-scientific approach to Christian origins, a small number of biblical scholars began looking at the relationship between the message internal to Christian texts and the imperial setting in which they were produced. Most notable among these scholars are Richard A. Horsley and John Dominic Crossan. Taking their cue from postcolonial studies and literary theory, the work of Horsley, Crossan, and others brought significant attention to the counter-imperial message found in the pages of

---

<sup>13</sup> John Barclay, review of *The Spread of Christianity in the First Four Centuries: Essays in Explanation*, ed. W.V. Harris, *JRS* 97 (2007): 373.

the Christian scriptures—an approach that has been assisted in recent years by the theoretical work of James C. Scott.<sup>14</sup>

Though the postcolonial and literary approach is wider than Scott's influential work, his distinction between the public transcript and the hidden transcript finds its way, either directly or indirectly, into most postcolonial explanations of Christianity's rise. This is because Scott not only identified a way by which subversive discourse occurs “‘offstage,’ beyond direct observation by powerholders,”<sup>15</sup> he also provided a reminder that though oppressed and colonized peoples may appear powerless (if we understand power as a qualitative, transferable, and repressive entity), they possess a means of resistance that allows them to withstand the cultural force of the empire. Or, ideas of resistance can have force; the one with the sword does not always have the last word. In essence, Scott put meat on postcolonial bones by explaining how an underclass can resist an empire without brute force. As such, even in postcolonial approaches to this question that do not employ or reference Scott, the underlying idea—that powerful and anti-imperial discourse can take place outside the purview of the dominant forces, sometimes hidden, sometimes not—is present.

Scott's distinction has gifted postcolonial critics with the opportunity to go beyond direct genres of resistance (e.g. apocalypticism) and point to ideas, words, and phrases that have often been taken as merely theological and thereby politically innocuous and declare them to be evidence of Christianity's politically subversive

---

<sup>14</sup> James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985).

<sup>15</sup> Scott, *Domination*, 4.

character. The search for these subversive forms of discourse has exploded in the last two decades. Entire volumes have probed the impact and imperial setting of words, phrases, and ideas (*kurios*, *Christos*, *euangelion*, *ecclesia*, *Parousia*).<sup>16</sup> The idea that a message can exist and thrive behind the powerholders' backs has helped scholars identify a host of postcolonial strategies in the New Testament that are used to challenge and subvert an imperial force which include "coded language, co-opted language, imagined judgment, hidden transcripts, mimicry, and flattery among others."<sup>17</sup>

All of these strategies, both hidden and not, do their work behind the scenes in order to resist discovery of subversion.<sup>18</sup> But how deliberate are these strategies and back-alley messages? Did the New Testament writers use this language because they were deliberately trying to formulate a subversive message to undermine Roman power but remain in relative safety while constructing that message? Or were these words,

---

<sup>16</sup> Christopher Bryan, *Render to Caesar: Jesus, the Early Church, and the Roman Superpower* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Warren Carter, *The Roman Empire and the New Testament: An Essential Guide* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2006); John Dominic Crossan, *God and Empire: Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007); Crossan and Jonathan L. Reed, *In Search of Paul: How Jesus's Apostle Opposed Rome's Empire with God's Kingdom* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004); Neil Elliott, *The Arrogance of the Nations: Reading Romans in the Shadow of Empire* (Minneapolis, MN: 2008); Horsley, ed., *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2000); Horsley, ed., *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 1997); Horsley, ed., *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order* (Harrisburg, PA: Bloomsbury T&T Clark 2004); Horsley, ed., *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008); Davina Lopez, *The Apostle to the Conquered: Reimagining Paul's Mission* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010); Adam Winn, ed., *An Introduction to Empire in the New Testament*, Resources, RBS 84 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2016).

<sup>17</sup> Winn, "Striking Back at the Empire," in *Introduction to Empire*, ed. Adam Winn. RBS 84. (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2016), 1–14.

<sup>18</sup> A recent introduction to this topic is made by Christopher Heilig who argues that the reason why the critique is only found in the subtext, is not due to the desire to resist discovery of subversion, but rather to create a counter-narrative that would have been more powerful than an outright, factual critique. An echo, he says, can be more effective than a mere critique. See Christopher Heilig, *Hidden Criticism? The Methodology and Plausibility of the Search for a Counter-Imperial Subtext in Paul* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2017), esp. 136.



phrases, and ideas simply in the linguistic air of their environment and used because they stuck out in the cultural thesaurus? Further, if not hidden, why was *this* use of anti-imperial discourse effective and not another, such as Judaism's long history of apocalypticism?<sup>19</sup> This multifaceted dilemma of intentionality and effectiveness highlights a flaw in the attempt to use postcolonial strategies alone as an explanatory force in the spread of Christianity. Namely, a hidden message is designed to resist discovery thereby weakening its explanatory force to the question of Christianity's success, and the more direct forms of anti-imperial rhetoric had been active well before Christianity and yet failed to produce results. So why now?

Postcolonial reading strategies can help us identify the formation of early Christian ideas vis-à-vis the Roman Empire, but, due to the ambiguity that will inevitably be present when one either tries to identify a *hidden* message of subversion or compares direct resistance with prior forms, the method will necessarily remain in the realm of a description of possibilities. A *hidden* message is, by its very definition, unclear and uncertain, which significantly limits our ability to use it as an explanation for the historical subversion of the empire. We can identify points that appear to demonstrate subversion through hidden or direct means, and we can show that these points present a counter-imperial message when read collectively from a certain perspective, but we are limited when we try to move from mere idea to reality. If these messages of subversion

---

<sup>19</sup> See Anatheia E. Portier-Young, *Apocalypse against Empire: Theologies of Resistance in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011); see also, Joel R. White, "Anti-Imperial Subtexts in Paul: An Attempt at Building a Firmer Foundation," *Biblica* 90.3 (2009): 316–333, who argues that the use of language and phrases by postcolonial critics has proved largely fruitless because of the antecedents of that language in the LXX. However, he argues that the subversive character behind Paul is undeniable when we look at his interaction with Jewish apocalyptic literature.

are designed to be identifiable only to the group, they will *ipso facto* resist the quest of identifying how they are supposed to function subversively. In other words, an obscure message can hint toward resistance, but it can never clearly show *how*, in the material world, its adherents are supposed to challenge the powers that be; if it did that, then the community would be at risk. This self-negating contradiction is a methodological flaw that opens the door for many questions concerning the value and veracity of a postcolonial reading strategy which sees the message of the New Testament in opposition to the Roman Empire and actively seeking to subvert its power.

The historical situation does not help the methodological flaw noted above. As Paula Frederiksen helpfully emphasizes, Christianity was never persecuted for a subversive message per se, suggesting that the message itself was not viewed as a threat to Roman power.<sup>20</sup> Roman persecution of Christians was not the result of a movement actively trying to overthrow the government in word or deed; rather, it was the result of a government seeking to maintain national security through the worship of the proper gods, something Christians did not do because of their opposition to idolatry. This is an important distinction. I am not implying that early Christians did not oppose the Roman government, I am saying that they did not produce an identifiable threat of revolution other than merely failing to worship the gods Rome wanted them to worship and honor Caesar's *genius*.<sup>21</sup> Rome did not burn the bodies of Christians because it thought they

---

<sup>20</sup> Paula Fredriksen, "Mandatory retirement: Ideas in the Study of Christian Origins Whose Time has Come to Go," *SR* 35.2 (2006): 239–241; cf. J. B. Rives, "The Decree of Decius and the Religion of the Empire," *JRS* 89 (1999): 135–54; see esp. Pliny the Younger, *Ep.*, 10.96–97.

<sup>21</sup> Jeremy Schott, *Christianity, Empire, and the Making of Religion in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 48–50.

posed a physical threat to Roman security, a religio-spiritual threat that jeopardized the natural ordering of society, yes, but not physical and not dangerous.<sup>22</sup> Christians were not martyred because Rome feared an armed revolution could somehow be cultivated by its message. Rome was notably tolerant of foreign religions (and in some cases, favorable) provided they did not resist Roman rule.<sup>23</sup> Perhaps recognizing this reality, when Rome began to smell the scent of threat in Christianity, the movement's apologists quickly suited up to demonstrate otherwise.<sup>24</sup>

If the Roman authorities did not detect an inherently subversive message to imperial power in Christianity (which, by contrast, led them to destroy the Druids), how then did others identify the hidden message, join the movement, and use it to overthrow Roman power?<sup>25</sup> Further, how could the ruling authorities, who used ritual and piety for their own power and control and were so attuned to the dangers inherent in ritual and

---

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 71–72.

<sup>23</sup> Tacitus, *Hist.* 4.54, notes that the Druids were abolished because they continued human sacrifice and they viewed the burning of the capital as a divine sign of their future triumph. See also Robert M. Grant, *Augustine to Constantine: The Rise and Triumph of Christianity in the Roman World* (San Francisco, CA: Harper Row, 1990), 18–19; Philip Freeman, *War, Women and Druids: Eyewitness Reports and Early Accounts of the Ancient Celts* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002), 45–46. The destruction of the Druids because of their anti-imperial rhetoric demonstrates Rome's propensity to destroy challenges to its power, even if those challenges were idea-based (i.e. the idea that the burning of the capital was a divine sign of the Druid's future triumph). cf. Simon Price, "Religious Mobility in the Roman Empire," *JRS* 102 (2012): 1–19, for a demonstration of Rome's tolerance to multiple forms of ritual and religious ideas.

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, Tatian, *Or.* 35; Justin, *I Apol.* 4, 65, esp. 12.1, "And more than all other men are we your helpers and allies in promoting peace, seeing that we hold this view, that it is alike impossible for the wicked, the covetous, the conspirator, and for the virtuous, to escape the notice of God, and that each man goes to everlasting punishment or salvation according to the value of his actions." For a helpful analysis of the apologetic response see Schott, *Christianity*, 28–51.

<sup>25</sup> Ramsay MacMullen notes two components necessary for a successful revolt that, if acquired, would make Rome suspicious: millionaires and broad popular support (the *plebs*), neither of which the early Christian movement had. See MacMullen, "How to Revolt in the Roman Empire," in *Changes in the Roman Empire: Essays in the Ordinary*, ed. Ramsay MacMullen (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 198–203.

piety, completely miss a subversive message that was clear to the adherents of the religion and those they proselytized?<sup>26</sup> This is not to suggest that there are not hidden messages that are subversive in the pages of the New Testament and other early Christian documents, I think there are, but the task for the postcolonial method of *not only* identifying those messages *but also* using those messages as an explanatory force for the spread of Christianity, stands on shaky ground because of this dilemma.

Into the postcolonial method steps a more cautioned approach to subversion and early Christian discourse in the world of scholarship. Christopher Bryan posits the idea that early Christian texts were political in the way that the prophetic and biblical message has always been political: “it asserts that there is One who is above all earthly powers, even within their own spheres, and who will hold them accountable. To that One every knee will bow.”<sup>27</sup> There was nothing specifically Roman about the message, Rome just happened to be the empire that was in the way of the prophetic witness, just as Israel, Babylon, and others had been before.<sup>28</sup> The Christian message, then, is political and does challenge the basis of Roman rule, but it does so in the way that the prophetic tradition

---

<sup>26</sup> By ritual and piety I mean the things a group in antiquity did for the gods and the proper way of living espoused by said group. *Pietas* in Roman culture was an elastic concept which is defined by Carlos Noreña as “very simply, the virtue of fulfilling one’s responsibilities to anyone or anything to whom or to which one was bound in any way. . . . in addition to [its] prominent religious aspect, *pietas* also had a critically important civic dimension, especially in the Ciceronian age, as it came to denote the loyal fulfillment of responsibilities toward the fatherland (*patria*).” Carlos F. Noreña, *Imperial Ideals in the Roman West: Representation, Circulation, Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 71–73. Cf. Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion: The History of a Modern Concept* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

<sup>27</sup> Bryan, *Render to Caesar*, 92.

<sup>28</sup> For a related, but slightly different take on this perspective see John Barclay, “Why the Roman Empire was Insignificant to Paul,” in *Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews*, ed. John M. G. Barclay, WUNT 275 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 363–387, who argues that, because of Paul’s eschatological outlook, the Roman Empire is relegated to a place of insignificance. That is, by virtue of God’s action in the world, Rome did not rule, or write history (386).

has always challenged injustice and oppression. According to Bryan, it did not seek to replace Roman power, it only sought to stand against it since it was an example of unrighteousness.

However, Bryan's thesis does not solve the dilemma. While he helpfully situates the counter-imperial message in the broader tradition of Israel's prophetic voice, he fails to adequately account for the fact that the Christian message did, in fact, replace the imperial power; an accomplishment never made by the prophetic voice of the past. How do we balance Bryan's temperate perspective—that the Christian message resides within the larger prophetic movement of Israel and was therefore not a legitimate physical threat to Rome—with the reality that there was something subversive within the message that actually made it work in a way that the prophetic tradition of the past did not?

#### *A Mediate Approach*

We are stuck, then, with two methods seeking to explain how such a small movement could take control of the world's most powerful empire of its time: the social-scientific approach which rests on mechanisms, numbers, and social movements; and the postcolonial approach which rests on a subversive message found within the pages of the Christian scriptures. However, both have flaws that limit their respective potential for having explanatory force. The social-scientific approach fails to account for the power intrinsic to the message, and the postcolonial approach lacks the ability to explain how the message could move into the material existence of early Christianity and thereby challenge the empire. That is, there appears to be a disconnect between the study of the subversive message of the New Testament and the study of mechanisms in early Christian expansion. What we need is an answer to this question that puts these two

methods in concert with one another, affirming the counter-imperial nature of the message and the importance of that idea, along with demonstrating how that idea shaped the social and material conditions to drive the movement.

To be clear, there are many biblical scholars who use social-scientific methods to study the message of the Bible, and there are many social-scientific scholars of early Christianity who use the Bible as textual evidence. The disconnect is not found in interdisciplinary work between the two approaches, rather, the disconnect is methodological—how is the subversive message of the New Testament related to the mechanisms that shaped early Christian expansion? The closest I have found is Claudia Setzer’s work on the resurrection wherein she uses Keith Hopkins’ research on Christianity as “small, scattered cells which had few literate members, but absorbed outsiders as new members at a rapid rate” as evidence that faith statements were an effective way to define group membership and assimilate newcomers.<sup>29</sup> But in this approach the message is simply facilitated by a social observation, there is no organic connection between the counter-imperial message of resurrection, and the small, scattered nature of early Christian communities—the latter just “happens to be” and the former fits nicely into that reality.

My thesis, in contrast, brings message and mechanism together in an organic relationship. It relies upon the counter-imperial message of resurrection in early Christian texts, but also recognizes the need to identify how that message produced social and material mechanisms to explain this phenomenon. This results in the conclusion that

---

<sup>29</sup> Claudia Setzer, *Resurrection of the Body in Early Judaism and Early Christianity* (Boston: Brill Academics, 2004), 134–135.

through the proclamation of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus there was not only a prophetic voice against violence, oppression, and injustice, there was also a resurrected body that began to re-shape the way people saw and responded to Roman power.

Resurrection did not simply speak against Roman power and injustice, it undermined it by reversing its judgment of Jesus and it did so by embedding that subversive critique into the ways by which Christians moved throughout the empire.

The counter-imperial implications of the resurrection of Jesus's body were vital to the early Christian message and movement. Because this message was so vital to the movement, the idea of resurrection became instantiated in material and social forms and thereby shaped the lived existence of early Christians through it. It did this by commensurately inciting new (or underlying) mechanisms of power, thus undermining the power that upheld Roman control. This dissertation will unfold by examining the instantiation of the idea and activation of the mechanisms. Following a chapter dedicated to the historical development of the idea of resurrection, and a chapter dedicated to an analysis of Foucault's theory of power, four chapters will explore the historical data necessary to prove my claim. We will see how resurrection was embedded in early calendar and liturgical debates (chapter four), architectural arrangements (chapter five), formation of the theological imagination (chapter six), and ideas and practices surrounding death and dying (chapter seven). And we will see how these connections activated disciplinary mechanisms of power in the formation of the Christian subject.

All of this is to say that the bulk of this dissertation will demonstrate *how* the message of resurrection was received in a way that shaped early Christian existence and subjectivity through mechanisms of power. However, it is important we begin by

addressing the underlying assumption *that* resurrection is a political statement; something I have assumed up to this point, and an assumption not unique to me. This requires we flesh out the political message of resurrection as found on the pages of the New Testament and situated in the Roman Imperial world.



## Chapter Two: Resurrection as Subversion—A Pauline Trajectory

### Introduction

Sometime near the beginning of the third century CE, likely by the cover of night, a Roman was on the Palatine Hill, near the imperial residence holding a sharp tool. He brought this tool with him to make a statement about a man, Alexamenos, who he clearly did not think very highly of. Once he found the right spot to make his public statement, he put the point of that tool into the stone and began to scrawl away.

His sloppy portrait and letters probably did not take much time to complete, but they certainly evinced a laugh when he stepped back to view his masterpiece. There, preserved on the Palatine wall for all to see, was Alexamenos paying homage to a donkey-headed, naked man on a cross—“Alexamenos worships god.”<sup>30</sup> But what is particularly shocking about this roughly one-foot-tall graffito is the absence of others like it. Christians, prior to the time of Constantine, rarely used the cross as a pictorial definition of their identity, and when they did, the cross they employed was empty.<sup>31</sup> The Alexamenos graffito, along with the scarcity of cross images and the empty nature of those images when found highlights an important and well-recognized aspect of early

---

<sup>30</sup> Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price, *Religions of Rome*, vol. 2 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 57–58.

<sup>31</sup> While it is generally true that cross was not a prominent symbol of early Christian identity, Richard Longnecker has largely disproven the idea that the cross was entirely absent as a Christian symbol prior to Constantine’s adaptation of the symbol for political purposes. However, it is important to note that all of Longnecker’s evidence, with the exception of the highly contested bloodstone gem *apotropaion*, contain depictions of empty crosses to symbolize resurrection rather than death. See Bruce W. Longnecker, *The Cross Before Constantine: The Early Life of a Christian Symbol* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015).

Christian identity. Namely, Jesus is remembered as victor over death, not victim of it.

And yet from the perspective of our artist at the Palatine Hill, Christians were ridiculous because their god was shamed by the empire.

This contrast, of victor or victim, helpfully demonstrates the relationship between resurrection and empire. In pagan eyes, Jesus was just another failed insurgent, but in Christian eyes he was an example of God's power. It stands as no surprise, then, that resurrection came to dominate early Christian identity formation. The earliest creeds, debates, and texts all bear witness to this reality. Yet when we look at the ways by which early Christians articulated the doctrine and importance of resurrection we find no explanations or justifications for the idea's genesis. It just, simply, is. In fact, when written into early Christian scripture it is presented as an idea that flows naturally from the Hebrew Bible as if it were always there. The problem is, however, when we meet the idea of resurrection in early Christian discourse, we meet an idea near the end of a long, jagged path that began centuries before. This chapter will set out to briefly uncover that path, and in so doing, demonstrate the complicated relationship between crucifixion, resurrection, and empire. By uncovering this path, we will understand why it functions in a counter-imperial way, and how it has the capacity to carry a subversive message.

### **Resurrection: The Back-Story**

Resurrection finds its first solid footing in Judaism's post-biblical literature as a message of God's faithfulness in the face of human oppression. Reference to the resurrection in the Hebrew Bible is faint, at best, even though its pages are littered with

eschatological ideas of the restoration of a remnant and the establishment of justice.<sup>32</sup> As we will see, when the idea is found in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple literature of Judaism, it is situated exclusively in times of great distress, oppression, and injustice, and it is almost always a product of apocalyptic literature.<sup>33</sup> This context, I believe, is not coincidental.

*The Beginnings: Resurrection in the Hebrew Bible*

When examining the beginning of the Jewish idea of resurrection attention is normally directed to Daniel 12, the most unambiguous reference to the dead rising again in the canon. But where did that idea come from? Daniel 12 and the idea of resurrection did not arise in a vacuum, rather, it is simply one step (albeit a more identifiable step) on the long, jagged path of the idea's articulation in Judaism and its texts.<sup>34</sup> In other words, Daniel 12, as Jon Levenson reminds us, is a passage dripping with intertextual references

---

<sup>32</sup> See Rolf Rendtorff, *The Canonical Hebrew Bible: A Theology of the Old Testament* (Leiderdorp, The Netherlands: Deo Publishing, 2005), 701–715, wherein he describes the eschatological hope of Israel as centered on the Day of the Lord as a day to bring restoration to all that has been disturbed through injustice. Cf. Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. 2, trans. D.M.G. Stalker (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1965), 350, “The idea that God will provide a resurrection from the dead of his own people is found in it only peripherally.”; Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 483, “Only late and rarely does Israel extend its lyric of hope beyond death to life resumed after death.”; Robert Martin-Achard, *From Death to Life: A Study of the Development of the Doctrine of the Resurrection in the Old Testament*, trans. John Penney Smith (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), 188.

<sup>33</sup> Walter Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, trans. J. A. Baker, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), 2.505–508; Gerhard F. Hasel, “Resurrection in the Theology of the Old Testament Apocalyptic,” *ZAW* 92.2 (1980): 267–284.

<sup>34</sup> My reading of resurrection's development is dependent on Jon Levenson who argues that “the resurrection of the dead did not appear as a jarring innovation in Second Temple Judaism but instead developed slowly and unevenly over the preceding centuries. Growing out of the convergence of a number of biblical themes, it drew, most centrally, on the long-standing conviction that God would yet again prove faithful to his promise of life for his people and that he had the stupendous might it would take to do so.” Jon Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel: The Ultimate Victory of the God of Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), xiii.

scattered throughout the Hebrew Bible.<sup>35</sup> Thus, to identify the start of this idea we must pursue the antecedents of Daniel 12.

Levenson first points to Is 52.12–53.12 wherein we find a hint of vindication and restoration to life for the servant of the Lord, and Is 26.13–19 which contains a cry for the reversal of death as a message to national Israel. These passages do not furnish enough evidence to definitively conclude that individual bodily resurrection was developed at this point, but they do provide enough fuel to ignite the idea that bursts open in Dan 12.<sup>36</sup> But there is more to the story; these antecedents have their own echoes, as John Day argues, in Hosea chs. 5–6 and 13–14.<sup>37</sup> Day convincingly builds the case that the seeds of resurrection belief in the Hebrew Bible were laid during a time of political crisis where the idea of the dead rising again was employed to communicate the restoration of Israel to covenant fidelity (Hos 6.13) and therefore international prominence.<sup>38</sup> At this point in the history of Israel, resurrection is not clearly articulated or defined. In fact, in Hosea proper it is unquestionably used to describe the resurrection of the nation from their covenant infidelity rather than an individual body from the dead. However, though the idea of the resurrection of the body is not definitively formed by Hosea or Isaiah, the

---

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 185–193.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 201–204.

<sup>37</sup> John Day, “A Case of Inner Scriptural Interpretation: The Dependence of Isaiah xxvi.13–xxvii.11 on Hosea xiii.4–xiv.10 (Eng. 9) and Its Relevance to Some Theories of the Redaction of the ‘Isaiah Apocalypse’,” *JTS* 31 (1980): 309–19; Day, “The Development of Belief in Life after Death in Ancient Israel,” in *After the Exile. Essays in Honour of Rex Mason*, eds. John Barton and David J. Reimer (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996), 240–248.

<sup>38</sup> Émile Puech, *La Croyance des Esséniens en la Vie Future: Immortalité, Résurrection, Vie Éternelle?: Histoire d’une Croyance dans le Judaïsme Ancien*, 2 vols., *EBib* 21 (Paris: Librairie LeCoffre, 1993), 1.39. Puech, like Day and Levenson, sees Hosea 6:1–3 as the first point in the Hebrew Bible that is then interpreted in later texts through the lens of bodily resurrection.

seeds for the idea encased in the hope of vindication and justice after death, were being sowed during this time, in the mid-eighth century BCE, when the political stability of Israel was being violently shaken by the tremors of international politics.<sup>39</sup>

In 745 BCE after a period of economic and political prosperity, the Israelite king Jeroboam II died. His death would precipitate the ascendancy of six different Israelite kings in the span of twenty-three years, drastically destabilizing the kingdom.

Meanwhile, on the international scene, Tiglath-pileser III would rise to power in Assyria, opening a fresh ambition for imperial expansion.<sup>40</sup> The entrance of imperial control in Israel was the next step, bringing with it a demonstration of the destructive power that empire wields. It was the Assyrian taste for imperial expansion coupled with Israel's unfaithfulness, which paved the way for a prophetic critique of Israel and empire. And it was this critique of unfaithfulness that sparked the hope of resurrection.<sup>41</sup> From this point forward, for Hosea and all his interpreters, the idea of resurrection and the reality of empire would forever be married.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> Hans Walter Wolff, *A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Hosea*, ed. Paul D. Hanson, trans. Gary Stansell, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1974), XXI. The beginning of Hosea's proclamation is dated to the last years of Jeroboam II (747–746 BCE) and the latest texts associated with his proclamation coincide with the Assyrian siege of Samaria (725–724 BCE). In the words of Wolff, "Hosea with his prophecy accompanied his contemporaries in the Kingdom of Israel during . . . the final and most agitated phase of Israel's history."

<sup>40</sup> Bruce C. Birch, *Hosea, Joel, and Amos*, Westminster Bible Companion (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 9; cf. Herbert Donner, "The Separate States of Israel and Judah," in *Israelite and Judaeon History*, eds. John H. Hayes and J. Maxwell Miller (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1977), 414; Siegfried Hermann, *A History of Israel in Old Testament Times* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), 227–235.

<sup>41</sup> Hosea's message, it must be noted, is that of a national resurrection, rather than individual.

<sup>42</sup> This is not to imply direct cause and effect relationship between imperial control and resurrection as if the former caused the rise of the latter. However, there is correlation between the commensurate rise of empire in Israel's collective experience and the prophetic introduction of the idea of resurrection in their collective imagination.

The Assyrian move to enter Israel was simply the first domino to fall in the history of Israel and empire. Soon thereafter Judah in the south would fall to Babylon; and as imperial power continued to grow and Israel's woes mounted, the sound of resurrection progressively grew louder through its expressions first in Ezek 37.1–14 and eventually in Dan 12.1–3. There are many surveys which document the rise of resurrection theology in the Hebrew Bible, that history is not my goal in this chapter.<sup>43</sup> Rather, I seek to simply highlight the commensurate rise of empire with the seeds of resurrection. N.T. Wright helpfully refers to earlier ideas in the Hebrew Bible as “deeply asleep, only to be woken by echoes from later times and texts.”<sup>44</sup> To put the matter more plainly, the seeds of resurrection, though not uniformly acknowledged, gained their sense of rhetorical value only after Israel was struggling through questions of God's justice and power during imperial control.

*The Development: Resurrection in Post-Biblical, Second-Temple Literature*

As imperial power grew in control and force, the idea of resurrection continued to take shape. After the Babylonian exile and return to the Judean region during Persian control, we hear little of resurrection. This is unsurprising since, after all, Cyrus was viewed as the anointed of God (Is 45.1) who allowed subjugated people the privilege of

---

<sup>43</sup> See Puech, *La Croyance*; Martin-Achard, *Death to Life*; Alan F. Segal, *Life after Death: A History of the Afterlife in Western Religion* (New York: Doubleday, 2004); N.T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003); Friedrich Schwally, *Das Leben nach dem Tode nach den Vorstellungen des alten Israel und des Judentums einschließlich des Volksglaubens im Zeitalter Christi* (Gießen: Ricker, 1892); Adolphe Lods, *La croyance à la vie future et le culte des morts dans l'antique Israelite* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1902); E. F. Sutcliffe, *The Old Testament and the Future Life* (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1946); Nicholas J. Tromp, *Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Nether World in the Old Testament* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969); George Nicklesburg Jr., *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal life in Intertestamental Judaism*, HTS 56 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

<sup>44</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*, 85.

maintaining their traditional customs and institutions.<sup>45</sup> But as the imperial seasons changed and Persian rule turned into Macedonian control, the brutal enforcement of Hellenism under the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes IV brought with it a revival in thoughts concerning the afterlife and the body.

The revival was not monolithic by any means; rather, several strains of thought developed concerning the afterlife and the body. Some, like the Sadducees in the late Second Temple Period denied any form of bodily resurrection or future life because of its absence in the Pentateuch. Others, rejecting the Sadducees' position, believed in a life after death that looked markedly different from the growing idea of the resurrection of the body. This position, broadly summarized, looked forward to a future life of the soul, free from the body of flesh and blood (Jub 23.27–9; Wis 3.1–4.16). Finally, there was the resurrection of the body, pointing toward a future time when God will raise the physical body (which included the soul in psychosomatic unity) from death so that the resurrected person might enjoy a renewed, embodied, and eternal existence.<sup>46</sup> This is not to be confused with the resurrection of a nation or group of people, seen in the prophetic witness of the Hebrew Bible.<sup>47</sup> Nor is it to be confused with resuscitation of the dead, which does not result in the eternal state but ends in a second death, of which there are a few examples in the Hebrew Bible (1 Kgs 17.17–24; 2 Kgs 4.18–37; 13.21).<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> Geo Widengram, “The Persian Period” in *Israelite & Judean History*, eds. John H. Hayes and J. Maxwell Miller (London: SCM Press, 1990), 518–523.

<sup>46</sup> My definition derives from James Charlesworth, “Where Does the Concept of Resurrection Appear?” in *Resurrection: The Origin and Future of a Biblical Doctrine*, eds. James H. Charlesworth, et al. (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 2.

<sup>47</sup> This list of three categories of approach to life after death is taken from Wright, *Resurrection*, 129–146.

<sup>48</sup> James Charlesworth helpfully lists and describes fifteen ways the language of resurrection in the Bible and other Second Temple Literature is used: “resurrection of the nation, raising of a group from

Though the language of resurrection takes on many forms throughout the Second Temple Period, I am concerned solely with the resurrection of a corpse to a state of eternal life, an idea that began to proliferate during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes IV and beyond. For it is, as Alan Segal notes, the idea of the resurrection of the body that carries with it the potential of revolution.<sup>49</sup> The connection of resurrection and revolution can be seen most clearly in the book of 2 Maccabees where martyrdom and resurrection are juxtaposed, the latter being set forth as an answer to the former.

During the persecution under Antiochus IV, a mother and her sons were arrested and compelled by whips and thongs to eat unclean meat (2 Macc 7.1–23). Surprisingly, they resisted the king's orders with a preference to die rather than eat the swine. As the mother stood by and watched the affair, the scalp of one of her sons, who was the spokesman, was cut off and his hands and feet severed from his body. While still breathing, he was cast into a pan and fried to a crisp. As his flesh charred and the smoke filled the air, he spoke with confidence of the knowledge that God was watching over him in this moment of torture. The next brother, who received the same tortured death, built on the first affirmation when he proclaimed with his last breath "you accursed

---

disenfranchisement, raising of the individual from social disenfranchisement, raising of the individual from personal embarrassment, raising of the individual from the sickbed to health, raising of the individual from inactivity to do God's will, raising of the individual from despondency due to consciousness of sin, raising of the individual from ignorance to divinely revealed knowledge, raising of the individual from meaninglessness in this world to a realizing eschatology (experiencing the end time in the present), both-and: the author may intentionally collapse any distinction between the present age and the future age, raising of Christ from Sheol, raising an apocalyptist into heaven, a spiritual rising up or awakening of an individual, raising of the individual from death to mortal life, raising of the individual from death to eternal life. See Charlesworth, "Concept of Resurrection," 2–17.

<sup>49</sup> Alan F. Segal, "Life after Death: The Social Sources," *The Resurrection: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Resurrection of Jesus*, eds. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O'Collins (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 113.



wretch, you dismiss us from this present life, but the King of the universe will raise us up to everlasting renewal of life, because we have died for his laws” (2 Macc. 7.9). The development of the bodily resurrection in the Maccabean tradition occurred alongside martyrdom, thus solidifying the connection between the two.<sup>50</sup>

But in addition to the connection of resurrection with martyrdom, 2 Macc 7.9 also implies a contrast between the power of Antiochus IV and that of the “King of the universe.” The reader of 2 Maccabees cannot miss the rich subversive irony in this story as the brothers stand trial and are forced to choose between following Antiochus IV and his laws, or the “King of the universe” and his. They side with the “King of the universe” whose power dwarfs that of Antiochus IV, and yet they still die. The resolution to this ironic twist of narrative is found in the presentation of resurrection as a means of bodily vindication, a counterpart to the rescue found in Daniel 3 and 6. But 2 Maccabees differs from Daniel by coupling a bodily resurrection with the consistent proclamation of the “inevitability of Antiochus’ punishment . . . (7:14, 17, 19, 31, 34–37).”<sup>51</sup> By the time we reach the Maccabean literature, resurrection has become not merely a vindication of the righteous who suffer under the sword of empire, but an implicit proclamation of punishment for the wicked who craft, sharpen, and wield that sword.

After the Maccabean revolt (164 BCE) the idea of resurrection explodes onto the scene of theological discourse throughout the Hasmonean dynasty. While this idea lacked any sense of uniformity, it unquestionably began to shape Judaism’s apocalyptic

---

<sup>50</sup> Lloyd Geering, *Resurrection-A Symbol of Hope* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971), 114–115.

<sup>51</sup> Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 120.

imagination.<sup>52</sup> For the apocalyptists, God assumed the role of the judge of the wicked and the righteous who will, beginning with resurrection, vindicate the righteous dead (1 En. 1.8), so that they might inherit the earth (1 En. 51.1ff), and God will fashion the ashes of men into bones and flesh so that they rise as they were before (Sib. Or., 4.179–92).

As resurrection began to capture the imagination of Jewish apocalyptic writers, it was also in the process of shaping the theological development of the religio-political sects of the period. Josephus and the New Testament writers distinguish the Pharisees and Sadducees by their adherence to the resurrection, or lack thereof.<sup>53</sup> These authors are, of course, writing after the Hasmonean era; however, their ability to leverage this well-formed doctrine in their time as a means by which their audience could easily distinguish between the two strongly suggests that the question of resurrection was a prominent and identity-forming question throughout the time of independent, Hasmonean rule.<sup>54</sup>

*The Setting: The Roman Empire in the Time of Jesus*

The region was in for some significant change, though, when in 63 BCE a Roman cohort, led by the general Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (Pompey) was invited into a civil war that was tearing the Judean region apart. Eventually, Pompey emerged victorious and Judea and its surrounding neighbors were swallowed by the power that was Rome. But

---

<sup>52</sup> I am not implying that resurrection at this time was a uniform set of beliefs that singularly shaped Jewish identity. Rather, I merely wish to show that the general idea of resurrection as vindication of the individual coupled with the question of whether one accepted that idea or not began to shape Jewish identity, as I will show below through the description of Jewish sects provided by Josephus and the authors of the New Testament.

<sup>53</sup> Josephus, *J.W.* 2.162–165; *Ant.* 18.14, 17.152–4; Mk 12.18–23; Acts 23.6–10; Matt 22.23–33.

<sup>54</sup> It should be noted that at this point in the history of Judaism, even their independent rule is so enmeshed in global politics and the Hellenizing effects of Alexander's empire that it should not be understood as independent from surrounding imperial pressure. See Eyal Regev, "The Hellenization of the Hasmoneans Revisited: The Archaeological Evidence," *Advances in Anthropology* 7 (2017): 175–196.

the changing tides of political power in the east were merely a precursor for a much larger change in the west that would eventually engulf the entire Roman Republic. Initially, not much changed in Judea with the introduction of Pompey. He returned to Rome shortly after his conquest, leaving Judea dependent on the Roman administration in newly conquered Syria. Though soon after his return the republic would undergo monumental change when Pompey entered into a tumultuous civil war with Julius Caesar, only to lose in 48 BCE

The untimely murder of Caesar, in 44 BCE, led to more strife and infighting within the republic and the eventual establishment of the Second Triumvirate, an alliance of Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus, which lasted ten years. Meanwhile, in Judea the Jewish civil war had intensified<sup>55</sup> until 40 BCE when Herod, the son of the powerful Idumean, Antipater, was chased off to Rome after a skirmish with the Parthians and the subsequent suicide of his brother, Phaesel. It was at that time when the Roman senate declared Herod, with support from Marc Antony, client king and tasked him with the mission of rescuing the Judean region from Parthian control.<sup>56</sup> This was a water-shed moment in Judean history. Herod, with Roman support, defeated the Parthians and was installed as a client king over the entire Judean region and later also made procurator of Syria. As client king, he was supported by Rome and tasked with funneling taxes safely into the heart of the empire; however, as the primary (Idumean) representative of the

---

<sup>55</sup> Seth Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 BCE to 640 CE* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 43.

<sup>56</sup> Herod's relationship with Antony was a patron-client relationship wherein Herod pledged his allegiance (*fides*) to Antony by supporting him with money, troops, and public prestige while Antony helped further the political career of Herod. See Robert D. Hunt, "Herod and Augustus: A Look at Patron-Client Relationships" *StudAnt* 2.1 (2002): 11–12.

empire he had to supply his own military forces from the surrounding regions.<sup>57</sup> This ended the Jewish civil war of 67–37 BCE and brought with that end the (re)-introduction of imperial control under the guise of a Judaized Idumaeon.<sup>58</sup>

The empire that controlled Judea by proxy underwent some monumental changes in the years following Herod's ascent. After the dissolution of the Second Triumvirate, a new civil war began between Caesar's nephew, Octavian and Marc Antony who had aligned with Cleopatra in Egypt. In 31 BCE Octavian decisively defeated Antony at the battle of Actium and took sole control of the empire. For the first time in Rome's illustrious history, she was an empire with a single emperor—Octavian, whom the senate gave the name *Imperator Augustus Caesar*.<sup>59</sup>

The empire was under the complete control of Augustus, from the legions on the frontiers to the provinces near and far. By 14 CE there was only one legion outside his direct command.<sup>60</sup> His rise to power, though, was far from clean. He purged the senate on multiple occasions, rigged elections to control what was merely an image of the republic, and killed potential threats.<sup>61</sup> Yet he disarmed the *plebs* who were discontent with the late

---

<sup>57</sup> Denis B. Saddington, "Client Kings' Armies under Augustus: The Case of Herod," in *Herod and Augustus: Papers presented at the IJS Conference, 21<sup>st</sup>–23<sup>rd</sup> June 2005*, eds. Nikos Kokkinos and David M. Jacobson (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 312–318.

<sup>58</sup> See also, Seth Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society*, 45..

<sup>59</sup> For a concise and helpful overview of this period, see Philip Matyszak, *The Sons of Caesar: Imperial Rome's First Dynasty* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2006), 76–90.

<sup>60</sup> W.V. Harris, *Roman Power: A Thousand Years of Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 101.

<sup>61</sup> Harris, *Roman Power*, 101–102.

republic by feeding them, entertaining them, and expanding the imperial cult.<sup>62</sup>

Throughout the empire, the hymns of Augustus were sang alongside those of the gods, and the vast reaches of the empire were united by his *genius* (divine spirit) infused through the imperial cult.<sup>63</sup>

Augustus's forty-year reign was accompanied by the proliferation of ideology and propaganda promoting his imperial project. Imperial propaganda spread throughout the empire through the medium of stone and verse, proclaiming Augustus the savior who brought peace and restored order. The Priene inscription for example, sings Augustus's praises in a way that draws remarkable comparison to Jesus:<sup>64</sup>

He restored stability, when everything was collapsing and falling into disarray, and gave a new look to the entire world that would have been most happy to accept its own ruin had not the good and common fortune of all been born: **CAESAR** (Lines 4–9) . . . Whereas Providence that orders all our lives has in her display of concern and generosity in our behalf adorned our lives with the highest good: **Augustus**, whom she has filled with virtue for the benefit of humanity, and has in her beneficence granted us and those who will come after us a savior [σωτῆρα], who has made war to cease and who shall put everything in peaceful order;<sup>65</sup> and whereas Caesar, when he was manifest [φανεῖς], transcended the expectations of all who had anticipated the good news [εὐαγγελίων], not only by surpassing all the benefits conferred by his predecessors but by leaving no expectation of surpassing him to those who would come after him, with the result

---

<sup>62</sup> Harris, *Roman Power*, 104; Barbara Levick, *Augustus: Image and Substance* (Harlow, UK: Pearson Education, 2010), 148–150.

<sup>63</sup> Harris, *Roman Power*, 105.

<sup>64</sup> For an analysis of the many correlates between the Priene inscription and the New Testament representation of Jesus see Craig A. Evans, “Mark’s Incipit and the Priene Calendar Inscription: From Jewish Gospel to Greco-Roman Gospel,” *JGRChJ* 1 (2000): 67–81. Evans concludes that “we can infer that one very important aspect of the Markan evangelist’s portrait of Jesus is comparison to the Roman emperor and the emperor cult” (p. 79).

<sup>65</sup> Consider Danker’s comments on this passage: “Luke 2:14 emphasizes *Eirene* as a promised feature of the New Age begun with the birth of Jesus, and the Evangelist’s association of this birth with the name of Augustus (verse 2) was calculated to capture the imagination of Luke’s public, who were well familiar with the contributions of that Caesar to the welfare of humanity,” Frederick W. Danker, *Benefactor: Epigraphic Study of a Graeco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Field* (St. Louis, MO: Clayton Publishing, 1982), 220.

that the birthday of our God [τοῦ θεοῦ] signaled the beginning of Good News [εὐαγγελίων] for the world because of him (Lines 30–44)<sup>66</sup> . . . the Greeks in Asia decreed that the New Year begin for all the cities on September 23, which is the birthday of Augustus (Line 50)<sup>67</sup>

Augustus's position came replete with titles of savior, god, and lord; and his reign was defined with proclamations of generosity, peace, and justice. In the words of Velleius Paterculus:

evil is punished; the humble man respects the great but does not fear him, the great has precedence over the lowly but does not despise him. When was the price of grain more reasonable, or when were the blessings of peace greater? The *pax Augusta*, which has spread to the regions of the east and of the west and to the bounds of the north and of the south, preserves every corner of the world safe from the fear of brigandage.<sup>68</sup>

Shortly following Augustus's ascendancy to power, his prestige and mystique filled the empire. But the imperial ideals were not limited to stone inscriptions or historical observations, they were also found in the pockets of the empire's residents. Coinage was one of the easiest means for widely distributing the ideals of the new imperial presence.<sup>69</sup> Augustan coins bore witness to the brute strength of the empire. They would often carry the image of Mars, the god of war, and the goddess Victoria; Augustus in full military dress with spear in hand; or the goddess Pax crushing subjected

---

<sup>66</sup> Consider again Danker's comments: "The theme of unsurpassable beneficence generates the declaration in Acts 4:12 that salvation cannot be associated with any other benefactor who has appeared in human form except Jesus Christ," Danker, *Benefacto*, 220.

<sup>67</sup> Letter of Paulus Fabius Maximus and Decrees by Asians Concerning the Provincial Calendar, trans. Frederick W. Danker, *Benefacto*, 216–217; Greek was supplemented from *OGIS* 2.458.4–9, 30–44, 50.

<sup>68</sup> Velleius Paterculus, *Compendium of Roman History* 2.126.3–4 (Frederick W. Shipley, LCL).

<sup>69</sup> For a robust treatment of the imperial message found on Roman coins and the significance of those coins in the distribution of imperial ideals see Carlos F. Noreña, *Imperial Ideals*, 190–244

nations under foot.<sup>70</sup> This coinage demonstrated the means by which Augustan peace was accomplished—war and brutality. As the poet Vergil reminds his reader “Roman, remember by your strength to rule earth’s peoples—for your arts are to be these: to pacify, to impose the rule of law, to spare the conquered, and battle down the proud.”<sup>71</sup>

Peace through devastation was an ideal carried along by Rome’s supporters and those who sought honor and wealth. If an ambitious client, such as Herod, sought to grow in honor and political standing, it was expected that he would publicly promote the patron’s position. This was carried out by building projects and other means of imperial advertisement. Josephus’s description of Herod recounts him seeking the favor of Caesar and other influential Romans by departing “from the customs (of the Jews) and [altering] many of their regulations, for in his ambitious spending he founded cities and erected temples . . . while he sought to please Caesar and the Romans.”<sup>72</sup> The honor of the clients and elites came, however, at the expense of those living at poverty level or without the means of long-term sustenance, roughly 55% of the empire’s free inhabitants.<sup>73</sup> The perpetual need to replenish the resources that the elite used for political advancement through imperial propaganda led to an economic machine that gradually transferred economic surplus from the bottom to the top through taxation and land rental.<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>70</sup> Bruce W. Longnecker, “Peace, Prosperity, and Propaganda: Advertisement and Reality in the Early Roman Empire,” in *An Introduction to Empire in the New Testament*, ed. Adam Winn, RBS 84 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 37.

<sup>71</sup> Vergil, *Aen.*, 6.851.

<sup>72</sup> Josephus, *Ant.* 15.9.5 in Longnecker, “Peace, Prosperity, and Propaganda,” 24.

<sup>73</sup> Longnecker, “Peace, Prosperity, and Propaganda,” 29–31.

<sup>74</sup> Marcus Borg, *Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1994), 103.

This economic reality was felt (and critiqued) sharply in the eastern province of Judea where Jesus spoke frequently about wealth and its real-life effects on the peasantry.<sup>75</sup> Roman control in Judea immediately before and during the early rule of Herod created a condition in Judea that was ripe for uprising and revolt. Though the installation of Herod as client king quelled the civil war, the frustrations of the region migrated into the peasant countryside in the form of bandits who ravaged the Galilean gentry in opposition to new Roman taxes and a dire economic situation.<sup>76</sup> In response to these uprisings Herod slaughtered the bandits and their families and firmly established Roman peace through the establishment of “strict and oppressive social control by means of a network of fortresses throughout the realm, a large army, a security police, and even a system of informers.”<sup>77</sup> Herod’s iron fist largely prevented widespread banditry, rebellion, and subversive activity. However, prevention of uprising does not imply dissolution of subversive desires. Instead, hope for a new age, justice, and vindication migrated almost entirely into the medium of apocalyptic hope. Within this political reality and apocalyptic hope, the seeds of resurrection from Israel’s past began to germinate in the soil of early Christian literature.

Much more can be said about the history and development of resurrection in Judaism’s Second-Temple period. My goal here is simply to frame the resurrection question in the New Testament with its connection to empire, apocalypse, and

---

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 104–105.

<sup>76</sup> Josephus, *J.W.*, 1.304

<sup>77</sup> Horsley and Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, 66. See pp. 64–69 for a history of banditry in the Herodian period, and pp. 52–63 for an overview of the socio-economic conditions that bred banditry in the region.



martyrdom. This is the ground within which the idea would sprout. Plainly stated—when life became difficult due to imperial control, and the perception of injustice was coupled with the theological assumption of a just and powerful God, resurrection was the result. For as long as Judaism and its variants lived under the control of empire, resurrection would be tied to their struggle under imperial control, until May of 337 CE when the emperor himself would be baptized into the death and resurrection of a man the Roman government executed for insurrection roughly 300 years earlier.

### **Paul's Apocalypse: Confronting the Empire**

Now that we have situated the idea of resurrection within its larger historical and theological context, we can move into Paul's theology of the resurrection and ask how it, specifically, is able to adopt a counter-imperial tone. That is, in this section I seek to demonstrate that scholars have laid the foundation for the claim *that* resurrection is a subversive idea, a foundation that I will build upon. Three scholars in particular stand out in this regard, Neil Elliott, N.T. Wright, and Claudia Setzer.<sup>78</sup> Though, as we will see, this foundation is lacking two important elements: *why* the idea is subversive rather than a mere vindication of Jesus's righteous life, and if it is subversive, *how* the idea can move into the lived reality of early Christians and function as such. But first we deal with the

---

<sup>78</sup> Counter-imperial readings of Paul are not new and the emphasis on resurrection as a counter-imperial statement can be found among this literature. There are other scholars who are noteworthy in laying this foundation, such as Richard S. Horsley, however, I have chosen these three as representative of three important elements in the foundation. Namely, the importance of the cross, the co-optation of imperial designators, and the role of resurrection in identity formation. For other counter-imperial assessments of resurrection see Crossan, *God and Empire*; Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus?: Exposing the Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Gospel Story* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1995); Richard A. Horsley *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New World Disorder* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003); Horsley, *Jesus and the Powers: Conflict, Covenant, and the Hope of the Poor* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011); Edward Pillar, *Resurrection as Anti-Imperial Gospel: 1 Thessalonians 1:9b–10 in Context* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013). For an assessment of this idea and its import into modern social discourse see James H. Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011).

foundation by turning to the wide range of Paul's recent interpreters who identify his theology as "apocalyptic." Aware of the warnings from recent scholars on the complexity of this subject, I intend to only dip my toe into the large pool of Paul's apocalyptic thought.<sup>79</sup>

Rather than falling headlong into the discussion and debate concerning Paul's apocalyptic thought, I seek to highlight the central components to an apocalyptic reading of Paul in order to draw attention to Paul's theology of the cross and resurrection.

Beverly Roberts Gaventa, as summarized by James P. Davies, provides a helpful starting point with the three central components important to Paul's apocalyptic:

First, apocalyptic is construed in the cosmological terms of the unilateral, invasive, and martial act of God in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Second, apocalyptic involves an epistemological invasion, rendering visible the power struggles at work in the world. Third, the soteriological result of "God's reclaiming of the world" through cosmological invasion is "liberation for humankind."<sup>80</sup>

Without implying my complete acceptance of Gaventa's ideas, or any other apocalyptic reader of Paul for that matter, this summary helpfully brings into focus the central apocalyptic elements that put Paul's theology of the resurrection in conversation with the empire. Namely, Paul's apocalyptic sees God's work through Jesus as a "martial" act that

---

<sup>79</sup> See James P. Davies, "Paul among the Apocalypses?: An Evaluation of the 'Apocalyptic Paul' in the Context of Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic Literature" (PhD diss., The University of St. Andrews, 2015). Davies, whose entire dissertation concerns apocalyptic readings of Paul, notes the enormous challenge of summarizing the entire field of scholarship. See also R. B. Matlock, *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul: Paul's Interpreters and the Rhetoric of Criticism* JSNTSup 127 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 13–14, who realized the enormous breadth of the history of apocalyptic interpretation while working on his dissertation. A full analysis of Paul's apocalyptic theology would require a book to itself, the reader is directed specifically to that which I have found most helpful: M. C. de Boer, *The Defeat of Death: Apocalyptic Eschatology in 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5* JSNTSup 22 (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1988); see also Davies, *Paul among the Apocalypses?*, 4–23

<sup>80</sup> As summarized by James P. Davies; Davies, *Paul among the Apocalypses?*, 22.

invades the evil cosmos, confronts the powers that be, and subsequently liberates humanity through this invasive confrontation.<sup>81</sup> Translating this into Pauline categories, the invasion is made by the person of Jesus (Gal 4.4–5), the confrontation is found in the cross (Phil 2.8–11), and the liberation occurs in the resurrection (Rom 8.9–11).<sup>82</sup> A vision of Paul’s subversive theology of resurrection begins, then, at the cross.

### *The Cross: Rome’s Reality*

Scholars of early Christianity have long noticed the political challenge offered by the New Testament.<sup>83</sup> The texts of the New Testament come from a cultural underclass, which openly constructs Christian identity in conversation with oppression, brutality, and exile.<sup>84</sup> They are written within the boundaries of an empire who, according to Calgacus make their mission “to plunder, butcher, steal, [and] these things they misname empire. They make a desolation and call it peace.”<sup>85</sup> The irony of early Christian discourse is that it lays its foundation of hope in the midst of this political world at the cross of Jesus. Christianity’s earliest author, the apostle Paul, for example, seeks to only know the

---

<sup>81</sup> For the critiques of apocalyptic readings of Paul along with a synopsis of the false dichotomies that underlie those critiques see James P. Davies, “What to Expect when You’re Expecting: Maternity, Salvation History, and the ‘Apocalyptic Paul,’” *JSNT* 38.3 (2016): 301–315.

<sup>82</sup> See J. Christian Beker, *The Triumph of God: The Essence of Paul’s Thought*, trans. Loren T. Stuckenbruck (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990), 65–91.

<sup>83</sup> See note 40 above.

<sup>84</sup> Many scholars have labored to demonstrate the oppression and brutality perpetuated by the Roman Imperial system. My research depends upon that scholarship and, as such, I will not repeat it. The reader is directed to the work of Neil Elliott, Richard Horsley, and Martin Goodman for directed study on this topic. See especially: Elliott, *Arrogance*; Richard Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence: Popular Jewish Resistance in Roman Palestine* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987); Martin Goodman, *The Roman World: 44 B.C.–A.D. 180*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2012); Vasily Rudlich, *Religious Dissent in the Roman Empire: Violence in Judaea at the Time of Nero* (New York: Routledge, 2015); Scott Norris, “Roman Strategies of Control: Terror and Intimidation” (PhD diss., The University of Calgary, 2005).

<sup>85</sup> Tacitus, *Agricola*, 30.4–5 (M. Hutton, LCL).

crucified Christ (1 Cor 2.2) in the Roman *polis* of Corinth, an odd desire given the brutality of crucifixion.

Crucifixion, as a means of “breaking the will of conquered peoples,” symbolized Roman power over the underclass, a fact adeptly demonstrated by Martin Hengel.<sup>86</sup> Philo describes this symbolic action against a group of Alexandrian Jews in the fall of 38 CE during the celebrations of the Augustan birthday who, due to the imperial fear of revolt, were “arrested, scourged, tortured, and after all these outrages, which were all their bodies could make room for, the final punishment kept in reserve was the cross.”<sup>87</sup> This brutal display of power was accompanied by the performances of dancers, mimes, flute players, and theatrical competitions.<sup>88</sup> Crucifixion was the great spectacle to the world that Rome would crush its enemies if they sought to rise up against the power of empire.<sup>89</sup>

During the time of the rising Jesus movement, the act of crucifixion, though infrequently documented by inscription, maintained dominance.<sup>90</sup> Cross and politics were two tightly intertwined ideas, a relationship seen with the recognition that most of the extant instances of crucifixion concern the disruption of the social order: brigandage,

---

<sup>86</sup> Martin Hengel, *Crucifixion in the Ancient World and the Folly of the Message of the Cross* (London: SCM Press, 1977), 46, 33–35.

<sup>87</sup> Philo, *Flacc.* 72 (F.H. Colson, LCL); see also *Flacc.* 82–84.

<sup>88</sup> Philo, *Flacc.* 85

<sup>89</sup> Resistance to crucifixion as the symbol of Roman power is seen in the response of the defeated in the Cantabrian wars (29–19 BCE). According to Strabo, those being crucified by Augustus’s army “chanted songs of victory” while being affixed to their crosses. Strabo, *Geogr.* 3.4, 18 (H.L. Jones, LCL).

<sup>90</sup> John Granger Cook, “Roman Crucifixions: From the Second Punic War to Constantine,” *ZNW* 104.1 (2013): 1–32. Outside of Josephus, there are twenty-seven documented cases of crucifixion from the time of the Second Punic War until Augustus’s reign, and from Augustus to Trajan there are thirty-three (31). See also Hengel, *Crucifixion*, 36–37.

rebellion, slave revolts, disobedience of slaves, crimes of soldiers to include disobedience and piracy, poisoning a teacher, assisting in the seduction of a matron, murder committed by a slave, and others.<sup>91</sup>

In addition to serving as a deterrent to revolt, crucifixion was used to control the lower class and conquered. In the words of Martin Hengel, it served as “a means of waging war and securing peace, of wearing down rebellious cities under siege, of breaking the will of conquered peoples and of bringing mutinous troops or unruly provinces under control.”<sup>92</sup> And this means of control—peace through brutality—was found littering the countryside of Judea around the time of Christianity’s birth. Josephus recounts the crucifixion of two thousand suspected insurrectionists in 4 BCE, shortly after the birth of Jesus.<sup>93</sup> This event is coupled with the mass crucifixion of an incalculable number of bandits (*lestai*) in the 50s CE, during the time of Paul’s missionary journeys, and not long after Jesus hung beside two other bandits (*lestai*) on the cross. Further, during the siege of Jerusalem, Josephus tells us (in hyperbolic fashion) that as many as five hundred Jews were crucified per day by the Roman general Titus.<sup>94</sup>

Crucifixion was the symbolic representation of Rome’s established *Pax Romana*. As Quintilian proudly proclaims “When we crucify criminals the most frequented roads are chosen, where the greatest number of people can look and be seized by this fear. For

---

<sup>91</sup> Cook, “Roman Crucifixions,” 32.

<sup>92</sup> Hengel, *Crucifixion*, 46.

<sup>93</sup> Josephus, *J.W.*, 2.5.1–3.

<sup>94</sup> Josephus, *J.W.* 5.450

every punishment has less to do with the offence than with the example.”<sup>95</sup> It was the pinnacle of the terror that maintained peace. It was the capstone on an entire system that ran on the fuel of slavery, fed through the exploits of Roman military conquest.<sup>96</sup>

This was the world in which the early Christian message burgeoned. The construction of its literary history took place amidst a peasant insurrection (4 BCE) and a large-scale Jewish revolt against this empire (66–70 CE), both of which were swiftly and brutally destroyed.<sup>97</sup> And yet, when Paul articulates his response to imperial domination the trumpet sound calling for violence is absent. Instead, Paul counters imperial violence through the unlikeliest source: literature admiring a crucified criminal.

### *Paul on the Cross*

The earliest written Christian discourse was produced by the apostle Paul as postage. Paul sent a series of letters to answer a variety of situations and problems occurring in the newly formed communities. Strikingly, when Paul provides the basis for life principles among members of the nascent community, he turns to the death of Jesus, rather than the life and example.<sup>98</sup> Theological explanations of his reference to the death of the messiah have frequently turned to the sacrifice of atonement or the *Christus Victor*. But the apostle is even more specific than this. It is not merely the *death* of the Messiah that is important for Paul’s project, it is specifically the *cross* that provides the definitive

---

<sup>95</sup> Quintilian, *Decl.* 274.13 (D.R. Shackleton Bailey, LCL).

<sup>96</sup> Neil Elliot, “The Anti-Imperial Message of the Cross,” in *Paul and Empire*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 1997), 171.

<sup>97</sup> Josephus, *J.W.*, 2.12–54, 2.224–27 and *Ant.*, 17.200–268, 20.105–12.

<sup>98</sup> In contrast to the contemporary Christian question: WWJD, Paul forms a new *pietas* based on the crucified Jesus.

moment in history.<sup>99</sup> Though Paul does not always draw attention to the language of crucifixion, we should, with Michael Gorman and Charles Cousar understand Paul as thinking about the mode of death when he discusses Jesus's death, namely crucifixion.<sup>100</sup>

Why draw his readers to this particular component of the larger story of the victimization of Jesus? What, for the apostle, is so important about the brutality of the cross? Neil Elliott, who provides one of the earliest sustained arguments for Paul's counter-imperial message of the cross, argues that Paul's message of the cross is a cosmic message bound up in a much larger apocalyptic drama.<sup>101</sup> The apocalyptic alliance of power between Roman authorities and the supernatural powers that stand behind them is confronted by the death of Jesus.<sup>102</sup> This violence-spawning alliance of power proved

---

<sup>99</sup> It should be noted that Paul has a wide vocabulary for describing Jesus's death and he does not predominantly use crucifixion language; however, his use of crucifixion language carries "importance in inverse proportion to their frequency." Charles B. Cousar, *A Theology of the Cross: The Death of Jesus in the Pauline Letters* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990), 21. Cousar points his reader's attention to Kuhn, Schrage, and Luz who all locate the center of Paul's theology on the cross. See Heinz-Wolfgang Kuhn, "Jesus als Gekreuzigter in der frühchristlichen Verkündigung bis zur Mitte des 2. Jahrhunderts" *ZTK* 72.1 (1975) 40–46; Wolfgang Schrage, "Das Verständnis des Todes Jesu Christi im Neuen Testament," in *Das Kreuz Jesu Christi als Grund des Heils*, ed. F. Vierung (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus/Gerd Mohn, 1967) 67–68; Ulrich Luz, "Theologi Crucis als Mitte der Theologie im Neuen Testament," *EvT* 34 (1974): 116–141 (here 116–23).

<sup>100</sup> Michael J. Gorman, *Cruciformity: Paul's Narrative Spirituality of the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 76–77; Cousar, *A Theology of the Cross*, 224. This tandem thinking, of death-cross together, likely explains Paul's addition of the phrase "even death on a cross" (Phil. 2.8c) to the preexisting early Christ poem in Phil. 2.6–11, Gorman, *Cruciformity*, 77n.7. Contra Beker, *The Triumph of God*, 87–91, who argues that Paul does not have a theology of the cross, rather, it is merely one of the death of Jesus. In my estimation, Gorman and Cousar have persuasively answered Beker's arguments that the cross is not central for Pauline theology.

<sup>101</sup> Elliott, "Anti-Imperial Message."

<sup>102</sup> Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1980), 189–190 in Elliott, "Anti-Imperial Message," 177.

itself hostile to God and his good creation in this confrontation; as such, it will be destroyed in the end by God's Messiah.<sup>103</sup>

There are two places in the Pauline corpus that warrant special attention. The first is found in 1 Cor 2.8, one of only two places in the Pauline epistles that identify the human actors in the death of Jesus, wherein Paul ties together the Roman Imperial order with the *archontes*, the rulers of this age who crucified the Lord of glory.<sup>104</sup> Apocalyptic readings of Paul have long seen this passage as a demonstration of the destruction of evil and renewal of the cosmos through the apocalyptic act of Jesus's death on the cross.<sup>105</sup> Additionally, though, Elliott draws attention directly to the political rulers who are co-signers on the power alliance's bank account. By confronting "evil" as a category, then, Paul is consequently implicating the Roman Imperial order for its collusion with the network of evil. This is where crucifixion comes to the fore. It not only displays the injustice implicit within the Roman system, it also demonstrates God's confrontation of the powers (spiritual and physical) that perpetuate this violence.<sup>106</sup> The connection between the unjust systems of law and the evil rulers of this age backed by spiritual

---

<sup>103</sup> Elliott, "Anti-Imperial Message," 176.

<sup>104</sup> Wesley Carr explains the three readings of the word *ἄρχοντες* in Wesley Carr, "The Rulers of this Age: I Corinthians II.6–8," *NTS* 23 (1976): 20–35. Contra Judith Kovacs, "The Archons, the Spirit, and the Death of Christ: Do We Really Need the Hypothesis of Gnostic opponents to Explain 1 Cor. 21:6–16?" in *Apocalyptic and the New Testament: Essays in Honor of J. Louis Martyn*, eds. Joel Marcus and Marion L. Soards, JSNTSup 24 (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1989). Carr persuasively argues that Paul's use of *ἄρχοντες* should be read in reference to human authorities, rather than demonic authorities. His conclusions are based on the way Paul and those inspired by Paul (specifically, Luke) use *ἄρχοντες* and related words elsewhere, and the context of 1 Corinthians.

<sup>105</sup> Kovacs, "The Archons," 222. cf. Gal 1.4, 3.13, and 6.14.

<sup>106</sup> Robert Hamerton-Kelly, *Sacred Violence: Paul's Hermeneutic of the Cross* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 82, quoted in Elliott, "Anti-Imperial Message," 176.



forces are confronted by God's apocalypse, and through this confrontation the Corinthian church is called to pattern their lives on the event of crucifixion, wherein we see the beginning of the end of the world as we know it.

The second passage of note is found in Gal 6.14–15, wherein Paul expands the impact of the cross of Jesus by directly connecting it to two commensurate crucifixions: that of the cosmos and of Paul himself. In this puzzling little verse Paul depends on his contrasting structure of the old cosmos and the new creation.<sup>107</sup> The former, for Paul, is enslaved by the curse and subject to violence and injustice, and the latter brings renewal and righteousness/justice. But the crucifixion is more than another medium of death. Rather, the Roman cross serves as the symbolic representation of the height of injustice and violence.<sup>108</sup>

By confronting the violence and injustice underlying the system, the crucifixion of Jesus stands as symbolic representation of the death of the cosmos and the corresponding, apocalyptic in-breaking of God's new order, defined by justice. This is how Jesus, through the cross, can be said to establish "new creation" (Gal 6.15), because the Roman cross serves as the symbolic representation of the height of injustice and violence—the old order. As such, all who identify with this movement through a life defined by God's righteousness are called to be "crucified with Christ" (Gal 2.19; Rom

---

<sup>107</sup> J. Louis Martyn, "The Apocalyptic Gospel in Galatians," *Int.* 54.3 (2000): 256; Paul S. Minear "The Crucified World: The Enigma of Galatians 6,14" in *Theologia Crucis-Signum Crucis*, eds. Carl Andresen and Günter Klein (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1979), 395.

<sup>108</sup> My reading of Gal. 6.14–15 is dependent on Martyn, "Apocalyptic Gospel"; Martyn, "Apocalyptic Antinomies in Galatians," *NTS* 31.3 (1985): 410–424; Minear, "Crucified World", 395–407; and more generally to apocalyptic readings of the Apostle Paul's theology. However, my reading emphasizes the importance of the cross's violence in Paul's emphasis, a point lacking in Martyn and Minear.

6.6), to identify with the victimization of Jesus at the hands of the unjust so as to be delivered from the system of violence, declared righteous, and participate in the resurrection through baptism.<sup>109</sup> Paul uses a death sentence that is designed to dehumanize and intimidate as the basis for his theology of life and power. The political declaration of the cross which held together the oppressive policies of Rome forms Paul's theology of reconciliation with God. Through the cross, Paul articulated a theology that confronts the cosmos which has been penetrated by sin, and so revels in self-destruction. It is the cyclical violence inherent in the evil cosmos and manifested through humanity and its political systems that put Jesus on the cross that Paul says Jesus confronts, crucifies, and calls on his followers to die to.

In Paul's theology of the cross, he deliberately places Roman forms of power and control in the same category as the evil cosmos that perpetuate sin and self-destruction, *both* of which will be destroyed by God in the apocalypse, and *both* of which are confronted by Jesus's crucifixion. Paul's emphasis on the cross is part of his apocalyptic project that is inextricably bound up with his political message. When Paul identifies the cross with the representation of the evil cosmos, or the strong that is being overcome by

---

<sup>109</sup> Hamerton-Kelly, *Sacred Violence*, 65–70. Hamerton-Kelly likens the Pauline gospel to a new mind with which one can see the “truly important things. . . . This renewal of the mind . . . takes the form of an insight into the meaning of the Cross as the epiphany of sacred violence.” 66. While Hamerton-Kelly does not connect the meaning of the cross to the Roman Imperial system and the violence it perpetuates, he rightly associates the event of the cross with violence that is inherent in the system. It should be noted that Hamerton-Kelly and his position on Paul within Judaism has been sharply criticized by John Gager, E. Leigh Gibson, and others. However, even among the critiques of Paul's use of violent language within Judaism, there is a recognition that Paul's commitment to Jesus on the cross accounts for most of his violent language. See John G. Gager and E. Leigh Gibson, “Violent Acts and Violent Language in the Apostle Paul,” in *Violence in the new Testament*, eds. Shelly Matthews and E. Leigh Gibson (New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 13–21.

the weak (1 Cor 1.18, 26), he is simultaneously placing Rome and its public display of power in the seat of the evil cosmos—that which is being destroyed.

Of course, merely connecting the Roman act of crucifixion with the evil that has penetrated this cosmos does not demonstrate subversion. After all, Jesus's crucifixion by itself does nothing but reinforce the injustice of the Roman political order and rehearse the violence it is founded on. While Paul's employment of crucifixion is certainly political, when analyzed by itself it offers no critique at all. In other words, the crucifixion of Jesus *as crucifixion* merely shows that the violence of Rome can destroy any challengers, peaceful or not. Crucifixion only works in a counter-imperial way when it doesn't work.

If the crucifixion of the Messiah displays the injustice perpetuated through the political system, it is his resurrection that demonstrates God's answer to that injustice. Elliott closes his article by pointing to the resurrection of Jesus, as an answer to the crucifixion, which gives power to the Messiah's followers to press on and resist the suppression that comes from unjust Roman rule.<sup>110</sup> In conclusion, he says, "it is the resurrection of Christ they crucified that reveals the imminent defeat of the powers, pointing forward to their final triumph of God."<sup>111</sup>

### *God on the Cross*

While Elliott provides a helpful, apocalyptic backbone to the claim that resurrection is a subversive response to the cross, what he leaves us with a mere teaser to

---

<sup>110</sup> Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence*, 139

<sup>111</sup> Elliot, "Anti-Imperial Message," 181.

its effect. We must turn to others who also see resurrection as subversive and seek to build on this claim. Few have done a better job at emphasizing Paul's counter-imperial claim of the resurrection than N.T. Wright. Drawing our attention first to Philippi, Wright shows that Paul, while situated in jail facing his own demise at the hands of this empire, brings his message of resurrection to a climax. The apostle does so by beginning with the comment that his hope is founded on Jesus's title of lord and savior (Phil 1.2; 3.20); a statement which implicitly removes those titles from Caesar.<sup>112</sup> Additionally, Jesus, through his humiliation is given the name that is above all names to which every (including Caesar's) knee will bow, and tongue will confess this truth (Phil 2.10–11).

Jesus's resurrection is set in contrast to imperial claims to glory. He does not merely ascend into the heavens upon death; his body exits the tomb. And by virtue of this bodily resurrection, the followers of the Christ are able to live in the resurrection by shining "like lights in the world" (Phil 2.15), a clear intertextual reference to Daniel 12.3. By channeling Daniel's message of resurrection which was written during a period of imperial oppression with the intention of providing the hope of future resurrection as vindication, the apostle is telling the Philippian believers that the resurrection not only provides vindication in the future. It also acts in the present by enabling an army of witnesses against violence perpetuated through sin.<sup>113</sup>

This claim becomes even more clear when Wright moves into Romans. When discussing chapters 1–4 of Paul's longest letter, he notes that the resurrection of Jesus

---

<sup>112</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*, 225; See also N.T. Wright, "Paul's Gospel and Caesar's Empire" in *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation. Essays in Honor of Krister Stendahl*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: TPI, 2000), 160–183.

<sup>113</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*. 228.

confronted the powers of the world “with a new reality, the Jewish hope come to life, the vindication of the ‘son of man’ after his suffering at the hands of the beasts. This was not an isolated, freak occurrence. This was, in embryo, ‘the resurrection of the dead, of *all* the dead.’”<sup>114</sup> This is why Paul designates Jesus as “son of God *with power*” by virtue of the resurrection (Rom 1.4).<sup>115</sup> Caesar’s status as savior, the son of a god, and lord of the world<sup>116</sup> is directly challenged through the resurrection which declares Jesus as the son of God and the “true world ruler, the one of whom Caesar is a mere parody.”<sup>117</sup>

Wright also sees the subversive message of resurrection connected to the larger society in 1 Corinthians. The ordering of society, which presently places Caesar at the top with the rest of society below him in graded fashion, is reordered. The resurrection places the Messiah at the top followed by a section populated by his people, and then the rest of the world beneath, but not placed there through exploitation or oppression.<sup>118</sup>

One cannot leave Wright’s work without knowing that for him, the resurrection has political importance because through it Jesus is declared to be lord and savior which

---

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 243.

<sup>115</sup> I read Rom. 1.4 with those who connect the phrase ἐν δυνάμει with the noun rather than the verb so that Jesus is appointed Son of God with Power. In contrast to Robert Jewett who argues that the power of God is what effected the resurrection, Moo argues that the Son of God is declared to be “Son of God in power” because the son is the subject of the whole sentence. Paul is claiming that the Son entered into the human experience and, on the basis of the resurrection (reading ἐξ in a causal sense) was appointed to a new and more powerful position in relation to the world, i.e. kingship. See Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, BECNT 6 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 39–44; Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), 1988, 45; Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, ed. and trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), 12 contra. Robert Jewett, *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006), 107.

<sup>116</sup> See the Priene inscription above, pp. 30–31.

<sup>117</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*, 243.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 339.

means, by implication, that Caesar is not.<sup>119</sup> Yet, we leave Wright's work on the resurrection strangely dissatisfied. His 817 page tome on the resurrection of Jesus which repetitiously makes the point *that* the resurrection declares Jesus as Lord and implies that Caesar is not, never reveals *why* it is a subversive message or *how* this statement of belief works subversively. Beliefs do not subvert a government, people subvert a government. The closest we get is this statement:

This subversive belief in Jesus's Lordship, over against that of Caesar, was held in the teeth of the fact that Caesar had demonstrated his superior power in the obvious way, by having Jesus crucified. But the truly extra-ordinary thing is that this belief was held by a tiny group who, for the first two or three generations at least, could hardly have mounted a riot in a village, let alone a revolution in an empire. And yet they persisted against all odds . . . and whenever we go back to the key texts for evidence of why they persisted in such an improbably and dangerous belief they answer: it is because Jesus of Nazareth was raised from the dead. And this provokes us to ask once more: why did they make this claim?<sup>120</sup>

I am less interested in the question Wright poses at the end of this paragraph, than I am with the questions he leaves unasked: why is the message of resurrection subversive, and how does it work to shape people's actions in the world? One can *say* that Caesar is not lord, but that saying does not change the fact that Caesar still collects your taxes, and Caesar can still have you killed. Why does this event, of a man exiting a tomb, say that Caesar is not Lord and how does this statement, that Jesus is Lord, actually work on a subversive level? Or, said another way, what is it about Jesus's resurrection that makes it *more than* simply a vindication of Jesus's good life? And if it is more than vindication, how does it convince people of its truth, and subsequently shape the way they live in the

---

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 372.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 570.

Roman Empire? There were many people in the Empire who saw Caesar as an illegitimate ruler, so what makes this claim any different? This, I propose, is the more important question that is not answered in the work of Elliott, or Wright.

Claudia Setzer begins to move us in this direction by laying out the rich tapestry of resurrection beliefs in the Judaism and early Christianity and connecting this hope with Jewish-Christian identity construction vis-à-vis surrounding political and social realities.<sup>121</sup> Setzer continuously emphasizes that the resurrection of Jesus is a display of God's power as seen in Judaism's apocalyptic vision and the motif suffering of the righteous one(s).<sup>122</sup> She accomplishes this by leaning on Anthony Cohen's theory of "condensation symbols"—symbols that evoke emotion, depend on a myth for support, and condense an understanding of the world with commensurate values for that understanding.<sup>123</sup>

Setzer helpfully begins her inquiry in early Judaism and shows that resurrection was seen as evidence of the power and justice of God in a world ruled by oppression. It was a message designed to answer the question of theodicy. For the Jew who suffered under imperial control, and for the martyrs that went before her, there was the knowledge that God would vindicate her faithfulness in the resurrection. The wicked would not get away with wickedness, and the righteous would not be ignored for faithfulness—God would set the record straight in the resurrection. This idea of vindication in the life to

---

<sup>121</sup> Claudia Setzer, *Resurrection of the Body in Early Judaism and Early Christianity* (Boston: Brill, 2004), 1.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 44, n.58; cf. Anthony Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (London: Tavistock, 1985).

come allowed the Pharisees to mediate between the Jewish people and their Roman overlord by showing that faithfulness in this life is not a lost cause, though it might appear to be.

Moreover, Josephus shows that resurrection in early Judaism could be concealed in a package that looks like Greco-Roman immortality of the soul. It might appear innocent enough, but carries with it an idea of vindication and, ultimately, of the destruction of Roman Imperial power. This, however, brings us back to our discussion in chapter one of postcolonial reading strategies and the challenge of using a hidden message as an explanatory force for subversion. That is, we are significantly limited in finding the subversive motivation in a message that was designed to resist discovery. But further, like my critique of Wright, the claim that resurrection carries with it the idea of the destruction of Roman Imperial power remains toothless when it resides in the world of ideas. An idea of ultimate vindication is vastly different than an actual, empirical threat.

The Apostle Paul, like the Pharisees before him, focuses his discourse of resurrection on *bodies* that will be raised, never on the mere survival of a soul or spirit.<sup>124</sup> On the surface there is nothing different between Paul's idea and the Pharisees's. However, Paul's emphasis on bodies, according to Setzer, proves God's victory over the cosmic powers of the world typified in the Roman Empire because he has an object to anchor his claim: the empty tomb of Jesus. The body of Jesus is risen and sits at the right

---

<sup>124</sup> By "body" I do not mean flesh. For Paul, the body refers to the bounded, material self. See Dale Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), esp. chs. 1, 6–7.



hand of God the Father waiting to return in judgment. And Jesus's resurrection is the firstfruits of the resurrection that is to come.

Resurrection is the central element in Paul's letters. Setzer notes that Paul hangs Christian identity on resurrection three times by noting that if Jesus did not rise from the dead, then there is no point in preaching. He fills his palette with this message to paint a broad apocalyptic picture "into which his hearers can plug the particulars of Rome: the emperor, the local aristocracy, and the system of patronage as well as the program of an emerging alternative community."<sup>125</sup> Resurrection is the key moment in Paul's apocalyptic drama. It is the clear indication that Rome is stripped of her power.

Setzer moves from Paul's counter-imperial claim to the observation that resurrection quickly became a key component to early Christian identity and, as in early Judaism, it served to display God's power and justice. Resurrection provided meaning for Christians in a time where they were tempted by meaninglessness. Though the idea of resurrection receives defense from some apologists, like Tertullian, to show that Christianity poses no threat to the Roman order, Paul's message is nonetheless part of an "anti-imperial polemic" according to Setzer.<sup>126</sup> She claims, in no uncertain terms, that the rhetoric of resurrection, beginning with the empty tomb of Jesus, is a polemic that "overturns the conventional pyramid of power, placing the crucified criminal at the top instead of the emperor . . . [it is] the final evidence that the power of Rome is broken."<sup>127</sup>

---

<sup>125</sup> Setzer, *Resurrection*, 67.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 146.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 146.

Setzer, working from a postcolonial biblical perspective, concludes (rightly in my estimation) that the message and proceeding rhetoric of resurrection is counter-imperial in nature. Her work is more helpful than others in the quest to see why this message is subversive in that she draws a connection between the idea of resurrection and the construction of early Christian identity. However, like Wright and Elliott, she stops short of showing *why* this event goes beyond vindication of Jesus and overturns the pyramid of power. Further, she offers little support to the functional question of *how* this message works subversively. The discourse of resurrection in Setzer, as in Wright and Elliott, remains in the world of ideas, and it is hard to provide “the final evidence that the power of Rome is broken” through an idea, when you live in an empire that continues to run rampant with abuse and violence.

Elliott, Wright, and Setzer all agree on one thing: *that* the message of resurrection is a counter-imperial idea that proclaims a new king, thereby implying that Caesar is not lord. Yet the collective work of these scholars misses two fundamental components: what is it about resurrection that overturns imperial power in a way that other ideas such as the immortality of the soul do not? And how can the proclamation of a subversive *idea* do the work of subverting a *real empire*. An idea is only as good as the results it can produce. It is one thing to tell people that resurrection means the ultimate destruction of every rule and authority (1 Cor 15:24), it is another thing entirely to make people turn that message into action. The brutality of crucifixion was still a distinct possibility—real, physical evidence against the claim that “*the resurrection of Christ the crucified . . . reveals the*

*imminent defeat of the powers, pointing forward to the final triumph of God.*”<sup>128</sup> After all, the idea of resurrection is not new to the club, nor are its connections with the ultimate justice of God in the face of unjust persecutors. It was alive and well in the theology of other Jewish sects, yet they never managed to subvert an empire with this idea. What, then, makes the Pauline proclamation and its early Christian appropriation different?

The contributions of the scholars discussed above are vitally important insofar as they cultivated a postcolonial reading strategy that identified the political reality of crucifixion and the subversive hope of resurrection in response to persecution. And so, they rightly conclude that the message of the cross and resurrection stands in opposition to the Roman Imperial order. But the question of *why* and *how* still remain. What is subversive about a dead man coming back to life, and how does that subversive message then translate to real subversion of a real empire?

### *A Philosophical Shift*

Simply saying *that* a statement, idea, or belief is subversive does not demonstrate why that statement, idea, or belief is subversive or how it can function as such.<sup>129</sup> In other

---

<sup>128</sup> Elliott, “Anti-Imperial Message,” 181.

<sup>129</sup> Neil Elliott makes this point as well: “because Paul does not *say* any of this explicitly—nothing here directly contests imperial claims regarding the Caesars—any subversion of the imperial gospel remains so implicit as to seem invisible.” And again, when discussing Dieter Georgi’s claim that Paul is making a political claim concerning the legitimacy of Caesarian rule: “Phrased as questions, Georgi’s suggestions were provocative, but hardly conclusive.” He then goes on to bolster these suggestions using James C. Scott’s category of “voice under domination” to demonstrate that Paul is, in fact, engaging with the powers that be. See Elliott, *Arrogance of the Nations*, 62–65; cf. Dieter Georgi, *Theocracy in Paul’s Praxis and Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991), 86–87. I agree with Elliott that the mere claim of subversion will not suffice; however, I do not think this problem is solved by importing Scott’s categories. “Voice under domination” merely corroborates the claim *that* resurrection is subversive, it does little to show *why* that is the case or *how* it can function as such.

words, it is not enough to say that the pyramid of power is overturned in the resurrection without making a philosophical connection between crucifixion and power. What in the resurrection fuels the message that Jesus is Lord? Why does *this* event as opposed to others clearly demonstrate the messiah's lordship?

To understand the philosophical connection between resurrection and the political structure and thereby answer the *why* question, we turn to the work of Jacob Taubes, and Theodore Jennings, Jr. The work of Taubes and Jennings builds an important layer on the foundation outlined above by providing a philosophically robust demonstration of why crucifixion and resurrection are subversive statements in the Roman Imperial order. To make this connection, both scholars find their home in the book of Romans and set up shop in the first chapter, specifically at Rom 1.4.

Taubes begins by identifying the letter to the Romans as “a political theology, a *political* declaration of war on the Caesar.”<sup>130</sup> For Taubes, it is important that Paul did not found the Roman church, and yet he writes a letter to them. The only justification he provides for writing to Rome is a request for assistance in a mission to Spain, a recently established Roman region still largely affected by barbarian resistance.<sup>131</sup> Paul shows his political genius by beginning this mission to the ends of the world with postage to the congregation established in the center of world empire, the eye of the storm. In Taubes's

---

<sup>130</sup> Taubes, Jacob. *The Political Theology of Paul* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 16.

<sup>131</sup> For a thorough assessment of the slow process of Romanization in Spain and the presence of resistance throughout the region into and beyond the *pax Augusta* see Leonard A. Curchin, *Roman Spain: Conquest and Assimilation* (New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1991), ch. 9.

words: “he had a sense for where to find the power and where to establish an opposing power.”<sup>132</sup>

Paul begins his missiological letter with a declaration that Jesus is designated “Son of God with power” because of the resurrection of the dead. The resurrection is, according to Taubes, the conscious attribution of the imperial enthronement of Jesus.<sup>133</sup> For Taubes then, the political challenge that Paul offers is more than a mere co-optation of imperial titles. Rather, Paul’s letter to the Romans, written just after the murder of Claudius and during the beginning of the Neronian period, is a public declaration of “protest against the flourishing cult of the emperor” that was on full display during Claudius’s *consecratio*.<sup>134</sup> This works in an apocalyptic way, that is, Paul constructs the world through a nihilistic lens whereby creation is decaying, and that is demonstrated in the Roman Empire—there is no hope under the Roman banner. The resurrected Messiah, then, stands as the public consummation of an anti-Caesar collection of followers who groan out against this decay.<sup>135</sup> Taubes emphasizes the public nature of Paul’s political declaration which is founded on the enthronement of Jesus.

Jennings builds upon Taubes and expands the theory that Romans is a declaration of war on the injustice inherent in the Roman and Jewish legal systems by the establishment of justice (*dikaiosune*) through the enthronement of a new king, Jesus, in the resurrection. For Jennings, this message drives the letter which is:

---

<sup>132</sup> Taubes, *Political Theology*, 16.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 70–74

a complex attempt to persuade his readers, a small group of messiah followers living in the capital of the empire that had executed that messiah, that he can assist them in understanding and living out the extralegal response to the divine claim of justice in the midst of a world whose injustice is all too evident, not least in the execution of the messiah of God.<sup>136</sup>

This message finds its starting point on the cross where Jesus is designated the son of David, “the king of the Judeans . . . the one in rebellion against the empire.”<sup>137</sup> This designation, messiah: son of David, threatens the *pax Romana* and is therefore dealt with in the way that Rome would secure “peace”: through violence. At this point, Jennings’s claim is almost identical with that of Elliott, Wright, and Setzer. However, he continues to push the political underpinnings of the message.

It is through the resurrection of Jesus that we witness God overturn the unjust Roman adjudication. The life-giving spirit of the resurrection brings the executed back to life, and thereby robs the empire of the violence that fuels the death penalty, its demonstration of power. Paul begins his letter to the heart of the empire with a direct challenge to the death penalty of the Roman political system. For Paul, Jesus’s death on the cross is tantamount to the Messiah taking on death, ontologically speaking.<sup>138</sup> But when Jesus takes on death through the death penalty of a political order, he is by consequence taking on that which undergirds the law of that order. Death and the order of law are inseparable because death is what gives law its force, it is the “or else” of law that

---

<sup>136</sup> Theodore Jennings Jr., *Outlaw Justice: The Messianic Politics of Paul* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), 12.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>138</sup> This much is clear in 1 Cor. 15 where Paul talks about resurrection as a reversal of the sting of death.

gives it teeth.<sup>139</sup> Without death, law loses its ability to persuade and thereby maintain the political order.<sup>140</sup> Or, in the words of Jacques Derrida, “when one tackles the death penalty, one does not dispute one penalty among others but law itself in its origin, in its very order.”<sup>141</sup> When Paul calls upon the cross as the starting point for his postmarked theology, he brings the entire Roman order into view and challenges its legitimacy. Paul’s apocalyptic theology is not only interested in the cosmic implications of the in-breaking of the new creation, it is also intensely concerned with the Roman Imperial order. And the question that Jennings asks, in response to this, is “if the instrument of imperial coercion is rendered inoperative through a resurrection of the executed, can the empire still stand?”<sup>142</sup>

This is *why* resurrection is a subversive statement. The apostle turns his apocalyptic theology into a political message by showing how resurrection confronts and overturns crucifixion, the capstone of violence, thereby undermining an entire legal system. For Paul, the Roman Imperial order and the violence that fuels the machine (seen most evidently in the crucifixion) is the present manifestation of sin’s pervasive nature. Paul stands in the prophetic line of Israel in his critique against the spirals of violence and injustice perpetuated by sin. Any unjust system of rule would receive the same apocalyptic critique, because the battle is a cosmic battle; Rome just so happens to be the

---

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Jacques Derrida, “Force of Law: The ‘Mystical Foundation of Authority,’” in *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*, eds. Michel Rosenfeld and David Carlson (New York: Routledge, 1992), 42, cited in Jennings, *Outlaw Justice*, 19.

<sup>142</sup> Jennings, *Outlaw Justice*, 20.

empire who killed the Messiah. Plainly stated, Paul's theology of the cross is a political-theology. It addresses God's vengeance against evil and in so doing it addresses the power of the Roman Imperial order as it perpetuates that evil.

With the work of Taubes and Jennings we move beyond a mere idea that uses Caesar's names to describe Jesus and vindicates the righteous, and into the realm of political theology. That is, they provide an answer to the *why* question. Paul's theology of the resurrection is subversive in that it does not simply vindicate Jesus as the righteous one, it also takes down the foundations of Roman law by removing Caesar's right to death. With the deactivation of that legal system, Paul's apocalyptic theology can begin to establish a new political order wherein its members identify with the crucifixion (Gal 2.20; 6.14) and are thus baptized into the resurrection (Rom 6.3–6).

### **Conclusion: The Subversive Potential of Resurrection**

Resurrection is an idea that was shaped through changing tides of imperial politics. It stood as a declaration of God's vindication for the just and soon came to represent his judgment of the unjust. Resurrection naturally lends itself to a counter-imperial message with subversive force, and we have seen that play out in the history of scholarship. It overturns the ordered society of Rome and declares Jesus to be lord and savior, implying that Caesar is not. It declares a new king and speaks in the prophetic voice of the Hebrew Bible against injustice and violence.

But what precisely makes this message subversive? Or, *why* does it function as such? Resurrection is a public declaration of war through the enthronement of a new king. But more than this, by reversing the judgment of Rome, resurrection snatches the death penalty from the grip of Rome and thereby removes the power of law. This act, of



bringing back to life a man declared criminal by the Roman order and executed, challenges Caesar's ability maintain peace through violence. This is seen most clearly with a view toward the cross. The imperial demonstration of power through torture shows that it has its cracks. And with enough pressure, it will shatter.

Yet once again we are left with a lingering concern. How does this idea, that has textual and philosophical support, make its way out of the world of ideas and into the lived reality of the early Christian community? The final component to a sustainable strategy of seeing resurrection as a subversive idea is to ask *how* it can actually produce a subversive movement against an empire, which does not exist in the world of ideas but is an all-embracing reality. My contention is that the counter-imperial idea of resurrection did not maintain residence in the world of potentiality, rather, resurrection was the idea that created and shaped a material space within which inhabitants of the empire could envision themselves outside of the power of Rome. And it accomplished this by undermining Roman sovereignty through the deployment of a new mode of power.

### Chapter Three: Foucault and the Power of Resurrection

“It has often been said that Christianity brought into being a code of ethics fundamentally different from that of the ancient world. Less emphasis is usually placed on the fact that it proposed and spread new power relations throughout the ancient world.”

—Michel Foucault<sup>143</sup>

#### Introduction

Any challenge to a political system requires the challenge to the power that underlies that system. As I emphasized in chapter two, the simple proclamation that Jesus is lord, therefore Caesar is not, does not sufficiently account for the rapid spread of the early Christian movement that occurred in the three hundred years following the crucifixion of Jesus. It is also true that we cannot point to a demonstration of physical force to explain this shift. Explanation requires we look beyond ideological formation and physical force to what Michel Foucault calls the micro-level of force relations.

Given the complexity of Foucault’s theory of power, this chapter will provide a brief introduction to his understanding of power (covering his writings and lectures) *for the purpose of* sketching out the blueprints that my historical genealogy will build with. In short, it will provide an overview of his theory of power for the uninitiated reader of Foucault. But, in addition to providing a basic introduction, this chapter will demonstrate to the dedicated or expert reader of Foucault how I am reading the historical

---

<sup>143</sup> Michel Foucault, “Why Study Power? The Question of the Subject,” in *Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, eds. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 214.

periodizations of power found in *Security, Territory, Population* (hereafter, *STP*), and how I am proposing to bolster his analysis of the history of the techniques of disciplinary power. The challenge of this chapter, then, is to provide enough background for the novice and enough proof for the expert.

I will accomplish this through a multi-step process. First, I will explore some of the important features of Foucault's understanding of "power" as an operative category, to include an analysis of the three dominant types of power found throughout Foucault's writings. Then, I will demonstrate how his lectures at the *College de France* from 1974–1980 show an unfolding of dominant forms of power throughout progressive historical periodizations.<sup>144</sup> This will allow me to construct a theoretical foundation of power upon which I can situate the early history of Christianity's expansion and thereby demonstrate in the remaining chapters that the drastic and unexpected rise of Christianity was due—in large part—to employment of new and subversive mechanisms of power in the empire. The Roman Imperial government, which maintained control through sovereign power, was challenged and subverted by a Christian use of disciplinary power activated by the discourse of resurrection.

---

<sup>144</sup> By "unfolding . . . historical periodizations" I do not mean anything akin to Hegelian developmental stages whereby history is moving in a direction toward human freedom by means of progress, and that there is a certain inevitability to historical events. See George Dennis O'Brien, *Hegel on Reason and History: A Contemporary Interpretation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 145–158. Rather, Foucault works in the realm of historical conditions to demonstrate the ever-present struggle of power, not in a universalizing way toward utopia or metanarrative, but in a way that demonstrates historical change through ruptures in the power relations that constitute society. See Shaun Gallagher, "Hegel, Foucault, and Critical Hermeneutics," in *Hegel, History, and Interpretation*, ed. Shaun Gallagher (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), 155–160.

## Power: A Primer

Foucault labored to demonstrate that power is not a top-down enterprise; it is not a quantitative *thing* found in the subject's observation of the sovereign's rules, or the contractual bond between subjects who seek to give up rights for the sake of self-preservation.<sup>145</sup> Foucault's work on power has drastically altered the conceptualization of the operation of power in any given society. For Foucault, power is a complex phenomenon grounded on the relationship of force between all subjects in any given society. In short, power is always present. Throughout his career, Foucault pulled on the threads that held together the fabric of the common understanding of power. He analyzed the operation of power in various historical periods and set out to show how it developed to that point. In doing so, he provided a grid, or a map on which we can situate our present position in the history of power relations.<sup>146</sup>

A discussion of Foucauldian power theory requires a brief justification for my decision to employ the term "theory." Foucault explicitly resists this word as he seeks instead to move toward an "analytics" of power that looks at the "domain formed by relations of power" and the mechanisms that establish this domain.<sup>147</sup> Richard Lynch,

---

<sup>145</sup> Foucault, *Society Must be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977–78*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 16–17.

<sup>146</sup> Foucault's work offers a critical view of the present without attaching a judgment upon that view. He's more concerned with telling us how things are and how they came to be that way, than with telling us how things should be and how they can come to be that way. As Felix Driver notes "Foucault's history disconcerts; it offers a means of criticizing the present, without the possibility of a return to the past . . . we might characterize many of his historical inquiries as maps rather than stories." Felix Driver, "Bodies in Space: Foucault's Account of Disciplinary Power," in *Reassessing Foucault: Power, Medicine, and the Body*, ed. Roy Porter and Colin Jones (Florence, KY: Routledge, 1998), 115.

<sup>147</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume One, An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 82.

however, noting that Foucault himself uses the term to refer to his understanding of power, clarifies that “theory” can be used, but with caution.<sup>148</sup> When I use the word theory, I do not refer to an overarching and complete explanation of the world.<sup>149</sup> Rather, the word serves as a tool by which I can bring structure and organization to a diverse set of historical evidence. It is a general, organizational term that broadly refers to the relationship between mechanisms of power in a given era and how those relationships shape cultural movement.

### *Toward a Definition of Power*

The closest we get for a starting definition of power in Foucault’s writings is found in part four of *The History of Sexuality*:

It seems to me that power must be understood in the first instance as [1] the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization; as [2] the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses them; as [3] the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from one another; and mostly, as [4] the strategies in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulation of the law, in the various social hegemonies.”<sup>150</sup>

First, power as a general theory begins on the micro-level, at the multiplicity of force relations. In other words, any analysis of power must start at the level of individuals and their actions and interactions: individual activities, such as ritual and routine, as well as

---

<sup>148</sup> Richard Lynch, “Foucault’s Theory of Power” in *Michel Foucault: Key Concepts*, ed. Dianna Taylor (Durham: Acumen, 2011), 15.

<sup>149</sup> See Foucault, *Society*, 13. Foucault states his desire to *not* provide an “answer to everything” through a theoretical conversation. Rather, he sets out to determine the power apparatuses operative at various levels of society and the mechanisms, effects, and relations of those apparatuses.

<sup>150</sup> Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 92–93. Enumeration borrowed from Lynch, “Foucault’s Theory,” 19.

culturally structural mechanisms, such as burial practices, architecture, and liturgy.<sup>151</sup>

Power is not something one can attain or lose, rather, it is “exercised from innumerable points”<sup>152</sup> caught up in the relationships within social life. Power begins at the bottom, not the top. Any analysis of the deployment of power in a society must begin at the bottom to see how the multiplicity of force relations organize themselves.

Second, the micro-level force relations are always in a state of struggle and contestation, and this struggle leads to change and transformation in the culture itself. A power network, by necessity, contains within it points of resistance everywhere. In the (not-so-subtle) words of Foucault: “where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power.”<sup>153</sup> All power relations are dynamic and have a push-pull nature to them. As such, when we analyze a change in the micro-level force relations we should expect to see resistance to the present structure, and this resistance is what makes power a productive force in the social movement of humanity throughout history.

Third, the resistance that is present in power relations, and the coalescence of force relations on the micro-level leads to the formation of a system. Resistance is not singular for Foucault, but plural. In other words, there is no single rise to resist that awakens the sensibilities of all other individuals and calls them to resist as well; rather,

---

<sup>151</sup> Foucault, *Society*, 28–30. Foucault warns against an understanding of power as a homogenous domination, or something that is held by some people and employed in the process of domination over a group of other people. Power is not like wealth, where it can be attained and transferred. Power must be analyzed as something that is circulatory and never localized. “In other words, power passes through individuals. It is not applied to them,” (29).

<sup>152</sup> Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 94.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 95.

there are multiple points of resistance that are spontaneous, all of which coexist in the field of power relations. Resistance is spread out at “varying densities, at times mobilizing groups or individuals in a definitive way, inflaming certain points of the body, certain moments in life, certain types of behavior.”<sup>154</sup> Foucault allows for points of radical rupture that occur on rare occasions, but more often than not “one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing cleavages in a society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings.”<sup>155</sup> This system that results from this regrouping is defined by the various points of resistance that take place on the individual and structural level.

And fourth, when these points of resistance are strategically codified, a revolution becomes possible. In the same way that the state relies upon power relations as they are integrated into its various institutions, a revolution (or shift in hegemonic structure) can occur when the resistant force relations are crystallized in various institutions and apparatuses without being localized in those institutions.<sup>156</sup> Foucault’s analysis of power begins at the bottom, with force relations at the micro-level. When these force relations (which are always in a push-pull resistance with the dominant form of power) coalesce, a shift, transformation, or change in the dominant power structures by historical period becomes possible.

---

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 96.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

## Apparatuses of Power

The coalescence of a particular set of power mechanisms defines and constitutes a larger type, or apparatus (*dispositif*) of power, of which there are three: Sovereign, Disciplinary, and Bio-Political.<sup>157</sup> These three can be understood as larger systems that operate through the crystallization of different mechanisms on the micro-level. As such, a description of a larger type of power begins with and is dependent on an analysis of the mechanisms that constitute that type.

### *Sovereign Power*

Sovereign power, in Foucault's work, centers on two things: the centrality of a sovereign figure (i.e. king, lord, emperor), and the human physical body as the primary target of punishment and penal repression.<sup>158</sup> Both of these warrant individual attention so that we might gain a clear picture of the difference between the key components of sovereign power and its successor, disciplinary power.

The first structuring element of sovereign power is the sovereign, who is the key figure in this power structure. Legality in the empire derives from his person and position, which means that an affront against the laws of the empire is understood as an affront against the sovereign himself.<sup>159</sup> Said another way, a crime within the realm of the sovereign not only attacks the immediate victim, it is also constitutes an attack against the sovereign because the law is representative of his will and power, which derives from his

---

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 135–145.

<sup>158</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline*, 8.

<sup>159</sup> Michel Foucault, *Abnormal*, 82. "The crime was crime insofar it attacked the sovereign; it attacked his rights and his will present in the law and it thereby attacked his strength and physical body."



person.<sup>160</sup> The sovereign is present through the law, and is therefore present in execution of law.

The sovereign figure, by virtue of his position, maintained ultimate power over life and death. Punishment and torture served as an extension of that power, so that through punishment things were set right and the sovereign's power over life and death was maintained.<sup>161</sup> Since power is maintained through punishment, and punishment is a component of the sovereign's power over life and death, the imperial punishment system served as a means of restoring honor to the sovereign. This is done through a calculated and regulated process that maintains life through the pain of death-torture. In other words, the subject desires death because of the pain implemented through torture, but the sovereign regulates the finely-tuned process so as to maintain life and divide the punishment into a "thousand deaths."<sup>162</sup> The spectacle of the ceremony of public torture and execution is then used to reconstitute the sovereign's temporarily injured right to rule.<sup>163</sup>

---

<sup>160</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 47.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 48. This, says Foucault, is directly tied to the foreign power of the sovereign – "the right to punish, therefore, is an aspect of the sovereign's right to make war on this enemies: to punish belongs to 'that absolute power of life and death which Roman law calls *merum imperium*, a right by virtue of which the prince sees that his law is respected by ordering the punishment of crime.'" See *Abnormal*, 82–83, 85. Punishment was the sovereign's vengeance so that he might regain his strength. The ceremony of execution was the reversal of the crime, the ritual of the reconstitution of the sovereign's power.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 34–35, 48. Torture and public execution is vital in system of sovereign power—"Its aim is not so much to re-establish a balance as to bring into play, as its extreme point, the dissymmetry between the subject who has dared to violate the law and the all-powerful sovereign who displays his strength" (48-49). Without the ritual of corporal punishment the power of the sovereign is eclipsed, and for this reason the punishment must be one of excess, an "emphatic affirmation of power and of its intrinsic superiority [because] . . . the offender has touched the very person of the prince" (49)

The sovereign controls life and death in the empire, thus removing those rights from his subjects.<sup>164</sup> However, Foucault calls this a paradox in that sovereign's right to life and death renders the subject's life neutral, he has no say in the matter and is therefore "neither dead nor alive," rather, he is dependent on the sovereign who grants this privilege.<sup>165</sup> This paradox however, sits beside its corollary disequilibrium in the system. The sovereign's right to life and death is not as it seems. Without the ability to grant life, the sovereign's right and power can only be exercised through death, or, through the *removal* of life from the subject.<sup>166</sup> This limit to *removal* of life is also seen in the sovereign's power of mercy and pardon in that he is not providing life, but merely postponing death. Put another way, "it is essentially the right of the sword" thus rendering the sovereign's power, at its core, a deductive force.<sup>167</sup> It cannot create life, it can only remove it or decide to postpone that removal.

The right of the sword was made evident to all in the act of public execution, and this act, while designed to re-establish justice and provide an example to the watching public, found its primary purpose in the (re)establishment of the sovereign's power.<sup>168</sup> Its

---

<sup>164</sup> Michel Foucault, *Society*, 240. Foucault calls this a "theoretical paradox that must have as its corollary a sort of practical disequilibrium. What does the right of life and death actually mean? Obviously not that the sovereign can grant life in the same way that he can inflict death. The right of life and death is always exercised in an unbalanced way: the balance is always tipped in favor of death." The power of the sovereign is heavily dependent on the ability to kill, and to kill in an extreme way, as a means of maintaining the power of life and death through "the power to take life or let live." (241)

<sup>165</sup> Foucault, *Society*, 240.

<sup>166</sup> Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 136

<sup>167</sup> Foucault, *Society*, 240; *History of Sexuality*, 136

<sup>168</sup> See Foucault, *Discipline*, 57–59. In *Abnormal*, 83, Foucault notes that the sovereign's punishment was necessarily imbalanced to create terror, and one element of the terror within the ritual of punishment was "intimidation against any future crime" which was accomplished through excessive demonstration.

public nature ensured every subject knew that the sovereign was unrestrained in his power of life and death. To be clear, the sovereign's power of life and death was not made manifest by the brutality of the torture or the finality of the execution. Rather, his power is felt through his very presence at the execution, not bodily but through the institution of his ability to take vengeance or provide pardon. The decision of vengeance or pardon was the sovereign's alone, and therefore his presence was felt at every execution. Public torture and execution was, in essence, a confrontation between the sovereign and the criminal, or a "hand-to-hand fight between the vengeance of the prince and the contained anger of the people, through the mediation of the victim and the executioner."<sup>169</sup>

Life and death, innocence and guilt, are all subject to the sovereign's power. This has important implications for any challenge in a sovereign system. Namely, sovereign power is highly dependent on the sovereign's ability to remove life through the implementation of the sword. When the sovereign's primary tool, the death penalty, is rendered ineffective the sovereign's ability to rule is brought into question.

The second structuring element of sovereign power is the physical body, which is the target of punishment. Penal repression is focused on the sovereign's ability to exact pain upon the subject's body in a finely-tuned, almost artistic, process based on the legal code and administered by the representative of the sovereign's presence: the executioner.<sup>170</sup> The spectacle of public punishment, to include "death, judicial torture

---

<sup>169</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 73.

<sup>170</sup> A shift from sovereign to disciplinary power also entails a shift in the treatment of crime: it is no longer the place of the judicial system to *punish* but to "correct, reclaim, 'cure.'" The body is no longer the *location* of punishment, but an *instrument* for its effect. A shift from "an art of unbearable sensations" to

pending proof, penal servitude, flogging, *amende honorable*, [and] banishment”<sup>171</sup> was not a subsidiary element to sovereign power, nor was it the result of unrestrained human anger. Rather, punishment in the sovereign system depended on spectacle and corporal pain through excessively violent acts on the body of the offender. This spectacle demonstrated the sovereign as the victor who regained his honor through the struggle between sovereign and subject. Through public torture, though the subject would strive to endure the pain, the sovereign would wind up victorious, demonstrating his right to take life.

The judge and executioner are unconcerned with the reason for the crime or the guilty subject’s internal disposition or soul.<sup>172</sup> The process of trial was intended to regain for the sovereign his power of truth.<sup>173</sup> This was done by process of investigation, torture, and ideally, a confession from the accused which would transcend all other evidence since through confession, the accused participated in the production of penal truth, thus justifying his own punishment.<sup>174</sup> The key question in the entire penal ceremony was whether or not a crime had been committed and if that crime could lead to corporal

---

“an economy of suspended rights.” Foucault, *Discipline*, 8–11. It is worth noting that in the gospel accounts, the minister of execution acknowledges the divine (imperial?) nature of Jesus (Mk 15.39; Matt 27.54).

<sup>171</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 32.

<sup>172</sup> This stands in contrast with disciplinary power which brings the criminal’s soul to the witness stand not “merely to explain his crime and as a factor in the juridical apportioning of responsibility . . . [but because] it too, as well as the crime itself, is to be judged and to share in the punishment.” Foucault, *Discipline*, 18. Cf. Foucault, *Abnormal*, 40–41

<sup>173</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 38.

<sup>174</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 38. Public torture was designed to reveal truth in the public eye, but all participants had to do their role. When this happened, “the penal ceremony had the effectiveness of a long public confession. See p. 44.

punishment. If the answer was yes, then the public battle between the sovereign and the subject would begin for the purpose of restoring the sovereign's honor through the employment of the sword.

### *Disciplinary Power*

Disciplinary power, in contrast to sovereign, is centered not on the body, but on the soul. And the ministers of this system are no longer trained in the arts of execution, but in medicine, divinity, and psychology—executioner is replaced by doctor, chaplain, psychiatrist, psychologist, educationalist, etc.<sup>175</sup> The shift to disciplinary power constitutes a fundamental change in the criminal process—from punishment with the purpose of revenge to discipline with the intent to prevent repeated offense. Whereas sovereign power restores the sovereign's honor and thereby secures the empire, disciplinary power cures the subject, and thereby defends the society.<sup>176</sup> The shift to the soul brings with it a shift in the question of knowledge production by the adjudicating authorities (who are now many, as opposed to one: “psychological experts, magistrates . . . educationalists, members of the prison service”<sup>177</sup>). The question is no longer concerned with the verifiability of the crime and its punishable nature on the body, but the protection of society and the discipline of the soul. The two-fold question of crime and punishment turns into a three-fold question: “Does the convicted person represent a

---

<sup>175</sup>Ibid., 11, 16. The shift from torture to imprisonment did not remove any form of physical pain, but its goal was the deprivation of wealth or rights for the purpose of reform. Pain (though a lingering effect), was a byproduct in the disciplinary system.

<sup>176</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 74, 93. The penalty was calculated to exactly the point that would prevent repetition.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 21.

danger to society? Is he susceptible to penal punishment? Is he curable or readjustable?”<sup>178</sup>

If readjustment, or cure is the goal of the disciplinary apparatus of power, then the mechanisms of power must change to produce the newly desired end state. These new mechanisms of power (which will be discussed momentarily) produce the modern internal self, or, the soul, which is the site of disciplinary power.<sup>179</sup> The soul is created by the mechanisms of disciplinary power and thus serves as the cause for a subject to act appropriately even apart from the direct fear of the sovereign’s sword. The desire to shape the developed soul becomes the motivating factor of disciplinary mechanisms as they effect the body. This makes soul and its end-state (normality) condition the actions of the body which is why Foucault can say “the soul is the prison of the body.”<sup>180</sup> This is to say that the mechanisms of disciplinary power act on the body, but their motivation is to work inside the body, on the soul.

Disciplinary power also shifts the right to punish away from the sovereign by redistributing power from the his body (single), to the social body (multiple).<sup>181</sup> This

---

<sup>178</sup> Ibid. This shift highlights a more important move—the penal system is lifted from the hands of the judicial authorities, and placed under the control of psychiatric experts and a host of extra-judicial individuals who could comment on the individual’s internal identity and thereby shape, indeed determine, the sentence for the crime.

<sup>179</sup> Foucault’s language about the “creation” of the soul should not be understood in a metaphysical or ontological sense. He is, instead referring to something that is not a substance but is the site on which the mechanisms of disciplinary power work. He draws our attention to other words used to articulate this inner-self: “psyche, subjectivity, personality, consciousness, etc.” *Discipline*, 29–30. It is the internal disposition of the human being to act a particular way *apart from* the fear of corporal punishment. In this way, the soul becomes the prison of the body, because the soul determines the actions of the human now, not the body.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>181</sup> The efforts at juridical reform in the late eighteenth century were, in effect, an effort at redistribution of power delivered through the rhetoric of equitable principles. Cf. Ibid., 80.

rearrangement shifts the motivation of punishment away from vengeance for the sovereign's position toward the health of society and its defense.<sup>182</sup> Because of the shift from the sovereign's right to power to the social body's health and defense, discipline becomes the responsibility of the social body, and the focus moves away from revenge and toward prevention through reformation. The right to punish becomes the responsibility of all in the social body, and the criminal becomes an enemy of society as a whole—a monster that threatens the health of the corporate body. Now, each person in society comes under scrutiny for the purpose of *training the individual body to affect the individual soul*, rather than merely impressing the sign of the Sovereign upon the condemned.<sup>183</sup>

In the dual shift to the social rather than sovereign body, and soul rather than physical body as the site of power relations, the subject's body does not disappear, rather, it is re-envisioned. Disciplinary methods, which are no longer limited to the juridical realm but take root throughout society, focus on developing the individual soul by controlling the body through a system of operations that efficiently circulate the body throughout society. The body is thus made docile (subjected and transformed for improvement through movements and attitudes) and useful (productive in the economic machine). Discipline is found in the creation of a body of docility-utility.<sup>184</sup> This is seen

---

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 90. Cf. Foucault, *Abnormal*, 86–87, wherein he speaks of the rise of a “series of scientific and industrial technologies . . . for exercising power at less financial and economic cost than in the absolute monarchies.”

<sup>183</sup> This leads to a system of disciplinary mechanisms designed to rehabilitate the offender, rather than exact punishment for the defense of the Sovereign. See Foucault, *Discipline* 117–131, esp. 127; cf., 170.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., 137.

most clearly in the military formation of the soldier in the late eighteenth century where every movement is observed, critiqued, and catalogued so that the body is made docile and meticulously controlled by movement and organization.

The body of docility-utility is absolutely necessary for disciplinary power as it allows for the distribution of individuals throughout society and thereby creates the individual *qua* individual.<sup>185</sup> Foucault does not mince his words on this point; “discipline” he says “‘makes’ individuals” and it does so through a modest, calculated, and subdued power that is dispersed throughout society which thereby becomes ingrained in the body.<sup>186</sup> In other words, while there were individual persons prior to the advent of disciplinary power, the *individual* as an object and instrument of the exercise of power did not exist.

The advent of disciplinary power *creates* the individual as subject who has a four-component definition: “[1] it is cellular (by the play of spatial distribution), [2] it is organic (by the coding of activities), [3] it is genetic (by the accumulation of time), [4] it is combinatory (by the composition of forces).”<sup>187</sup> The employment of these four characteristics of power gives birth to the disciplined individual, who self-corrects (by virtue of his training). This subject self-corrects to cure himself according to the

---

<sup>185</sup> Disciplinary power forms the individual by defining him by his individuality, thereby making the individual a subject. Foucault defines the meaning of subject as being “subject to someone else by control and dependence, and [being] tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge.” Foucault, “Why Study Power?,” 212

<sup>186</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 170.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., 167. Enumeration my own.



standards of the disciplined society due to pressure on the newly-formed soul, rather than the body and the fear of the sovereign's sword.

Put another way, the disciplined individual is shaped through the activation of disciplinary mechanisms. The mechanisms of power come first, and as they begin to frame the lived existence of the human, he is subsequently shaped by these characteristics which define his individuality according to disciplinary power. The characteristics of the disciplined individual are, then, formed by commensurate techniques, which will be enumerated and described below. These techniques are best understood as a material structure through which disciplinary power functions. Material objects such as architecture, calendars, routines, and rank structures cycle the body throughout society and distinguish her from the larger mass as an individual who is now the object of power. But this structure, which forms the characteristics of the disciplined individual, ultimately functions to create the inward-looking self by virtue of the infusion and implementation of commensurate instruments of power, of which Foucault identifies three: hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment, and the combination of these two in the examination.<sup>188</sup> These instruments working within the techniques of power complete the system; they arrange a material world that cycles the body throughout, creating the fear of constant observation within society to make the individual's body docile, useful, and self-correcting.

---

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 170

<b>Four “Great Techniques” of Disciplinary Power</b>	<b>Three “Simple Instruments” of Disciplinary Power</b>
Spatial Distribution	Hierarchical Observation
Activity Control	Normalizing Judgment
General Organization	Examination
Force Composition	

Table 1: Foucault’s categories of the techniques and instruments of disciplinary power as found in Foucault, *Discipline*, 141–169, 170–194.

The activation of Foucault’s four “great techniques” infused with his three “simple instruments” of disciplinary power will be explored throughout the historical journey in the chapters that follow. As such, a careful explanation of the key elements of each technique and instrument is in order to create a proper frame for the chapters that provide a comparison between Roman power and the challenge to that power in early Christian practice.

### **Techniques of Disciplinary Power (or, the characteristics of the individual)**

*Spatial Distribution:* The art of distribution concerns the use of architecture in the circulation and utility of individuals. First, the subject is enclosed within a space that distinguishes him from others and thus materially defines him as individual.<sup>189</sup> This enclosed space is where the individual is made productive. But mere enclosure would not suffice; discipline must organize this analytical space by breaking it up and dividing it “into as many sections as there are bodies or elements to be distributed.”<sup>190</sup> The goal in distribution is “to know where and how to locate individuals . . . [and] to be able at each

---

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 141.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 143.

moment to supervise the conduct of each individual.”<sup>191</sup> The pattern of this distribution to which Foucault often refers is the monastic cell wherein each individual is compartmentalized for the purpose of solitude. In addition to the individual divisions, there were specific functional sites set apart for assigned activities to make the space useful. Finally, within this divided, functional, and enclosed space, the individuals are arranged by rank so that each person is distributed and circulated in “a network of relations” which creates a hierarchy of rank within the enclosed space.

*Activity Control:* The daily activities of the individual are governed by a time table, which Foucault notes is borrowed from the monastic communities, and both creates a rhythm of the day and regulates the cycles of the rhythm throughout the year. The division of time, in the disciplinary system, becomes more and more minute so that the body responds immediately to commands that are given. At the first sound of the school bell the body responds immediately; the pupil will kneel with arms crossed and eyes lowered for prayer. Soon, time begins to penetrate the body through the use of a program that provides a schema of behavior. The act is broken down into movements wherein each part of the body is “assigned a direction, an aptitude, [or] a duration.”<sup>192</sup> This code overtakes the whole body so that each component of the body is made useful, in handwriting, for example, the entire body has a role from the feet to the tip of the finger. The body is mechanized to respond in particular ways to particular times and commands, and the more time is divided and categorized, the more the subdivisions multiply.

---

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., 152.

Through this process the disciplined individual is made organic, that is, her response to this technique of power appears natural, spontaneous and unforced.<sup>193</sup>

*Genera Organization:* Once the body is controlled by means of space and time, the genetic individual can be created through the division of time according to various genera, or ranks.<sup>194</sup> The purpose of this is to move towards an end-state, or, to create an evolutive process by which the individual can progress through the ranks. The day is capitalized by breaking up and rearranging activities based on segments of training, which is isolated based on the type of training and the individuals involved. To use Foucault's example of the military, recruits do not train with veterans. Training is isolated according to rank and complexity; however, the individual is organically drawn to "climb the ranks" by making the most and best use of her time in the assigned rank. Each element in the divided hierarchy is given a time-limit and a series of concluding, graded examinations.<sup>195</sup> The end result of genera organization, is the internalization of the goal of progress. The genetic individual seeks progress, and through this pursuit the whole social body progresses. For Foucault there is a correlation between the techniques of disciplinary power in the eighteenth century what he calls the "two great 'discoveries'" of that period—"the progress of societies and the geneses of individuals."<sup>196</sup> That is, the idea of societal progress, and the idea of society divided by ranks which individuals can

---

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., 156.

<sup>194</sup> By "genetic individual" I refer to Foucault's category of individuation that is organized through spatial arrangement and the time-table so as to enforce the accumulation of skills and exercises within respective ranks. The accumulation of these skills leads to the desire of hierarchical movement. In this way the individual is "genetic" in that he pursues upward movement through the defined geneses.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 159

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 160.

climb are both correlative with the rise of disciplinary techniques. And, like spatial distribution, for Foucault the pattern of genetic progress is seen first in the ascetic life and the community's pursuit of collective salvation. In this technique of power, time is ordered for progress, progress is defined by established ranks, and the individual's success leads to the success of the society.

*Force Composition:* The final characteristic of the disciplined individual is a combinatory form. The individual body is now defined not by characteristics intrinsic to itself, but by the place that it occupies within the larger, rank-structured society; that is, by its relation to others. The body is made mobile so that it can be moved around and placed in relation to others to become part of a “multi-segmentary machine.”<sup>197</sup> This larger machine, or body that is created out of constitutive parts, or members, is controlled by a command system mediated through signals. The ordering system is required to fire off commands that will result in the proper bodily response of all members within the body within their place. This can be seen in modern hospital settings wherein a particular alarm sounds, indicating a pre-designated code. When the alarm is heard, every employee knows what to do based on the sound of the alarm. Trauma doctors might end lunch prematurely to come to the floor, nurses buzz around the patient to take vital signs, nurse practitioners ensure everyone is in their proper spot, and cleaning crews know to stay out of the way. Without being instructed, every cog in the medical machine begins turning in the proper way based on a simple sound. The machine works efficiently and productively.

---

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 164.

### **Instruments of Power (or, how disciplinary power *gets going*)**

In the shift from sovereign to disciplinary power, through the production of the four-component, disciplined individual, the power of the sovereign body is transferred and dispersed to a larger social body, or society. The four techniques outlined above are used to create the social body made up with disciplined individuals. But these techniques do not work alone, rather, they are made successful because of three “simple instruments” of power which work through and alongside the techniques: hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment, and the combination of these two in the examination.<sup>198</sup>

*Hierarchical Observation:* The architecture that is used to segment off individuals and create demarcations based on rank was also designed to make the contents of the distributed space visible and manageable.

“the perfect disciplinary apparatus would make it possible for a single gaze to see everything constantly. A central point would be both the source of light illuminating everything, and a locus of convergence for everything that must be known: a perfect eye that nothing would escape and a center towards which all gazes would be turned.”<sup>199</sup>

However, the ability for a single eye to see all is impossible in any real space. Therefore, the institutionalized gaze was divided among smaller elements, or relay points, all of which point back to a center point. The end result being an integrated system of control organized around a network of surveillance. The mechanism of perpetual supervision maintains itself as a discreet and omnipresent system that distributes individuals through

---

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., 170. These three instruments are described in detail in part three, chapter two of *Discipline and Punish*.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 173.

the production of power.<sup>200</sup> A clear demonstration of this distribution of surveillance is seen in Foucault's analysis of Pinel's *Traité medico-phlosophique*, concerning the psychiatric hospitalization of King George III of England.<sup>201</sup> The king is separated from his family and all reminders of royalty, and while it is the doctor who will determine the King's ability to rule, it is the job of two very strong assistants to care for his "needs" and provide him with "services." They are also to convince him of his weakness and subordination to them, and keep constant, silent watch over him to report back to the doctor. The architecture provides individualized care to the king, the doctor is the one who will watch over his "care," and the assistants are tasked to report his movements to the centralized eye. This gaze is both ever-present, but also discreet. It functions silently and yet holds the entire system together through the constant reminder of observation.

*Normalizing Judgment:* Constant supervision leads, then, to comparison between subjects within the disciplinary system. Disciplinary power depends on individuals within rank, and though the ranks themselves are established by the techniques of spatial distribution and force composition, the placement of individuals within the ranks is the result of judgment that comes from observation. An individual is watched and gauged on the basis of his value as an individual in comparison with others, and then placed in the proper hierarchical space. The penal system enforces this hierarchizing judgment as it contains both gratification for obedience, and discipline for disobedience. The discipline of this new system is based on precision and micro-punishments for each negative action.

---

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 177.

<sup>201</sup> Foucault, *Psychiatric Power: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1973–74*, ed. Jacques Lagrange, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 19–30.

Reward and discipline work together to cover all of the individual's action and create a hierarchy based on comparison. But unlike sovereign punishment, discipline is designed *not* to expiate or repress, but to differentiate individuals and normalize the actions of all within the society. The disciplinary system creates a distinction between 'normal' and 'abnormal' within the system and inscribes that distinction on the soul of the individual who will self-correct in order to maintain movement in the hierarchy.

*The Examination:* The final instrument of power ingrained within the techniques of discipline is found at the point where hierarchical observation and normalizing judgement meet. The gaze tracks the subject as an individual, judgment determines hierarchy through a penal response to individual action, and the examination objectifies the subject by transforming each individual into a 'case' with a history of documented actions that forever follow him. In the words of Richard Lynch, "the examination binds the exercise of disciplinary power to the formation of a disciplinary knowledge."<sup>202</sup> The comparative system in which its members were deemed 'normal' or 'abnormal' was both activated by and forever secured through the examination and the commensurate documentation of the one being examined.

All these various pieces, of techniques and instruments, combine so as to create the subject as individual, and this whole process is what Foucault calls disciplinary power. Disciplinary power arises through the creation of the subject as *individual*. This creation occurs through various material means, by separating, hierarchizing, and observing each person within society. In this way, the locus of power shifts from the

---

<sup>202</sup> Lynch, "Foucault's Theory," 32



body of the sovereign, to the body of society which is comprised of many elements, all of whom must function properly, and self-correct when deemed abnormal. Self-correction for the purpose of restoration is fundamental to disciplinary power, and the underlying mechanism that makes this possible is the institutionalized gaze.

The institutionalized gaze is not something that is forced onto a society, but rather, it is a system that arises from the ordering of bodies in space. Foucault discusses the ordering of citizens during the seventeenth century plague to show how surveillance developed through a process of the state desiring to ensure the well-being of society through observation and registration.<sup>203</sup> This shows that while there is an idea behind the implementation of these mechanisms (e.g. the well-being of society during a plague), disciplinary power is not the result of an ideology *of control* that is put in action. Rather, it is the result of a re-ordering of material practices that shapes the subject.

### **Power and Historical Periodizations**

For Foucault, power throughout history has unfolded through three periods whereby one apparatus maintains dominance: sovereign, discipline, and bio-political. The first two have been covered at length above. The third type of power, bio-political, is largely unrelated to my thesis and, for the sake of space, will not be described in detail. In short, bio-power uses the mechanisms of disciplinary power and shifts focus from the individual body to the population, or the species-body.<sup>204</sup> Bio-political control is no longer exercised exclusively by training the soul, but moves to the biopolitical

---

<sup>203</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 195–197.

<sup>204</sup> Foucault, *Society*, 242–245.

management of life via the ability to sustain it by managing birth and mortality rates, levels of health, life expectancy and longevity, along with all the conditions that create variations in these rates.<sup>205</sup>

By “embedding itself in existing disciplinary techniques,” bio-power expands these individualizing techniques into a larger, more expansive management of society.<sup>206</sup> In so doing, it creates an “anatomy-politics of the human body.” That is, once the body is formed into a machine that is capable of optimization and regulation, it can be expanded onto the larger social body and, subsequently, optimized and regulated through mechanisms such as statistics, health, and life-expectancy. Because bio-power largely builds upon disciplinary power it will remain out of focus for our present study, which will pay attention instead to underlying disciplinary mechanisms of power in the Roman Empire.

To be clear, Foucault marks the dawn of the eighteenth century as the point at which the Western world transitioned from sovereign power to disciplinary power with the advent of certain technologies: prison, the Panopticon, and the schoolhouse among them. However, he is equally clear in his analysis that disciplinary methods had long been present in monasticism, armies, and workshops, but for Foucault these early forms are sporadic and limited.<sup>207</sup> It was not until the dawn of the eighteenth century when these disciplines turned into “formulas of domination.”<sup>208</sup>

---

<sup>205</sup> Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 139.

<sup>206</sup> Foucault, *Society*, 242.

<sup>207</sup> See esp., Foucault, *Psychiatric Power*, 63–66.

<sup>208</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 137; Foucault, *Abnormal*, 193.

However, while the definitive transfer from sovereign to disciplinary power did not occur until the eighteenth century, my contention is that these forms of power were, nonetheless, developing and coalescing in the early Christian movement of the second through fourth centuries. Through the discourse of resurrection which served as the great challenge to the Sovereign's right of death, I contend we also find the coalescence of formerly sporadic and limited disciplinary mechanisms of power in the formation of the early Christian community. Talk of disciplinary power in antiquity is something most Foucault scholars will warn against. As such my historical claim requires justification in Foucault's theory of power through history.

The three types of power discussed above (sovereign, disciplinary, bio-political) each gain dominance throughout various historical periodizations. The natural question that arises, though, is how these three forms interact on a larger historical level.<sup>209</sup> For example, Foucault, as seen in *Discipline and Punish* (hereafter *DP*) is convinced that disciplinary power replaced sovereign power as a dominant form in the eighteenth century when disciplinary mechanisms of power which were already operative in the religious sphere (monastery, confession) became ingrained in larger society through the inventions of the eighteenth century, such as the prison, Panopticon, military structure, and workshop. But how does a historical change occur? Is it a gradual evolution or a

---

<sup>209</sup> Foucault recognizes distinct periodizations of power throughout history (a cursory reading of *Discipline and Punish* will demonstrate this point), what he seeks to disrupt is not the idea of large-scale change, but the idea of a "story" that has a natural and necessary narrative continuity. Elizabeth Clark notes: "throughout his writings, Foucault focused on gaps, ruptures, and shifts of meaning. This approach to history, he acknowledged, owes much to Marx, and differentiates his own work from that of traditional historians of ideas, who more often searched for continuities." Elizabeth Clark, *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 116; cf. Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 234. Foucault, *Discipline*.

radical rupture? And further, how do we account for disciplinary mechanisms that were present prior to the eighteenth century?

Foucault begins to answer these questions in the following way:

One might say this: It is as though power, which used to have sovereignty as its modality or organizing schema, *found itself unable to govern* the economic and political body of a society that was undergoing both a demographic explosion and industrialization. So much so that *far too many things were escaping the old mechanism of the power of sovereignty*, both at the top and at the bottom, both at the level of detail and at the mass level. A first adjustment was made to take care of the details. Discipline had meant adjusting power mechanisms to the individual body by using surveillance and training. That, of course, was the easier and more convenient thing to adjust. That is why it was the first to be introduced—as early as the 17th century, or the beginning of the 18th—at a local level, in intuitive, empirical, and fragmented forms, and in the restricted framework of institutions such as schools, hospitals, barracks, workshops, and so on. And then at the end of the 18th century, you have a second adjustment; the mechanisms are adjusted to phenomena of population, to the biological or biosociological processes characteristic of human masses.<sup>210</sup>

In summary, a shift in the dominant type of power occurs when the governing scheme of power cannot contain the resistance present in the changing society, a resistance that occurs through mechanisms on the micro-level. As this resistance becomes an integrated system, it brings about a change, transformation, or replacement of the governing power structure. Foucault elsewhere describes this as a gradual invasion that altars the mechanisms of the major form.<sup>211</sup> But where do the forms of power come from if they were not present in the system of sovereignty?

In *STP* Foucault begins to answer this by setting out a historical understanding of power relations as they pertain to governmentality. In his words, he gave his audience

---

<sup>210</sup> Foucault, *Society*, 249, emphasis mine.

<sup>211</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 170.

“the bare bones, if you like, of a kind of historical schema.”<sup>212</sup> In this historical schema, Foucault outlined a genealogy of power apparatuses, noting the differences between multiple modes of power as they developed through history wherein the legal (sovereign) system is “the archaic form of the penal order,” that dominates the Middle Ages to the seventeenth or eighteenth century, then the modern (disciplinary) system “which was established from the 18th century,” and finally the contemporary (bio-political) system which is what we currently see.

In other words, Foucault identifies exactly what we have noted thus far, that his three primary modes of power appear as dominant modalities at different points in the history of politics and control. Now, at first read, one could come away with a linear view that the development/flow of history leads to the ascension of a new form of power, and in its ascension the new form of power completely replaces the former. In fact, some have left *DP* with the impression that power is epochal and totalizing in that there are different eras that subsequently replace one another with different modes of power. This is where his lectures in *STP* step in to nuance his position by showing overlap and interrelation between mechanisms of power throughout historical periods. In outlining the schema noted above he made a small but important comment that both complicates and illuminates his theory of power:

To describe things in this way, as the archaic, ancient, modern, and contemporary, misses the most important thing. The main thing is missing, in the first place, because, of course, the ancient modalities I spoke about involve those that appear as newer. It is absolutely clear that in the juridico-legal system, which functioned,

---

<sup>212</sup> Foucault, *Security*, 6.

or at any rate was dominant, until the 18th century, the disciplinary side was far from being absent.<sup>213</sup>

Foucault's historical schema is *not* linear and totalizing. Rather, though one mode of power is dominant in each era, and this dominance changes throughout history (in what might appear to be an epochal way), all three modes of power are always co-present and co-dependent.<sup>214</sup> While sovereign power was the *modus operandi* for Roman control when the Apostle Paul was putting stylus to parchment, lurking beneath the surface were apparatuses of disciplinary and regulatory power, neither of which were dominant, but both of which were present and alive.<sup>215</sup>

He refers to the shift between one form of power dominance and another as a change in the system of correlation between technologies of power:

So, there is not a series of successive elements, the appearance of the new causing the earlier ones to disappear. There is not the legal age [sovereign], the disciplinary age, and then the age of security [bio-power]. Mechanisms of security do not replace disciplinary mechanisms, which would have replaced juridico-legal mechanisms. In reality you have a series of complex edifices in which, of course, the techniques themselves change and are perfected, or anyway become more complicated, but in which what above all changes is the dominant characteristic,

---

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>214</sup> The difference between *Discipline and Punish* and *Security, Territory, Population* lead some, like Stephen Collier, to see a "radical break" between Foucault's method of history in his early work and in his later lectures. According to Collier, his early totalizing claims were a product of a "history of techniques," and his later nuanced approach was a "history of technologies" where the focus breaks away from epochal ideas and develops a topological dimension. Collier described this break as merely one of focus, however, I believe Collier's language of "fundamental methodological break" is far too strong for what Foucault is accomplishing in his lectures. The historical perspective is still clearly present, it is simply nuanced to clarify *how* the change between technologies of power takes place and show how each technology is present at all times, though not dominant. See Stephen Collier, "Topologies of Power," *Theory, Culture & Society* 26.6 (2009), 89–90, and Thomas Nail, "The Crossroads of Power," *Foucault Studies* 15 (2013), 113.

<sup>215</sup> My research is not interested in the regulatory (bio-political) aspects of the Roman Empire, it is concerned only with the disciplinary elements and how those take shape through the resurrection discourse of the Christian movement. However, recent Roman historians have drawn attention to underlying mechanisms of bio-power in the Empire. See Shreyaa Bhatt, "The Augustan Principate and the Emergence of Biopolitics: A Comparative Historical Perspective," *Foucault Studies* 22 (2017): 72–93.

or more exactly, the system of correlation between juridico-legal mechanisms, disciplinary mechanisms, and mechanisms of security. In other words, there is a *history of the actual techniques themselves*.<sup>216</sup>

In fact, Foucault briefly alludes to this overlap of technologies of power in *DP*. While discussing the formation of a disciplinary society, he emphasizes that this formation does not mean that disciplinary techniques of power have replaced sovereign techniques, but that the new modality of power has “infiltrated the others, sometimes undermining them, but serving as an intermediary between them, linking them together, extending them and above all making it possible to bring the effects of power to the most minute and distant elements.”<sup>217</sup> It is this overlap and infiltration that allows Foucault to emphasize that each technique of discipline has a long history behind it.<sup>218</sup>

The long history of techniques is central to my argument. The techniques of discipline slowly build on a micro-scale, which implies that though it is the disciplinary society in the eighteenth century that combines and generalizes these techniques throughout all of society, they are nonetheless present and employable *before* their period of dominance. So, with the prison, Foucault can say that it was not born with new codes, rather, “it had already been constituted outside the legal apparatus when, throughout the social body, procedures were being elaborated for distributing individuals, fixing them in space, [and] classifying them . . . .”<sup>219</sup> When the modern prison was in its infancy, in the early nineteenth century, society recognized its novelty, but the mechanisms of

---

<sup>216</sup> Foucault, *Security*, 8, emphasis mine.

<sup>217</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 216.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*, 224.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, 231.

disciplinary power had become so deeply ingrained in the social body *before* its introduction that the prison, as a mere reproduction of those mechanisms (an “apparatus for transforming individuals”<sup>220</sup>), appeared to be self-evident by the time it was introduced in full-scale.<sup>221</sup>

This point is made most clear in Foucault’s lectures in 1973 in which he says in no uncertain terms that the mechanisms of disciplinary power which become dominant in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have a history that extends far into the past. They were “anchored and functioned in the midst of apparatuses of sovereignty; they were formed like islands where a type of power was exercised which was very different from . . . sovereignty.”<sup>222</sup> But more than simply existing on the margins of the dominant apparatus of power, they “made possible certain forms of social opposition to the hierarchies, to the system of differentiation of the apparatuses of sovereignty.”<sup>223</sup> Granted, Foucault locates these islands of disciplinary power in the Middle Ages among the monastic orders; however, the important element for my thesis is the possibility of the existence of disciplinary societies within a periodization of sovereignty, and the subversive potential of those marginal groups.<sup>224</sup>

Power relations are, then, overlapping. And as such, they influence each other throughout history. This means that there is not the “age of sovereignty” in the Medieval

---

<sup>220</sup> Ibid., 233.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., 232.

<sup>222</sup> Foucault, *Psychiatric Power*, 63.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>224</sup> I draw my reader’s attention especially to Foucault’s clear discussion on this in Foucault, *Psychiatric Power*, 63-87.



period (and before) which gave way to the “age of discipline” in the eighteenth century then finally succumbed to the “age of bio-power” in the late nineteenth century to the present. Rather, the techniques of power overlap, with one technology of power orienting and driving power relations during various historical periods. One can imagine a music mixer, where a listener sips bourbon and enjoys Dvorák’s symphony number 9. He can choose to highlight and/or silence any element within the symphony so that, at exactly two minutes and five seconds into the symphony the volume of the brass is escalated, with the strings, percussion, and woodwinds turned down to a slight din. The violins are still present in the score, and the listener can hear them if he listens carefully, but the driving force at this point in the score (to the listener) is the highlighted sound of the French horns. Then, as the movement continues, he slowly turns down the brass to highlight the strings. There is the point, when the strings and brass on the mixer are both at mid-level, and both are competing for the listener’s attention, but the listener continues to lower the volume of the strings and raise the volume of the brass.

In such a way, sovereign power, like the French horn, was emphasized at the beginning of the score, while disciplinary and bio-power were present in the score but turned down low. I am proposing that Christianity, through the instantiation of the idea of resurrection, began to raise the level of the violins, of disciplinary power, in competition with the French horn, and thereby shift the attention within the score itself.

Allow me to build on this analogy so that we might think about my project in another way. Had I removed the elements of my thesis concerning resurrection and the rise of Christianity, this project could be presented as a history of disciplinary techniques of power before the dominance of a disciplinary apparatus of power. But I am not only

interested in the history of these techniques, but the effect they had on the early Christian movement along with the ideas that they used to get going (i.e. resurrection).

For Foucault, the precursor to disciplinary power is *pastoral power*, defined at length in *STP*. Pastoral power is not a dominant apparatus because it resides in the religious realm of the medieval period, found in the church and monastery. Disciplinary power arises when the “modern Western state” integrates “an old power technique which originated in Christian institutions. We can call this power technique the pastoral power.”<sup>225</sup> One of the key elements of Christian impact, for Foucault, was not the introduction of a new “code of ethics fundamentally different from that of the ancient world,” but the proposition and expansion of “new power relations throughout the ancient world.”<sup>226</sup> This new form of power introduced by Christian expansion, which receives little emphasis, is a power that begins the process of creating the individual subject who is central to the later dominance of disciplinary power. In a sense, then, this project is expanding Foucault’s observations on Christianity’s introduction of a new form of power and demonstrating how this introduction took place. But more than that, it is going to show that this introduction was instrumental in the expansion of the Christian movement.

### **Diagnosing Power in the Empire**

If we desire to diagnose a political situation with this in mind, then, following Thomas Nail, that diagnosis requires we analyze *not only* the dominant form of power, but also those competing forms “along with their degree of intensity, mutual relations of

---

<sup>225</sup> Foucault, “Why Study Power?,” 213.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., 214.

overlap, and antagonism.”<sup>227</sup> It is only this type of analysis which will allow us to identify the ways by which hidden forms are used as means of resistance.

The change from sovereign power to disciplinary power, recall, comes from “mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing cleavages in a society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings.”<sup>228</sup> Now that I have outlined the characteristics of sovereign and disciplinary power along with an analysis of how dominant forms of power work over larger historical periods, we can turn to the historical data of Roman power. Foucault draws a straight line in the history of sovereignty between Rome and the Middle Ages.<sup>229</sup> It is somewhat frustrating that Foucault does not clearly demarcate between Republican Rome and Imperial Rome when he discusses antiquity, a point which several historians have recently critiqued.<sup>230</sup> Had he done so, we might be able to better nuance how he would envision power in early Rome contra the later empire. However, by the time we enter our period of consideration, Augustus’s imperial project was fully underway, and though he sought to maintain a connection with the republic’s principles of indirect moral control (as seen in *Res Gestae* 8.5), the language used to create this connection is deeply sovereign in nature. That is, the imperial system centered on Augustus and made his body and authority the source of the

---

<sup>227</sup> Nail, “Crossroads,” 114.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> To be clear, the line Foucault draws is that between the historical methods of Rome and those of the middle ages. However, historical methods are described as a ritual that reinforces and upholds sovereignty, implying that both periods are ruled by sovereign power. See Foucault, *Society*, 68–69.

<sup>230</sup> Dean Hammer, “Foucault, Sovereignty, and Governmentality in the Roman Republic,” *Foucault Studies* 22 (2017): 49–71, and Bhatt, “Augustan Principate”.

reinstated republican ethics.<sup>231</sup> Imperial power appears to be definitively sovereign in nature.

However, because Foucault's work on sovereignty, as outlined above, comes from an analysis of medieval rule, to make my case, it is important that I draw out several key elements and proofs to demonstrate Roman sovereignty. It is outside the scope of this project to provide a full analysis of sovereignty in the pre-Christian Roman Empire (ca. 30 BCE – CE 325); however, it is important that I draw attention to the two structuring elements of sovereign power and connect those with Roman ways of governing: the figure of the sovereign and his power to take life, and the subject's physical body as the target of punishment.

#### *The Imperial Body and the Right of Death*

For the inhabitant of the Roman Empire, the presence of the sovereign's person and power over life was both felt and seen. Two components of imperial rule demonstrate this: imperial portraiture and the power of clemency.

The provinces of Rome were covered with images and statues of the emperor. This begins with Julius Caesar, the first living person to appear on coinage, and extends through Constantine who demonstrates Maximinus' loss of rule through the destruction of his portraits.<sup>232</sup> The imperial portrait was a symbol of power and a demonstration of

---

<sup>231</sup> Bhatt, "Foucault," 78–79. In *Res Gestae* 8.5 Augustus emphasizes that "I myself handed down exemplary practices of many things to be imitated in later generations." Bhatt notes that the restoration of the moral code of the republic required, in the empire, "embodiment in the person of the sovereign, Augustus." (80).

<sup>232</sup> Clifford Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire*. Classics and Contemporary Thought. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 221, 230, 248; cf. Charles Brian Rose, *Dynastic Commemoration and Imperial Portraiture in the Julio-Claudian Period* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 58.

the emperor's special relationship with the gods. As such, his image was found in temples, displayed during local holidays, and protected by Roman law.<sup>233</sup> But veneration of the portrait was not given as mere lip-service. Rather, the portrait itself was a stand-in, or representative of the imperial presence and power.<sup>234</sup>

During the Julio-Claudian dynasty, portraits of the new emperor were delivered to legionary forces to act as a stand-in for the soldiers to swear the oath of loyalty to the emperor.<sup>235</sup> Further, the portrait of the emperor was installed in centers of commerce and law so that the emperor could watch over Roman officials as they conducted legal business, and provide safety and sanctuary for any who would take hold of the image.<sup>236</sup>

This continues into the third century when, during the inauguration of Decius (249 CE), the empire was called to a period of universal and unanimous piety through sacrifice to the ancestral gods for the security of the empire. Portraits and statues of Decius were placed alongside local deities and earlier emperors so that prayers for the empire were made before the image of the current emperor, set in succession with his predecessors.<sup>237</sup> The empire was awash with officially produced portraits and representations of the emperor, so that its subjects could distinguish between good and

---

<sup>233</sup> Ibid., 232, 237.

<sup>234</sup> Charles Rose reminds us that the practice of setting up portraits of emperors was not done by the emperors themselves. Rather, it was done by provincial cities in anticipation of the emperor's blessing. See Charles Brian Rose, "The Imperial Image in the Eastern Mediterranean," in *The Early Roman Empire in the East*, ed. Susan E. Alcock, OM 95 (Oxbow Books: Oxford, 1997), 109.

<sup>235</sup> Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.3.3, in Ando, 230.

<sup>236</sup> Ando, 217; W.H. Worrell, *The Coptic manuscripts in the Freer Collection*, UMHS 10 (New York: MacMillan, 1923), 375.

<sup>237</sup> Ando, *Imperial Ideology*, 207–209.

poor representations.<sup>238</sup> Where the image of the emperor was, there also was his body, weapons, and victorious hand.<sup>239</sup> The presence of the sovereign's body through imperial portrait is best summarized by the late-fourth century Severianus, who describes the imperial portrait as a point of comparison for the invisibility of God:

“You know how many are the magistrates throughout all the earth. Since the emperor cannot be present everywhere, it is necessary to set up a portrait of the emperor at tribunals, in marketplaces, at meetings, and in theaters. In fact, a portrait must be present in every place in which a magistrate acts, so that he might sanction whatever transpires.”<sup>240</sup>

Like the prince in Foucault's sovereign power, the power of the emperor was a constant presence in matters pertaining to law, life, and death. Legality derives from his person and position.

Yet sovereign power requires more than just imperial presence, it also requires the emperor's right to take life or let live. The removal of life by the powerful is nothing new in the history of Rome, or the history of humanity for that matter. But during the rise of Julius Caesar and the introduction of imperial Rome and important element of imperial power developed—the public and political use of *clementia Caesaris*.<sup>241</sup> Though repudiated by Roman elites after the death of Julius Caesar, it took but a generation for

---

<sup>238</sup> Arrian of Nicomedia can identify a statue as a poor representation of emperor Hadrian, which implies a familiarity with a large catalogue of portraits. Arrian *Peripl. M. Eux.*, 1.3–4; cf. Pomponius Mela 3.13, cited in Ando, *Imperial Ideology*, 229. The practice of imperial presence through artistic representation was criticized by Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 4.80.

<sup>239</sup> See Men., *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 1–2, 377.10–30 *Basilikos logos* (trans. Russell and Wilson). Cited in Ando, 235.

<sup>240</sup> Severianus, *In Cosm.*, 6.5 in Ando, 233.

<sup>241</sup> Melissa Barden Dowling, *Clemency & Cruelty in the Roman World* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 18.

clemency to take hold in imperial Rome as an exercise of the emperor's power.<sup>242</sup> It was a reminder that the one granting clemency holds power over the subject's life because of his right of death. And in this imperial setting, the emperor maintains the right to exercise clemency on all.<sup>243</sup>

The imperial right of death and life, exercised through the virtue of clemency, was made most direct in times of war. Following the war of 32 BCE, Augustus employed execution as a primary tool to construct imperial unity. When the Roman poet Horace, comes to accept the clemency afforded him, he simultaneously comes to accept Caesar's power over life and death:

...  
The oxen amble over the pastures, safe  
from foreign marauders and thieves;  
  
Ceres gives increase to crops in the fields;  
Prosperity grants us her blessing; sailors voyage  
without having to fear the attacks of pirates;  
and morals govern our lives.  
  
(Punishment follows any lapses swiftly.)  
If Caesar is safe, we are all safe, too.  
... (Odes, 4.5)<sup>244</sup>

---

<sup>242</sup> Dowling, *Clemency*, 273.

<sup>243</sup> Shelley Matthew, *Perfect Martyr: The Stoning of Stephen and the Construction of Christian Identity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 119.

<sup>244</sup> Horace, *Odes*. 4.6, trans. David R. Slavitt. (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014)

The emperor's right to clemency protects Rome from the barbarian and from itself, both on the battlefield and in the city.<sup>245</sup> However, as the poet Vergil warns, clemency is dependent on the whim and wish of the emperor.<sup>246</sup>

Clemency quickly becomes articulated as a companion to punishment from the High Empire to Late Antiquity, so that Tiberius can set himself forward as one who is self-controlled and merciful with “the power to injure or aid all who live under his authority.”<sup>247</sup> It restrains the emperor's power, separates him from the tyrants, and finds its opposite, not in strictness, but cruelty.<sup>248</sup> In imperial Rome, clemency becomes painted upon the canvas of society, and derives from the emperor's ability to show mercy and kindness to the furthest reaches of the empire.<sup>249</sup>

#### *The Roman Body as Target of Punishment*

The Roman justice system was unquestionably a system of class justice.<sup>250</sup> Torture, though reserved for slaves who have been accused of a crime in the earliest Roman law, expanded in the second and third centuries to prisoners who gave inconsistent evidence. This, says W.V. Harris, opened a wide loophole for the

---

<sup>245</sup> Dowling, *Clemency*, 88–89.

<sup>246</sup> In the closing lines of the *Aeneid*, the victor, Aeneas, stands before his enemy who begs for mercy to return to his family. In his request he begs Aeneas to lay down his hatred, but to no avail, in the final words of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas saw the war loot that Daunus wore which “commemorated his wild grief, and he burned with hideous rage . . . Incensed, he thrust the sword through Turnus' chest. His enemy's body soon grew cold and helpless, while the indignant soul flew down to Hades.” Vergil, *Aen.*, 12.925–952. Trans. Sarah Ruden. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 294–295.

<sup>247</sup> Dowling, *Clemency*, 178; 169. Cf. Seneca, *Clem.* and *Ira*.

<sup>248</sup> Carlos F. Noreña, *Imperial Ideals in the Roman West: Representation, Circulation, Power* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

<sup>249</sup> Dowling, *Clemency*, 281.

<sup>250</sup> W. V. Harris, *Roman Power: A Thousand Years of Empire* (New York: Cambridge, 2016), 198.



administration of torture throughout the empire.<sup>251</sup> Additionally, during this time cruel punishments, once reserved only for slaves spread to citizens among the lower ranks.<sup>252</sup> However, for all subjects of the empire, the body was the target of punishment.

Many crimes in the Roman Empire came with the penalty of death, for slaves and the lower class, or exile, for the elites.<sup>253</sup> Capital punishment was most commonly accomplished by means of crucifixion or the arena, both of which were designed to extend the condemned criminal's suffering. Many medieval and modern instruments of torture were originally developed in the Roman period. The condemned might be burned with coals and fire, or might have a three-pronged claw thrown at him and dragged along his body tearing holes in his chest and belly, or he might be placed on the rack while heavy stones were tied to his extremities intended to slowly pull the bones from their sockets.<sup>254</sup>

For Foucault, recall, sovereign punishment is a contest between the emperor and criminal, an idea also found in Seneca who identifies retribution and revenge as the chief motivating factors in the emperor's punishment.<sup>255</sup> The offender would receive a punishment that delivered pain commensurate with the offense, so that when the death

---

<sup>251</sup> Edward Peters, *Torture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), 18, 29; Harris, *Roman Power*, 198.

<sup>252</sup> Harris, *Roman Power*, 198.

<sup>253</sup> Dowling, *Clemency*. Ramsay MacMullen, "Judicial Savagery in the Roman Empire," *Chiron* 16 (1986): 147–166; G. Thome, "Crime and Punishment, Guilt and Expiation: Roman Thought and Vocabulary," *Acta Classica* 35 (1992): 73–98; Richard A. Bauman, *Crime and Punishment in Ancient Rome* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

<sup>254</sup> Dowling, *Clemency*, 225; 331 n. 10.

<sup>255</sup> Seneca, *Clem.* 1.20.1.

penalty was complete, the worst among the condemned would have died in the most painful way possible. Torture changed throughout the empire. Some capital crimes formerly punished with decapitation, were changed to crucifixion, wild animals, or burning after 200 CE<sup>256</sup> The only criminals exempt from torture were pregnant women and children under the age of fourteen, except under the sentence of treason.<sup>257</sup>

The imperial prerogative to torture, punish, and execute for the maintenance of the emperor's right to death was palpable in the empire. In the Roman Empire, violence and execution were public and visible. Crowds would pack the arena to watch executions and gladiatorial games. Executions were performed in public spaces and brought observers who would rejoice at the death of the condemned. Cassius Dio recounts the fear that overcame the senate as the emperor Commodus, after fighting gladiators and animals, severed an ostrich's head from body and brought the head to the watching audience as a reminder of his power to decapitate any in the empire.<sup>258</sup>

But recall, sovereign torture is not designed simply to hurt the body. It is designed to reinstate the sovereign's honor through the production of truth through trial (and ideally confession) and the subsequent fight between the sovereign and subject, mediated by the executioner. The Roman emperor was also intimately involved in the juridical production of truth. He would spend time out of his day to hear cases and embassies and issue verdicts. During this process, pain was inflicted as a way of gaining true testimony

---

<sup>256</sup> MacMullen, "Judicial Savagery," 152.

<sup>257</sup> Ulpian, *Dig.* 48.19.3; cf. Dowling, *Clemency*, 225.

<sup>258</sup> Cassius Dio, 73.21.1–2, recounted in Dowling, *Clemency*, 219.

as is seen in the story of a decurion who, upon being tied up and tortured, changes his story.<sup>259</sup>

Being bound up with the sovereign's honor, the juridical production of truth was often public and arbitrary, or, bound up with the emperor's whim and wish. Many emperors, up to Hadrian, would give their judgement in public from a tribunal to squash any propensity for rumor, and to gain the public's favor.<sup>260</sup> Yet the judgment of the emperor, as based upon his desires, was often seen as an arbitrary process unconnected to objective standards. Consider two contrasting judgments as an example of this arbitrary process. Augustus, after conquering Alexandria, entered the gymnasium and ascended a tribunal to declare his mercy upon the city. He refrained from destroying the city out of his respect for its founder, great size, and philosopher-resident, Areius.<sup>261</sup> Yet during a visit to Syria in 20 BCE Augustus failed to remove his kindness from Herod after receiving detailed charges of injustice and malpractice by the Gadarenes. As a result and out of fear from this arbitrary process many of them cut their throats, threw themselves from heights, and cast their bodies into the river out of fear from the punishment that they would receive from Caesar.<sup>262</sup> These two examples highlight the reality that judgment and punishment was entirely dependent on the person of the emperor, and there was nothing outside of him that would restrain his decision.

---

<sup>259</sup> *Acta purgationis Felicis*, line 342 ff.

<sup>260</sup> Fergus Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World: 31 BC – AD 337* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), 229–230

<sup>261</sup> Plutarch, *Ant.*, 80.1–3.

<sup>262</sup> Josephus, *Ant.*, 15.10.3

The emperor himself held the power of the sword and used it for defense of his person as he was distributed throughout the empire by his body or image. Death was always a real possibility for the Roman inhabitant, as justice was arbitrarily meted out by the emperor.

### **Conclusion**

My contention is threefold. First: that sovereign dominance was challenged by disciplinary mechanisms of power in concentrated form much earlier than Foucault posits. That is, this challenge occurred through a coalescence of disciplinary mechanisms during the first centuries of the common era. Second: that this regrouping of power was produced by the resistance to sovereign imperial power offered by the early Christian movement and the discourse of resurrection. Which means, third: that Christianity's challenge to empire was founded on disciplinary mechanisms and it was this foundation that produced a cleavage in sovereign dominance allowing the successful spread of a counter-imperial movement. To be clear, I do not think that this concentrated regrouping of power in the second through fourth centuries *produced* a disciplinary society, rather, it appears that early changes were reversed and pushed into the religious margins of the monastery and pastoral office after Christianity had become the dominant political force in the fifth century and beyond. However, it was the production of a cleavage point in the early Roman Empire through the coalescence of disciplinary mechanisms of power which opened up a space for early Christian subversion.

The observation of an early Christian challenge to sovereign power is not novel. It is identified by Foucault as well. He sees the Hebraic-biblical message as a protest,

critique, and opposition of power of the sovereign.<sup>263</sup> Hellenistic-Judaism, he says, was always in protest against Rome and the innocent blood it shed—“the Bible was the weapon of poverty and insurrection; it was the word that made men rise up against the law and against glory, against the unjust law of kings.”<sup>264</sup> For Foucault, the biblical critique of sovereignty explains, in part, the rise of disciplinary power commensurate with the Reformation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However, I think it explains much more than the protestant reformation, namely, it also explains the origin of Christianity.

But how did this happen? That is the question that the remaining chapters will attempt to answer. Foucault’s method requires the analysis of micro-level force relations. That is, we must examine the ways and degrees to which the four techniques of disciplinary power (spatial distribution, activity control, genera organization, and force composition) and three instruments of power (hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment, and the combination of these two in the examination) took root in the early Christian communities to form a counter-imperial space. This occurred, I propose, through the spread of the idea the resurrection of Jesus and its instantiation in material and textual forms through which we find the establishment of a new sovereign who blunted the blade of the emperor’s sword and maintains constant watch over the souls of his people.

---

<sup>263</sup> Foucault, *Society*, 71. For Foucault, the biblical history of servitude and exiles stand in contrast to the Roman history of sovereignty, see *Society*, 77.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

In the remaining chapters I will demonstrate that the resurrection of Jesus acts as a counter-imperial statement because it removes the sovereign's right to death, and I will show *how* it functions as such by creating a community through the employment of disciplinary techniques and instruments. This will unfold in four successive chapters each addressing the techniques and instruments of disciplinary power that arise and are shaped by virtue of the discourse of resurrection. These chapters will show how the resurrection of Jesus shapes ritual behavior and ranks the community by accumulating time, directs movement through spatial distribution, infuses these techniques with the instruments of observation through theological speculation, and reinforces the sovereign's lost power through martyrologies and burial practices.

By deploying these mechanisms and instruments of disciplinary power, early Christian communities created a space wherein inhabitants of the Empire could envision themselves removed from the oppressive power of Rome. This vision created a modulated space that began the formation of the cellular, organic, genetic and combinatory individual.

However, there are two important qualifications that must be made concerning my method before we move from theory to evidence. The first concerns the breadth of this project. It is nearly impossible to become an expert in all of the details surrounding the many fields of study I will address. The challenge in a Foucauldian study of history is that it requires a mix of detailed analyses coupled with larger generalizations. I have attempted to become conversant with the leading texts and scholars for every subject I will address. That being said, I have undoubtedly missed some.

In many places I rely upon larger generalizations made by scholars within these fields. Typically, modern scholarship does not completely disrupt long-held generalizations, it merely demonstrates exception for the purpose of displaying diversity. There will be exceptions to these generalizations, but the exceptions that demonstrate diversity do not completely undermine the larger conclusions.<sup>265</sup> This being said, the generalizations that I depend upon assume an amount of diversity beneath the surface, but not so much diversity to completely undermine the larger conclusions.

Related to this qualification is a note on the data I will be using for evidence. This project is not designed to reveal or introduce any new evidence to the field of Christian origins. Rather, it is designed to be a re-vision of the evidence available through scholarship. We might think of the goal, then, as a re-examination of early Christian material and textual origins through the lens of disciplinary power in contest with sovereign power.

The second qualification concerns the relationship between Christianity and its religio-cultural neighbors. With some exceptions, I am not proposing that the individual disciplinary techniques described in the chapters to follow are completely unique to Christianity in Roman society. In point of fact, there are examples to the contrary, as will

---

<sup>265</sup> A good example of this is found in the recent work of Edward Adams, *The Earliest Christian Meeting Places: Almost Exclusively Houses?* NTS 450 (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), which challenges the idea that early Christians met “almost exclusively in houses.” Adams proposes alternative sites and pushes only so far as to caution interpreters to not assume “house” when meeting sites are discussed. However, while Adams nuances the generalization by showing diversity of sites, when he proposes to get rid of the term “house church” altogether, Carolyn Osiek says “not so fast: there is more to be considered about the family-based nature not only of gatherings for the Lord’s Supper but of all the other activities in their lives about which we know so little. . . . However, a good case has been made here to exercise caution and consider the widest possible alternatives for early Christian meeting places.” Carolyn Osiek, review of *The Earliest Christian Meeting Places*, by Edward Adams, *BTB* 45 (2015): 185–186. While Adams has done a masterful job at nuancing the generalization by demonstrating diversity, he has not undermined it entirely.

be seen in chapter five. Rather, what I am proposing is unique to early Christianity is the coalescence of multiple techniques of power. For this reason, the chapters that follow do not work as individual analyses. The rupture in power relations that I am proposing depends upon multiple points of resistance in coalescence with one another. To put the matter more plainly, Christianity was not the only movement to make time more precise (ch. 4), partition its meeting spaces (ch. 5), propose that one is constantly being watched (ch. 6), or produce martyrs out of the hope for future life (ch. 7). What I am proposing, is that Christianity uniquely put these together under the larger, subversive category of resurrection.



## Chapter Four: The Shape of Ritual Behavior

“We are of your stock and nature: men are made, not born, Christians.”

–Tertullian, *Apol.*, 18.

### Introduction

Imagine yourself as a young child living on the south-western edge of the city of Rome, the center of the world. It is May 29th, 218 CE and, because the weather is so pleasant, you and a group of friends begin meandering down the Via Campana. Time escapes you and you quickly realize that you have covered over four miles of dusty ground. About to turn back home, you hear a loud commotion coming from the bank of the Tiber in the grove of Dea Dia, a goddess of fertility for the land.<sup>266</sup>

Inquisitively, you and your friends inch closer to a sanctuary in the grove, careful to not be caught. You spot several statues adorning the space, among them portraits of Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, and Lucius Verus, all of whom wear a wreath of corn atop their head.<sup>267</sup> As you turn around, you notice a wealthy man, wearing a toga with a purple border and donning a wreath identical to the imperial busts you saw earlier. He walks up to the altar and offers the innards of piglets as sacrifice. Following him to the

---

<sup>266</sup> We know very little about the early history of the goddess Dea Dia, to include her function in Roman religious life; however, her later cultic rituals after Augustus renewed the *Fratres Arvales* are well known through excavations from 1975 and on. Filippo Coarelli, *Rome and Environs: An Archaeological Guide*, trans. James J. Clauss and Daniel P. Harmon (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014), 439.

<sup>267</sup> Jane Fejfer, *Roman Portraits in Context* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 87–89.

nearby tetrastyle, you see him remove his toga and together with eleven other priests dine on the piglets and their blood.

It is about noon now and your stomach growls out of hunger while you sit behind a column near the ritual feast. After an hour passes the wealthy men exit the tetrastyle, again clad in toga and wreath, and return to the sanctuary. They close the doors behind them, and as you inch closer you hear the slaughter of animals alongside the melodic noise of hymns. Suddenly, the doors open, and the priests come out to throw a collection of jars down the hillside.

You and your friends decide to rummage through the grove for something to eat, and when you return to the sanctuary you see the *fratres Arvales* walking down the hill, back to the city. The overwhelming feeling of curiosity pulls you into the sanctuary where you begin to walk around, admiring the portraits of emperors and gods and the inscriptions of events and rituals. On one wall you see a large, marble calendar, the *fasti fratrum arvalium*, etched with a series of dates and events. It was a gift to the *fratres Arvales* from Caesar Augustus and was installed shortly after his victory at Actium (31 BCE).<sup>268</sup> On the calendar, you spot today's date and festival along with other cultic celebrations that litter the year. But in addition to these, you see imperial dates such as births, marriages, victories and discovered assassination plots, replete with explanations to their importance.<sup>269</sup> One date stands out to you, reminding you of the importance and

---

<sup>268</sup> Jörg Rüpke, *Religion: Antiquity and its Legacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 91–92.

<sup>269</sup> Rüpke, *Religion*, 92. Concerning the *fasti* Rüpke says that “the calendars were not a representation of the complex imperial cult of Rome that might be visited by tourists or delegations. Instead, the calendars were an independent medium to represent imperial celebrations, not festivals; they were not an auxiliary institution of urban cult as the primary mode of representation, but a complementary institution within the whole spectrum of imperial propaganda.” For calendar transcriptions see also, Victor Ehrenberg and

centrality of the Caesar: September 23<sup>rd</sup>, a day celebrated as a public festival for Augustus's birthday in Rome, and decreed as the day of the New Year in Asia.<sup>270</sup> As you leave the sanctuary, your final look at the marble calendar reminds you of how time is patterned in the empire. This calendar, like the many others that Augustus established throughout the empire, serves as a constant reminder that both time and ritual in the empire revolves around the emperor.

Our fourth chapter thrusts us into the first installment of our material analysis of the impact of the idea of resurrection on the formation of disciplinary power in ante-Nicene Christianity. And with this, we turn to the first two techniques of disciplinary power whose beginnings I propose are found in early Christianity—*control of activity*, and *organization of geneses*. My contention for this chapter is quite simple: early Christian time and liturgy, which were structured by the idea of resurrection, developed along a trajectory toward greater precision thus governing the weekly and annual timetable of the Christian subject, and centered that precision on the resurrected Jesus. What I mean by this is that the Christian calendar adopted and distorted Roman time structure, creating a hybrid calendar with a new center point. But more than this, the Christian calendar, through an evolutionary process created annual *and* weekly precision to govern the movement of Christian subjects throughout the empire. I will demonstrate in this chapter that the organization of Christian time challenged imperial time by co-

---

A.H.M. Jones, *Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Augustus and Tiberius*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 44–55.

<sup>270</sup> Beth Severy, *Augustus and the Family at the Birth of the Roman Empire* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 123; Robert Hannah, *Greek & Roman Calendars: Constructions of Time in the Classical World* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2005), 131–133; Mary Beard, “Writing and Ritual: A Study of Diversity and Expansion in the Arval Acta,” *PBSR* 53 (1985), 134.

opting the calendar, making it more precise, and developing a liturgy to fill this newly precise calendar and circulate the Christian subject through a life of participation in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

In short, there are two elements which will structure this chapter: time and liturgy. Both are important because both follow the same path, from diversity and simplicity to structure, precision and uniformity. First, I will demonstrate how the calendar, while following this path toward precision, centered the Christian week and year on the resurrection and replaced imperial time with counter-imperial time. Then, I will demonstrate how liturgical structure, also following this path, moved the subject's body into the resurrection and organized hierarchy and groups dependent on proximity to the resurrected Christ in the Eucharist. Ultimately, by tracing the development of an increasingly precise weekly and annual calendar filled with increasingly precise liturgical guidelines in the early Christian movement, this chapter will demonstrate two points: that weekly and annual precision of Christian time began the activation of disciplinary mechanisms of power, and that what is inscribed on the body through this time-table is the resurrection of Jesus in contrast with the primacy of the emperor.

The topic in this chapter, as with the three to follow, contains a subject matter with many opinions concerning the theology, genesis, and development of the elements discussed. My focus in this chapter is on practice, not theology. That is, I am interested in how calendar and liturgy developed greater articulations of precision, and how that precision consequently moved the Christian body throughout the empire. I am not going to examine every theological explanation of baptism, Eucharist, Easter, or Lord's Day unless those explanations contribute to my larger question of resurrection, controlling

time and organizing bodies. On this note, it goes without saying that one chapter cannot plumb the depths of early Christian time and liturgy. This chapter will not, and indeed cannot analyze every divergent point of nuance in early Christian time and liturgy. Rather it will focus on general conclusions that can be made, taking account for the exceptions but not scrapping the generalizations simply because diversity exists. Further, it will only analyze significant points of evidence that demonstrate the trajectory that I posit. There are many other points of evidence that I could provide, and many of them are included in the footnotes. The evidence that I stop to analyze are, in my estimation, the most important contributions to my thesis.

### **Fixing the Time-Table**

Calendars are important in any society. They structure lives and provide points of transition and importance for subjects within the calendar's reach. Consider the modern American calendar; from my own, non-scientific observation, it centers on the birth of the nation (4<sup>th</sup> of July) and the importance of the consumption of goods (Black Friday and Christmas). We transition into the New Year on a day when we resolve to work harder at some culturally-determined, important task: budget, money, weight. Similarly, our weekly calendar re-cycles the week of labor with a *weekend* intended for relaxation and consumption of goods. The week begins on Monday, when work starts anew, and by Wednesday, the transition over the hump creates an eager buzz as the office anticipates the weekend, which again re-centers our weekly existence through relaxation and consumption. Now, this is merely my own observation on the rhythm of American life, it is one that emphasizes work/labor and rewards good work/labor with relaxation and consumption.

You may disagree with *my* points of emphasis, but any reflection on the American calendar, or any modern cultural calendar will reveal points of transition and importance which create the rhythm of life. A culture's calendar tells its recipients what is important to that culture and how they should act within its bounds. As a calendar gains greater precision in annual, monthly, weekly, and daily patterns, the rhythm of that culture's points of importance and transition are inscribed on the body to a greater degree. Precision in a calendar with the purpose of organizing the culture's life is a hallmark of disciplinary time. Foucault, when considering time and the control of activity, notes that "precision and application are, with regularity, the fundamental virtues of disciplinary time."<sup>271</sup>

Foucault's analysis of time sees calendar precision beginning abruptly in the Christian monastic order, wherein three methods of activity control are born—the establishment of rhythm, imposition of particular occupations, and regulations of cycles of repetition.<sup>272</sup> These methods eventually make their way into "schools, workshops, and hospitals," in the construction of the disciplinary society.<sup>273</sup> To be clear, there is a difference between the use of the time-table in the monastic order, and in the eighteenth century. For the former, the goal was to not waste the time granted by God, whereas the latter sought to make the time as productive as possible.<sup>274</sup> This chapter will excavate the beginnings of these monastic methods and show that the monastic ordering of time did

---

<sup>271</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 151.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> See Nail, *Theory of the Border* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 105 n.92.

not arise *ex nihilo* but was the product of a developing disciplinary mechanism of power through Christian calendar contestation.

As a reminder, I contest that early Christianity activated underlying disciplinary mechanisms of power through the idea of the resurrection, and this activation contributed to its successful spread. Activation, though, does not imply full development. Rather, in these early examples we find the beginnings of what will only later become a fully-formed disciplinary society. For the time-table and the control of activity, these beginnings are found in the adoptive process whereby the early Christian movement distorted the Roman calendar and re-centered the rhythm of Christian life to place importance on the resurrected Christ *in contrast to* the Roman calendar which centered on the emperor. To see the political significance of this calendar transformation, we must understand the political significance of the Roman calendar itself.

#### *Annual Time in the Empire*

The structure of time has always been important to governments, but with the advent of imperialism this importance grew exponentially. Prior to the dominance of imperial systems in the Near East and Mediterranean regions in the sixth century BCE, annual time was flexible and variable. The local political ruler would establish the calendar annually for the population so that he could regulate commerce, cult, and agriculture.<sup>275</sup> However, the rise of imperial domination brought with it the need for a fixed and stable calendar that required as little recalculation as possible. The Persian empire was the first to notice that the constantly expanding borders created

---

<sup>275</sup> Sacha Stern, *Calendars in Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 167.

communication problems which prohibited the sovereign from adjusting the calendar effectively throughout the empire. In response, Persia adopted the Egyptian calendar (the only fixed pre-imperial calendar in antiquity) to institute a stable, empire-wide, Zoroastrian calendar.<sup>276</sup> The rise of imperial control and the need to regulate time in that empire, coupled with the example of a 365-day Egyptian calendar requiring limited adjustment led to the erratic spread of calendar stability throughout the Mediterranean and Near-Eastern regions. By the end of the first millennium, BCE, the majority of calendars were fixed.<sup>277</sup>

Rome's calendar reform began with Julius Caesar, when the Roman Republic was on the verge of imperial transition.<sup>278</sup> The Julian calendar, post-transition, largely replaced the numerous regional Roman calendars, which were in disarray prior to the 50s, with a single, fixed calendar.<sup>279</sup> But uniformity was not the only goal. The introduction of Caesar's calendar was a value-laden affair; it did not merely introduce a more precise method of intercalation, more importantly, it combined the astronomical calendar and the civil calendar to ensure proper observance of cultic sacrifice and feasts throughout the

---

<sup>276</sup> Ibid., 168.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid. Stern helpfully dissociates the notion that this was a macrohistorical trend and defines the spread of the fixed Egyptian calendrical system as sporadic in nature.

<sup>278</sup> The Republican calendar was based on the solar cycle, like the surrounding fixed calendars, however its relation to the solar year was unstable. Though it had fixed months, its intercalations were irregular—"making it an unusual, idiosyncratic combination of rather different calendrical features." In response to this instability, Julius Caesar used the Egyptian example to transition from a Republican calendar to the influential Julian calendar. Ibid., 205.

<sup>279</sup> Alan E. Samuel, *Greek and Roman Chronology: Calendars and Years in Classical Antiquity*, HA 1 (München: Beck, 1972), 171–173; Jörg Rüpke, *From Jupiter to Christ: On the History of Religion in the Roman Imperial Period* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 139–140.



empire.<sup>280</sup> Caesar gave careful attention to the existing religious structures, and through a method of standardization he composed a single song, a rhythm to which imperial life would dance.<sup>281</sup>

In the decades following Caesar's dictatorship, physical Roman calendars (*fasti*) began to proliferate throughout the empire. The *fasti* graphically represented cultic reflections on political events, thus dramatically changing the face of Roman religious politics. The *fasti* did not simply provide a mirror for religious politics; rather, it gave religious politics an autonomous existence that was no longer confined to the cultic site—it moved religious politics into the daily lives of imperial inhabitants.<sup>282</sup> Imperial calendars were not just a tool that society used to keep track of the days, rather they were a constitutive element of society and culture. They actively participated in the creation of a shared imperial habitus.<sup>283</sup>

The Roman Imperial calendar, governed by priests, quickly became a formative influence by annually moving residents throughout the empire to the requisite sites of sacrifice for the observance of ritual activity.<sup>284</sup> Yet the Julian transition was seen by many as a political move as well. Suetonius marks the reform as the first step in the reorganization of the state, and Censorinus sees it as Julius's service, as pontifex

---

<sup>280</sup> Plutarch, *Caes.* 59.2.

<sup>281</sup> Jörg Rüpke, *The Roman Calendar from Numa to Constantine: Time, History, and the Fasti*, trans. David M. B. Richardson (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 114–115.

<sup>282</sup> Rüpke, *The Roman Calendar*, 146.

<sup>283</sup> Stern, *Calendars in Antiquity*, 169. See also Mary Beard, “A Complex of Times: No More Sheep on Romulus' Birthday,” *PCPhS* 33 (1987), 1–15.

<sup>284</sup> Macrobius, *Sat.*, 1.14.1

maximus, to clean up past political abuse.<sup>285</sup> Caesar's reforms were part of a larger movement to remove power from the senate and priesthood and make Caesar's "name and presence . . . indispensably central" to Roman life.<sup>286</sup> Though many cultures on the outskirts of the empire maintained their traditional calendars alongside the Roman counterpart (and sometimes in opposition to it), the observance of Roman festivals and the imperial cult became the pulse that beat throughout the empire, maintained by the *fasti*.

Caesar's centrality to the annual rhythm of imperial life became abundantly evident in the Augustan reforms when, in 9 BCE, the proconsul Paullus Fabius published a decree among the Greek cities in the Asian province that the start of the New Year would fall on September 23rd, the birthday of Augustus, for "the birthday of the god was the beginning of good tidings for the world through him, and [the cities of] Asia decreed in Smyrna . . . that the time for life begins from his birth."<sup>287</sup> To what degree this was observed, we cannot tell, but some calendars appear to follow suit and shift their New Year's day from the Autumn equinox to the Augustan birthday.<sup>288</sup> But either way, the mere *ability* for Fabius to make such a pronouncement implies an empire-wide

---

<sup>285</sup> Suetonius, *Jul.*, 40; Censorinus, 20.7–8.

<sup>286</sup> Denis Feeney, *Caesar's Calendar: Ancient Time and the Beginnings of History*, SCL 65 (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007), 197. See also Elizabeth Rawson, "Caesar: Civil War and Dictatorship," *CAH* 9:424–67, in which she says concerning Caesar's building projects "Thus Caesar imposed his presence on the very heart of Rome, and in every public act of his life the Roman citizen was to be reminded of him," (454).

<sup>287</sup> *OGIS*, 458.II.30–77, trans. Robert Hannah, *Greek and Roman Calendars*, 131–132.

<sup>288</sup> See calendar Heliopolis (Baalbek) in Samuel, *Greek and Roman Chronology*, 176. The date for New Year's Day was not firmly established at this point, Suetonius notes that some cities mark the first day of their year as the day Augustus visited them. Suetonius, *Aug.* 59.

understanding of the centrality of Augustus's birth and person in the ordering of life. His birthday was much more than another festival, it was the central calendrical element.

The calendar reforms of Julius and Augustus created an annual structure, centered on the emperor's person, within which ritual could be standardized and the inhabitants of the empire would circulate through life as determined by the imperially-guided, political-religious message. However, the weekly structure of Roman life was quite different. Neither the Julian reforms, nor the Augustan corrections to the Roman calendar paid much attention to the weekly rhythm of life. During the first centuries (BCE, CE) the *nundinae*, an eight-day market cycle, continued to mark the collective life of the empire alongside a newly introduced seven-day astrological cycle.<sup>289</sup>

The *nundinae*'s eight-day cycle provided a loosely-structured week designed to provide a single day for market transactions, held every eighth day. It was a "multifunctional" institution that set aside one day for market visits and popular assemblies, though the latter were sometimes officially restricted as a means of keeping political influence away from the rural laborers who would be in the city.<sup>290</sup> Some, like Macrobius, attempt to connect the *nundinae* with an ancient holiday to Jupiter; and while there were cultic activities that took place on the *nundinae*, the day appears to simply be a pragmatic function of economy in the empire.<sup>291</sup> Sometime during Augustus's reign, the *nundinae* was joined by the seven-day week, which reorganized the week and connected

---

<sup>289</sup> James Ker, "'Nundinae': The Culture of the Roman Week," *Phoenix* 64.3/4 (2010): 364. See also Rüpke, *The Roman Calendar*, 161–162; Hannah, *Greek and Roman Calendars*, 141.

<sup>290</sup> Lukas de Ligt, *Fairs and Markets in the Roman Empire: Economic and Social Aspects of Periodic Trade in a Pre-Industrial Society*, DMAHA 11 (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1993), 112–113.

<sup>291</sup> See Macrobius, *Sat.* 16.6, 30 in Ker, "Nundinae," 362–363.

each day with the seven planetary gods.<sup>292</sup> Though it appears this seven-day week began to grow in prominence, its influence in shaping the day-to-day rhythm of imperial inhabitants was likely insignificant, given the lack of testimony connecting an individual's activities to weekly time, outside of Jewish and Christian sources.<sup>293</sup>

The rhythm of Roman Imperial life, moderated by the *fasti*, had an annual focus. Various regional festivals that filled the calendar would sew together a rich tapestry of sacrifice, punctuated by a few festivals (notably Saturnalia and the New Year's Day in January) employed to tie together all local regions and levels of society.<sup>294</sup> Most notable among these empire-wide festivals, is the month of August (Augustus's month), and September 23<sup>rd</sup> (Augustus's birthday), when the imperial air would fill with the sounds of temple dedications and triumphs.<sup>295</sup> The movement of this cultic life was directed by the *fasti*, which publicly marked the chronological shape of the year. The mass proliferation of the *fasti* began with Augustan rule and extended through Tiberius' reign. And from that point forward, the cycle of imperial life was an amalgamation of local ritual with a cultic focus on the emperor established by the *fasti*, which were instituted through the expansive presence of the imperial cult and the Roman army.

---

<sup>292</sup> Rüpke, *The Roman Calendar*, 162.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid., 163.

<sup>294</sup> Rüpke, *Jupiter to Christ*, 145.

<sup>295</sup> Rüpke, *Roman Calendar*, 132. Cf. Feeney, *Caesar's Calendar*, 154. Augustus's birthday was on the day of Apollo, after recalibration of the calendar, the day of Apollo moved from the 8th day before the Kalends of October to the 9th day before the Kalends which led Augustus to recalibrate his birthday as well. This generated some confusion and caution which led some cities to celebrate his birthday on both dates to ensure they were celebrating it correctly.

### *Reformatting Imperial Time*

One of the great feats of the Julian calendar was its ability to merge the civic and cultic life of the empire, placing both on a solar scheme. This was a move that could replace regional calendars among the colonies, structure annual time around the emperor and his cult, and thereby unify the empire. However, the religious life of the colonized rarely follows the rules set down from its colonizer. Many groups on the outskirts maintained alternative and unofficial calendars based on a lunar scheme, leaving the structure of the year outside of Rome's control.<sup>296</sup> More than this, they would create hybrid calendars by adapting and integrating the Julian structure of time into their preexisting lunar scheme. As Sacha Stern notes, this served as a means by which colonized groups could write their own rhythm of life and thereby undermine, distort, and pervert the calendar set down by the empire and written in stone.<sup>297</sup>

This process of hybridity and subversion also occurred during the evolution of the early Christian calendar; however, Christian hybridity took a different path. Stern makes a brief comment on the unique adjustment made by Christians by calling it a "vertical hybridity," though he does not draw attention to the significance of this adjustment.<sup>298</sup> Christian hybridity worked backwards. They did not distort Roman cycles to fit them into

---

<sup>296</sup> Stern, *Calendars in Antiquity*, 300. These groups include those with rich literary histories such as the Greeks (in Greece) and Jews (in Palestine and the Diaspora) as well as those without a literary heritage such as the Gauls. Not all lunar calendars are the result of dissidence, some are found in the city of Rome itself as a secondary tradition; however, as Stern argues, most of them represent a desire to resist Roman rule.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid., 302.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid., 330. Christian calendars represent tables of lunar calendars which were fixed and cyclical based on the Julian solar calendar. The Easter calendars provide the first example of this move.

their own calendar; rather, they adopted the Roman rhythm of life but changed its center-point.

The development of the Christian calendar shows several important changes taking place. Through this process of vertical hybridity, the Christian movement first developed a more precise weekly rhythm, and then a more precise annual rhythm, and both of these were based on a remembrance of the resurrection of Jesus. Neither of these moves were unique inventions of the Christian movement. Judaism long before had structured the weekly lives of its adherents, and many, if not all cultures created an annual structure of life, Rome being no exception to this. What the Christian movement did, though, was borrow from surrounding forms to create a calendar that was both more precise than the dominant Roman structure while also subversive at its core. It created greater structure and precision to Christian life in the Roman Empire and based that structure and precision on an inherently subversive moment by moving the center of Christian life, in both weekly and annual form, away from the emperor and to the resurrected Jesus.

### *Re-Centering the Week*

Prior to the expansion of the Christian movement, the only other group that organized itself on a weekly basis was Judaism.<sup>299</sup> To be clear, the early Christian movement walked throughout the Roman world in the first few centuries of its existence as a sect of what we now call Judaism. Lines of definition and identity that would soon define “the sect of the Nazarenes” (Acts 24.5) were drawn, erased, and redrawn

---

<sup>299</sup> Rüpke, *Religion*, 90.

throughout the first four centuries, CE.<sup>300</sup> An important element in the process of drawing these lines, and defining a distinctly Christian identity was the question of calendar. Naturally, Christian calendar formation began with its Jewish roots, by re-centering the week. Only later would it shift its attention to the year. Or, following the journey of the *Acts of the Apostles* and the missional priorities of the Apostle Paul (Rom 1.16b), Christian calendar reforms began in Jerusalem and quickly moved to Rome.<sup>301</sup>

The construction of these borderlines between Christian and Jew, for some, placed the Christian's weekly rhythm in confrontation with a competing weekly center point: the Jewish Sabbath.<sup>302</sup> In one early-second century example from Antioch of Syria, Christians are described as those who have “come to a new hope, no longer keeping the Sabbath but living according to the Lord's Day (*kuriakē*), on which also our life arose through him and his death—which some deny.”<sup>303</sup> In another mid-second century source

---

<sup>300</sup> See Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

<sup>301</sup> While some scholars argue that the direction of adjustment was the reverse (i.e. that Easter developed first and then Sunday worship), Richard Bauckham convincingly shows that while there is question with respect to which Easter practice is primary, there is no definitive evidence that hints towards the chronological priority of Easter over Sunday worship (Bauckham, “The Lord's Day,” 230–231). For those who argue for the chronological priority of Easter, see C.W. Dugmore, “Lord's Day and Easter” in *Neotestamentica et Patristica: Eine Freundesgabe, Herrn Professor Dr. Oscar Cullman* SNTS 6 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1962), 272–281; Kenneth A. Strand, *The Early Christian Sabbath* (Ann Arbor, MI: Ann Arbor Publishers, 1979); Samuele Bacchiocchi, *Anti-Judaism and the Origin of Sunday* (Rome: The Pontifical Gregorian University Press, 1975). For those who argue for the chronological priority of Sunday worship, see Richard Bauckham, “The Lord's Day,” in *From Sabbath to Lord's Day*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981), 221–250; Roger T. Beckwith, *Calendar, Chronology and Worship: Studies in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, AGJU 33 (Boston: E.J. Brill, 2005).

<sup>302</sup> Through the second and into the beginning of the third century, two approaches to Sabbath and Sunday are found: those who are indifferent to Sabbath observance, and those who believe Sabbath observance must be replaced/superseded by the Lord's Day. Tertullian, ca. 200 CE, writes about Christians in Carthage who appear to observe both Sabbath and Sunday (*Or.* 23.1–2) and Eusebius (late-third century) discusses the Ebionites who observe Sabbath on Saturday, then observe Christian rites on the Lord's Day in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus (*Hist. eccl.* 3.27).

<sup>303</sup> Ignatius *Magn.* 9.1 (Ehrman, LCL). Though the letter itself was not written from Antioch of Syria, the author and his theology was. There are text-critical problems with this passage, as the only extant mss.

the Jewish Sabbath is identified with a sealed sepulcher, centurions, and soldiers, whereas the Lord's Day (*kuriakē*) transformed the Sabbath with the dawning of a new day, the opening of the heavens, brightness, and a risen Christ.<sup>304</sup>

In redefining the week, the Christian calendar formula shifted the subject's attention toward the risen Jesus. It began in earnest with the priority placed on the first day of the week for Christian gathering so that, by the second century, the *Didache* can identify the first day of the week as the "Sunday of the Lord," and a day for meeting, breaking bread, confession, thanksgiving, and new way of living.<sup>305</sup> This change, though, did not simply occur because of a blind preference. It began by re-defining the day with a unique phrase—the *kuriakē hemera*, from the similarly unique word *Kuriokos*, found only in reference to presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11.20) or the Lord's

---

Reads κατὰ κυριακὴν ζῶντες which could be a call to live "according to the Lord's life." However, most scholars, omit ζῶντες with the Latin text and translate it as "Lord's Day," see Bauckham, "From Sabbath to Lord's Day," 228.

<sup>304</sup> *Gos. Pet.* 8.32–10.42, esp. 9.35. Wilhelm Schneemelcher dates the Gospel of Peter to the middle of the second century with an unknown provenance, possibly Syria, Asia Minor, or Egypt. Wilhelm Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, trans. R. McL. Wilson, vol. 1. (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 221. This text reads with the canonical gospels at several points and here replaces "the first day of the week" with κυριακή, leading most to believe that the practice of Sunday worship was widespread at this point.

<sup>305</sup> Translation from Kurt Niederwimmer, *The Didache: A Commentary*, ed. Harold W. Attridge, trans. Linda M. Maloney, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1998), 194. Niederwimmer, acknowledging the difficulty of definitively identifying a date and provenance for the *Didache*, places the date of composition between ca. 110–120 CE, and provenance in possibly Northern Egypt, Syria, or Palestine; see Niederwimmer's comments on pp. 194–195.



Day (Rev 1.10).<sup>306</sup> This designation is equally uncommon in secular use apart from references to the emperor.<sup>307</sup>

An answer to why Christians chose Sunday as their day for meeting continues to elude certainty. Though it is possible that it was the result of a conscious attribution to resurrection, it is by no means necessarily the case. Nonetheless, what is clear is that by the early-second century and beyond, the *kuriakē hemera* was interpreted as such (Ign. *Magn.*, 9.1; *Gos. Pet.*, 35, 50; Barn. 15.9; Justin, *1 Apol.*, 67),<sup>308</sup> with relatively few clear exceptions. The formation of the Christian week began by adopting the importance of weekly structure from their Jewish siblings and quickly infusing it with a counter-imperial pinnacle—the resurrected Lord, on whose day they gathered. It is also worth noting that there is evidence that some placed the *kuriakē* in contestation with the astrological week (Sunday).<sup>309</sup> The evidence suggests that many early Christian authors

---

<sup>306</sup> Though it is impossible to definitively conclude from Rev. 1.10 itself that a reference to Sunday as a liturgical day is intended, the second century attestation, suggests that *κυριακή* serves as a reference to the first day of the week as a day of liturgical gathering patterned on the resurrection of Jesus in contrast to the eschatological *ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου*. See Bauckham, “The Lord’s Day,” 222–226 for an analysis of the use of language structure. The syntax of *κυριακή ἡμέρα* was likely used instead of *ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου*, to not create ambiguity between the theological concept of the Day of the Lord and the first day of the week

<sup>307</sup> For a discussion on the usage of *κυριακός*, see Bauckham, “The Lord’s Day,” 222–226, cf. n. 17, *κυριακή* came to alone represent the day which is normal when referring days pointing to a significant figure; e.g. *ἡ Σεβαστή* for the Emperor’s day *ἡ κρονική* for Saturn’s day (Saturday).

<sup>308</sup> List from Bauckham, “The Lord’s Day,” 240.

<sup>309</sup> Justin Martyr, writing to Emperor Antoninus Pius (ca. 150 CE), refers to the day “which is called Sunday” as a day of common assembly, and a day that is set in contrast with that of Saturn as a marker for the death of Jesus (*1 Apol.* 67). A similar contrast is made by Dionysius of Alexandria (ca. 250 CE) who draws a distinction between first creation and second creation with the use of Sunday: “God Himself has instituted Sunday the first day both of creation and also of resurrection on the day of creation He separated light from darkness and on the day of the resurrection He divided belief from unbelief.” In *Analecta Sacra Spicilegio Solesmensi* 4 (Pitra, 421), translated and quoted in Samuele Bacchiocchi, “The Rise of Sunday Observance in Early Christianity,” in *The Sabbath In Scripture and History*, ed. Kenneth Strand (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing, 1982), 149, n. 76. Sunday as a designation must have become prominent in certain parts of the empire since Tertullian (197 CE) felt the need to distinguish

wanted to define the Lord's Day in contrast with competing structures, namely Sabbath and the Roman astrological week, by placing the resurrection as the point of distinction. Through this process of defining their day of cultic importance, the early Christian movement co-opted a weekly calendar precision, unique to Judaism, and defined their gatherings with reference to the event that overturned Caesar's decree of death. Each and every week, the Christian life would begin anew with a reminder of the one whom death could not hold.

### *Re-Centering the Year*

It did not take long for the calendar construction of a weekly rhythm to expand in scope. Though we have little evidence from the early-second century concerning the annual celebration of the resurrection, it was unquestionably a practice among many Christian communities. We can deduce this from the fact of the Easter debates which began in the middle of the second century and picked up steam near its end. That is to say, an established practice with competing interpretations is required before a full-scale debate can commence.<sup>310</sup> Beginning with an amicable disagreement (ca.154 CE) between Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, and Anicetus, the bishop of Rome,<sup>311</sup> the question of Easter's date of celebration turned into a highly contested matter when, ca. 190 CE,

---

between Christian worship and sun worship since Christians meet on Sunday and pray to the east (*Apol.*, 16.9–11; *Nat.*, 1.13).

<sup>310</sup> Evidence of Easter observance can be found as early as the year of Polycrates's birth, ca. 125 CE See Euseb. *Hist. eccl.*, 4.24:1–8 wherein he argues that his Easter date which has been "handed down from of old" should be the proper date of observation. There is also an allusion to Easter in the *Ep. Apos.*, 15 which also dates to 125. Both of which come from the province of Asia which leads Francis Beckwith to conclude that it originated ca. 110 CE and reached Asia around 125 CE See Francis T. Beckwith, *Calendar and Chronology*, 61; See also Clemens Leonhard, *The Jewish Pesach and the Origins of the Christian Easter: Open Questions in Current Research*, SJ 35 (New York: Walter De Gruyter, 2006), 121.

<sup>311</sup> Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.14.1.

Victor, the Bishop of Rome sent a series of letters to Bishop Polycrates of Ephesus with sharp criticism of the observance of Easter in the Asian tradition. From this point forward, the precision of the annual timetable came into sharp focus. The sides of this well-documented debate remain outside the scope of our concern, so a brief description will suffice. In the Asian custom Easter was celebrated on the Jewish Passover, the 14th of the lunar month, anachronistically labeled the Quartodeciman practice. By contrast, the western custom was to celebrate Easter on the Sunday following the Jewish Passover. The debate concerned the proper time for celebration and ritual.

This is, of course, a complex topic with many nuanced detours, and it would be a mistake to see either the east or the west as homogenous in practice. But the sides of the debate are not my focus, rather the trajectory toward precision and uniformity found in the disagreement is. In the span of 46 years, from Polycarp to Victor, a significant shift occurred, from what was merely an amicable disagreement to an outright demand for uniformity replete with threats to “cut off the dioceses of all Asia . . . as being heterodox” and excommunicate every Asian Christian.<sup>312</sup> Furthermore, Victor’s concern expands beyond observance of the day to what one does with the body on the day: “some think that they ought to fast one day; others, two; others, even more; some measure their day as forty hours day and night.”<sup>313</sup> Victor ultimately fails in his attempts, but his desire for uniformity and precision lived on and prevailed in the years that followed.<sup>314</sup>

---

<sup>312</sup> Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.24.14

<sup>313</sup> Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.24.16–17; cf. Anatolius, *Rat. Pas.*, 7, wherein he recounts the same controversy but leaves out the calls for excommunication.

<sup>314</sup> Eusebius may have been reading Victor’s desire for uniformity through the lens of the controversies of the early-fourth century. Either during Eusebius’ work, or immediately after (314 CE) the Council of Arles

From the late-second to the mid-fourth century, the structure and practice of Easter continued to evolve and develop. The picture of Easter in the late-second and early-third centuries, though incomplete, shows Christian communities in North Africa, Syria, Asia, and Rome working out the details of what this festival entails, resulting in greater precision in practice. When and how long should the stomach be empty? When should the catechumens be baptized? What should the baptized wear when entering the water on Easter? What posture should the catechumens take prior to exorcism? When should food enter the body again? What should the emotional disposition of the Christian be? These questions, among others, plague the minds of early leaders in the church to a greater and greater degree as time develops. And alongside the diverse answers to these questions there is a rising desire, from Victor on, to see the disparate practices of Easter brought under one umbrella.

The desire for uniform precision, while rebuffed initially, came to fruition at the Council of Arles (c. 314 CE), which dedicated its first canon to the cause of calendar precision:

1. In the first place, concerning the celebration of the Lord's Easter. That it is to be observed by us on one day and at one time in all the earth, and that you should send out letters to all as is the custom.

The second recension of the canon clarifies, as the reason for this uniformity, “that the devotion of Easter be not disrupted by ‘divisions and dissensions.’”<sup>315</sup> This decision is

---

would soon issue the first decree that mandates uniform Christian observance of Easter. See. Stern, *Calendars*, 384.

<sup>315</sup> Stern, *Calendars*, 397.

finally given imperial weight through Constantine at the council of Nicaea (325 CE), wherein it is determined that Easter will be celebrated throughout the world, by all Christians on the same day, in distinction from the Jews. Then, in only two years' time, the Council of Antioch (327 CE) will declare deviation on the date of the Easter festival to be grounds for excommunication.<sup>316</sup>

Stern notes that this call for a universal Christian calendar is “an important ideological innovation,”<sup>317</sup> and one that reaches a pinnacle when Constantine, following the council of Nicaea, addresses calendar diversity:

There was already another very dire sickness of longer standing than these, which had been a nuisance to the churches for a long time: the disagreement over the Feast of the Saviour. . . . So in this matter too the congregations everywhere had already for a long time been divided, and the divine ordinances were in disarray, since for one and the same festival the divergence of date caused the greatest difference between those keeping the festival: some were disciplining themselves with fasting and mortification, when others were devoting leisure to relaxation. No human being was able to find a cure for the evil, since both parties were equally vehement in their disagreement.<sup>318</sup>

. . . what could be better for us, and more reverent, than that this festival, from which we have acquired our hope of immortality, should be observed invariably in every community on one system and declared principle? . . . Our Savior has passed on the day of our liberation as one, the day, that is, of his holy passion, and it is his purpose that his universal Church be one.<sup>319</sup>

---

<sup>316</sup> Irenaeus' work, *Haer.*, (ca. 185 CE), does not list the quartodeciman practice of Easter as heretical. This is astonishing considering the great lengths he goes in detailing heretical practices in the church. This demonstrates the increasing polarity surrounding the uniformity and specificity of the annual calendar. See Elaine H. Pagels, *Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas* (New York: Random House, 2003), 134; and Karen King, “Social and Theological Effects of Heresiological Discourse,” in *Heresy and Identity in Late Antiquity*, eds. Eduard Iricinschi and Holger M. Zellentin (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 35. Both are cited in Stern, *Calendars*, 386.

<sup>317</sup> Stern, *Calendars*, 395.

<sup>318</sup> Eusebius, *Vit. Const.* 3.5.1–2 (Cameron and Hall), cited in Stern, 398.

<sup>319</sup> Eusebius, *Vit. Const.* 3.18.1, 5 (Cameron and Hall), cited in Stern, 399.

Constantine provides the earliest Christian example of describing diversity as such as a negative element, a “very dire sickness” and “evil” (and possibly the earliest example in all of antiquity).<sup>320</sup> But it would be a mistake to see Constantine’s negative attitude toward calendar diversity as merely symptomatic of his attempt to unify the empire, because the call for calendrical unification and precision began well before Constantine’s rule, at a time when the Christian community had no political voice.<sup>321</sup> Rather, Constantine’s decision serves as the next, logical step in the Christian challenge of structured time that began with the *kuriakē* and its source of origin, the resurrection. Annual precision and uniformity, as a counterpart to weekly precision had been a goal for almost two hundred years; with Constantine and the Nicaean decision, it was secure throughout the empire. Both week and year were fixed and focused on the resurrected Jesus.

The precision and uniformity with which Easter was fixed was merely the first step in a long process of calendar formation. Remaining aware of the chronological limits of our scope of study, it is nonetheless worth mentioning in brief that once this precision and uniformity was established, it was followed in the mid to late-fourth century by even greater precision as the annual calendar began to fill in the space surrounding Easter. The Lord’s Day remained the structural anchor of weekly ritual movement, but new dates proliferated through documents like the *Breviarium Syriacum*, which listed annual commemorations for the martyrs and their anniversaries of death and the feast of

---

<sup>320</sup> Stern, *Calendars*, 398.

<sup>321</sup> Contra Stern, *Calendars*, 380.

Epiphany,<sup>322</sup> and the *Chronography of 354*, which emphasized the birth of Jesus and provided a detailed list of Easter from 312–411 CE. Beginning in the mid-fourth century, the date of Easter became the point on which the calendar was anchored. Once the date was officially established, the Church could move backwards from that date to identify the beginning of Lent, the celebration of Pentecost, and the celebration of Christmas and Advent.<sup>323</sup>

The development of the Christian calendar provides for us a clear trajectory toward precision and uniformity. It began with the development of a fixed and precise weekly cycle and moved toward a fixed and precise annual cycle, both of which were a product of the idea of resurrection. These early stages of weekly and annual precision continued to develop into a fully formed calendar with precise and universally fixed dates, which structured the year by cycling the Christian throughout appropriate commemorations, rituals, and feasts. This is not to imply that the process of creating such a calendar was a simple linear development without complexity and controversy, quite to the contrary.<sup>324</sup> Nonetheless, there is an unquestionable move toward greater and greater

---

<sup>322</sup> English translation found in W. Wright, “An Ancient Syrian Martyrology,” *JSLBR* 8 (1866) 423–432. For dating see Henry Chadwick, “The Calendar: Sanctification of Time,” *ITQ* 66 (2001), 106.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid., 104. As Henry Chadwick concludes, “the basic essentials of the Church calendar were constituted first . . . in Easter and dependent feasts such as Pentecost, but secondly of an annual remembering of the Church’s heroes” (107).

<sup>324</sup> There are many excellent analyses of the development of the liturgical year. A venture into this topic would take us too far off task. Rather, I seek to emphasize simply the growth of precision in the calendar’s focus. See Thomas J. Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*, 2nd ed. (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1986); Noële M. Denis-Boulet, *The Christian Calendar*, trans. P. Hepburne-Scott, TCEC 113 (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1960); Chadwick, “The Calendar”; Hugo Mendez, “The Origin of the Post-Nativity Commemorations,” *VC* 68.3 (2014): 290–309; Thomas C. Schmidt, “Calculating December 25 as the Birth of Jesus in Hippolytus’ *Canon* and *Chronicon*” *VC* 69.5 (2015): 542–563; Nicholas V. Russo, “The Origins of Lent” (PhD diss., The University of Notre Dame, 2010); Gary Philippe Raczka, “The Lectionary at the Time of Saint John Chrysostom” (PhD diss., The University of Notre Dame, 2015).

precision and universality growing out of the early emphasis on the weekly and annual calendar precision.

*Time, Power, and Subversion*

Through the process of weekly and annual calendar formation, two things began to happen in early Christian discourse and practice. First, the management and definition of time began to shift the calendrical focus *away* from the emperor and *toward* the commemoration of the event that symbolized the reversal of imperial domination: resurrection. But in addition to a shift in focus, there is a simultaneous rise of greater precision to the calendar alongside a new desire for uniformity. The rhythm of life for the Christian in the Roman Empire was now shaped, in both week and year, by a focus on the resurrected Jesus. Each week would bring the Christian back to the day of resurrection, and each year would lead not to the emperor, but to the Messiah whom that emperor put to death. It is, then, no coincidence that controversies on the dating of Easter arise very early in the history of Christianity. This suggests that Easter becomes controversial *because* it concerned the very formation of Christian identity. The entire Christian movement was being shaped in a way that moved the Christian body throughout time in a way that centered on the resurrection of Jesus as a historical event of subversion in the near past, not simply a repetitive event on a calendrical cycle.

Disciplinary power, according to Foucault, is intimately tied up with the control of time. Time, in a disciplinary society, is divided by increasingly minute units. To be clear, I am not proposing that the development of the Christian calendar is an instance of a fully formed, disciplinary society. Rather, my suggestion is that the evidence of the early Christian calendar and its evolution toward greater precision and uniformity is



indicative of the early implementation of the disciplinary mechanism of the *control of activity*. This receives greater accent into the fourth and fifth centuries, at which time it moves especially into the monastic movement.

Foucault, then, is correct to find the genesis of the seventeenth century's daily time-table in the monastic communities, but it is important to note that the first monastic community arises ca. 320/5 and the "great heyday for the monasteries" comes on the heels of these calendrical movements toward precision and uniformity.<sup>325</sup> That is, the monastic time-table did not appear without historical precedent, rather, it was the result of the calendrical shift whereby Christian life received structure through an increasingly precise and uniform calendar. Foucault is also right to note that the religious orders were the "specialists of time, great technicians of rhythm and regular activities," however, what is clear is that the seeds of the religious control of time were germinating much earlier, during the early spread of Christianity when the forefathers of those very religious orders were constructing an increasingly precise calendar in contest with Roman power.<sup>326</sup>

As Christian life, centered on the resurrection of Jesus, came into conflict with the rhythm of Roman and Jewish life, it inherited the calendars of old and began to place greater regulation on the cycles of life. Through this regulation and precision, the Christian body was circulated throughout the empire so that each Sunday, and every Easter, she would remember the resurrection of Jesus. My proposition is that it was the

---

<sup>325</sup>Guntram Koch, *Early Christian Art and Architecture: An Introduction*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1996), 56.

<sup>326</sup> For an example of the adaptation of Patristic ideas in early monastic life, see Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion*, 26–38.

resurrection which fueled the desire to structure the Christian's whole life around one, calendar, and in contrast with Roman articulation of time, this calendar continued to evolve toward greater precision concerning the days and bodily actions.

### **Filling the Time-Table**

Up to this point, I have attempted to document a relatively simple and well-recognized observation: that the Christian control of time grew from a focus on a weekly meeting connected with the resurrection event into an annual commemoration of that event, eventually developing an entire year that built off of that commemoration. There is much that can be said concerning the complexities and controversies concerning this evolution, but the *fact* that the evolution is present is undeniable. Further, by comparing the structure of Christian time with that of early Roman Imperial time, the center of the Christian's calendrical life was moved away from Caesar, and toward the one Caesar had executed, who subsequently rose from the dead.

Of course, there are minor exceptions to this evolution, but those exceptions are not my focus and would merely serve to take us off track. This is, after all, not an analysis of early Christian calendars for the sake of mere analysis. It is rather a bird's-eye perspective for the sake of demonstrating the beginnings of one mechanism of disciplinary power: *the control of activity*. Beginning with the resurrection, the calendar began to divide the Christian's life into increasingly minute units. Granted, this precision is nowhere near that found in schools and workshops of the eighteenth century, but it nonetheless laid a foundation upon which the monasteries of the late fourth and early fifth centuries could build upon.

However, in addition to articulating the units themselves, it is also important to define what one does within those time-blocks. That is, disciplinary time is divided and ordered so as to discipline the body through movement, rhythm, and supervision. It is important to note that Foucault categorizes both the division and government of time under the disciplinary technique of the control of activity.<sup>327</sup> This means that the rise of a precise time-table as a disciplinary mechanism, as I am proposing here, would not only divide time into increasingly minute units, but would also govern the activities within those units through orders which required obedience.<sup>328</sup>

Alongside the increasingly precise calendar, the early Christian movement was also developing precision and uniformity surrounding its ritual and liturgy. Now, early Christian ritual, which provided direction on bodily action within these time units did not arise in a vacuum.<sup>329</sup> It certainly borrowed from and grew alongside its neighbors,<sup>330</sup> especially early Jewish synagogue worship,<sup>331</sup> but Christian liturgy also developed its

---

<sup>327</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 149.

<sup>328</sup> *Ibid.*, 150.

<sup>329</sup> The question of Christian liturgical origins is by no means an easy question, nor is it the question I seek to address in this chapter. For surveys that cover the origins of early Christian liturgy see Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford, 2002); Andrew B. McGowan, *Ancient Christian Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014); Hal Taussig, *In the Beginning was the Meal* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009); Jean Danielou, *The Bible and the Liturgy* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1956); Paul F. Bradshaw, *Reconstructing Early Christian Worship* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2010); Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, eds. *The Oxford History of Christian Worship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Larry W. Hurtado, *At the Origins of Christian Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Press, 1999)

<sup>330</sup> Though Roman religion was the cultural air breathed by early Christian worshippers, it did not contain a set liturgical structure from which the early movement could borrow. Roman religion centered on a sacrifice performed in the open space in front of a community, or in front of the temple for civic worship. Even among sacrifices of divination and *defixiones*, which were performed in isolated and remote areas, there is not enough internal structure to provide a genetic connection between the two.

<sup>331</sup> Due to the dearth of literary or archaeological evidence, a significant number of scholars now doubt the existence of any form of liturgical structure beyond an informal “Bible study” in the synagogue prior to the third century, see Daniel K. Falk, “Jewish Prayer Literature and the Jerusalem Church in Acts,” in *The*

own form by introducing organic and genetic characteristics of individuality within the liturgical time-table. That is, by coding activities for the individualized body to perform independently along a sequential path, it activated the *organic* individual, and by imposing exercises within the time-table so as to create a sense of individual progress it activated the *genetic* individual. The introduction of these two characteristics of individuality through early Christian liturgy demonstrates a characteristic of disciplinary power: its orientation toward a mass of people for the purpose of introducing divisions and thereby creating individual units within which the principle of individuation could be realized.<sup>332</sup>

the ever-increasingly precise calendar of the Christian movement began to divide and order time for the subject so that the point of focus (resurrection) penetrated the body using a program (liturgy) that would provide a schema of behavior that could differentiated the homogenous mass into individual units. Liturgical time would thus be accumulated and divided according to various genera, so that early Christian would be isolated based on the level of training and initiatory rites calculated on pre-determined time-limits and examinations, which were regionally diverse to begin with, but progressively moved toward precision and uniformity.

---

*Book of Acts in its Palestinian Setting*, ed. Richard Bauckham (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Press, 1995), 277–285. Conversation with Sabbath does not mean imitation or copy of Synagogue worship as all evidence points to a structured Sabbath worship developing in conversation with Christian Sunday worship. Sabbath day Synagogue gatherings in the time of Christ and the Apostles were loose, informal and flexible in buildings that were not designated for religious purposes. See Heather A. McKay, *Sabbath and Synagogue: The Question of Sabbath Worship in Ancient Judaism*, RGRW 122 (New York: E.J. Brill, 1994), esp. chs. 5, 6, 8.

<sup>332</sup> For a helpful overview of this process see Sverre Raffnsøe, Marius Gudmand-Hoyer, and Morten S. Thaning, eds. *Michel Foucault: A Research Companion* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016), 180–184.

### *From Simplicity to Complexity*

An attempt to extract the seeds of a liturgical manual of the late-fourth century from the New Testament will always result in futility. However, when we acknowledge absence of seeds and instead step back to investigate the development of liturgy, any analysis of the 300 years of liturgical change following the New Testament will quickly reveal a story that develops from simplicity to complexity.<sup>333</sup> I wish to highlight three elements in the earliest Christian liturgy as seen in the New Testament texts, then progressively demonstrate how they began to control the body alongside the development of calendar precision

The first element is the initiatory rite of baptism. The practice of baptism began as a diverse expression. It was seen as the forgiveness of sins and receipt of the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2.38), birth to a new life (John 3.5; Titus 3.5–7), enlightenment (Heb 6.4; 10.32; 1 Pet 2.9), and for Paul the participation in the death and resurrection of the savior (Rom 6.2–11).<sup>334</sup> For the Apostle Paul, baptism was a reenactment of Christ's burial and resurrection wherein the baptized was given newness of life. It marked the beginning of an incomplete transition, with the expectation of an apocalyptic fulfillment.<sup>335</sup> Yet aside from acknowledging the *fact* of baptism and providing its

---

<sup>333</sup> By this I do not mean that a single uniform liturgy diversified over time, in fact, the opposite is true with respect to diversity. However, liturgical actions and direction became more defined and detailed as Christianity developed. This began in a diversified and regional way which eventually coalesced into a single whole through a process of cross-fertilization. Paul F. Bradshaw, *Search for Origins*, 9–13; See also John Fenwick, *Fourth Century Anaphoral Construction Techniques* GLS 45 (Bramcote, Notts: Grove Books, 1986).

<sup>334</sup> Bradshaw, *Search for Origins*, 60.

<sup>335</sup> Adela Yarbro-Collins, "The Origin of Christian Baptism" in *Living Water, Sealing Spirit*, ed. Maxwell E Johnson (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995), 56.

theological basis, New Testament authors give no direction as to the ritual movements associated with baptism, nor do they provide any inclination of an examination or waiting period before baptism.<sup>336</sup>

The second element is communal arrangement. The earliest liturgy for communal gatherings began with little structure. The community would gather around a table (in a triclinium, to be precise) to eat, sing, and reflect upon early Christian scripture (1 Cor 11.17, 18, 20, 33; 14.1–17), with the absence of specific rules and requirements. It was a gathering in which various prophets (male and female, 1 Cor 11.5) would speak so that “all may learn and all be encouraged” (1 Cor 14.26b–31). The wealthy and poor would gather in one room and, ideally, none would be separated from the group based on social standing or class (1 Cor 11.20–22). Though it is impossible to tell how far-reaching this practice was, the ideal set forth was a community devoid of distinctions.

The third element is the communal meal. Amidst teaching, prophecies, and singing, the meal was the primary communal event which cultivated a collective sense of dependency.<sup>337</sup> This is not unique in the milieu of the Greco-Roman world, as many Hellenistic groups and associations ate together in a triclinium for a common social, civic, or religious purpose. The early Christian meal, like its Hellenistic forbearer was designed to cultivate community (*koinonia*), friendship (*philia*), and grace (*charis*)

---

<sup>336</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977), 144; 145–146. Dunn says in no uncertain terms: “the fact is that *there is no express reference to a catechumenate before the year 200* . . . There is really no evidence whatsoever for the view that in the first two generations of Christianity baptisms were organized ceremonies at which the gathered congregations sang hymns. The information we have in the NT suggests that for the first 50 years or so at least initiation ritual was still simple and spontaneous, still flexible and not yet hardened into a rigid pattern.”

<sup>337</sup> Taussig, *In the Beginning*, Ibid., 21.

through utopian and political values.<sup>338</sup> The early Christian rendition did, however, contain a countercultural flair through the absence of a libation on behalf of the emperor or local deity, and the presence of its replacement in a sacrificial meal consumed to remember a crucified criminal of imperial rule.<sup>339</sup> Though these meals lacked structure, they did not lack ritual. Like all other banquets in antiquity, the first Christian meals were ritualized with a focus on the sacred nature of the meal alongside prayer, instruction, and singing.<sup>340</sup>

There are, of course, additional components of Christian liturgy, such as preaching and daily prayers which also lacked descriptive detail. But these three elements: baptism, communal arrangement, and the Eucharist were the primary, unstructured beginnings of early liturgy. This lack of structure is not an insignificant point in the development of the early Christian subject. Though the New Testament theology of both the Christian meal and baptism was clearly connected to the crucifixion and resurrection, the authors did not think it necessary to lay out any liturgical guidelines aside from a few minor generalities.<sup>341</sup> The earliest communities were content with fitting

---

<sup>338</sup> Ibid., 27; see also Dennis Smith, *From Symposium to Eucharist* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003), 54–55; ; and Matthias Klinghardt, *Gemeinschaftsmahl und Mahlgemeinschaft*, TANZ 13 (Tübingen: Francke Verlag, 1996), 153–156.

<sup>339</sup> McGowan, *Ancient Christian*, 22.

<sup>340</sup> McGowan, *Ancient Christian*, 63. Consider McGowan’s comment: “There is no ‘fall’ across early Christian history from commensality to ritual, or from feast to sacrament, despite the attractions such narratives seem to have for some.”

<sup>341</sup> There is a tendency among some scholars to read later liturgical practices back onto the texts of the New Testament as if the communal writings were intended to provide substance to already established practices. However, this methodology is ultimately an argument from silence. See Bradshaw, *Search for Origins*, 47–52. In the words of Paul Bradshaw: “If there is no unambiguous witness in the New Testament documents themselves to a particular liturgical practice but it can only be detected by interpreting obscure allusions there in the light of evidence from several centuries later (and often from a quite different geographical region), are we justified in making such a connection?” (51).

the early Christian message into a pattern familiar to them through their Jewish and Roman culture, and the New Testament writers were similarly content with providing trace amounts of correction on a level of generality. However, as the Christian calendar moved in the direction of precision and uniformity, these elements, too, gained structure and began to fill time with instruction on the movement of the body.

### *Baptism into the Resurrection*

From the earliest stages of Christian identity, baptism marked initiation into the community of Christ followers. In our first glimpse at early liturgical formation through the *Didache*,<sup>342</sup> we immediately note the importance of baptism in a community that lacked resources to always perform it in the preferable way. Nonetheless, attention is paid to the particulars of baptism and bodily action, providing a fascinating picture of the growing need for precision with respect to how the body functions in time. Flowing water for immersion was clearly the preference, though still water (ideally cold rather than warm) could be used in exceptional circumstances (7.2–3), and in a last resort the body could be soaked with water poured over the head three times. But the water component of the baptismal rite, even at this early stage was merely one step in a larger process. Already growing around the immersion experience was, for this community at least, a two-day, preceding fast (7.4–8.1), the recitation of the Way of Life alongside the Way of Death (7.1), and the corporate recitation of the Lord's Prayer (8.2).

---

<sup>342</sup> Scholars do not agree on the date or provenance of the *Didache*; however, in agreement with a high concentration of scholars, I will place the original text in the beginning of the second century (c. 110–120 CE) originating around the Syria-Palestine border. Niederwimmer, *The Didache*, 42–54.



Beyond the *Didache*, the first extant, detailed treatise on baptism is found in Tertullian, writing from North Africa near the beginning of the third century.<sup>343</sup> The ritual contained three elements: baptism with water, anointing with oil, and the imposition of hands; all of which constitute *one* initiatory rite performed on the body, with consequences on the soul.<sup>344</sup> The baptismal process began, following an undefined time of training, with “frequent prayers, fasts, genuflections, and vigils . . . coupled with the confession of their former sins.”<sup>345</sup> Tertullian recommends a lengthy period of catechesis prior to baptism to prohibit relapse and its commensurate appointment to fire.<sup>346</sup> In the days preceding baptism, the catechumens are moved through a series of vigils and fasts, leading to a renunciation of Satan and a profession of faith based on a three-fold question. Following this movement, the body would be immersed three times, thus protecting the soul and making it spotless, following which the baptized community would consume milk and honey and abstain from bathing for one week.<sup>347</sup>

From this point forward, baptism becomes the embodied ritual that begins to demarcate ranks and hierarchy within the movement. Catechumens are separate from the laity, and the laity are separate from those who perform the baptism. There is undoubtedly diversity in this practice and the hierarchies they produce, but the embodied practice of hierarchizing the community is clear. Now that a point of division has been

---

<sup>343</sup> Thomas M. Finn, *Early Christian Baptism and the Catechumenate: Italy, North Africa, and Egypt*, MFC 6 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 115.

<sup>344</sup> Tertullian, *Bapt.*, 6–8.

<sup>345</sup> Tertullian, *Bapt.*, 20.

<sup>346</sup> Tertullian, *Bapt.*, 8.

<sup>347</sup> Tertullian, *Cor.*, 3; *Res.*, 8.

identified (baptism), the questions begin to grow concerning time of training within the ranks, and the embodied practices employed to mark the transition between each rank.

By the mid-third century, the liturgical movement is shoved even further in the direction of precision by the question of re-baptism for lapsed Christians, arising from the Decian persecution. Here, Tertullian's three components of the *one* rite of baptism were separated by Cornelius in Rome and Cyprian in Carthage so that the "sealing" of the initiate, now detached from the baptismal rite, could serve the purpose of re-initiating lapsed Christians. With this move stages of separation within the ranks were identified to allow movement both up and down the ranks. This change foreshadowed the mid-fourth century identification of confirmation as a distinct sacrament alongside the Eucharist and baptism.<sup>348</sup>

In the two hundred years that follow Cyprian we find, in the *Apostolic Tradition*, a concerted effort to consolidate and universalize the regional specificity which had developed to this point.<sup>349</sup> The slow development of this text through a lengthy process of redaction is important to our study because it demonstrates, in the clearest possible way,

---

<sup>348</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem, *Myst.* III. Cyril's identification develops into a clear separation of the two sacraments, firmly established by the fifth century. McGowan, *Ancient Christian*, 174.

<sup>349</sup> The previous idea that this document was authored by Hippolytus in the early-third century as a means of solidifying early liturgical traditions in the face of innovation by Bishop Callistus has been proven to be false. It is best to approach the *Apostolic Tradition* as "an aggregation of material from different sources, quite possibly arising from different geographical regions and probably from different historical periods, from perhaps as early as the mid-second century to as late as the mid-fourth . . . [and not] the practice of any single Christian community." Paul F. Bradshaw, Maxwell E. Johnson, and L. Edward Phillips. *The Apostolic Tradition*, ed. Harold W. Attridge, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002), 14. For definitive challenges to the Hippolytus theory see Marcel Metzger, "Nouvelles perspectives pour la prétendue Tradition Apostolique," *Ecclesia Orans* 5 (1988): 241–259; J. F. Baldovin, "Hippolytus and the Apostolic Tradition: Recent Research and Commentary," *Theological Studies* 64.3 (2003): 520–42.

the trajectory toward precision in liturgical rites and the movement of the body.<sup>350</sup> The *Apostolic Tradition* addresses baptism in three primary chapters (17, 20, 21). The original core, which could date to the mid to late-second century, is found primarily in ch. 21. The process is similar to the instruction found in Justin Martyr's *First Apology* and the *Didache*. At daybreak, the water (ideally flowing water) is prayed over. Those to be baptized disrobe and stand naked awaiting their entrance into the water. They enter the water in an orderly fashion, first children who can speak, then children who cannot speak, followed by the men and lastly the women, who have let down their hair and taken off all jewelry. The only thing to enter the water is the human body, devoid of any foreign object. They answer a series of questions, committing to belief in the omnipotent Father, Jesus the Son of God, and the holy Spirit. Following each positive affirmation, the initiate would be baptized. Exiting the water, the baptized would dry himself, clothe, enter the church, pray with the congregation, and receive the kiss of peace.

The second stage of liturgical accretion in the *Apostolic Tradition* continues to add to the embodied journey of baptism. The bishop is given tasks including the imposition of the bishop's hands on the baptized with a commensurate prayer, an anointing, kiss, and greeting. The third stage, likely originating near the early to mid-fourth century adds a series of prebaptismal practices such as a diaconal anointing with

---

<sup>350</sup> My analysis of the *Apostolic Tradition* is dependent on Paul Bradshaw, "Re-Dating the *Apostolic Tradition*: Some Preliminary Steps," in *Rule of Prayer, Rule of Faith: Essays in Honor of Aidan Kavanagh*, OSB, ed. John Baldovin and Nathan Mitchell (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), 3–17.

an oil of thanksgiving, renunciation of Satan, and an exorcism with special oil.<sup>351</sup> This entire practice, when combined in the *Apostolic Tradition*, creates an embodied journey through the ritual consisting of many stages: training, fasting, praying, walking, disrobing, confessing, touching, anointing, exorcising, baptizing, kissing, and eating.

What makes the *Apostolic Tradition* so important in our study is precisely this progressive attempt to consolidate and universalize practice. Up to this point, baptismal rites were connected, but diverse throughout the empire. The *Apostolic Tradition* provides an attempt to consolidate this diversity to create a precise and universal embodied ritual that all members of the community would experience. This attempt appears to have paid off. Maxwell Johnson, after examining the development of the baptismal ritual throughout the fourth and fifth centuries, in the East and West respectively, notes that there is a “remarkable degree of commonality across ecclesial and geographical lines.”<sup>352</sup> This is not to discount the diversity that is present. Rather, it demonstrates a trajectory similar to that seen in calendar formation. As time receives greater precision and uniformity, so do the embodied rituals that fill that time.

Furthermore, the embodied precision of the baptismal rite also begins to accumulate direct connection with the resurrection, from Paul’s interpretation of baptism in Romans 6.3–4, wherein the baptized is said to be buried with Christ in death so as to rise with Christ and walk in newness of life.<sup>353</sup> Hints of this are found in Justin Martyr

---

<sup>351</sup> For a consolidated discussion on this textual development see Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation: Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1989), 72–85.

<sup>352</sup> Johnson, *Rites of Christian Initiation*, 121, 157; see esp. his charts of comparison on pgs. 122, 157.

<sup>353</sup> For a clear connection between this passage and the rituals surrounding baptism, as well as instruction to the initiates see Origen, *Comm. Rom.*, 5.8.

who, writing from Rome, outlines a process of prayer, communal fasting, then baptism, and interprets this movement as a rebirth for the cleansing of the soul and entrance into the kingdom.<sup>354</sup> For Justin, the moment of baptism was a moment of illumination, or the beginning of a new life in which the Spirit takes up residence in the soul of the baptized.<sup>355</sup> But it is even more accentuated in the *Shepherd of Hermas* and the *Letter of Barnabas* wherein the water becomes associated with either a seal, or the cross of Jesus, and those who come out of the water transition from death to life.<sup>356</sup> Participation in Christ's death and resurrection gained prominence among early Christians who saw baptism as "a proleptic resurrection from the dead," and "initiation into the community of those who accepted Jesus as the Messiah, who believed that God had raised him from the dead."<sup>357</sup> This is likely why Easter was presented as the day during which baptisms would take place in some parts of the empire, notably by Hippolytus in Rome and Tertullian in North Africa.<sup>358</sup>

---

<sup>354</sup> Justin, *1 Apol.* 61.

<sup>355</sup> L.W. Barnard, *Justin Martyr: His Life and Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 140–141.

<sup>356</sup> Herm. Sim. 9.16.1–7, "Before bearing the name of the Son of God, a person is dead; but after receiving the seal, a person rejects death and receives life. The seal is the water. They descend into the water as those who are dead and come out as those who are alive. To these also this seal was preached and they used it to enter the kingdom of God"; cf. Barn. (Egypt, ca. 117–132), wherein the water of baptism is identified with the cross of Christ (11.7–8) and the eternal water of life is dependent upon rising from the waters of baptism (10.10–11). cf. Irenaeus, *Epid.*, 286.3 wherein baptism as the seal of eternal life is premised on the resurrection of the incarnate Son of God.

<sup>357</sup> Yarbro-Collins, "Origin," 52, 53.

<sup>358</sup> Hippolytus, *Comm. Dan.*, 13.15; Tertullian, *Bapt.*, 12.25. See the development of this idea through the early-fifth century in Paul F. Bradshaw, "'Diem baptism sollemnioem': Initiation and Easter in Christian Antiquity," in *Living Water, Sealing Spirit*, 137–147. This practice of pursuing baptism on Easter appears to have been a localized affair that lasted only fifty years or so.

Additionally, there is evidence that suggests, though not conclusively, that this connection between resurrection and baptism was a primary reason for the ever-expanding precision in the initiation rites. This suggestion is found in the significant exception to liturgical precision in east Syria. Gabrielle Winkler notes that, while the majority of the western Empire moved in a direction toward ritual precision centered on the resurrection, eastern Syrian baptismal liturgy instead emphasized Jesus's baptism in the Jordan not his burial in the tomb.<sup>359</sup> As a result of this emphasis, the baptismal rite was relatively simple in comparison, containing only one oil anointing prior to baptism as a replication of the anointing of the kings of Israel and the coming of the Spirit. In absence of a Rom. 6 interpretation of baptism, east Syria placed no emphasis on Easter as the preferred time of baptism, nor is there any evidence for a "lengthy, highly formalized and strongly ritualized catechumenate . . . and no mention of pre-baptismal exorcisms nor even of sponsors."<sup>360</sup> However, as the baptismal theology of participation in Christ's death crept up the coast of the eastern Mediterranean in the mid to late-third and early-fourth century the baptismal of greater Syria and Palestine progressively transformed from a womb, in reference to Jordan, to a sepulcher and grave in imitation of death, burial, and resurrection.<sup>361</sup> It was the theological change from birth to resurrection, notes Winkler, that moved the emphasis away from anointing and toward baptism proper,

---

<sup>359</sup> Gabriele Winkler, "The Original Meaning of the Prebaptismal Anointing," in *Living Water, Sealing Spirit*, 79.

<sup>360</sup> Bradshaw, *Search for Origins*, 154.

<sup>361</sup> Winkler, "Original Meaning," 80.

subsequent infusing it with precise and detailed rites preceding and following the immersion.<sup>362</sup>

This movement throughout the empire from the second to fourth century should not be seen as a move from informal to formal, rather, it is a move from diversity and simplicity, following the calendar's trajectory, toward structure, precision and uniformity. Christian bodies are simultaneously moved through the pattern of resurrection; and, as east-Syria demonstrates, when the liturgical theology of resurrection comes to shape the rituals, they begin take on a greater specificity through the addition of new anointings, exorcisms, and classifications.

### *Communal Identity*

The rise and emphasis on baptism as an initiatory rite into the death and resurrection of Jesus brought with it a simultaneous development of hierarchy and communal boundaries with the catechumenate. To be clear, Christian catechesis, in some form or another, is arguably as old as the writings of the New Testament, whose examples are based on the Hebrew Bible.<sup>363</sup> However, as early Christian liturgy moved toward precision, Christian identity simultaneously began to divide into a collection of genera, or an organization of geneses. In other words, as the elements of Christian liturgy began to gain greater precision and complexity, there arose the commensurate need to determine who may participate in what elements. More specifically, early Christian

---

<sup>362</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>363</sup> Philip Carrington, *The Primitive Christian Catechism: A Study in the Epistles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940)

communities had to decide who could and who could not partake of the Eucharistic meal, and baptism was quickly identified as the ritual that allowed access to the table.<sup>364</sup>

The *Didache* provides the first model for the requisite pre-baptismal instruction, which required training in the “two ways” followed by fasting and initiation into the community, though there is no defined waiting period.<sup>365</sup> In late-first/early-second century Antioch, Ignatius calls for approval from the bishop prior to baptism, with the implication of his desire to examine the production of truth. By the third century, in many parts of the empire (with the exception of Egypt and the Syrian East), the pre-baptismal preparation time desired was three weeks. The Egyptian catechumenate began after January 6<sup>th</sup> and lasted for a period of 40 days, in imitation of Christ’s fast in the wilderness.<sup>366</sup> And with the *Apostolic Tradition* we find a prescription for three years of catechetical instruction, though this is admittedly an outlier.

The time of preparation was not merely a waiting period. It included testing, examination, and instruction.<sup>367</sup> From the two ways in the *Didache* to the structured

---

<sup>364</sup> However, in all the sources I have examined, I cannot find a well-reasoned justification for this position aside from the simple citation of 1 Cor. 11.27. It is largely assumed that baptism is necessary for admission to the table from as early as the *Didache* (ch. 9), and perhaps earlier, though evidence is unavailable.

<sup>365</sup> Everett Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 202.

<sup>366</sup> In the fourth century, this fast is moved to Easter which may constitute the early history of Lent. See. Bradshaw, *Search for Origins*, 168.

<sup>367</sup> The *Apostolic Tradition* 15.1–8 provides a series of initial exclusions based on lifestyle and occupation. Matthew Dickie has attempted to show that this is a reflection of the pagan cult and the common idea that the gods required a morally upstanding life. However, his argument is largely unconvincing for two reasons: first, in both restrictions from shrine attendance and restrictions from the mystery cults the morally unclean individual is denied access to the *sacrifice*, not to the preparatory time before sacrifice; second, the exclusions from the catechumenate for the *Apostolic Tradition* are merely the first step in a whole system of examination and training *for the purpose* of entering a community, whereas exclusions from pagan cults is simply the denial of access to sacrifice. See, Matthew W. Dickie, “Exclusions from the Catechumenate: Continuity or Discontinuity with Pagan Cult?” *Numen* 48.4 (2001), 417–443.



school of Origen, the catechumenate is the organization of a class within which “hearers” learn the ways of the resurrection in preparation for baptism. During the Eucharistic celebration, the catechumens were typically isolated from the larger community of the baptized and leaders. Justin Martyr articulates the barriers for the catechumenate when the community would assemble for instruction on Sunday afternoon, “the day that Jesus Christ our Savior rose from the dead.”<sup>368</sup> During this time, “no one is permitted to partake of [the Eucharist] except those who believe the things we teach are true and who have been washed in the bath for the forgiveness of sins and unto rebirth and who live as Christ has directed.”<sup>369</sup> From this point forward, though the details vary by region and date, there arises separate groups based on initiation into the resurrection, and proximity to the Eucharist.

It is important at this point to pause and notice what is transpiring in this move toward hierarchical division. The development of the catechumenate takes the time of resurrection and, like the military orders of the eighteenth century, “gradually impose[s] it] on pedagogical practice.”<sup>370</sup> Catechesis examined the soul over a set period of time, with the purpose of climbing the ranks through baptism and exorcism, which prepared the body for worship and the Eucharist. This development is not lost on Foucault who calls

---

<sup>368</sup> Justin, *1 Apol.*, 68.

<sup>369</sup> Justin, *1 Apol.* 65, 66.

<sup>370</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 159.

the early Christian catechumenate “a gymnastics of the body and the soul” which prepares the Christian for a life of repentance, the “price of baptism.”<sup>371</sup>

Origen, in great detail, describes the preparation process for catechumens in late-second century Egypt:

The Christians, so far as they are able, test beforehand the souls of those who wish to become hearers [catechumens] and give a preliminary warning to them privately, before introducing them to the community, when they seem to devote themselves sufficiently to the intention of living a good life. At this time they introduce them. Privately they form one class of those who are taking the lead and are received admission but have not received the symbol of complete purification. They form another class of those who according to their ability are presenting themselves with the purpose of wanting nothing other than the things approved by Christians. For these some are appointed to make inquiry into the lives and activities of those who are being admitted in order that they might exclude those doing infamous deeds.<sup>372</sup>

Origen’s school for the catechumenate, the most detailed in the first three centuries, developed in stages beginning with initial training in morality and the way of Christ in contrast to idolatry. This was followed by advanced instruction in the sacraments and the details of doctrine. Throughout this entire process, the catechumen would listen to the Law of God daily to incite repentance and restraint from sin, and as the time of baptism drew closer, attention would shift to the divinity of Christ.<sup>373</sup> Once a catechumen passed the mandatory time and examination requirements, she would be admitted to baptism. In the event of martyrdom prior to baptism, the catechumen would

---

<sup>371</sup> Foucault, *On the Government of the Living: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1979–1980*, ed. Michel Senellart, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2012), 131–132.

<sup>372</sup> Origen, *Cels.*, 3.51

<sup>373</sup> Everett Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church*, 420. See also Origen, *Hom. Judic.*, 4–5; *Hom. Jes. Nav.*, 5; *Hom. Lev.*, 6.5.

not be left out of the resurrection life, for she would become a recipient of the “baptism of blood,” a baptism “purer than the baptism of water.”<sup>374</sup>

What is clear in the above cited passage is the emphasis on testing the soul to weed out those who could not be disciplined according to a life devoid of evil. The soul takes center-stage in Origen’s catechetical school, an unsurprising fact given the role of baptism in cleansing the soul.<sup>375</sup> Once the proper initiates could be determined, training would begin in preparation for baptism and admission into the community. While there is no uniformity on what is taught or how long this process lasts, the catechumenate was a period of training designed to demarcate groups within the community based on time and level of training, centering on baptism and resurrection.

#### *Eating with the Resurrected Jesus*

Baptism was the initiatory rite for access into the community that met on the day of the resurrection, and was sometimes administered on Easter, and the catechumenate was the pedagogical practice that demarcated the community based on levels of training and granted access to the initiatory right. However, the primary thing that baptism protected, and catechesis prepared for was the Eucharist.

The Eucharist receives little attention in its earliest treatment in the *Didache*, and the attention that it does receive is highly debated.<sup>376</sup> However, what is clear from the

---

<sup>374</sup> Origen, *Hom. Judic.*, 7.2; cf. Cyprian, *Fort.*, pref. 4; Tertullian, *Bapt.*, 16.

<sup>375</sup> Herm. Par 9.16.

<sup>376</sup> The main question concerns whether chs. 9–10 and 14 of the *Didache* both refer to the Eucharist, or if the former refers to a regular meal and the latter to the Eucharist? And, if they both refer to the Eucharist, do they constitute a liturgical manual? It is likely the case that the chapters in question contain prayers said before the Eucharist, rather than a liturgy proper.

*Didache*'s discussion of the Eucharist is that, aside from a few points of doctrinal importance, there remains a lack of precision for the actual ritual movement.<sup>377</sup> In addition to this lack of precision, we find the early idea that the supper is, in some way, connected to the presence of the risen Jesus though this too is not precisely worked out. First, the *Didache* presents the idea that the supper is *communicated* through the resurrected Jesus (10.3) who also provides faith and immortality (9.2). Additionally, because the ritual serves as an anticipation of the return of Christ, there is mention (albeit brief) of a preparation time prior to coming to the table (10.6).<sup>378</sup> Preparation through confession of sins (14), likely made through corporate prayer, is also required as the Eucharist was viewed as a sacrifice.<sup>379</sup> Finally, the presence of Christ was mediated by the preaching, "for where the Lord's nature is discussed, there the Lord is" (4.1) or any visiting Apostle who was to be welcomed as if he were the Lord (11.4).<sup>380</sup> Through this

---

<sup>377</sup> There is historic debate as to whether or not the meal communicated in the *Didache* constitutes a celebration of the Eucharist. Some see the meal as a set of preparatory prayers, or simply an *agape* feast; see Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 2nd ed. (Westminster, London: Dacre Press, 1949), 48 n.2; Willy Rordorf, "The Didache," in *The Eucharist of the Early Christians*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (New York: Pueblo Publishing, 1978), 1–23. However, most modern liturgical scholars now conclude that *Didache* 9–10 describes an early Eucharistic meal, likely patterned from an (unknown) Jewish tradition of a bipartite prayer over the bread then wine. This demonstrates that there is not a single 'core' from which all other liturgies develop, but in the earliest stages of Eucharistic evolution the practice was diverse and lacked clear definition. See Bradshaw, *Search for Origins*, 133–143. Additionally, early Jewish prayers consisted of short, individual units that would be strung together, so the accretions found in later Eucharistic pattern do not represent deviance from an original core, but continue the early Jewish pattern of combining small units, see Enrico Mazza, *Origins of the Eucharistic Prayer*, trans. Robert E. Lane (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995), 12–61; Enrico Mazza, *The Celebration of the Eucharist: The Origin of the Rite and the Development of its Interpretation*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 29–34.

<sup>378</sup> Rordorf, "The Didache," 9–10.

<sup>379</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>380</sup> See also Ign. *Eph.*, 5, 6; Ignatius commands Christians to be physically present in the sanctuary as it is the only place wherein one can receive the "bread of God." The bishop should not be opposed by absence, rather, he should be looked upon as if he were the Lord himself. In Ign. *Trall.*, submission to the bishop is evidence of living according to Jesus Christ and escaping death. And in Ign. *Smyrn.*, refusal of the

ill-defined liturgical formation, the Christian subject is already in the process of being trained to not only anticipate the unexpected return of the Lord but to also expect his presence at the Eucharist and through the preachers and apostles. This anticipation should result in frequent communal gatherings for the perfecting of the soul (16.1–2).

The connection between Eucharist and resurrection continues to develop in Ignatius, for example, who interprets the bread as the flesh of Christ<sup>381</sup> which is the medicine of immortality and the antidote against death which enables eternal life in Jesus Christ.<sup>382</sup> Justin Martyr, too, refers to the Eucharist as a food that is communicated through Jesus, nourishes the body by transformation, and is, in some way, the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus.<sup>383</sup> For Irenaeus, the elements of the Eucharist, body and blood, serve to strengthen and nourish the flesh of the Christian subject thus sealing off the Christian from corruption because of the hope of the resurrection.<sup>384</sup> And for Cyprian, though he provides little structural detail, the Eucharist is a memorial of the Lord's Supper, passion, and resurrection.<sup>385</sup> It is performed in the morning as commemoration of

---

Eucharist is tantamount to refusal of the resurrection, and evidence of a dispute which will lead to death in sin.

<sup>381</sup> Ign. *Rom.*, 7

<sup>382</sup> Ign. *Eph.*, 20.

<sup>383</sup> Justin, *1 Apol.*, 66; cf. *Dial.*, 117

<sup>384</sup> *Haer.*, 5.2.2–3; 4.18.4–5; 1.18.5; cf. Acts John, Acts Pet., all of which mention liturgical practice that closely resembles Justin Martyr, but leave out the importance of resurrection. See also Acts Paul wherein Thecla self-baptizes, eschewing the growing specificity and structure internal to the liturgical evolution. One could conclude that the absence of resurrection is due to an East / West divide; however, Melito of Sardis during Easter contrasts this conclusion by emphasizing the embodied (material) resurrection of Jesus who raises humans from the depths of the tomb as the source of worship.

<sup>385</sup> Johannes Quasten, *The Ante-Nicene Literature after Irenaeus*, vol. 2 of *Patrology* (Allen, TX: Christian Classics, 1995), 381.

the resurrection, and this ritual commemoration calls the recipient to faithfulness, to the point of martyrdom if necessary.<sup>386</sup> Both sacraments, for Cyprian, were intimately connected with martyrdom. Though baptism is focused on individual sin and the creation of the new man, the most glorious baptism is the “baptism of blood,” received by the catechumen martyred prior to water baptism.<sup>387</sup> The baptism of blood is the consequence of the Eucharist, a sacrament which communicates the requisite strength for this sacrifice of martyrdom.<sup>388</sup>

These three elements: baptism, communal identity, and Eucharist not only grow meaning out of the doctrine of the resurrection, they also begin to develop a level of precision in ritual structure that mirrors the development of calendar precision. Time, in other words, is adapted by the early Jesus movement, and filled with commensurate practices connecting the subject’s body to the resurrection on a weekly and annual basis. This is not to imply that these practices were uniform throughout the empire, nor is it to suggest that this was an intentional move toward precision for the purpose of discipline. Rather, I am suggesting that this move, by consequence, began to activate and implement the disciplinary mechanism of the control of activity and the organization of geneses in the formation of Christian identity.

---

<sup>386</sup> Raymond Johanny, “Cyprian of Carthage” in *The Eucharist of the Early Christians*, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (New York: Pueblo Publishing, 1978), 167. See also Mazza, *Celebration*, 134–137.

<sup>387</sup> Cyprian, *Fort.*, pref. 4.

<sup>388</sup> *Ep.* 63.14–15; see also Johanny, “Cyprian,” 164: “We may even say that martyrdom has its roots in the Eucharist.” See also *Ep.* 63.16.2; 17.1, where Carthaginian Christians were substituting wine for water in morning Eucharist out of fear of having the smell of the blood on their breath.

### *Liturgy, Resurrection, and Discipline*

As early as the distribution of the *Didache*, Christian liturgy had taken the turn toward precision. This, of course, is not a new observation. However, what is important to notice in this evolution toward precision (first through a diversity of regional precision, then a unified effort through cross-fertilization), is that it began to both create boundaries between the various stages of conversion and inscribe the time of resurrection (Lord's Day and Easter) on the body of the Christian subject through the initiation process and subsequent ritual observance. In other words, the idea of the resurrection became materially instantiated in baptism and the Eucharist; the former led to the development of a genera of Christ followers and the latter to the development of a detailed liturgy wherein the time of resurrection would liturgically penetrate the body and begin the correlation of body and gesture.

From the very beginning of the development of calendrical and liturgical precision, the Christian subject began the process of formation through bodily practices. While liturgical precision took years to solidify, the earliest stages of liturgical articulation show Sunday as the day on which the body liturgically moved through the resurrection of Jesus, from training, to baptism, to eating. In some circles, resurrection not only structured Sunday, but provided a pattern to think about every day. The author of Clement's first letter to the Corinthians, for example, cites the rising and setting and its orderly and repetitive pattern as daily evidence and reminder for future resurrection (1

Clem. 24.1–3).<sup>389</sup> This solar reflection on resurrection theology, extends beyond mere evidence for the resurrection and into the very shape of liturgy.<sup>390</sup> Though lacking detailed description, the community is instructed to observe the liturgical rites in a specific way on the basis of the pattern and repetition of the solar cycle:

“not in a random or haphazard way, but according to set times and hours. In his superior plan he set forth both where and through whom he wished them to be performed, so that everything done in a holy way and according to his good pleasure might be acceptable to his will. Thus, those who make their sacrificial offerings at the arranged times are acceptable and blessed” (ch. 40).

Though these days and hours are not identified, a desire for precision and order is not only emphasized, it is said to be the thing that makes ritual acceptable to God. For the author, this orderly structure should also extend beyond liturgy and into communal life, evidenced through the letter’s reflection on the Roman military as an instructive guide for Roman and Corinthian Christian life. The “whole body” should be divided and reflect a system of soldiers serving under generals who serve with submissiveness. Thus, all Christians are soldiers who need direction by a general, and all generals require direction from the king, the resurrected Jesus (ch. 37; cf. ch. 24).

As time ticked by in the empire, Christian liturgy expanded in complexity, precision, and uniformity, so that, by the mid-third century in most parts of the empire, the liturgical structure would cycle the catechized Christian initiate through the rite of

---

<sup>389</sup> Cf. Melito of Sardis, *frag.* 8b.2–4. Melito compares the setting sun on the ocean to a baptism wherein the fire within is not quenched but remains asleep until after the baptism he rises again the next day, purified. This is the pattern for Christ who appeared to the dead in Hades and arose as a Sun from heaven.

<sup>390</sup> See 1 Clem. 24–25, wherein the author of 1 Clement presents a cyclical view of time with a focus on renewal which is seen in the metaphor of the sowing and harvesting of crops and the dying and rising phoenix. See James S. Jeffers, *Conflict at Rome: Social Order and Hierarchy in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991), 149. Cf. Melito of Sardis (above) who compares Christian baptism with the baptism of the sun into the ocean at sunset. Just as the sun is purified in its baptism but will rise again, so also the Christian will rise.



baptism to the Eucharist, in each stage manipulating the initiate's body to highlight the centrality of the burial and resurrection of baptism, leading eventually by a place at the table of the Eucharist where, for some communities, the initiated Christian would prepare for martyrdom.

This overview of liturgical and calendrical development toward precision in the first three centuries demonstrates two important points: (1) Early Christian identity and the practices that were caught up in constructing that identity were deeply connected with the ever-increasingly precise control of time. This first occurred in regional settings, and, through a process of cross-fertilization, these practices became gradually universalized. (2) The vast majority of reflections upon liturgical practice concern the resurrection of either Jesus or the Christian. While there are notable outliers to this claim,<sup>391</sup> most interpret baptism as a participation in the death and resurrection of Jesus (Rom 6), which provides access to the Eucharist as a meal in preparation for martyrdom and resurrection (1 Cor 11.26). It is dangerous to overgeneralizing this very diverse period of Christian formation, however, it is nonetheless safe, I think, to conclude that the liturgical structure was largely guided by a theology of resurrection, and the path that it took was one of precision and control.

These two points are important because they show that the identity of the early Christian was shaped through the movement of the body within the bounds of liturgical practice. The body was "liturgized" in a way that *highlighted* the individual's relationship to the risen Christ. As we will see in the next chapter, this process created immaterial

---

<sup>391</sup> See esp. Eastern Syria as described above, pgs. 140–141.

boundaries between various classes, or genera within the community. One could traverse the boundary only after a period of time and catechetical instruction.

Early liturgical structure grew out of the rhetoric of resurrection and created a liturgy which symbolically regulated the body and put the Christian in “the order of doing.”<sup>392</sup> Liturgy took the message of resurrection and transformed it into a speech act that would penetrate the body and guide the gestures of rising and sitting, standing and kneeling, baptizing and eating. Resurrection was that idea which would penetrate the body as it approached the altar, raised the hands, or gave the holy kiss, or whatever else was required throughout the diverse communities. Through progressively greater precision and universality, the entire life of the Christian and catechumen was structured by the resurrection, so that the body was directed once through the waters of baptism in order to attend to the weekly consumption of the body of the resurrected Christ.

### **Conclusion**

My contention in this chapter is, really, quite simple. early Christian theology of the resurrection shaped time and liturgy in the early community. This process, in both the creation of the time-table and the regulation of action within it, moved in the direction of ever-increasing precision and uniformity. I might say that while there are debates concerning the diversity of calendrical change in the empire, there are virtually no debates on the *fact* that the Roman calendar was appropriated and infused with

---

<sup>392</sup> Francis Jacques, “The Body and Rituality in the Liturgy,” in *Liturgy and the Body*, eds. Louis-Mari Chauvet and François Kabasele Lumbala, Concilium 1995/3 (London: SCM Press, 1995), 10. Cf. Stephen Baukland, “Ritual, Bodies and ‘Cultural Memory’” in *Liturgy and the Body*, 49–56, wherein he argues that liturgy creates habitual body practices which sediments experience and identity within the body: “That is to say, [habituated bodily practice] discovers and reinvents, enforces and reinforces its identity, and in this way gives ‘life’ to its members . . . ; life, that is, ‘as it is lived’ by members of the myriad interlocking, overlapping, multi-layered, and conflicting groupings that constitute a human community.”<sup>51</sup>.

resurrection as its centering point, and the Christian calendar moved to greater and greater precision as the years crept by. Similarly, while questions swirl concerning the origin and diversity of Christian liturgy, almost all will agree that baptism and the Eucharist are tightly connected with the rhetoric of the resurrection and moved in the direction of precision and universality. I do not think either of these are novel in and of themselves. I have merely attempted to thread a connection between time, liturgy and their rhetorical genesis: resurrection.

This historical observation is based on the many scholars who have come before. The real contribution of this chapter is in the final connection that I am attempting to make—between the precision of calendar and ritual, and the formation of the disciplined subject. Through the process of developing and filling Christian time with the resurrection, and along the path of increasing precision, the Christian subject was simultaneously being shaped by the disciplinary control of time and the organization of geneses.

This is not to imply that we have, at this point, disciplinary power in its full form, or even the disciplinary mechanisms of activity and geneses in their full form. A vital component to the control of the body and its gestures through time and organization is the introduction of power to fasten bodies together into one “body-machine complex” as an “apparatus of production.”<sup>393</sup> In other words, the movement of the body in Foucault’s disciplinary structure requires the advent of utility—the creation of stuff—and this is not happening in the early Christian movement and control of the body. Nonetheless, what is

---

<sup>393</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 153.

occurring in Christianity's first three centuries is the material codification of resurrection *through* nascent forms of disciplinary power. These forms will eventually become concentrated in the monastery, commensurate with the mid-fourth century imperialization of Christianity, where they will reside until the advent of the modern prison.

Through the evolution of the Christian calendar and liturgy, the time and movement of the resurrection was inscribed on the body of the Christian subject. But more than this, these disciplinary mechanisms of power were energized by the counter-imperial message of the reversal of the cross. As the Christian subject was formed through the precision of time, and as she moved through the catechumenate by means of examination and training, she was always brought back to the direct challenge of the emperor's sovereign right to death, the resurrection of a crucified criminal of the state—Jesus.

## Chapter Five: Movement in the Empire

“In organizing ‘cells’, ‘places’ and ‘ranks’, the disciplines create complex spaces that are at once architectural, functional and hierarchical. It is spaces that provide fixed positions and permit circulation.”

—Michel Foucault <sup>394</sup>

### Introduction

After weeks of sailing on the Tyrrhenian sea, a young sailor ports on the river Sarno and finds his way, for the first time, to the city of Pompeii. He, of course, has four things on his mind—a cup of wine (or two), food, the public bath, and the brothel. Entering the Stabiae gate on the south-eastern side of the city, he quickly accomplishes his first task after walking only 300 feet on the via Stabiana when he steps into a *popina* (bar) and orders a drink.<sup>395</sup>

As he continues walking up the via Stabiana, he crosses the road on a series of raised stones, which flank the worn wagon tracks on the busy street, and stops. To his left, he hears the loud call of a rooster held by a priest in a temple of Asclepius just before

---

<sup>394</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 148.

<sup>395</sup> John F. DeFelice, Jr. “The Women of Pompeian Inns: A Study of Law, Occupation, and Status” (PhD Diss., Miami University, OH, 1998), 24–26.

the sacrifice.<sup>396</sup> The crowd stands in the small courtyard, in front of the altar, while the fowl is sacrificed on behalf of the sickly-looking sailor among the crowd who would sleep in the temple that night.<sup>397</sup> There are about fifteen people watching the sacrifice, all that can fit in the courtyard, and as the blood pours out on the altar, our sailor walks away to finish his quest for food and sex. But he decides to take a detour and turns left down the via dell' Abbondanza where, after walking roughly 750 feet, he finds himself in the forum. Amidst the hustle and bustle of the busy city he stood and gazed upon the magnificent temple of Jupiter, adorned by the splendor of Mount Vesuvius above. On his left he saw the temples of Venus and Apollo, and on his right the temple of Vespasian. As the sailor watched the crowds move in and out of the forum and temples in the heat of the Pompeii sun, he knew that he was in the presence of the gods.

### **Temples, Rome, And Society**

Temples were an inseparable component of Roman society. A stroll through any Roman city, as evidenced by Pompeii, would include a tour of multiple temples all of which facilitated an encounter with the gods. To be certain, the Roman temple was not the only source of religious and cultic life in the Empire. Roman cities were a rich mosaic of various cultures and ethnicities, each of which brought with their own method of interacting with the divine. Almost all religious traditions in Rome agreed that the gods

---

<sup>396</sup> This refers to the Temple of Jupiter Meilichios which has been recently associated with Asclepius. See Paul Zanker, *Pompeii: Public and Private Life*, trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 52–53. It is a small temple and altar on the via Stabiana. Contra Zanker, however, the temple's size is not evidence that it was privately funded and attended, nor was it a site of individual religiosity in contrast with the "official" cult. The cult of Asclepius was promoted, funded, and spread by the Roman Senate throughout the Roman colonies, see John Scheid, *The Gods, the State, and the Individual: Reflections on Civic Religion in Rome*, trans. Clifford Ando (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 12, 15, esp. 129.

<sup>397</sup> Plato, *Phaed.*, 118a; Philostratus, *Vit. Apoll.* 1.9–12.

existed, and they were involved in the lives of people.<sup>398</sup> The existence of the gods was not an abstract concept, but a reality that was woven into the fabric of everyday Roman life. The average city in the empire was awash with sacred groves, shrines, and statues. The Roman city was a thoroughly religious city; and where temples were absent, their cultural space was filled with open-air shrines, either *sacella* (an altar within a small precinct) or *luci* (sacred groves for the gods, usually with an altar).<sup>399</sup> There were altars near funeral grounds, and shrines on the city's outskirts. Throughout the city, one would encounter shrines to the *Lares* and *Penates* peppering Roman homes and crossroads.<sup>400</sup> One could find shrines lining the main roads that exit the city, well outside the city's borders.<sup>401</sup> Even the natural world of forests and mountains was filled with the presence of the gods, and thus acknowledged through offerings.<sup>402</sup>

In the midst of this expansive religious diversity, I draw attention to the temple because, for the Roman inhabitant, it was the primary communal symbol of the presence of the gods. For Roman religion and the Roman city, the temple was the most prominent landmark.<sup>403</sup> They were carefully situated within the city to attract attention and facilitate

---

<sup>398</sup> James B. Rives, *Religion in the Roman Empire* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 89.

<sup>399</sup> Rüpke, *Religion of the Romans* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2007), 176.

<sup>400</sup> The *Lares*, often translated as “household gods,” were understood by some to be “deified spirits of the dead,” and their shrines are often found in homes or at crossroads. Beard, North, and Price, *Roman Religion*, 1:185. See esp. n. 63. *Penates* appear to be exclusively household gods, for the protection of property; see also Rives, *Religion*, 118–119.

<sup>401</sup> Rüpke, *Religion of the Romans*, 177.

<sup>402</sup> Ingrid E.M. Edlund, *The Gods and the Place: Location and Function of Sanctuaries in the Countryside of Etruria and Magna Graecia (700–400 B.C.)*, SUASIR 4:42 (Stockholm: Paul Åströms Förlag, 1987), 35–36, 42, 44–62.

<sup>403</sup> John Stambaugh, *The Ancient Roman City* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1988), 215; E.J. Owens, *The City in the Greek and Roman World* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 3–4.

crowds, and where you found a temple, you found the gods. They were large, grandiose, and ornate—a sharp contrast with the earliest Christian meeting sites.<sup>404</sup> This chapter will explore the difference between the architectural form of the Roman temple, and that of the earliest Christian meeting space. More precisely, my question in this chapter is twofold: what was the *purpose* of early Christian architecture in the life of the community? And what was the *effect* made on the human subject by the differences in architectural form?

These questions are important for our primary task of analyzing nascent forms of disciplinary power in early Christian discourse. My larger contention, recall, is that the Christian subject was constituted through disciplinary mechanisms of power which grow out of the Pauline doctrine of the resurrection, and that these mechanisms of power were instantiated in material forms.<sup>405</sup> In the previous chapter, I attempted to show the beginnings of two mechanisms of power: the control of activity and the organization of geneses. In this chapter, I will continue to develop my thesis by demonstrating how architectural arrangement in early Christian worship spaces, in contrast with communal sacred space of Rome, enforced the technique of genetic organization through spatial distribution, and infused it with the possibility of hierarchical observation. My primary

---

<sup>404</sup> Not all temples were large; some, like the Asclepian temple (Jupiter Meilichios?) were relatively small and could only hold a small group of people. They were, however, consistently open spaces with large entrances relative to their size.

<sup>405</sup> This is not to imply that the ideology of resurrection created these forms, but that it coexisted with these mechanisms and gave them formative power. Consider Foucault's comment on the coexistence of ideology and power: "It is quite possible that ideological production did coexist with the great machineries of power. . . . But I do not think that it is ideologies that are shaped at the base, at the point where the networks of power culminate. . . . The delicate mechanisms of power cannot function unless knowledge, or rather knowledge apparatuses, are formed, organized, and put into circulation, and those apparatuses are not ideological trimmings or edifices." Foucault, *Society*, 33–34.



points of comparison are the Roman temple structure and the Christian church before the advent of the Constantinian basilica. While the former point has ample evidence, the latter is, admittedly, limited in quantity. Nonetheless, given the similarity of certain elements found in early Christian structures in diverse regions (Syria and Italy), and a uniform evolution of these elements in the Christian structure through time I will make some modest conclusions concerning early Christian space and the introduction of disciplinary power.

This chapter will not introduce any new information to the study of early Christian architecture, nor will it draw contrasts that are not easily noticed or widely recognized. Like the previous chapter, my contribution is not the introduction of new information, but the re-interpretation of recognized facts. That is, through a relatively simple observation, this chapter will merely suggest that the ranks, or genera, which were created through the ever-increasing specificity of the early Christian time-table (i.e. control of activities seen in chapter four) were subsequently materialized onto the body through partitioned space in early Christian architecture. This can be demonstrated by placing the layout of the Roman temple against that of the earliest Christian meeting spaces. The contrast will highlight the constitution of the individualized subject defined by his or her attained rank as determined by the hierarchized space.

### **The Roman Temple**

In order to gain our architectural bearings, we begin with the spatial definitions of the Roman temple. I will to use the word “temple” to describe the Roman cult site as a whole. However, within that whole there are several important elements. Literature from

Roman antiquity distinguishes between the *templum* and the *aedes sacre*.<sup>406</sup> The former is an area of land that had been ritually set apart. It could include a place in the sky wherein a priest would read the flight patterns of birds as messages from the gods, or it could simply refer to a plot of land dedicated to a god, with or without architectural enhancement.<sup>407</sup> The latter is the house within which the god lived.

The *templum* area was surrounded by a boundary marker, typically a wall, and contained within it an altar and the *aedes sacre*.<sup>408</sup> The altar stood in the courtyard, within the bounded *templum* area, and was the most important component within the *templum*. Sacrifices were always done in open-air space of the *templum*, a characteristic that shaped the conduct of the sacrificial event, though sometimes the altar would find itself on the steps of the *aedes* due to space limitations.<sup>409</sup> There are certainly variations, but these features are generally consistent in demarcated temple space.

The Roman temple was, simply put, a house for the gods. As such, there would normally be a statue or representation of the god within the *aedes sacre*, near the rear of the temple interior (*cella*), visible from outside through a wide doorway.<sup>410</sup> Restriction of

---

<sup>406</sup> See Varro, *Ling.*, 7.8 and Servius, *ad. Aen.*, 1.92.

<sup>407</sup> Ulrike Egelhaaf-Gaiser, "Roman Cult Sites: A Pragmatic Approach" in *A Companion to Roman Religion*, ed. Jörg Rüpke (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 205–207.

<sup>408</sup> Stambaugh, *Ancient Roman City*, 218.

<sup>409</sup> Egelhaaf-Gaiser, "Roman Cult Sites," 210; for the altar on the stairs, see the Temple of Fortuna Augusta, founded by M. Tullius, and described in detail in Egelhaaf-Gaiser, "Roman Cult Sites," 220. For a literary picture of the open-air, chaotic, crowd-based experience see Apuleius, *Met.*, 11.12–17.

<sup>410</sup> Silius Italicus, *Pun.*, 10.432–33: God's dwell in temples and in heaven. Though the statue was not a direct correlation with the god, it was symbolic representation so that access to the god was mediated through access to the statue. See Gregory Stevenson, *Power and Place: Temple and Identity*, BZNV 107 (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2001), 45. There were, of course, critiques of this idea as demonstrated by Seneca, *Ep.*, 41.1–3. See Egelhaaf-Gaiser, "Roman Cult Sites."

access to the *cella* varied by temple. Some had significant restrictions whereby only members of the temple cult could enter, and others were open to the public. Some temples were open year-round, others were only open on special days throughout the year.<sup>411</sup> The Roman temple could have many functions ranging from a depository for expensive items, location for feasts to the temple's god or meals for the local ruling elite, and even a museum and space for advertising the connection between Caesar and the gods.<sup>412</sup>

The temple was cared for by a temple attendant, the *aeditumus*, who often had a space for temporary lodging in the temple precincts along with a home elsewhere in the city. The *aeditumus* would care for the furnishings in the temple, and close the doors to the *aedes* at night, which was sometimes patrolled by watchdogs. During the daytime, the temple area was open for people to regularly linger and loiter in the open-air space and participate in sacrifice when they were being performed. Participation in these sacrifices as one's religious duty was the primary function of the Roman temple. Sacrifice was done at the temple in both public and private forms whereby either official priesthoods would mediate the sacrifice or individuals would come to the temple to present prayer and offering at or near the altar.<sup>413</sup> Each temple would have at least one festival per year

---

<sup>411</sup> There is also ample evidence that many temple buildings were permanently closed except on the mandated opening of all temples, which was a special event. See Richard Jenkyns, *God, Space & City in the Roman Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 227.

<sup>412</sup> John E. Stambaugh, "The Functions of Roman Temples" in *ANRW* 2.16.1 (1978), 555–556; see also Ovid, *Fast.* 5. 561–568.

<sup>413</sup> Stambaugh, "Function," 576.

with a special sacrifice on the anniversary of the temple's dedication, and under certain occasions, all temples would open and offer sacrifice and prayer together.<sup>414</sup>

Roman temples were diverse in practice and purpose. As such, it would be a mistake to read the temple encounter as one homogenous experience. Nonetheless, accounting for the diversity in Roman temples, their architecture was almost always situated around a crowd experience. The exceptions to this crowd-based architectural layout prove too insignificant to change the generalization that temples did not have partitioned space to separate the crowd or individuals within that crowd based on rank. Sacrificial festivals were communal and crowd oriented so that all in the city could come to the temple and participate. Temples served as “an institution and symbol that could unify disparate people and a place that individuals, cities, and empires could use to express their self-identity and make sense of their relationship with both the gods and one another.”<sup>415</sup> Further, as John Stambaugh concludes, the multi-functional nature of the temple produces a distinct impression:

of people streaming to, around and from temples, finding them indispensable to the conduct of their business and their cultural and intellectual life. Beyond that, shady porticoes, the steps and benches for strolling and sitting, the constantly changing scene, the prospect of seeing a procession or sacrifice, made the temples some of the most attractive places for lounging and loafing in the city. The area Capitolina attracted many strollers, and all the more important temples offered a place for beggars to wait for handouts, for the idle to wait for something of interest, and for the shoppers to browse among the shops and stalls. . . . such crowds of people visiting the temples at leisure presented possibilities for all sorts of liaisons.<sup>416</sup>

---

<sup>414</sup> Stambaugh, “Function,” 577.

<sup>415</sup> Stevenson, *Power and Place*, 41.

<sup>416</sup> Stambaugh, “Function,” 587–8.

The temple was built and intended for crowds entering and moving about in an open space to encounter the gods and be reminded of the relationship between Caesar and those gods. This intention is clearly found in the architecture of the Roman temple and the way that architecture moved the Roman crowds throughout their experience with the gods. As an example of the Temple's crowd-based architecture, I draw your attention to the Temple of Portunus, one of the best preserved Roman Temples, ca. 120 BCE<sup>417</sup>

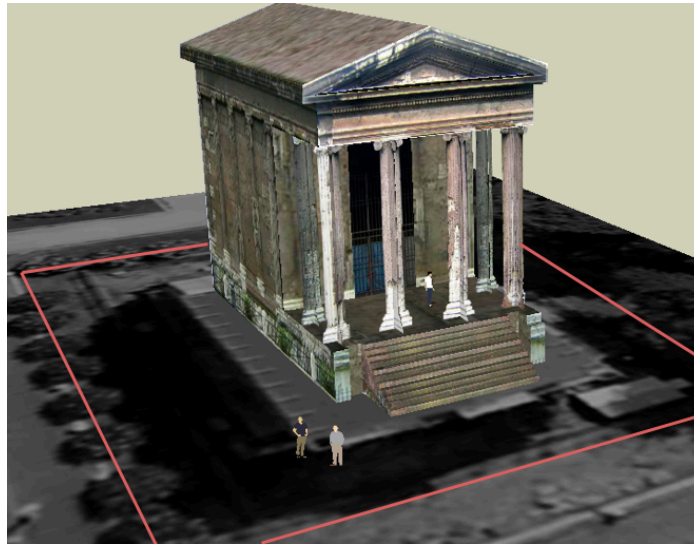


Fig. 1: Temple of Portunus, 3D Scale. “Tempio di Portuno, Foro Boario, Roma,” by Andrea Pittalis, 2008. Permissions granted 3/2018. Additions of *templum* boundary (in red) and humans for scale are author's.

The architectural layout of the Roman temple was made for a crowd. The *templum* was a large, bounded, often paved, open-air space that that usually had only the *aedes* and the altar. The cultic celebration was performed in this large area, welcoming

---

<sup>417</sup> The Temple of Portunus serves as a helpful paradigm as it was an average size temple that serves as an example of the crowd-based architecture that was found almost universally in Roman Temples. It was not as large as later Augustan temples, such as that of Mars Ultor in the Forum Augustum; however, as John Stamper copiously demonstrates, both large and small temples maintain this basic architectural layout with very few exceptions. The red area represents the *templum* boundary, and the addition of human figures shows the space relative to the human size.

unrestrained jubilation by the crowd.<sup>418</sup> The large, open design allowed for the smooth movement of large amounts of people, without distinction.<sup>419</sup> These spaces were further developed in the second century, CE with the introduction of a portico behind the *aedes* full of shops and storerooms, all of which were intended to facilitate the large gatherings of crowds.<sup>420</sup> The design of the Roman temple would catch the visitor's attention with large and decorative temple doors, tall and proportional columns, and a bright and lavish interior designed for the accommodation of large groups of people.<sup>421</sup>

This emphasis on the crowd orientation of the temple is demonstrated clearly by the change in temple architecture during the time of Pompey and Julius Caesar. Along with the use of marble as building material and the increasing grandeur of temple design, new settings were implemented to emphasize the relationship between the crowd and the temple. While the size of imperial temples was being expanded, several temples were even combined with a theater to form a single complex, such as the *opera Pompeiana*, *Fortuna Primigenia*, and the Sanctuary of Hercules Victor at Tivoli.<sup>422</sup> Where a temple's architectural layout included more definition by means of subsidiary rooms and

---

<sup>418</sup> Egelhaaf-Gaiser, "Roman Cult Sites," 210.

<sup>419</sup> Stambaugh, "Function," 571. This is not to imply that there were not distinctions between who was permitted in various sections of the *templum*. Some temples allowed access to women alone and others to men alone, See Stevenson, *Power and Place*, 50; cf. Strabo, *Geogr.*, 14.6.3; Pausanias, *Descr.*, 2.10.4–5; 3.20.3. Distinctions were also made on the basis of ethnicity in some cases, see Herodotus, 1.144; 5.72. These distinctions, however, were not built into the architecture of the *templum*, rather, they were enforced by the rules of the temple. In other words, the *templum* was still built for crowds, but the rules determined which crowds could access the *cella*.

<sup>420</sup> Stambaugh, "Function," 571.

<sup>421</sup> Robert L. Scranton, "Interior Design of Greek Temples," *AJA* 50 (1946): 39–51; Rüpke, *Religion*, 60

<sup>422</sup> John W. Stamper, *The Architecture of Roman Temples* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 84–89. See also the Roman expansion of Temple B during the time of Pompey or Augustus, wherein the *cella* and podium were enlarged and a *pronaos* was added to the front.

partitions, those rooms were tucked away from public view, under staircases and in dead corners.<sup>423</sup> The additional rooms in the *templum* were poorly lit, cramped, and peripheral, demonstrating their function as supplementary to the large, open, crowd-oriented *templum*.<sup>424</sup> Aside from these subsidiary rooms, the architectural layout of the Roman temple, though diverse in application, was quite simple: an *aedes* inside a bounded area—two large, open spaces. The Temple of Portunus serves, again, as a clear example of this format, as can be seen in Stamper’s drawing.

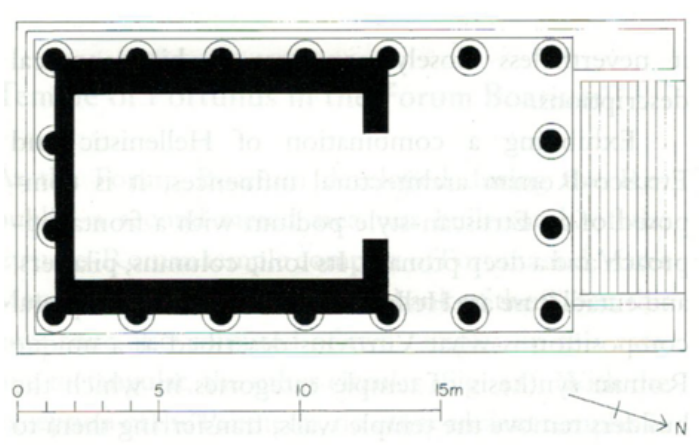


Fig. 2: Temple of Portunus, plan. Drawing: John W. Stamper after Ernst R. Fiechter, in *RomMitt* 21 (1906), pl. 6. In John Stamper, *The Architecture of Roman Temples*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. fig. 44.

While the individual is important in Roman cultic rituals, the emphasis is on that individual *as part of* the large crowd gathered for festival. Minor variation and diversity notwithstanding, this generalization holds true that official sacred space in the empire was large, open, and lacked architectural definition. People could come and go as they

<sup>423</sup> Stamper, *Architecture*, 210

<sup>424</sup> Ibid.

pleased unless a temple had particular restrictions for who could enter its *aedes* and when it was open. They could linger, loiter, and view a sacrifice, or not.

### **Early Christian Space**

The earliest Christian meeting space differed substantially from the Roman Temple in both form and function. This is not to imply that early Christian meeting spaces were intended as replications of the Roman *templum*, they were not. Nor is it to imply that early Christian meeting space was completely unique in the empire, it was not. I do not intend to contrast early Christian architecture with the nuances of the Roman Temple or compare it with similarities found in other mystery cults for the sake of architectural analysis. Rather, I simply seek to emphasize the role of architectural mediation with the divine in the construction of the Christian subject by drawing attention to one important difference: partitions and doorways. That is, the early Christian movement, by re-directing imperial inhabitants from the *templum* to the church for the encounter with the divine, also re-shaped the individual through a compact architectural space filled with partitions and doors, within which that encounter was made.

#### *The Origins of Christian Architecture*

It is important to note that the ritual construction of space along lines of hierarchy and embodied demarcation within that space is something present within Paul's own writings, as Jorunn Økland ably demonstrates.<sup>425</sup> However, Paul's rhetoric of ritual space and hierarchical distribution is absent of any concrete evidence for how the Christian subject *actually* circulated throughout the space.

---

<sup>425</sup> Jorunn Økland, *Women in their Place: Paul and the Corinthian Discourse of Gender and Sanctuary Space* (New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 168–170.



Recent scholarship has demonstrated the challenge of pinpointing a “standard” architectural form for the earliest Christian meeting spaces, prior to any extant remains.<sup>426</sup> Nonetheless, given the low numbers of the early movement, it is reasonable to conclude that at its earliest stage, gatherings would have been small and intimate wherein new attendees could be easily recognized, and baptism could be performed wherever running water was available.<sup>427</sup> The expanding numbers of the movement, however, would have led to necessary adjustments in space.

Unfortunately, any evidence of early Christian meeting spaces in the first and second century is unavailable, and our evidence of meeting spaces in the third and early-fourth century is significantly limited. Given this paucity of material evidence, it is all too easy to retreat into the debates of what we *can’t* know, rather than boldly make hypotheses from what we *do* know.<sup>428</sup> My analysis will work from what we do know by making a few simple observations that build off of consistent generalized forms present throughout the earliest material remains. That is, I propose that there is enough evidence to identify the role of early Christian ritual needs in architectural adaptation, and from that note the drastic difference between the way the Christian subject experienced the

---

<sup>426</sup> See especially Dennis E. Smith, “The House Church as Social Environment,” in *Text, Image, and Christians in the Graeco-Roman World: A Festschrift in Honor of David Lee Balch*, eds. C. Osiek and A.C. Niang, PTMS 176 (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock), 3–21. Cf. the recent study by Edward Adams that challenges the idea that Christians met exclusively in Houses, Adams, *Earliest Christian Meeting Places*.

<sup>427</sup> See Mart. Jus. 2, wherein one Christian group in Rome is said to have met above the baths of Myrtilos. We cannot know if this site was chosen because of the accessibility to water, or if was simply the only place available. However, given the importance of baptism for the early community, it is likely that sites such as this would have been preferred.

<sup>428</sup> My analysis of generalized trends will undoubtedly open this chapter up for criticism from scholars who work on the level of nuance and diversity. My goal, however, is not to create a picture of a homogenous movement of architectural evolution. Rather, I seek to identify points of similarity and connect those points with my larger thesis of power in the formation of the Christian subject.

worship space and the way the Roman visitor to the temple experienced an encounter with the gods. As we will see, it is a difference that emphasizes the *individual* subject through her progressive movement throughout the space for a liturgical encounter with the resurrection in Baptism and the Lord's Supper.<sup>429</sup>

The architectural remains of three different Christian meeting sites will demonstrate the aforementioned difference. My primary subject of analysis is the Christian building at Dura-Europos, and in addition to this site, attention will be given to the remains beneath the Cathedral at Aquileia, and the remains beneath one of the Roman titular churches. These sites are privileged in my analysis for two reasons. First, they comprise the earliest and only extant evidence of definitive Christian material space, *ante pacem*. Second, they provide a picture of the ways by which early Christian communities adapted various buildings to suit their needs. These adaptations, I will demonstrate, emphasize demarcated space through the use of partitions and doorways. And this demarcation of space facilitated an embodied hierarchization based on rank and proximity to the resurrected Jesus.

#### *Partitions and Boundaries at Dura-Europos*

The first definitive, extant evidence of Christian communal space is found at the border of the Roman Empire, in the formerly militarized and diverse city of Dura-Europos, just east of the modern border between Syria and Iraq, on the Euphrates river.<sup>430</sup> In 1932 Clark Hopkins and Henry Pearson uncovered a house along the city's western

---

<sup>429</sup> See Richard Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 4th ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 25–27.

<sup>430</sup> Michael Peppard, *The World's Oldest Church: Bible, Art, and Ritual at Dura-Europos, Syria* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 6–7.

wall that had been set aside and renovated to meet the needs of the growing Christian assembly. Built in 232/233 CE, the house was unquestionably in Christian hands by 240/241, when it was renovated to facilitate regular Christian gatherings.<sup>431</sup>

Buried in the sands of the Sasanian defeat of the Roman outpost in 256, the church of Dura-Europos provides our earliest architectural layout of early Christian meeting space. The renovations set this house aside for religious gatherings making it a “true *domus ecclesiae*” (the “house of the church”).<sup>432</sup> An initial glance at Dura’s layout highlights an emphasis on partitions and demarcated space that is not found in the typical Roman Temple. The building is comprised of eight different rooms within a single building measuring roughly 57f x 65f.

---

<sup>431</sup> L. Michael White, *The Social Origins of Christian Architecture*, 2 vols. HTS 42 (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, Intl., 1990), 2:124.

<sup>432</sup> White, *Social Origins*, 2:124; see also 1:20, 111; Krautheimer, *ECBA*, 27; Adolf Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*, trans. J. Moffatt, 2 vols. (London, 1908), 11:86f.

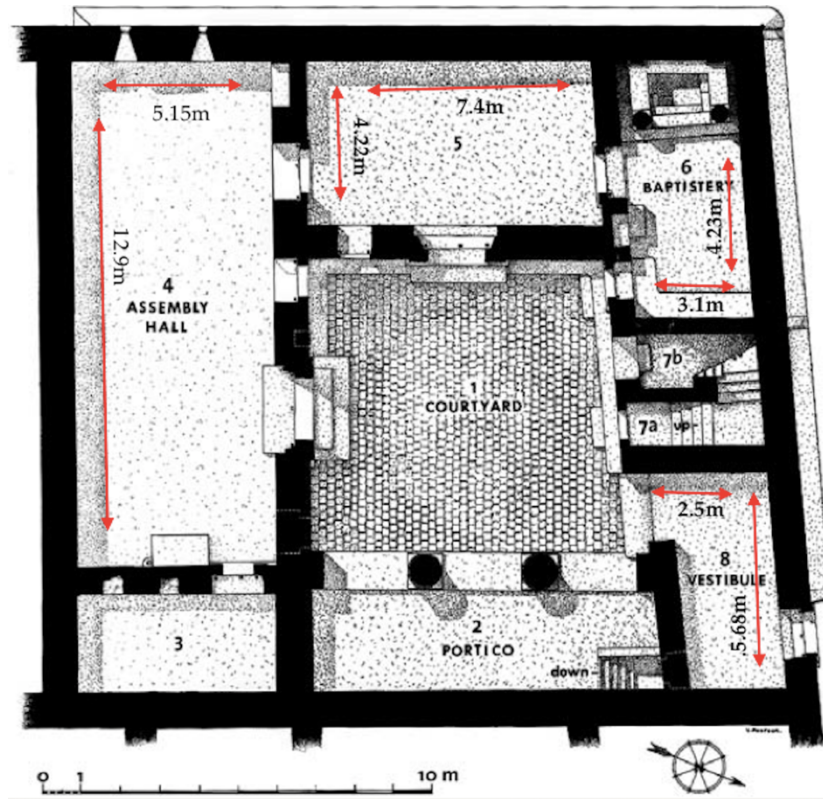


Fig. 3: Floor plan of the Dura-Europos *domus ecclesia* (Yale University Art Gallery, Dura-Europos Collection). Labels and measurements are my additions. Measurements from L. Michael White, *The Social Origins of Christian Architecture*, vol. II. (Valley Forge, Penn.: Trinity Press Intl., 1997), pgs. 128–130.

At the center of the building there is a courtyard (room 1), flanked by the two largest rooms (rooms 4 and 5), both suitable for a sizeable group. In addition to these two larger rooms there is a small room dedicated for baptism (room 6), and another small room (room 3) presumed by some to be a vestry, though certainty on its function cannot be determined. What is most striking about this layout is the decision to leave the majority of the walls intact during renovation. This decision contrasts the early Christian building with the Jewish synagogue located only a few blocks up the road. The Jewish synagogue in Dura, like most other synagogue adaptations, was accomplished through the removal of most partitions so as to provide large spaces suitable for a large assembly

hall. In the words of White, the building was “guttled,” a process seen clearly in the various stages of restoration.<sup>433</sup>

Given the building’s relatively small dimensions, the decision to leave almost every wall in place and live out Christian ritual in a small building made up of eight separate rooms meant, by consequence, that each room would be significantly limited by size. Consider the dimensions. The entrance (room 8) could hold only a small group of people at one time (L.5.68 m/18.63 ft; W.2.5 m/8.2 ft).<sup>434</sup> The passageway from the vestibule into the courtyard could, realistically fit two people at a time, at most (only W.1.75m/5.74f). The room that appears to be the primary meeting room (room 4) was the only room subject to expansion through wall demolition, and thus could hold roughly fifty or sixty individuals (L.12.90 m/42.32 f; W.5.15 m/16.9 f).<sup>435</sup> The second largest room (room 5) on the western side of the building was a little more than half the size of the large meeting room, and could hold twenty to thirty individuals (L.ca.7.35–7.60 m/24.1–24.9 f; W.4.22 m/13.85 f). If we judge by looks alone, the baptistery (room 6), with its elaborate trim on the formal doorway and images adorning the walls, was the most important room and could comfortably hold, at most, five people at any given time (L.ca.4.23 m/13.9 f; W.3.1 m/10.2 f). At its west end was a small baptistery pool orienting the room (L. 1.63 m/5.35 f; D. .955 m/3.13 f) covered by a decorated canopy, and the room’s space was divided vertically so that the ceiling was lowered (from a

---

<sup>433</sup> See White, *Social Origins*, 1:74–75; esp. figure 15, pg. 75

<sup>434</sup> All measurements for the Dura-Europos church from White, *Social Origins*, 2:125–130.

<sup>435</sup> Krautheimer, *ECBA*, 27.

height of 5.22 m/17.13 f to 3.45 m/11.32 f from floor) with a small apartment created above, further emphasizing the tight space.<sup>436</sup>

But why does this matter? That is the more important question that is likely on the mind of my reader at the moment. My observation of the partitioned differences between the Roman Temple and the earliest Christian meeting site is not dependent on novelty in either discovery of fact or comparison of sites. Rather, my observation of the simple binary contrast between the demarcated space of the Christian site at Dura and the crowd-oriented space of the Roman Temple seeks to reinterpret the role of Christian configuration of space in the construction of the subject. We cannot know why the community decided to leave the walls up. It could have been the result of differing ritual practices, or it could have been due to a simple lack of resources. Either way, what is clear is that the partitioned space itself was employed in the ritual movement of subjects within the community. And this ritual movement was one that highlighted the individual in distinction from the crowd.

How, then, did the Christian subject move through this ritual map? While we have no extant sources that definitively describe movement through the building, we can, nonetheless, build a picture given the existence of these partitions and doorways and the role that partitions and doorways play in any architectural space. Imagine, for a moment, a Roman soldier stationed in Dura-Europos, this diverse and militarized city, who is used to patrolling the busy and eclectic streets of the frontier town.<sup>437</sup> In the heart of the city,

---

<sup>436</sup> White, "Architecture: The First Five Centuries" in *The Early Christian World*, ed. Philip F. Esler (New York: Routledge, 2000), 2:714.

<sup>437</sup> Peppard, *The World's Oldest Church*, 6–7.

he strolls by the Temple of the Gadde and of Adonis, both of which are normal sights for this soldier who is used to the proliferation of Temples throughout the imperial cities. But on the Western wall of the city he periodically walks by three buildings, all of which look normal from the outside but act as meeting sites inside for minority religious groups.<sup>438</sup> One of those buildings served as a gathering space for Christians and recently underwent minor renovations. Out of curiosity, one night, our soldier attends a meeting.

Dura's Christian building is unlike almost any temple this soldier has seen before. The doors are small, and the walls inside remain intact. Space is mediated by partitions and demarcation. He enters the building through the small vestibule (Room 8), large enough for only a few other people. He is then materially forced to separate from this small group as he passes, individually, through a small arch into a paved courtyard (Room 1). This courtyard is a central hub from which attendees separate by status. Several people, who are members of the community and whom this soldier has seen on the streets before, funnel into the main room (Room 4). Our soldier, however, is told to go through the door on the right, but before entering that space he curiously peers into the main room, which is filled and holds roughly forty people.<sup>439</sup> The room's focal point was a raised platform on the eastern side, where there is bread and wine. Following orders, our soldier goes through the small door on the right and sits with a group of

---

<sup>438</sup> See the layout of the city of Dura-Europos in Peppard, *The World's Oldest Church*, Plate 2. The three buildings are, from north to south, the Mithraeum, the Jewish Synagogue, and the Christian Building.

<sup>439</sup> Krautheimer, *ECBA*, 27.

catechumenates in a room that could comfortably fit only twenty individuals (Room 5).<sup>440</sup> After hearing the message, this soldier is intrigued and decides to return.

Time passes, and the soldier continues to return to faithfully listen through the window that connects the catechumenate room and the main meeting room, and during this time he receives specialized instruction in preparation for baptism. He can listen to the message of the resurrection, and see the Eucharist distributed, but he cannot partake.<sup>441</sup> After his prescribed period of instruction and training, the time has come for him to separate, once again, from the already small crowd of catechumens. The small doorway on the northern side of the room would be unlocked from the inside on the night of his transition<sup>442</sup> and he would enter the baptistery (Room 6)—originally a mere side room, now given a heightened sense of importance by the addition of elaborate trim to its formal doorway marking the significance of his transition from catechesis in room 5 to baptism in room 6. The myriad of images that fill the room, the only one with images, testifies to this importance.<sup>443</sup> In this room, along with a handful of people at most, he is surrounded by witnesses plastered on the walls, the Samaritan woman at the well, David

---

<sup>440</sup> Though there is no preserved evidence to define the use of this room, it is reasonable to conclude that it served as a gathering space for the catechumenate who could hear the liturgy through the small window on the southern wall, but could not see. Peppard, *The World's Oldest Church*, 17; Krautheimer, *ECBA*, 26; Tertullian *Paen.*, 7.1–24

<sup>441</sup> Did. 9.5. See Jonathan Schwiebert, *Knowledge and the Coming Kingdom: The Didache's Meal Ritual and its Place in Early Christianity*, JSNTS 373 (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 157–159.

<sup>442</sup> Excavations noted a locking mechanism on this door that could only be accessed from the inside of room 6. See Carl H. Kraeling, *The Christian Building: Dura-Europos* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 23; Peppard, *Oldest Church*, 231 n.7.

<sup>443</sup> White, *Social Origins*, 2:129



and Goliath, and Jesus performing miracles.<sup>444</sup> The largest image that stares at him contains three women, followed by five others around the corner, symbolizing either a visit to the empty tomb at dawn on Easter morning, or the five virgins approaching the bridegroom's tent. In either case, the symbol is that of resurrection and the pending return of Jesus.<sup>445</sup> Entering into the baptismal font recalled the placement of a body into the rectangular tomb in the Roman catacombs.<sup>446</sup> And upon his exit from the water he was born anew.

---

<sup>444</sup> Robin Jensen, *Living Water: Images, Settings, and Symbols of Early Christian Baptism in the West* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 184.

<sup>445</sup> See Clark Hopkins, *The Discovery of Dura-Europos*, ed. Bernard Goldman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 114, who makes a compelling case that the women should be understood as those who, on Easter morning, visited the empty tomb, symbolized by the baptistery which resembles an empty sarcophagus. However, this image is contested, see Jensen, *Living Water*, 184.

<sup>446</sup> Jensen, *Living Water*, 184.

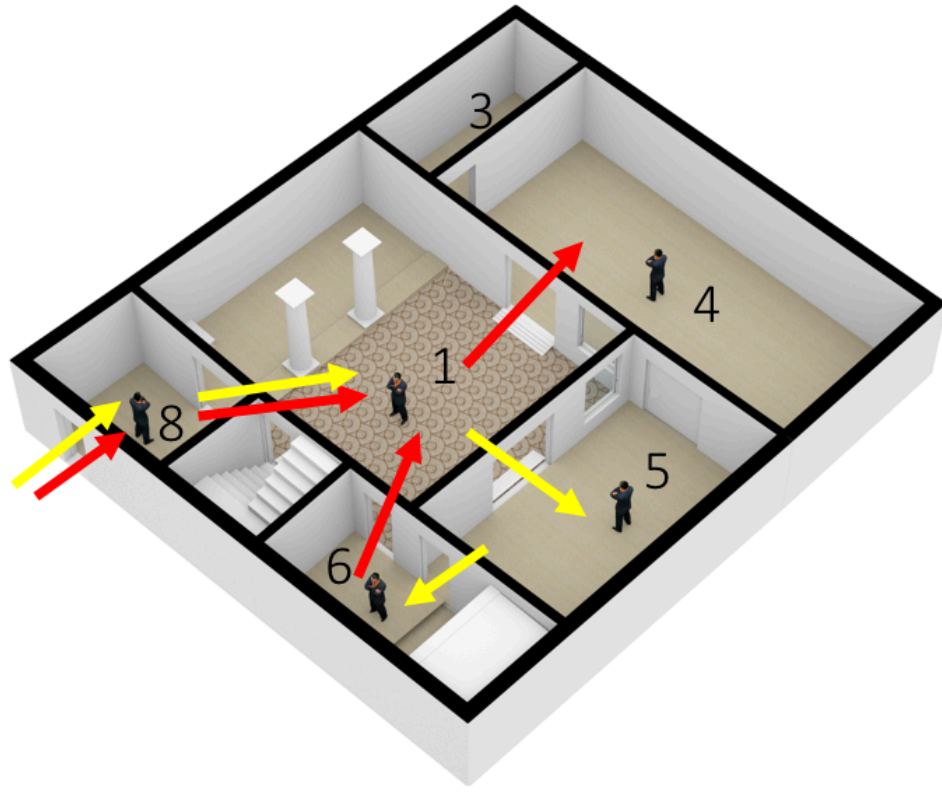


Fig. 4: Christian *domus ecclesia* in Dura-Europos, 3D Scale, by Luke Stefan, 2017. Permissions granted 12/2017. Additions of directional arrows and humans for scale are author's. Yellow arrows represent the path of the catechumenate and red the path of the baptized.

Only after being baptized, or born into the eschatological reality of Jesus,<sup>447</sup> would this Soldier pass through another series of doorways to partake of the spiritual food and drink of the Eucharist, along with promise of eternal life, mediated through the

<sup>447</sup> The baptismal ritual in East Syria evolved through time. Initially the rite was seen as a birth event which focused on the pre-baptismal anointing; it thus associated baptism with Jesus's descent into the Jordan. In the fourth century, as traditions moved up the coast of the Mediterranean, the ritual shifted from a birth event to a death event so that immersion became imitation of the burial and resurrection of Jesus. In the Western Empire, by contrast, the rite appears to have always been associated with death, burial, and resurrection. See Winkler, "The Original Meaning of the Prebaptismal Anointing," 58–81.

resurrected Jesus.<sup>448</sup> Finally, once the liturgical journey is complete, a journey which forced the soldier to oscillate between group cohesion and individual identity, mediated by a series of doorways and small rooms, he would arrive in the space where he would anticipate the return of the Christ.<sup>449</sup> He was now a Christian.

This is, admittedly, a hypothetical reconstruction that is dependent on reading textual history onto material conditions. However, the Christian space at Dura would have, by necessity, required some embodied movement along these lines. At the very least, one was separated from the crowd at entrance into the space, and during baptism into the community. Given the importance of the catechumenate throughout early Christian literature, I also think it is reasonable to conclude with Michael Peppard, Richard Krautheimer, Ramsay MacMullen and others that room 5 was likely used for catechetical instruction, following which time the door into room 6 would be unlocked and the initiates would enter one at a time, given the compact space.<sup>450</sup>

---

<sup>448</sup> This idea is prominent in literature such as Did., 10.3. Though exactly *what* is communicated through the resurrected Jesus is not perfectly clear in 10.3. What is received through Jesus is the πνευματικὴν τροφὴν καὶ ποτὸν καὶ ζωὴν αἰώνιον. Jonathan Scwibert thinks this to be knowledge that comes from reflecting on the teachings of Jesus. However, I do not think this read squares with its literary or historical setting. Since this prayer comes after the community has had their fill (10.1) from a, presumably, large meal which included the cup and bread (9.2–3), the more natural read would suggest that those praying, and thanking God for “spiritual food and drink and life eternal” would think immediately of their stuffed bellies. The prayer directs the congregants to see the resurrected Jesus as the one who communicated this ritual meal to them. Scwibert, *Knowledge*, 160. Cf. Niederwimmer, *The Didache*, 144–145, 157–158.

<sup>449</sup> Did., 10.6

<sup>450</sup> For a literary picture of this process that resembles the one I described above, see Peppard, *World's Oldest Church*, 46–50; Krautheimer, *ECBA*, 26; Ramsay MacMullen, *Second Church: Popular Christianity A.D. 200–400*, WGRWSup 1 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2009), 3–8; cf. Tertullian *Paen.*, 7.1–24. Peppard, *Oldest Church*, 46–47, speculates that the presence of doodling, to include several *abecedaria* (alphabet inscriptions) might be evidence of the preparatory rituals during which candidates were taught the importance of confronting demonic powers with rituals and exorcism.

While it is in vogue to separate the textual history of Christian origins from its material remains for the sake of creating a complex and diverse picture, this separation can sometimes do an injustice to the larger analysis of the formation of the Christian subject. Stated more clearly, older scholars had the tendency to map fourth century homogeneity onto third century space creating the impression of a uniform origin to Christianity. Modern scholars seek to distance the uniformity found in post-Constantinian Christianity from the complex and diverse beginnings of the movement. This corrective is helpful; however, it can take us a bit too far. Early Christian practices were unquestionably diverse; however, the proliferation of texts that both assume certain practices and seek to instruct on those practices implies that there was some level of uniformity amidst the regional diversity. In this, I am referring specifically to the existence of a catechumenate, the separation of that catechumenate from the baptized, and the practice of baptism as the initiation rite that allowed access to the Eucharist. Given the widespread assumption of these practices in the larger textual history of Christianity, it is reasonable to assume that space would have been used to facilitate these practices.

Demarcated space as a facilitator of ritual practices is what I propose we see demonstrated in Dura's Christian meeting site. Its spatial layout facilitated the individual's entrance into and journey through the space in correlation with his journey through the stages of Christian identity. Rooms were thus designed to physically distinguish the catechumens from the faithful, and each had room had its respective purpose and liturgical function which required the ability to "communicate with each other and allow for a smooth sequence of baptism, confirmation, and regular

assembly.”<sup>451</sup> The Christian subject in Dura-Europos would encounter the divine by continuously moving through a series of doorways and rooms, oscillating between individual movement and group cohesion, and this was all based on one’s rank and status within the community. This movement would take the subject first to catechumenate room for training, then into the baptistery to enter the sarcophagus of Christ, and finally into the assembly room to receive the body and blood of Jesus in the Eucharist.

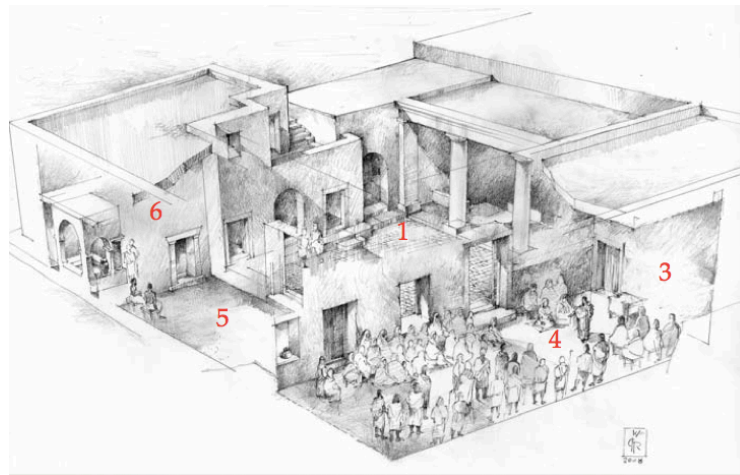


Fig. 5: Hypothetical reconstruction with congregants in the *domus ecclesia* (Wladek Prosol), fig. 1.4 in Ramsay MacMullen, *The Second Church: Popular Christianity A.D. 200–400*. (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 5. Room numbers are my own addition based on the enumeration from the Yale University Art Gallery, seen above.

This architecturally forced movement caused the Christian subject to encounter the divine through a process of embodied self-discovery as he would slowly move from room to room, only when the requisite training and rituals were complete. Each stage was physically marked by the subject passing through a small doorway by himself in a partition to indicate his movement up the ranks. With respect to catechetical instruction and baptismal initiation, Foucault was not ignorant of this important development in the

<sup>451</sup> Krautheimer, *ECBA*, 26.

history of modern subjectivity. In point of fact, he sees baptismal initiation as a movement toward the production of truth and illumination. “We can,” he says “imagine a sort of continuous progression with nothing more dramatic than the ascent towards truth . . . and, consequently, towards illumination—the spatiality, if you like, of baptismal preparation in the second century is evidently an ascending line.”<sup>452</sup> What Foucault does not draw attention to, however, is the role of architectural difference in mediating this ascending line in the third century and beyond, along with the importance of the idea of resurrection in drawing the line.<sup>453</sup>

Power, recall from chapter three, is found within a series of network relations. Discipline distributes bodies throughout this network so that they circulate and are not afforded a fixed position.<sup>454</sup> This circulation is accomplished by means of a system of rank within a given setting and is both reinforced *and* materialized onto the human subject through space commensurate with that rank. The goal for the disciplinary society is the construction of a series of individualizing partitions that provide a space for continual observation, an analytical space, exemplified in the modern prison or hospital.<sup>455</sup> That is, disciplinary space seeks to divide into as many partitions as are

---

<sup>452</sup> Foucault, *Government of the Living*, 125.

<sup>453</sup> Foucault, *Government of the Living*, 127–128, while discussing the fear about what one is, which comes from a life of penance proceeding from baptism and catechetical instruction, says that “this fear, I think, anchored in Christianity from the turn of the second and third century . . . will obviously be of absolutely decisive importance in the whole history of what we may call subjectivity, that is to say the relationship of the self to self, the exercise of self on self, and the truth that the individual may discover deep within himself.” This is the beginning of the construction of the disciplined individual.

<sup>454</sup> Foucault, “Space, Knowledge, and Power” in *Power*, vol 3 of *Essential Works of Foucault 1954–1984*, ed. James D. Faubion (New York: The New Press, 1994), 361–362. See also Foucault, *Society*, 29.

<sup>455</sup> See Foucault, *Discipline*, 143.

bodies for the purpose of observation.<sup>456</sup> However, as Foucault demonstrates through an example of late eighteenth century factories and educational spaces, disciplinary sites do not require individualized partitioning but can instead center and analyze the individual as one subject in a larger crowd of similar rank.<sup>457</sup> Observation in this setting is placed on individual bodies *as they reside within larger units of similar rank*.<sup>458</sup> The individual body is still the primary subject of surveillance and training, though this surveillance now takes place within units, or ranks filled with bodies of similar status and level.

Architecture is, in the words of Foucault, “an element of support to ensure a certain allocation of people in space, a *canalization* of their circulation, as well as the coding of their reciprocal relations.”<sup>459</sup> For Foucault, the individual is created, in part, through the use of space and architectural partitions that differentiate each subject as individual by his or her rank. The subject is placed in a space commensurate with her level and monitored within that group. To be clear, the *result* of this mechanism in a disciplinary society is the goal of production, something not present in early Christian partitioned architecture. However, the mechanism of spatial distribution is not dependent on the presence of production. This is an important nuance Foucault identifies. The mechanism of spatial distribution leads to separation, hierarchization, and surveillance. Following the introduction of this mechanism, “attempts were made to increase their

---

<sup>456</sup> Ibid., 143

<sup>457</sup> Ibid., 140–141.

<sup>458</sup> Ibid., 145, 238.

<sup>459</sup> Foucault, “Space, Knowledge and Power,” 253.

productive force through exercise, drill, and so on.”<sup>460</sup> Foucault uses this distinction when talking about housing in the eighteenth century. The mechanism of spatial distribution began through layout of the town which localized families “(one to a house) and individuals (one to a room)” thus making the individual easier to identify and normalize.<sup>461</sup> The layout, designed for visibility and normalization of behavior, then resulted in another process of regulating productivity, savings, pensions, etc.

My observation about the differences in architectural layout between the Christian site at Dura and the average Roman Temple that situated religious life in the empire demonstrates the introduction of this mechanism, of spatial distribution for the purpose of hierarchical observation, in early Christian architecture. While we cannot say that this design was intentional, we can say that for whatever reasons they left the walls up and used this partitioned space for ritual, they by consequence introduced these disciplinary mechanisms and ritually infused them with the theology of the resurrection.

The question that remains to be answered, though, is whether the building in Dura was a lone example of partitioned space, or a pattern that continued to develop throughout other early Christian sites. The answer to this question is admittedly challenging as the data is significantly limited. However, there are two reasons why I do not think it is unreasonable to surmise that other cities throughout the empire had arrangements similar to this. First, resources in the early Christian communities were significantly limited, a fact that caused the early movement to meet in a plethora of

---

<sup>460</sup> Foucault, *Society*, 242.

<sup>461</sup> *Ibid.*, 251.



locations such as shops, workshops, barns, warehouses, and others.<sup>462</sup> In other words, Christians had to use what they could get their hands on prior to Constantinian control. Thus, when a site came into the control of the movement it generally had, by virtue of its previous life, a layout filled with rooms, walls, and doors like the Dura site. And second, when we look at the progressive development of Christian architecture from the extant archaeological evidence, partitions for the purpose of demarcating rank remain, and, in some cases, are artificially constructed. This can be seen most clearly in two other early meeting sites.

#### *Partitions and Boundaries beyond Dura-Europos*

Another important *ante pacem* example of early Christian architecture is found under the cathedral of Aquileia and dates to the early-fourth century (see fig. 6 below). This church offers an example of an early stage in Christian architecture, the *aula ecclesiae*, where the focus would be placed on large rectilinear hall for gathering. Named after the bishop Theodore, a signatory at the council of Arles (314), the church was in use sometime between 314–325.<sup>463</sup> The church contains two main halls, or assembly rooms, the north hall (Room A) (L.37.4 m/122.7 f; W.ca.17.14 m/56.23 f) and the south hall (Room G) (L.ca. 37.10 m/121.72; W.ca. 20.10 m/65.95 f), both of which could easily

---

<sup>462</sup> Edward Adams, *Earliest Christian Meeting Places*, has persuasively shown that while the *domus* was a primary site of meeting, it was by no means the only type. That is, Adams work debunks the notion that early Christian communities met almost exclusively in houses. This diversity speaks to the limited resources available.

<sup>463</sup> Heinz Kähler, *Die Stiftermosaiken in der Konstantinischen Siedkirche von Aquileia*, MAR 4 (Köln: M. Dumont Schauberg Verlag, 1962) suggests a date closer to 325, and Krautheimer, *ECBA*, 43, suggests an early date of 314–319.

hold 500 individuals, and were connected by a long, wide hallway (Hallway D).<sup>464</sup> One would enter the church through a thin hallway (Hallway C) and go to the appropriate room. While there is no way to definitively determine the liturgical function of these two halls, many scholars, working from the assumption of an operative catechumenate from literary sources, see one for catechetical instruction and the other for the Eucharistic ceremony.<sup>465</sup> Generally, the south hall is seen as the place for catechetical instruction because of the presence of Jonah and Good Shepherd imagery.<sup>466</sup> Presumably, then, after entering the building through a thin hallway, the participant would attend the appropriate service for catechumenate instruction (G) or Christian assembly (A) after passing through an entry chamber (B or H). The eastern section of the main hall (A) was set aside for a heightened sense of importance by its mosaic floor.<sup>467</sup> There are four rooms between the main halls, the purpose of which is not clear because of their poor preservation. White posits them to be part of the episcopal residence, though baptismal activities were initially held in room J, accessible only from the south hall. Baptism was later moved to room F, in the large hallway connecting the rooms.<sup>468</sup>

---

<sup>464</sup> Estimates made using basic calculations based on square footage and modern meeting space capabilities. As we cannot be certain how tight early Christians would have packed their space, all estimates are rounded down and are rough at best.

<sup>465</sup> See Allen Doig, *Liturgy and Architecture* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 46; Krautheimer, *ECBA*, 43–45; Graydon F. Snyder, *Ante Pacem: Archaeological Evidence of Church Life before Constantine* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2003), 139–140; White, *Social Origins*, 2:201–203.

<sup>466</sup> Margo Strousma Uzan, “Jonas of Aquileia: A Gesture to Constantine the Great,” in *Between Judaism and Christianity: Art Historical Essays in Honor of Elsheva (Elisabeth) Revel-Neher*, eds. Katrin Kogman-Appel and Mati Meyer (Boston: Brill, 2009), 57, identifies the possible meaning behind the imagery in room (G) as representative of both the afterlife and the sacrament of baptism.

<sup>467</sup> Inge Nielsen, *Housing the Chosen: The Architectural Context of Mystery Groups and Religious Associations in the Ancient World*, CS 2 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepolis, 2014), 193.

<sup>468</sup> White, *Social Origins*, 2:202–203

I draw attention to this site for its importance in the evolution of partitioned space within the growing need for larger rooms.<sup>469</sup> Though the rooms of assembly grew exponentially in size due to expanding numbers in the Christian movement, the flow of the church at Aquileia remains similar to that of Dura. A thin entrance (C) in which only two people could comfortably walk side-by-side serves as a funnel for the individual to be separated from the crowd upon entering the space. Then, moving through a series of partitioned spaces and doorways she would enter the hall commensurate with her level of training (A or G) after passing through an entry chamber (B or H) to be trained as a catechumen (G) or watched by the bishop giving the Eucharist (A). When the catechumen had passed the requisite period of training, she would undergo the initiatory rite of baptism (F) on her journey to the hall of Christian assembly (A).

---

<sup>469</sup> L. Michael White identifies this church as one example of the *aula ecclesiae* phase of church architecture in which the primary structure is a long rectilinear hall. It demonstrates that the Christian community had taken “a notable step in the fortunes and public presence . . . within the local culture of Aquileia.” White, *Social Origins*, 2:207.

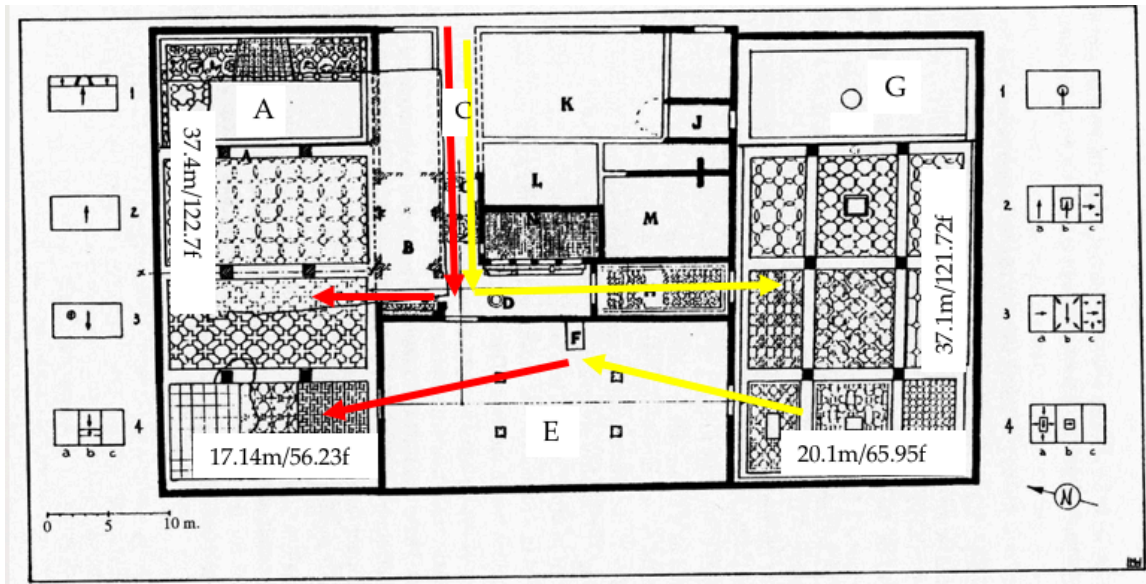


Fig. 6: Floor plan of Istria, Aquileia, Church of Bishop Theodore (early fourth c.). Plan and measurements from L. Michael White, *The Social Origins of Christian Architecture*, vol. II. (Valley Forge, Penn.: Trinity Press Intl., 1997), pgs. 200–203, fig. 13. Directional arrows my own. Yellow represents the path of the catechumenate and red the path of the baptized

Perhaps the layout of the church at Dura was simply a pragmatic result of the type of building available to the earliest Christians and the desire to use all of the available space, we cannot tell for certain. Nonetheless, Aquileia shows that an architectural design that emphasizes the journey of the individual through various ranks, demarcated by partitioned rooms, carries through to the *aula ecclesiae* period. The space is larger and the individual sits with larger crowds for observation and training, but the journey from catechumenate, through baptism, to Eucharist while oscillating between individual and group identity remains.

This adaptation of partitioned space is seen also in a series of buildings (*tituli*) likely used by Christians that reside beneath post-Constantinian basilicas in Rome. One of the more important of these for our purposes is *Titulus Chrysogoni* (S. Chrisogono). This church consists of a hall built directly beside a small, second century, Roman house.

It offers, according to many, the only evidence of a church hall constructed *de novo* prior to Constantine, or right on the cusp of Constantinian rule.<sup>470</sup> What is important is that it is the earliest extant site that was neither built over an existing structure nor adapted from a pre-existing home; it was new construction. As a pre-Constantinian hall without the restrictions of previous walls and corridors, *titulus Chrysogoni* will help us determine the extent to which the individualized and hierarchized focus of previous buildings was emphasized in later spatial arrangement that was not dependent on a building with a prior life.

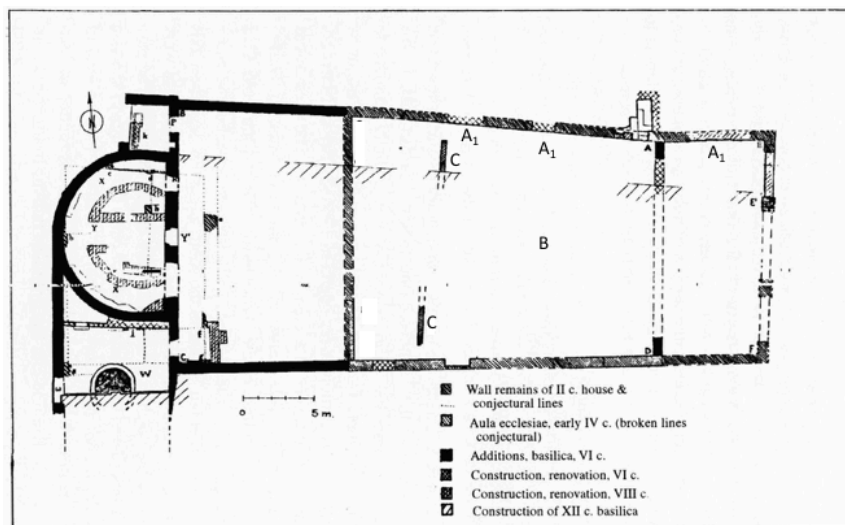


Fig. 7: Floor plan of Italia, Rome. S. Crisogono and *aula ecclesiae*, fourth–sixth centuries. Plan restoration, composite with stages of construction. Drawing from L. Michael White, *The Social Origins of Christian Architecture*, vol. II. (Valley Forge, Penn.: Trinity Press Intl., 1997), pgs. 234, fig. 19. Based on field plan of W. Frankl in *CBCR* 1. Some designating letters removed, and letters A<sub>1</sub>, B, and C added.

<sup>470</sup> Snyder, *Ante Pacem*, 151–152; Doig, *Liturgy and Architecture*, 10 date the building to c. 310. Though some doubt that this church predates Constantine, see Siri Sande, “Huskirker og tituluskirker—salmer i heimen eller i badet?,” *Kirke og Kultur* 104:7–18, cited in Adams, *Earliest Christian Meeting Places*, 4.

The size of the hall (L 29.50m/96.78ft.; W 17.25m/56.59ft) could hold roughly 475 people. But in contrast to the preceding *domus ecclesia* and *aula ecclesia*, this hall had no partitioned boundaries separating rooms within the space. Entrance would begin on the eastern side of the hall into the large meeting space (B).<sup>471</sup> Once inside, the meeting space was further divided by a choir screen that distinguished the clergy from the faithful baptized who would participate in the entire service (C). Reasoning from the large openings in the side walls (A<sub>1</sub>) and the textual evidence from Eusebius's basilica description, Krautheimer posits that, once in the large hall, the openings on the northern wall led to open porticoes, or side rooms, within which the catechumens could attend part of the service outside the church.<sup>472</sup>

*Titulus Chrysogoni* is the earliest evidence of new construction for Christian communal use. As such, it does not contain a maze of rooms that would necessarily be present in the adaptation of a house or other building. However, the contrasts between

---

<sup>471</sup> Krautheimer argues that entrance was made through one of three arches, though this has now been largely abandoned and the means of entrance is unknown. See Richard Krautheimer, *Corpus Basilicarum Christianarum Romae*, 5 vols. (Vatican: Pontifical Gregorian Institute, 1937–1977), 1:153; cf. Beat Brenk, *Die Christianisierung der spätrömischen Welt: Stadt, Land, Haus, Kirche und Kloster in frühchristlicher Zeit* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2003), 82–120; Nielsen, *Housing the Chosen*, 192.

<sup>472</sup> Krautheimer, *CBCR*, 1:162. Consider Eusebius' description of the basilica at Tyre: “. . . Not even the floor was overlooked by him. This he made bright with marble laid in wonderful patterns, going on next to the outside of the building, where he constructed halls and chambers along both sides on a great scale, skillfully uniting them with the fabric of the basilica so that they share the openings that let light into the central building. These, too, were provided for those still in need of cleansing and sprinkling with water and the Holy Ghost . . . he equitably divided the whole people in accordance with their powers. With some, he walled round the outer enclosure—that was enough for them—making unwavering faith the protective barrier . . . to some he entrusted the entrances to the church proper . . . others he made under-props to the first outer pillars that form a quadrangle round the court, bringing them for the first time into touch with the letter of the four gospels. Others he joined to the basilica along both sides, still under instruction and in process of advancing.” Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 10.4.45, 67ff. [Williamson]. While Eusebius' comment is well beyond our time of study, it nevertheless demonstrates that the use of architecture to distinguish ranks was firmly etched in the collective Christian mind by this point. Further, it demonstrates a later attempt to maintain these distinctions given the ever-increasing need for larger buildings. This attempt, posits Krautheimer, is also at work in the side doors (A<sub>1</sub>) in *Chrysogoni*.

*Chrysogoni* and previous Christian structures are important as they demonstrate that demarcated space by hierarchy based on the liturgy of the resurrection, when not forced due to existing architecture, is nonetheless built into the new structure. It must be noted that while the means of entrance into the main meeting area is unknown, it appears that access was not made through a small hallway or vestibule. There is a move away from the disciplinary mechanism of spatial distribution taking place, as the process of funneling the individual is done at a far lesser degree than any of the previous examples. Further, there are no longer hallways or small corridors that emphasize the individual apart from the crowd, a layout that becomes normalized in later basilicas. However, once the individual is present in the space, the boundaries which were previously adapted from existing walls and rooms are constructed in the form of a fence, a wall, or an opening within a wall and used to distinguish between ranks among the crowd.

The differences and similarities between *Chrysogoni* and earlier meeting spaces leads to an important question. Was the Christian emphasis of partitions for the demarcation of ranks merely a result of earlier spatial arrangement which was adopted by necessity (see Dura and *Aquileia*)? Or was it a result of direct theological reflection? In other words, did Christians adapt to the space they inherited and thereby “create” ranks and groups, or did they reflect on the theology of the resurrection and thereby use different rooms as a means of materially interpreting that theology? Likely both.

It is reasonable to surmise that the earliest churches lacked the resources for building construction and therefore met in a converted house as a matter of necessity. The various rooms in the re-fashioned building were used to differentiate between the various ranks, each reflective of proximity to the resurrection. In this way, theology of the

resurrection was materially interpreted through the spatial arrangement of a house with multiple rooms. In other words, each stage of progression brought the subject closer to the resurrected Christ in the Eucharist. The catechumenate was trained in one room, then baptized into the death and resurrection of Jesus in another. Once in the primary meeting room, he was provided access to the space of the baptized wherein he could anticipate the return of Christ by partaking of the Eucharist which was communicated through the resurrected Jesus.<sup>473</sup> The final area was for the one administering the Eucharist from the altar. These various ranks were easily situated in a building with multiple rooms and allowed the movement to utilize all the acquired space (i.e. necessity). However, as the movement grew and required a larger space, independent buildings such as *titulus Chrysogoni* were constructed. No longer needing to situate theology *around* existing spatial arrangement, the church could create its own material conditions. *Chrysogoni* does not contain spatial distribution at anywhere near the level found in earlier buildings, a change undoubtedly forced by rapidly expanding numbers. However, use of artificial boundaries demonstrates the lingering importance of rank designation in the formation of the Christian subject through her encounter with the divine. Though the individual's journey through a series of hallways and enclosed space disappears at this stage, the individualizing effect remained as the subject identifies based on her connection with a distinct group, which was separated by the level of training and the commensurate physical boundaries.

---

<sup>473</sup> Did., 9.2, 10.3.



Disciplinary power requires space within which the individual can be created. Within this space, enclosure is generally needed so as to confine individuals either separately, or within ranks of commensurate training.<sup>474</sup> For Foucault, this begins in the monastic orders where space first becomes cellular thus creating a sense of solitude necessary to discipline the soul.<sup>475</sup> It was later, when this cellular space was mapped onto the model of the school or military, that it became a place, not merely for renunciation, but for productivity.<sup>476</sup> Observation enters the picture through the creation of ranks for the purpose of increasing utility. That is, bodies are individualized, distributed according to rank, and monitored on a regular basis for the purpose of climbing the hierarchy, all of which is mediated by space.<sup>477</sup> This is why spatial distribution and hierarchical observation are “inextricably bound up.”<sup>478</sup>

What I have attempted to outline thus far is the introduction of these disciplinary mechanisms of power in early Christian space, and the distinction between early Christian space and the common Roman Temple as a result of this introduction. I am not proposing that the mechanism of power had been fully formed at this period of time, as there is not the introduction of productivity yet. However, elements basic to the mechanism are at play and begin the process of forming the Christian subject and creating the disciplined individual.

---

<sup>474</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 143.

<sup>475</sup> Ibid.

<sup>476</sup> Ibid., 137, 144.

<sup>477</sup> Ibid., 146–148.

<sup>478</sup> Ibid., 148.

## Partitioned Space Elsewhere in the Empire

Up to this point, I have drawn attention to a relatively simple observation: Christian meeting sites were partitioned in a way that the general Roman Temple was not. This partitioning of space was then infused with hierarchical meaning based on the subject's proximity to the Eucharist. And movement through the ranks was the result of training and an embodied, individual journey into the death and resurrection of Jesus in baptism and eventual inclusion in the community to receive the body and blood of Jesus and await his return. While granting the fact that diversity was unquestionably present throughout the empire, the examples of Dura-Europos, Aquileia, and *Titulus Chrysogoni* demonstrate a continuous use of boundaries to facilitate the journey even when numbers and resources begin to expand.

However, an objection could be raised at this point that Christian structures with partitioned space was not a unique phenomenon. Many architectural examples from Mystery Cults and religious associations also demonstrate demarcated space, and some of this was also used to facilitate hierarchical movement.<sup>479</sup> This objection helps to clarify what I am and am not trying to say. My analysis is neither an attempt to demonstrate absolute novelty in early Christian architecture, nor is it an attempt to draw comparisons for the sake of explaining genetic relationship or adaptation. It goes without saying that early Christian architecture was not formed in a vacuum, and that, because of its social

---

<sup>479</sup> Two clear examples of this are found in the sanctuary of Sarapeion in Alexandria and the sanctuary of Isis in Pompeii. See Nielsen, *Housing the Chosen*, 58–59, 68–70 for a description of the use of space in initiatory rites. For a discussion on limiting participants in certain banquet spaces in Roman Religion by status see Rubina Raja, “Staging ‘Private’ religion in Roman ‘Public’ Palmyra: The Role of the Religious Dining Tickets (Banqueting *tesserae*),” in *Public and Private in Ancient Mediterranean Law and Religion*, eds. Clifford Ando and Jörg Rüpke, RGV 65 (Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 165–186.

and religious environment, there will be points of similarity in surrounding religious groups. Two points on the question of architectural relation to other groups should be made.

First, the importance that I place on early Christian architectural forms contra the general structure of the Roman Temple is intended to demonstrate merely one mechanism among several that contribute to the formation of the disciplined individual. If this were the only mechanism of disciplinary power employed by the early Christian movement it would not serve to prove my larger thesis, that the theology of resurrection was subversive because it activated disciplinary mechanisms of power, thereby creating a space inhabited by individuals who did not fear the sovereign power of Caesar. This chapter alone would prove insufficient because resistance to a larger power apparatus occurs through multiple points of resistance, which already exist in varying densities as “mobile and transitory.”<sup>480</sup> My larger argument is based on Foucault’s observation that a revolution, or transformation becomes possible only when there is a “strategic codification of these points of resistance . . . somewhat similar to the way in which the state relies on the institutional integration of power relationships.”<sup>481</sup>

My re-interpretation of the data of early Christian existence seeks not to demonstrate absolute novelty in the ways by which Christians organized themselves. Rather, by this Foucauldian read we would *expect* to see similar mechanisms in surrounding religious expressions as the dominant form of power is always in a push-pull

---

<sup>480</sup> *History of Sexuality*, 96.

<sup>481</sup> *Ibid.*

relationship with forms of resistance. Rather (and this is why each individual chapter of this dissertation cannot stand alone), I am proposing that when we look at the larger picture of Christian organization we will find precisely this coalescence of disciplinary mechanisms.

Second, and closely related to my first point, it would follow then that disciplined space arranged with partitions and doorways for the facilitation of hierarchical observation would be found primarily among the surrounding minority groups. And this is largely what we find, with both minor and major differences between them. This project cannot devote substantive space to the comparison of minority religious groups and Christianity, many works have pursued this task and can provide those details.<sup>482</sup> However, a brief analysis will demonstrate this point and both nuance my claims for early Christian architecture, and contribute to my larger thesis that disciplinary resistance is found at the margins.

Early Christian architectural forms unsurprisingly look similar to forms of architecture in diaspora Judaism. Synagogue structure and architecture was formed alongside early Christian meeting spaces. There is now a large consensus that definitive synagogue structures were not prevalent before the first century, CE<sup>483</sup> This means that it

---

<sup>482</sup> See esp. White, *Social Origins*, vols. 1 and 2; Nielsen, *Housing the Chosen*.

<sup>483</sup> See Howard Clark Kee, "Defining the First-Century CE Synagogue: Problems and Progress," in *Evolution of the Synagogue: Problems and Progress*, eds. Howard Clark Kee and Lynn H. Cohick (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press Intl., 1999), 20–26; for a more nuanced approach to this question see Lee Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); and for an overview of this debated topic see Birger Olsson, "The Origins of the Synagogue: An Introduction," in *The Ancient Synagogue: From its Origins until 200 CE* ed. Birger Olsson and Magnus Zetterholm, CONBnt 39 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell Intl., 2003), 27–36.

is difficult, or perhaps impossible to determine whether architectural forms of the diaspora synagogue were patterned off the early Christian communities, or vice-versa.

Synagogues in the Diaspora did not have a strict architectural uniformity. Rather, they were determined largely by local custom and influence.<sup>484</sup> In the five synagogues researched by White which were adaptations of private buildings—Delos, Priene, Ostia, Stobi, and Dura—architectural renovation was more significant than the Christian buildings we examined above. Though some rooms remain, walls are razed at a higher percentage to create a larger communal meeting space. Further, the entrances were expanded to allow for the flow of large quantities of people. Generally, when there are remaining rooms they serve as living quarters for the Synagogue caretaker. Though diaspora synagogues were also adaptations of private structures, they did not take on the same individualizing effect as early Christian buildings.

The Mithras cult provides one of the closest comparative groups to the early Christian movement. Though it was introduced to the empire several years before the early Christian movement, it gained prominence and began to spread in the second century CE, commensurate with Christian spread.<sup>485</sup> Mithraism has many similarities to early Christianity such as a hierarchical structure of rank (seven grades of initiation), and

---

<sup>484</sup> White, *Social Origins*, 1:64; cf. A. Thomas Kraabel, “The Social Systems of Six Diaspora Synagogues,” in *Ancient Synagogues: The State of Research*, ed. Joseph Gutmann, BJS 22 (Ann Arbor, MI: Scholars Press, 1981), 89.

<sup>485</sup> The earliest estimated date of Mithraism’s presence in the empire is in Plutarch where pirates from Asia Minor who lost in battle to Pompey offer sacrifices to Mithras (Plutarch, *Pomp.*, 24.5), though, as Hans-Josef Klauck rightly notes, this could be a case of Plutarch projecting present conditions onto the past. The first inscription from Rome dates to 102 CE and the wave of inscriptions is found at its height in 140 CE Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity*. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 141.

initiation rites that distinguish these grades.<sup>486</sup> These seven grades appear to have been determined largely by social class and gave favor to the local patrons of the cult. In many cells around the empire, the organization reflected the military structure.<sup>487</sup>

It is unsurprising, then, that we find similarities in architectural form as well. White describes a typical layout for a Romanized mithraeum, or sanctuary for the cult of Mithras.<sup>488</sup> Mithras, according to legend, lived in a cave. As such, the mithraeum's dominant imagery was that of a cave with astrological images painted on the ceiling, evoking ideas of the underworld.<sup>489</sup> Like early Christian structures, mithraea were frequently established by transforming preexistent structures with numerous rooms such as houses, warehouses, and baths. Though mithraeums had many rooms, the primary hall was a long and narrow sanctuary consisting of a central aisle, flanked by raised benches.<sup>490</sup> At the end of the aisle was a shrine to Mithras, or an altar. Like the *domus ecclesiae* and the *aula ecclesiae*, access to the main assembly hall was gained after traveling through a vestibule and sometimes a series of rooms as well. The main sanctuary imitated the Roman Temple's *naos* but was placed within the assembly hall which served as the location for shared meals, initiation, and social gatherings; the sanctuary was located within the hall.<sup>491</sup>

---

<sup>486</sup> Klauck, *Religious Context*, 143–144.

<sup>487</sup> White, *Social Origins*, 1:58–59.

<sup>488</sup> White, *Social Origins*, 1:47–59.

<sup>489</sup> Klauck, *Religious Context*, 146–147; White, *Social Origins*, 1:47.

<sup>490</sup> See Nielsen, *Housing the Chosen*, 152–169.

<sup>491</sup> White, *Social Origins*, 1:47–48.

All of this, says White, reflects the tendency on the imperial margins toward “*privatization* in social and religious activities.”<sup>492</sup> There is a recognizable propensity for sub-groups throughout the empire to flourish through small communities dependent on intimacy and cultic identity. White attributes this general tendency to a social need for people to bond together with others who have similarities. Guy Strousma also draws attention to this move toward privatization in non-civic religions by pointing to the emphasis on interiorization through the move of worship from outside settings to interior and private sites.<sup>493</sup>

Both of these are undoubtedly a component of the rise of privatization through these small movements. But, this Foucauldian analysis can add another layer of meaning by drawing a connection between the development of privatization in certain religious groups who employed similar architectural forms and the propensity of these groups to be sometimes denounced and restricted by the imperial government, unless they outwardly supported Caesar. The various religious associations, for example, which also developed through privatization reflected in its architectural forms, were viewed with suspicion by imperial officials for their potential to become political and thereby stir unrest in the regions.<sup>494</sup>

There is a correlation between privatization in religious sub-groups, often expressed through architectural form and hierarchy, rapid spread of the movement, and imperial suspicion of its ability to produce political unrest. This correlation, I propose,

---

<sup>492</sup> White, *Social Origins*, 1:59.

<sup>493</sup> Guy Strousma, *The End of Sacrifice: Religious Transformations in Late Antiquity*, trans. Susan Emanuel (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 62–63.

<sup>494</sup> Robert L. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (New Haven: Yale, 1984), 34.

was due to the ever-present resistance of power in any given society. In the way that we saw disruptive and subversive calendars on the margins of the empire, we also see architecture that reflects spatial control and hierarchical observation. My research limitations restrict me from pursuing the degree to which these mechanisms were present in other religious sub-groups; however, the density of these religious sub-groups, all of which are dependent on privatization, may suggest that the use of disciplinary mechanisms in the Christian challenge of Roman sovereignty was not unique to the early Christian movement, but was something that was in the air.

### **Architecture and the Movement of Christian Bodies**

Architecture is not neutral, people are shaped by the way they encounter the world. Early Christian meeting space introduced (or adapted) several architectural elements in the subject's encounter both with the world and the divine that were distinct from the common Roman Temple that proliferated throughout the empire. I have drawn attention to two elements in particular that distinguish early Christian meeting sites from the Roman Temple: an emphasis on the individual apart from the crowd, and the use of architecture to enforce boundaries within the community based on rank. The introduction of these elements could have been the result of several reasons, such as limited resources, imitation of religious associations, or simple ritual distinction, but for our purposes, their genesis is unimportant. What is important is their existence and their role in shaping the Christian subject.

Very often, when we think about architectural change or advancement, such as that seen in the difference between early Christian meeting spaces and the Roman Temple, we think through the lens of adaptation or functionality. While these elements



are undeniably present in architectural change (to include our present study), any change in architecture is also a demonstration of how the material world shapes the very people who constructed that world.<sup>495</sup> A Roman inhabitant, upon entering a *domus ecclesia* or *aula ecclesia*, would have entered a religious space distinctly different from the temple down the street. This architectural environment shaped the material world within which Christian identity in the ante-Nicene period was formed.<sup>496</sup> That is, the movement of the Christian body, shaped by the individual's proximity to the resurrection based on rank and training, formed a subject that was both individualized and hierarchized.

Baptism was the requisite ritual prior to the individual's encounter with the divine through Lord's Supper, and training was required before a catechumenate could undergo that ritual. These practices all required space, and Christian space differentiated these ranks with walls and partitions. The space itself was employed to reflect and materialize the path on which the catechumenate must walk before participating in the Lord's Supper. This architectural move communicated the primacy of the resurrection in worship by creating a movement of the body that progressed up the ranks by virtue of the individual's relation to the resurrection. The catechumenate was spatially separate from the eucharist so that he could be trained and examined for a period of time when he

---

<sup>495</sup> Daniel Miller, *Stuff* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2010), 49–53. See also Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 102, 110–117. This is stated succinctly by Jonathan Z. Smith when summarizing the important implications of the classical theory of geography: “place is not the creation of personality; it is what forms or imprints personality.” Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 31.

<sup>496</sup> A helpful analogy is found in the change in Iceland home architecture after the conversion to Christianity around 1000 CE. House architecture was changed to reflect the church's law on monogamy as proper companionship. That is, the *idea* of monogamy created tension and resistance resulting in a new architectural space, and the new *material* environment constructed the Christian identity in Iceland. See Steinunn Kristjánsdóttir, “Becoming Christian: A Matter of Everyday Resistance and Negotiation.” *Norwegian Archaeological Review* 48 (2015): 27–45.

would pass, individually, through the baptismal font. Once baptized into the death and resurrection of Jesus, he could move into the space designated for the baptized, where the risen Lord was present in the Eucharist, a ritual that required repentance, confession, and expectation of Jesus's return, as seen in the previous chapter. In later architectural forms, such as *Chrysogoni*, the highest in rank, the clergy, administered the eucharist, separated from the others by a choir screen.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter I have attempted to demonstrate two ways by which early Christian architecture differed from architecture of the Roman temple. Namely, the space was divided by partitions and those partitions were used to distribute individuals hierarchically. It was a partitioned and hierarchized space in contrast to a crowd-based experience. My goal in demonstrating this difference was to argue that this partitioned space introduced the beginnings of two disciplinary mechanisms of power: spatial distribution and hierarchical observation. That is, individuals were created by virtue of their entrance into the space, and they were observed and trained according to their hierarchical rank which was imprinted on the body through movement in space. Neither one of these mechanisms are fully formed, but by their introduction they have begun the process of constructing the Christian subject as individual who exists within a system of hierarchy and ranks which is navigated through training and observation.

Building upon the previous chapter, I have attempted to show that two elements of early Christian existence, calendar and liturgical formation along with architecture and space, were both infused with the idea resurrection and began to introduce the disciplinary mechanisms of activity control, genetic organization, spatial distribution, and

hierarchical observation. These mechanisms are by no means fully formed, but through early Christian identity development, they started to rise to the surface, all in connection with the subversive idea of the resurrection. In the chapters that follow, I will continue to demonstrate the beginnings of disciplinary mechanisms of power in the spread of Christianity, first through the theological imagination, then through care for the corpse.

## **Chapter Six: The Body and the Theological Imagination**

### **Introduction**

Deby Stamm-Loya had a difficult life.<sup>497</sup> Raised by a physically and mentally abusive father and a Mormon mother, she grew up in a home dominated by anger and depression. By the age of thirteen she was a thief and runaway, and by fifteen she led a girl's gang in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Drugs came with the package, primarily LSD, until one day when she stole a book on religion from the public library. She soon began reading the Bible, and subsequently became a Christian.

In 1972, she moved to Tuscon, Arizona to live with her parents in the aftermath of her failed marriage. While lying in bed one night, thinking about her desire to know God better, she opened her eyes and saw a man standing at the end of her bed whom she immediately identified as Jesus. His arms were stretched out as if he were inviting her in, but suddenly his normal, masculine appearance began to change forms. As a bright, pure, radiant light enveloped and transformed him, she was brought into an unconscious connection with the immense universe. Only aware of his voice, she was told that he had power over everything, including her life. He told her to keep her attention fixed on him as he had many things to teach her. Suddenly, she regained consciousness and found herself lying in her bed as the sun was rising.

---

<sup>497</sup> This story is found in Phillip H. Wiebe, *Visions and Appearances of Jesus* (Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 2014), 57–58.

Deby was adamant, when questioned, that this was not a dream and that it differed from any experiences with LSD she had in the past. She knew it was real, moreover, because the man looked like traditional renditions of Jesus, and his shape transformed while in conversation. As outrageous as this sounds to many, this story is not unique. People across the world recount similar experiences, and many more than those live everyday with the expectation, hope, or fear of having such an experience.<sup>498</sup>

The reality of Deby's experience is not my concern, though. Rather, I want to explore the ways by which the constant expectation of a Jesus encounter shaped Christian subjectivity. More specifically, I will attempt to demonstrate how the theological imagination of the first three centuries and the idea of resurrection created a Christian subject who had the necessary elements for hierarchical observation, and who lived with the anxious expectation of a watching Jesus who could appear at any moment. To put the matter more plainly, this chapter is interested in the question of why Christians expected a Jesus encounter, given his bodily ascent into the heavens in Acts 1.9–10, and how that

---

<sup>498</sup> Philip Wiebe has done extensive research exploring the subject of Jesus appearances in the modern age and compared them with those in antiquity. Phillip H. Wiebe, *Visions and Appearances of Jesus*; Wiebe, *Visions of Jesus: Direct Encounters from the New Testament to Today* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997). The fear of a Jesus encounter is not relegated to the hyper-religious either, it is firmly entrenched in our culture and shows up periodically in pop-culture. I am reminded of the comedy movie, *Joe Dirt* wherein Joe Dirt, a Janitor played by David Spade, has a conversation with Zander Kelley, an LA radio jockey played by Dennis Miller. During the conversation Kelley asks a series of questions answered by Joe Dirt:

Kelly: You been on your own since eight years old?

Dirt: Pretty much. It's a long story, actually.

Kelly: Listen to you. What's the story here? "I'm a white-trash idiot." The end.

Dirt: Is this where you want to be when Jesus comes back, making fun of Joe Dirt?

Kelly: Probably, because I'm sure Yahweh would be chiming in too.

Dirt: Funny, because my mom used to say that if she caught me doing stuff. Like one time, I was jerking my gherkin . . . Can I say that? She goes, "Is this where you want to be when Jesus comes back?"

Kelly: A real winner. It's amazing to me you turned out like you did . . . with that sort of mentoring. *Joe Dirt*, directed by Dennie Gordon (Los Angeles: Columbia Pictures, 2001), DVD.

expectation had the power to shape the subject. This chapter will explore that question by examining the use of the theological imagination throughout the second and third centuries and its articulation of both the expectations for the believer's future resurrection, and encounters with the resurrected Jesus.

### **Creating and Watching the Soul**

If there is one thing Foucault is well known for, it is the development of the idea of panopticism from Bentham's Panopticon: the penultimate architectural example of hierarchical observation. It is a device designed to make every subject of the prison act as if he were being watched at every moment. He should, in principle, not be watched at every-time but think that he *might* be the object of observation so that the subjects bear the weight of the operation of power upon themselves.<sup>499</sup> But there is more to the story than simply making a collective think they may be always watched, and this is an important point to Foucault's thought that is often missed. For discipline to take root, a soul must first be born, upon which the instrument of observation can operate. Two things, then, are important in the dispersion of disciplinary power: the creation of a soul that the subject can discipline and the creation of a mechanism that infiltrates the subject with the expectation of observation (e.g. the Panopticon) so that the soul is disciplined.

For Foucault, the modern soul is neither an illusion, nor an effect of ideology, but "born out of methods of punishment, supervisions, and constraint."<sup>500</sup> Though he does not imply a metaphysical soul in the common religious sense, the soul is nonetheless real.

---

<sup>499</sup> *Discipline*, 201.

<sup>500</sup> *Discipline*, 29.

The soul is the place where disciplinary power can intervene “before the actual manifestation of the behavior, before the body, the action, or the discourse, at the level of what is potential.”<sup>501</sup> The soul in this understanding, then, is not the metaphysical part of the self that remains alive post-mortem; rather, it is that part of the self that is disciplined by the movements of the body, and the techniques of observation.

Both disciplinary power and sovereign power (indeed all power) is applied to and works on the body.<sup>502</sup> The difference between the way these two apparatuses of power function on the body, however, is important. Whereas sovereign power is applied to the body as an object of violence, disciplinary power is applied to the body as an object of care.<sup>503</sup> It is this goal of correction and reclamation that requires the soul, or psyche, for the operation of disciplinary power. In this way, and because of this comingling of body and soul in the construction of the subject’s identity, Foucault can say that the soul is the “prison of the body.”<sup>504</sup> With this, Foucault is not merely inverting Platonism nor is he imagining the soul as an ideological effect, rather, he is locating the soul as the place on which the panoptic gaze works.<sup>505</sup>

---

<sup>501</sup> Foucault, *Psychiatric Power*, 52. It should be noted that Foucault here distances his concept of “soul” from that of Christian theory or practice. To a certain extent, he is correct, insofar as the soul for Foucault is not metaphysical but is connected to the concept of psyche or personality, see Davidson, “Introduction,” xix. However, what the early Christian discourse on resurrection, the soul, and the flesh demonstrate—as I will show in the remaining pages of this chapter—is that the ideological production of the soul creates subject as one with an inner personality on which the examination can begin to take root.

<sup>502</sup> Foucault, *Psychiatric Power*, 14.

<sup>503</sup> Ibid., 44; *Discipline*, 10.

<sup>504</sup> *Discipline*, 30.

<sup>505</sup> Arnold I. Davidson, introduction to *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1974–1975*, by Michel Foucault, ed. Arnold I. Davidson, trans. Graham Burchell (New York : Picador, 2003), xix.

However, even if we remove the religious and philosophical conception of the soul, whether Christian, Hellenistic, Jewish, or any combination thereof, Foucault's idea of the soul as psyche or personality ultimately concerns the subject's identity. That is, if we equate soul with personality and see it as the place where the examination operates, then there has to exist the idea that one's self, or identity, is both intertwined with, yet different from the fleshly body. This person who is a body yet has an inner-self that can be managed is the disciplined subject. This is why Foucault can say that, at its core, disciplinary power is the government of souls, and why the discipline of the soul occurs through actions on the body. But to have a soul/psyche/personality to observe, you must first have subjects who see themselves as more-than-body, *and* more-than-soul (trapped in body).

If one sees herself as a psychosomatic unity, then there is no soul to be governed in the Foucauldian sense because the two (soul and body) are so tightly ingrained that you cannot distinguish between inner and outer self. Likewise, if the soul is merely a prisoner within the body who escapes upon death, then what the body does is unimportant to the soul's existence. Put another way, the examination depends on "the opening up of a domain . . . which is that of thought, with its irregular and spontaneous flow, with its images, its memories, its perceptions, with the movements and the impressions that are *communicated from the body to the soul and the soul to the body*."<sup>506</sup>

---

<sup>506</sup> Foucault, "Le Combat de la chasteté," in *Dits et écrits*, 4 vols. (Paris : Gallimard, 1994) 2:1125. Cited and translated in Davidson, introduction to *Abnormal*, xxv, emphasis mine. This distinction is what allows for the shift in focus from action and thought to desire and pleasure. The body (to which the flesh is now pinned), is the bearer of pleasure and desire at exactly the point where it meets the soul, the root of consciousness. To be clear, Foucault emphasizes this shift as occurring in the sixteenth century development of penitential confession. My argument here is simply that you need an operative conception



Neither the self as psychosomatic unity, nor the self as soul trapped in a body has the necessary features to facilitate this communication of perceptions, movements, and impressions between body and soul.

Here is why the theological discourse concerning resurrection is vital to disciplinary power: it was the idea that created the individual whose identity was located in both body-and-soul, distinct but intertwined.<sup>507</sup> The internal self, for Foucault is absolutely necessary for disciplinary power, as it is the site on which observation works. While this occurs in its most concentrated form between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, my contention in the first part of this chapter is that the underlying component necessary for the detailed examination found in confession, that of the soul within the body, and “the body as the bearer of pleasure and desire,” begins its formation during our period of study.<sup>508</sup> For Foucault, the soul can be effectively disciplined only when the body becomes correlated with the flesh and thereby distinguished from, but related to the soul, or the flesh “pinned to the body.”<sup>509</sup> That is, you need two independent, but dependent components of the self: soul and flesh-body.

---

of the self that includes body and soul as two necessary, but different components of identity. See Foucault, *Abnormal*, 189, 191–192.

<sup>507</sup> This is not to imply that either Foucault envisioned the soul as a metaphysical reality, or that early Christian discourse *did not* envision it as a metaphysical reality. Rather, I am proposing that Christian conceptions of the soul—as a metaphysical component of the self—served as a historical condition for the self to develop a soul/internal self/psyche/personality as envisioned by Foucault.

<sup>508</sup> Foucault, *Abnormal*, 192.

<sup>509</sup> Foucault, *Abnormal*, 188. I remind my reader that the soul for Foucault, is not a metaphysical thing that exists post-death. It is the subject’s personality, or psyche that is distinguished from the flesh, and operated on by techniques of disciplinary power.

This, in essence, is what was meant in my earlier statement that this chapter will explore the articulation of expectations for the believer's future resurrection alongside encounters with the resurrected Jesus so as to demonstrate the creation of a Christian subject who had the necessary elements for the technique of examination (i.e. soul and body, separate but intertwined), and who lived with the anxious expectation of a watching Jesus who could appear at any moment (i.e. panoptic gaze). The chapter will develop along these two poles, first exploring the creation of the self as body-and-soul through expectations of resurrection, and second analyzing the creation of a mechanism of observation on that soul through canonical and extra-canonical accounts of visits from the resurrected Jesus. Another way of thinking about this two-stage process is the analysis of theological explanation of the resurrection, in part one, and narrativel expectation, in part two. By dealing with these two ideas together, we will see the necessary components for disciplinary observation take shape alongside each other, reinforcing one another and disciplining the Christian subject.

### **Theological Adjustments: Fixing the Soul**

Though both of the aforementioned developments took place simultaneously, we begin by addressing the matter of the body-soul creation before moving into speculation over the nature and appearances of Jesus in canonical and extra-canonical texts. This is a logical decision, rather than chronological, due to the importance of the existence of a Foucauldian soul for the development and institution of the hierarchical gaze. Both during and after the proliferation of the canonical Christian scriptures, the proto-orthodox movement was hard at work delineating between right and wrong perceptions of the

resurrected body and the relation between that body and the soul, thereby creating a new understanding of the self and the location of his identity.

### *The Creation of the Soul and the Rise of the Flesh*

As we saw in chapter three, the resurrection of the body was nothing new to Second Temple Judaism. Further, *that* a soul existed and was part (if not the essence) of the person was nothing new either, in Hellenistic thought.<sup>510</sup> However, and there are two points to consider here, when we begin by looking at the roots of Second Temple Jewish thought, we notice that immortality of the soul, in the sense of a soul departing after death for its world of true being, is largely absent from the Hebrew Bible, and the Jewish idea of the inner and outer man are so intertwined that the former lacks full existence apart from the latter.<sup>511</sup> Though some note minimal evidence for a degree of body-soul dualism in the Hebrew Bible, the common Jewish conception of the self, growing out of the Hebrew Bible, was that of a psychosomatic unity wherein that which is described as soul (*nefesh*) did not exist apart from the body.<sup>512</sup>

---

<sup>510</sup> The soul is frequently referred to as residing within the body through the use of metaphors such as “tomb,” “garment,” or “prison.” See Radcliffe G. Edmonds III, “A Lively Afterlife and Beyond: The Soul in Plato, Homer, and the Orphica,” *ÉP* 11 (2014), DOI : 10.4000/etudesplatoniciennes.517. Though the Hellenistic conception of the soul contains diversity across the spectrum of Platonic, Aristotelian, and Stoic thought (esp. with respect to the soul’s corporeality and physicality), there is a general consensus that the soul and body should be sharply contrasted, see Zaitsev Cornelius, “Ancient Philosophical Ideas of the Soul (Plato-Aristotelian Tradition and Stoicism) as a Source of Patristic Thought,” *Studia Humanitatis* 3 (2014), <http://st-hum.ru/en/node/166>. In addition to this soul/body contrast, belief in the soul in its most basic sense simply referred to the existence of something that explains the animation of behavior, see Klaus Corcilus and Dominik Perler, *Partitioning the Soul: Debates from Plato to Leibniz*, ed. Excellence Cluster Topoi, BSAW 22 (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2014), 2–3.

<sup>511</sup> Werner Jaeger, “The Greek Ideas of Immortality,” in *Immortality and Resurrection*, ed. Krister Stendahl (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 112, and Oscar Cullman, “Immortality of the Soul,” in *Immortality and Resurrection* ed. Krister Stendahl, 24–25.

<sup>512</sup> See Jeffrey Garcia, “Creation, Composition and Condition: On Being Human in Early Judaism” (PhD diss., New York University, 2016), 133–34. For a challenge to the consensus of the Hebrew self as psychosomatic unity, see Richard Steiner, *Disembodied Souls: the Nefesh in Israel and Kindred Spirits in*

By the time we reach the Second Temple Period there are several ways of conceiving the human self. The first, reading with Ben Sira and the Hebrew Bible, understands the *psyche* as the “self” that does not exist apart from the body, but reflects a psychosomatic unity.<sup>513</sup> However, among other authors such as that of 1 Enoch, or Philo, the self was conceived as consisting of both body and soul in distinction from another. These latter conceptions, as Jeffrey Garcia outlines, take on the Hellenistic understanding of the body’s ultimate unimportance. He notes that in both the Wisdom of Solomon (3.1; 5.15; 8.19–20; 9.15) and 1 Enoch (22.1–14), there is a body-soul dualism, along with the idea of the immortality of the soul; however, for both of these texts the flesh-body is understood as a detriment to existence, with the lone exception of 1 Enoch’s brief and questionable allusion to resurrection (22.13).<sup>514</sup> There are, then, two categorical ways of viewing the location of the self’s identity in Second Temple texts. The first, in keeping with the Hebrew Bible, emphasizes a psychosomatic unity wherein the human self does not exist apart from an embodied existence; and the second, by moving in the direction of greater degrees of Hellenization, emphasizes a body-soul dualism wherein the body is a detriment to the self’s true existence.

The variety of Second Temple ideas, according to Alan Segal, was the result of well to do Jews complicating the idea of the self as psychosomatic unity through their

---

*the Ancient Near East, with an Appendix on the Katumuwa Inscription*, ANEM 11 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015).

<sup>513</sup> Garcia, 152. Garcia notes that for Ben Sira, the instructions directed to the  $\psi\chi\lambda\eta$  do not connote an “internal psychological struggle but rather presume a union between humanity’s physical and metaphysical self” (see Ben Sira 9.2–3).

<sup>514</sup> Garcia, 174.

interaction with Hellenistic thought.<sup>515</sup> Philo of Alexandria is the prime example of this attempt who, when discussing the afterlife, avoided the terms *anastasis* or *egeiro* which signified resurrection and favored instead *athansia* to signify immortality.<sup>516</sup> For Philo, the human self consists of two elements, the created body and the immortal, uncreated soul (*Opif.* 134), so that upon death the incorruptible soul of the moral person is borne to eternal life apart from the flesh (*QG.* 1.16).<sup>517</sup> This, posits Segal, is likely tied to a discomfort with subversive doctrine of the resurrection of the body and its Messianic hope.<sup>518</sup> While admiring the martyrs, for Philo their reward was not the resurrection of the body but the immortality of the soul (*Legat.*, 117.2; 369.2; *Prob.*, 117.4).<sup>519</sup>

However, for the Hebrew Bible and many readers and listeners of its words who did not reside in the upper echelons of society, the human self was simply a *basar* (psychosomatic person, or human being), rather than flesh with soul. Without the body, the self did not exist, hence the necessity of bodily resurrection. Nevertheless, in either case, the variety of Second Temple Jewish conceptions of the self leaves us with the same two perspectives that we began with: either the self exists *only* through the body, or the self exists *in spite of* the body.

---

<sup>515</sup> Segal, *Life after Death*, 367–8. Segal calls the idea of the immortality of the soul an “ideology of the rich,” referring to those Jewish intellectuals whose work and lives depended on integrating into Greek intellectual life. This attempt led to a synthesis of the immortal soul with resurrection that is mirrored in early Christian thought, though he says “they did not blend so easily in Christianity, leaving us with centuries of interesting attempts to synthesize them.” (367).

<sup>516</sup> *Ibid.*, 370.

<sup>517</sup> John Dillon, “Philo of Alexandria and Platonist Psychology,” in *The Afterlife of the Platonic Soul: Reflections of Platonic Psychology in the Monotheistic Religions*, eds. Robert M. Berchman and John F. Finamore, AMMTC 9 (Boston: Brill, 2009), 21–23.

<sup>518</sup> Segal, *Life after Death*, 370.

<sup>519</sup> *Ibid.*

This is, admittedly, a simplification of a very complex idea in antiquity. However, it is helpful insofar as it draws out an important change that comes through proto-orthodox constructions of resurrection belief, namely, that the earliest Christian witness, like that of most in Second Temple Judaism, thought in terms of a unitary person who, in death, slept awaiting resurrection, yet by late antiquity the soul was understood as immortal and deeply (sometimes confusingly) connected to the body of flesh that would rise again.<sup>520</sup> During this expansion of the theological imagination through the articulation of proto-orthodox beliefs, the soul and the body take on new meaning. The self is still located in the co-mingling of both inner and outer man, as it is in the prominent Jewish conception, but the soul takes on a new, intermediate life. An inner-self that is distinct from but dependent on the flesh is created.<sup>521</sup> This shift, I will propose, was a necessary component for the rise of a disciplined subject. Without a subject who was necessarily both body and soul, the operations of discipline could not take root.

Of course, this interpretive shift did not occur in a theological vacuum. As we will see in the paragraphs that follow, the late second and early third centuries ignited this shift by a commensurate concern on the material and fleshly recreation in the resurrection of the body. But why did this shift from psychosomatic unity to an inner-self that is

---

<sup>520</sup> Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 13. This section is heavily indebted to Bynum's treatment of the subject and is at times merely a summary of her conclusions as they contribute to my thesis.

<sup>521</sup> By "creation of the soul" I do not mean to imply that the Christian understanding of "soul" is not metaphysical, and merely refers to personality. The orthodox articulation of one's soul is connected directly with the afterlife, ascension to heaven, and the resurrection of the body and reunion of body and soul at the return of Christ. However, the implications of this metaphysical doctrine have far reaching consequences on the formation of the subject as individual, and the way by which the aforementioned mechanisms and instruments of disciplinary power function on that individual, most specifically the instrument of the hierarchical gaze.

distinct from but dependent on the flesh happen? A host of explanations have been proposed, generally premised on the idea that concern over Jesus's resurrection body led to a simultaneous concern over the individual's resurrection body, and a subsequent desire to maintain the self's identity pre-resurrection.<sup>522</sup> However, as Caroline Walker Bynum has appropriately noted, the idea of material recreation does not *necessarily* follow from Jesus's resurrection. After all, as the second half of this chapter will demonstrate, early Christians were often puzzled over the nature of Jesus's resurrection and attempted to bring order to that puzzle with a variety of ideas and images. Given the exploration of the nature of Jesus's resurrection in spiritual, Gnostic, or Docetic directions, an immaterial existence could just have easily become the dominant idea for the individual's resurrection, thereby veering the Christian understanding of the self in an exclusively Hellenistic direction.

As is the case with virtually all theological speculation, the second century concern with the nature of the resurrected body and the need for material recreation arose due to acute historical conditions that affected the Christian community, namely, widespread martyrdom. To be clear, Christian accounts of martyrdom in this period greatly exaggerate the extent of persecution in the empire; however, as Bynum notes, "neither research that minimizes the numbers of martyrs nor interpretation that draws parallels between pagan and Christian behaviors should be used to suggest that fear of

---

<sup>522</sup> For a helpful summary and analysis of these explanations see J. G. Davis, "Factors Leading to the Emergence of Belief in the Resurrection of the Flesh," *JTS* 23 (1972): 448–55; Bynum, *Resurrection*, 26–27; Wm. O. Walker Jr., "Christian Origins and Resurrection Faith," *JR* 52.1 (1972), 41–51.

martyrdom was an insignificant motive in shaping Christian mentality.”<sup>523</sup> The second and third century reflections on resurrection as salvation from the curse of death and putrefaction had a specific dead body in mind—the martyr.<sup>524</sup>

Though martyrdom will receive extensive treatment in the chapter that follows, it is important here insofar as it concentrates the quest for the nature of the resurrected body in the lived experience of early Christians and their fears of death. As seen in chapter two, martyrdom has always been connected with articulations of resurrection, so it follows that this fear would stoke the flames of the theological imagination in order to translate ideas about Jesus’s resurrected body to oneself, and through that translation identify the source of continuity of identity. A simple reflection will bear this out. It is one thing to speculate on the nature of someone else, namely Jesus, and how he might look when he visits you; it is another thing entirely to fear an impending death and ask how your identity will be maintained after that death, especially if your body is mutilated.

Bynum has outlined the significant change that took place in the late-second to early-third century toward continuity of identity in the idea of resurrection. This shift, she argues, marks the beginning of the theological emphasis on the flesh in the resurrection. Before the shift took place, the earliest writings on resurrection, in the first half of the second century, distanced from wide-spread persecution and martyrdom, had little interest in the question of the continuity of self-identity through the resurrection of the

---

<sup>523</sup> Bynum, *Resurrection*, 44; I will document the exaggerations embedded in early treatments on martyrdom in the chapter that follows, and thus save the footnotes for then.

<sup>524</sup> Bynum, *Resurrection*, 43–44; for the idea that resurrection in the early fathers was salvation from death resulting from sin, rather than sin, see Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Shape of Death: Life, Death, and Immortality in the Early Fathers* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1961), 114–118.



body.<sup>525</sup> This is not to say that they were not interested in the resurrection, they were, but that continuity was not their focus. Clement, for example, uses the image of a phoenix that dies, decays, and is eaten by a larva that eventually grows wings and flies away, thus symbolizing life from death (1 Clem. 25.1–3), or the dawning of day that rises from the grave of night (1 Clem. 24.3). The focus in this early stage is simply on the power of the creator God to bring life from death, often described in rather confusing and discontinuous ways.

But this focus on God’s power cedes dominance by the end of the second century, wherein, the articulation of resurrection becomes tied up in the Christian apologetic defense against pagan and heretical attacks that a decomposed body cannot maintain identity in the resurrection.<sup>526</sup> This subsequently gave rise to the formation of the Old Roman Creed that elicits belief in “the resurrection of the flesh,” rather than body.<sup>527</sup> To be clear, a focus on the flesh in resurrection is present earlier than the late second century, found in Clement and Ignatius.<sup>528</sup> What is important in the development of articulation

---

<sup>525</sup> To be clear, it does appear that Clement has the idea of a material resurrection of the flesh, as he changes the Job’s *δέρμα* in the LXX (Job 19.26) to *σάρκα* (1 Clem. 26.3), emphasizing the fleshly resurrection. Ignatius, too, emphasizes the fleshly element of the resurrection (Ign. *Smyrn.* 5.2, 6.2, esp. 3.1–3). The difference between these early-second century authors, and those who follow is that the fleshly emphasis is not concerned with continuity of identity, but with the power of God (Ign. *Smyrn.* 1.2). Further, the Didache, Papias, and *The Testimony of the Elders* approach resurrection as a sign of hope for a coming millennium. See Calvin Clopp Staudt, *The Idea of the Resurrection in the Ante-Nicene Period* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1909), 541–545.

<sup>526</sup> See esp. Robert M. Grant, “The Resurrection of the Body,” *JR* 28.3 (1948): 192–199.

<sup>527</sup> Bynum, *Resurrection*, 26, 30; Gunnar af Hällström, *Carnis Resurrectio: The Interpretation of a Credal Formula*, CHL 86 (Helsinki: Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters, 1988), 9, 92. Hällström emphasizes the absence of this term from the biblical witness. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 2nd ed. (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1960), 128–130, places the final redaction of the creed during, or slightly before the bishopric of Victor in Rome (189–197), and identifies this creed as the seed from which grows all Western creeds to follow.

<sup>528</sup> See n. 515 above.

from the second to third century is not the sudden development of an interest in the flesh and its role in resurrection but the newly-focused reasons for this emphasis, namely, continuity of the self.<sup>529</sup> The flesh becomes the “thing” that *must* rise again for the self to continue on past death.

Ps-Justin’s *De Resurrectione* is one of the first extensive treatments exclusively on the subject of the resurrection of the body. The author writes to combat pagan and heretical challenges to the resurrection for the purpose of strengthening and protecting the weak and the not-yet believers (*Res.* 1.23). In his argument the issue of continuity of identity through material re-creation comes to the fore. His metaphors recall a statue re-forged and a mosaic put together again (ch. 6). These images are meant to corroborate his direct claim that the flesh must rise in the same way that it fell, to include physical deformities. Though, he also has to wrestle with the belief that Jesus will make the body perfect upon resurrection because of his demonstration of healing on earth (ch. 4). The resurrected body must be flesh, which means that it also must have all of its organs, even if it has no use for them in the future world (ch. 3). This emphasis becomes so acute, that those who deny the resurrection of the dead and believe, instead, that the soul migrates to heaven upon death (*Dial.* 80.4), may not properly be called Christians.

Further, Theophilus of Antioch, attempting to maintain 1 Clement’s organic images but also maintain fidelity to material continuity, changes Clement’s metaphors to move the emphasis away from mystery and toward continuity (*Autol.* 1.8, 13).<sup>530</sup> His goal

---

<sup>529</sup> Ignatius, (*Rom.* 4) early on, expresses the beginnings of this concern for continuity; however, he does so without recourse to the resurrection of the flesh.

<sup>530</sup> Bynum, *Resurrection*, 30.

in making this change is to protect the core of the human self from the transformation that occurs in digestion. As such, for Theophilus, resurrection is directly tied to the incorruption of the fleshly-body and God's care for the bones.<sup>531</sup>

*Flesh, Corruption, and the Problem of the Self*

As the idea of material continuity and the importance of the corpse continued to gain prominence, pagan critics, repulsed by the whole thing, began to level critiques. This makes it all the more striking that proto-orthodox Christian authors in the late-second century, especially the apologists, firmly maintained adherence to the flesh-body as the thing that rises, given the opening for pagan persuasion through a simple adoption of a Docetic or Gnostic conception of resurrection. For these thinkers, the identity of the person was of paramount importance, and the mere existence of a soul after death would not suffice. Without a body, says Athenagoras "man as such cannot be said to exist" (*Res.* 25.2–3); for the self to continue, the soul but be restored to the same body, even if it has undergone complete dissolution.<sup>532</sup> For Athenagoras, as for the many Jewish articulators of resurrection before him, the purpose of resurrection is the final judgment (*Res.* 18.2). As such, he wants to maintain *both* the resurrection of the same body that was buried, and the immortality of the soul so that both, combined, might be judged (*Res.* 18.4). This emphasis on material continuity for the purpose of identity-preservation, continues to pick up steam in Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Minucius Felix, all of whom connect

---

<sup>531</sup> Theophilus, *Auto.*, 2.38.

<sup>532</sup> Athenagoras, *Res.* 25.2–3 [Schoedel]; see also, Bynum, *Resurrection*, 32. For Athenagoras, though he employs the word *σῶμα*, his reference is clearly a fleshly-body as it is required to be the same one that enters the ground.

punishment with the need of a risen, fleshly body at the end of time.<sup>533</sup> From this point forward the Christian self would take on the identity of an independent, yet dependent soul and flesh-body, and receive greater clarification and explanation throughout the years.

Tertullian, in particular, highlights the interdependency of the soul and the body. For him, because it was the whole person (intermingled soul and body) who sinned (or did not), the whole person must rise for the judgment, which included a reassemblage of material bits.<sup>534</sup> An immortal soul, then, required God's preservation of the flesh for resurrection and judgment.<sup>535</sup> Tertullian offers a prime example of the general struggle to articulate this idea among proto-orthodox theologians and apologists. Namely, how can identity be tied to both continuity of flesh, which is maintained through the preservation of the body, and the immortal soul, which continued to exist in an intermediate state.

With identity so firmly lodged in the flesh and its return, the possibility of change through decay in the ground or the digestion of the consumed martyr brought about a significant dilemma. That is, decay and digestion would inevitably result in change, but this was a problem as change brought with it the fear of losing identity.<sup>536</sup> The second

---

<sup>533</sup> See Irenaeus, *Haer.*, 5.5.9–12.; Minucius Felix, *Oct.*, 5, 11. See the excellent synopsis of these positions in Bynum, *Resurrection*, 34–35. The philosophical shift that occurs here is toward the reassemblage of human bits. For Irenaeus, just as Christ can repair a missing eye with paste of dust, so he can reconstitute the decayed body. For Minucius Felix, nothing is lost to God so we should be assured that our basic bits will survive decay and will be brought together at the end of time. And for Tertullian, holding that all reality is corporeal (even the soul—made of fine matter), reassemblage of the bits is necessary for the self's identity.

<sup>534</sup> Bynum, *Resurrection*, 36.

<sup>535</sup> Tertullian, *Res.*, 58. Though, for Tertullian this resurrected, fleshly body will be transformed, as in the example of the transfiguration. *Res.*, 55.

<sup>536</sup> Bynum, *Resurrection*, 62, articulates the dilemma clearly: "There must be something that rises; there is no resurrection without identity. We know we are body; therefore body must rise. But there must be process and transformation as well, because the risen body must be radically changed. Unless something

century apologists answered this dilemma by pointing to the power of God as creator who would maintain material continuity despite decay.<sup>537</sup> Some, like Origen, attempted to chart a middle way through this quagmire by arguing continuity through a changing body that takes on a new character after resurrection. That is, soul, for Origen does not change, but body, just as it changes in life, also does after death (*Orig. Princ.* 2.10.3).<sup>538</sup> What rises, then is a spiritual body that is the same, but has changed (*Orig. Princ.* 2.10.1). Yet Origen's pursuit of a resurrected body independent of the flesh did not gain traction. By the third century, a dualist anthropology of the human as intimate union of soul and flesh-body, with the soul immortal and the necessity of the return of the flesh was set as the default among the proto-orthodox.<sup>539</sup> This only continued to develop into the third century and beyond, wherein the majority of Christians maintained the view that resurrection consisted in the recreation of material particles. Finally, as Bynum notes, "by the end of the fourth century, bodily integrity was for many thinkers so closely connected with material continuity as to be inseparable from it."<sup>540</sup>

#### *Foucault's Need for the Soul*

This development toward fleshly continuity and material recreation is interesting in its own right and Bynum provides a superb overview that traces the complexities, outliers, and trajectories of it. However, if we get too bogged down in the weeds of this

---

can change and still be the same thing, there can be no rising to glory of the corpse that has gone down into the grave."

<sup>537</sup> As an example of this, see Athenagoras, *Res.*, 3.1–3

<sup>538</sup> See also Origen, *Fr. Ps.*, 1.5; cited in Bynum, *Resurrection*, 65–66.

<sup>539</sup> Bynum, *Resurrection*, 57–58.

<sup>540</sup> Bynum, *Resurrection*, 68 n.33

debate we can overlook the very basic, but important development in the understanding of the self that occurs in the resurrection debates of the second through fourth centuries. Through the course of these debates, the early Christian comes to understand herself as consisting of two vitally important parts, interrelated yet distinct from one another. And it is this development, I propose, which is necessary for the creation of the disciplined subject. The disciplined subject requires both body and soul, or inner and outer self, working together whereby observation on the former leads to the discipline of the latter.

The independent yet dependent Christian self, made up of body and soul, is a marked contrast from the interpretation of the self as psychosomatic unity from the Hebrew Bible, wherein the body is indistinct from the internal self.<sup>541</sup> John A. T. Robinson calls the self of the Hebrew Bible “flesh-animated-by-soul”<sup>542</sup> so that the parts of the body stress different aspects of the whole person.<sup>543</sup> The Hebrew conception of a psychosomatic self creates problems for the exercise of disciplinary power as there is no Foucauldian-type soul, or personality/psyche, to function as the site upon which observation can work through the movement of the body. That is, rather than training the body by movement, rank, and observation to discipline the soul, in a system with a psychosomatic self what happens to the body directly correlates with what happens to the soul, and vice-versa. Therefore, you cannot train one to act upon the other since what happens to one necessarily happens to the other in the exact same way.

---

<sup>541</sup> John A. T. Robinson, *The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology*, SBT 5 (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1952), 14.

<sup>542</sup> Robinson, *Body*, 14.

<sup>543</sup> Robinson, *Body*, 16.

But similarly, a Hellenistic or Jewish-Hellenistic view—in the words of Robinson, of the soul incarcerated within a slot-machine, waiting for its escape—differs markedly from the Christian development as well.<sup>544</sup> The Greeks asked far more questions about the body as body and thus, had a more complex notion of the self. Previous notions of the flesh as completely unimportant to the Hellenistic mind have been largely disproven.<sup>545</sup> However, the Hellenistic self was centered on the soul and when the body was dead, it was gone, while the soul lived on in a shadowy state of existence. The site of the self was located firmly in soul. The body was not completely unimportant, but the soul, once released from the prison, did not need the body. Disciplinary power, by contrast, depends on the soul's existence (as personality), but it also depends on the correlation between body and soul so that the body can influence the soul, and vice versa. Once again, like the Hebrew conception of psychosomatic unity, the Hellenistic conception of the dualistic self is not able to bear the weight necessary for disciplinary power in that the soul exists and changes independent of the body's movement, life, or death.

By contrast, what the second and third century articulations of the resurrection began to do was chart a path that understands the vital importance of the body (to which the flesh is pinned), alongside the immortal existence of the soul. The internal and external self are independent, yet deeply intertwined so that they need one another for the pending judgment. This relationship is what allows for a “change of the soul” that is

---

<sup>544</sup> Robinson, *Body*, 14.

<sup>545</sup> Dag Endsjø has convincingly demonstrated in the Homeric epics, burial epitaphs, and cult practices that the flesh did matter a great deal to the Pagan world. The self was not complete without the body, but he nevertheless continued to exist, in a shadowy state. Apart from the body, the soul exists and remains immortal, but the soul of the dead. Dag Edsjø, *Greek Resurrection Beliefs and the Success of Christianity* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009).

actualized through the discipline of the body.<sup>546</sup> Or, put another way in the words of Foucault, once the Christian conceives of herself as fleshly-body and soul, the life of faith can become a life of gymnastics:

“physical gymnastics, a corporal gymnastics, a spiritual gymnastics, a *gymnastics of the body and the soul* for this long struggle against evil . . . hence this idea that if the time of baptism must indeed be a *disciplina paenitentiae*, a discipline of repentance, then so too, the entire life of the Christian must also be a repentance.”<sup>547</sup>

Now that we have a soul that is independent from the body, yet dependent on the body, the movements of the latter can discipline the former. And with this independent, yet dependent body-soul self, we have a site upon which Foucault’s Panopticon can function. We have a body that can be watched, and through this examination, a soul that can be disciplined.

But how does the examination take place in a world without prisons, Panopticons, cells, or security cameras? What functional device watches the movements of the body in order to produce the discipline of the soul? This question leads us to the second part of this chapter. Developing alongside the Christian construction of the self as body and soul, independent yet dependent, is the expectation of a watching Jesus, communicated through narratives recounting his post-resurrection visits.

### **Theological Clarification: Understanding the Body (of Jesus)**

Occurring alongside questions of the martyr’s resurrected nature were, understandably, questions concerning the nature of the penultimate martyr’s resurrected body—Jesus. It was in answer to these questions that the expectation of a visiting Jesus

---

<sup>546</sup> Foucault, *Government*, 128.

<sup>547</sup> Foucault, *Government*, 131, emphasis mine.



arose, and it is this visiting Jesus, I will propose, who functioned in a panoptic sense to examine and shape the newly forming self.

Panopticism is central to Foucault's understanding of disciplinary power.

Foucault goes so far as to call a disciplinary society, a panoptic society.<sup>548</sup> For this reason, the tendency to correlate Foucault's ideas of power with panopticism are not entirely misplaced, though they are perhaps a bit imbalanced. Nevertheless, one cannot demonstrate the introduction of disciplinary mechanisms of power without locating a panoptic core to the apparatus.

Demonstrating panopticism during the earliest stages of Christianity is, at first glance, enormously difficult since the movement was diverse, spread out, and lacked consistent communication. However, in the pages that follow I will demonstrate that, growing up alongside the hierarchization, time control, and spatial distribution present in the early movement was an internal expectation of observation and unexpected embodied visitation through the resurrected Jesus. Again, like the mechanisms discussed before, this form of panopticism is not fully formed. Indeed, it carries with it many elements of sovereignty as well and cannot be seen as democratizing whereby any member of society can perform the gaze.<sup>549</sup> Rather, it is operated by a new sovereign that replaces and enhances the observatory power of Caesar.

Yet while not fully formed, these narrational and theological articulations of the resurrected Jesus perform the work of individualizing the operation of power and construction of knowledge of the self. This takes place through the constant potential of a

---

<sup>548</sup> Foucault, *Psychiatric Power*, 79.

<sup>549</sup> See esp. *Ibid.*, 76-77.

gaze, set alongside the narrativial demonstration of that observation, both of which are set within the context of ethical restrictions.

*With What Kind of Body did (He) Come?*

An entrance into the realm of theological reflection and formulation of Jesus's resurrection returns us to the biblical witness and the testimony of the resurrection of Jesus. And concern with the testimony of the resurrection of Jesus brings us back, momentarily, to the first written articulation of that event: the Pauline epistles. In chapter two we dealt extensively with the revolutionary and apocalyptic nature of Paul's theology of the resurrection. However, one element I did not address is what Paul said about the nature of the resurrected Jesus, a question we will now approach for the purpose of examining how later interpretations, both canonical and extra-canonical, developed his proclamation.

An important, and well-recognized point in Pauline scholarship is that the Apostle Paul nowhere references an empty tomb or the pre-ascension, resurrection appearances.<sup>550</sup> He appears to rely on an older creedal tradition of the death and burial of Jesus, as well as the resurrection of the Christ after three days (1 Cor 15.3–4); however, references to a rolled-away stone, folded linens, and a physically empty tomb are

---

<sup>550</sup> Nikolaus Walter, "Leibliche Auferstehung? Zur Frage der Hellenisierung der Auferweckungshoffnung bei Paulus," in *Pauls, Apostel Jesu Christi: Festschrift für Günter Klein zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. M. Trowitzsch (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998) 112; PHEME PERKINS, *Resurrection: New Testament Witness and Contemporary Reflection* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984), 90; Alan Segal, *Life After Death*, 446–447; See especially Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. K. Grobel (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 45, who says "The accounts of the empty grave, of which Paul still knows nothing, are legends." For many contemporary scholars, Paul and other early Christ-followers did not equate resurrection with the physical return of Jesus's dead body, rather, Jesus was translated into heaven with a new, spiritual body after three days. See Adela Yarbro-Collins, "The Empty Tomb in the Gospel according to Mark", *Hermes and Athena: Biblical Exegesis and Philosophical Theology* (eds. E. Stump and T.P. Flint; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993), 111–114.

lacking.<sup>551</sup> To be clear, Paul is intensely concerned with the resurrected *body* of Jesus. But the body of which he speaks is a *soma pneumatikon*, raised from a *soma psuchikon* that was sown in death (1 Cor 15.44).<sup>552</sup> So, what precisely did Paul think happened to the flesh and bones of Jesus? He is not exactly clear on this point, hence the gallons of ink spilled over this passage.<sup>553</sup> Nonetheless, it is clear that what rose from the dead for Paul was a body, and that body was not an immaterial spirit<sup>554</sup> in a Platonic sense.<sup>555</sup>

---

<sup>551</sup> Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, trans. James W. Leitch, Hermeneia (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1975), 251–254; Joseph Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, AYBRL (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 540–543

<sup>552</sup> It is important to note here that *σῶμα* does not refer to a person's flesh and blood. Rather, it is a type of encasement that houses the self. Further, when we read Paul's description of transformation from *σῶμα ψυχικόν* to *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, we should not read in a Cartesian dualism that sees Paul presenting a physical body vs. a spiritual body. Dale Martin argues that Paul sees, in the resurrection, a shedding of the earthly elements of the body (*sarx, psyche*) and maintaining the third (*pneuma*). N.T. Wright, by contrast, sees Paul's phrases in reference to that which animates the human body, rather than that of which the human body is composed. For Wright, the body that is raised will be animated by the spirit (embodied spirit) rather than the soul (embodied soul). This view is also (contra Engberg-Pederson) forcefully argued through contextual means by James Ware. Given the importance of Paul's apocalyptic theology (see ch. 2), Wright's read is the better of the two in my estimation. See Dale Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 125–129; Wright, *Resurrection*, 352; James Ware, "The Resurrection of Jesus in the Pre-Pauline Formula of 1 Cor 15.3–5," *NTS* 60.4 (2014), 488–489

<sup>553</sup> A summary of the scholarly debate surrounding Paul's understanding of the resurrection of Jesus is outside the purview of this project. Additionally, it is a task that has been ably accomplished by many others. The best summary of this history of scholarship that I have found, along with a critique of the underlying dualism/monism controversy that animates this scholarship, is found in Frederick S. Tappenden, *Resurrection in Paul: Cognition, Metaphor, and Transformation* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2016), 7–23. Paul's conclusions on the nature of the resurrected body remain unable to provide a fixed point of reference for interpretation, see Christopher F. Evans, *Resurrection and the New Testament*, SBT 2.12 (Naperville, IL: A.R. Allenson, 1970), 56.

<sup>554</sup> The New Testament Easter appearances use the term *ἐφθῆναι*, which is used in the Hebrew Bible to refer to a revelation, and as such, argues Leonhard Goppelt, should be translated 'He appeared,' rather than 'he was seen.' In other words, they are not visions whereby God reveals the fact of the resurrection, but encounters with the embodied Jesus. Paul also draws a distinction between the appearances at Easter and the visions of Christ (1 Cor 15.8; 2 Cor 12.2 ff.). See Leonhard Goppelt, *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times*, trans. R. Guelich (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1970), 18–19.

<sup>555</sup> For point of clarification, I remain unconvinced that the early creedal formula of 1 Cor 15.3–4 did not imply an empty tomb for Paul or his audience. The creedal formula is a stereotyped formulation designed for repetition that need not include all of the details. This point is made evident in Luke-Acts which contains a full narrative of the empty tomb (Luke 24.1–12; 24.23–4), but when the confessional summaries of the event are mentioned the empty tomb remains unmentioned but implied (Acts 12.26–37; 10.36–41; 2.22–32; 3.13–15; 4.10; 17.31), an observation James Ware highlights. See F. Mussner, "Zur stilistischen

However, for this chapter, what Paul *meant* is less important for my purposes than how Paul, and the creedal proclamation of Jesus's resurrection behind him were *interpreted* by those texts that came after him.<sup>556</sup> When we turn to the writings and theological debates that follow the Apostle and build on his ideas we notice a relatively stable developmental trajectory from an undefined body, to an empty tomb, a flesh and blood Jesus who eats food, and who eventually can appear at will in multiple forms. Concern over the nature of Jesus's resurrected body developed throughout the canonical gospels and expanding into theological debates of the second and third centuries along with the extra-canonical narratives.

The four canonical gospels, all written after the Pauline corpus, bear witness to the first testimony of theological formulation of the resurrection deriving from tradition and Pauline doctrine. It is important we address these texts firsts, as these texts form the first set of questions concerning the nature of the post-resurrection Jesus, and it is this set of questions that was then expanded upon by later theological and narrational developments. There is a long list of scholars and publications who have dealt with the form-critical and redaction-critical questions concerning the gospels' post-resurrection

---

und semantischen Struktur der Formel von 1 Kor 15,3–5," in *Die Kirche des Anfangs: Festschrift für Heinz Schürmann*, ed. R. Schnackenburg et al. (Leipzig: St. Benno, 1977), 408–409 in Fitzmyer, *1 Corinthians*, 547; R.J. Sider, "St. Paul's Understanding of the Nature and Significance of the Resurrection in I Corinthians xv 1–19," *NovT* 19.2 (1977) 140; Christopher Bryan, *The Resurrection of the Messiah* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 51; see esp. the full argument of James Ware, "The Resurrection," 475–498.

<sup>556</sup> We cannot know how much of Paul's theology was known by the gospel writings. However, as L. Michael White notes, he must have received this resurrection creed from somewhere and presumably it came from the disciples of Jesus who either wrote or were behind the canonical gospel accounts. That is, while Paul gives the first, somewhat unclear, articulation of the meaning of the resurrection creed (1 Cor 15.3–4), the gospel narratives are likely working off of the same creed in their narrational formulations. L. Michael White, *Scripting Jesus: The Gospels in Rewrite* (New York: Harper One, 1999), 107–123.

accounts.<sup>557</sup> Rather than development of text, I want to focus on the development of questions throughout the canonical gospel accounts concerning the nature and state of the post-resurrection Jesus. These questions are more important for my purposes as they reveal the lingering curiosities left in the minds of their hearers, and it is these curiosities which contribute to later theological and narrational development.<sup>558</sup>

Narrational accounts of Jesus's post-resurrection state begin in the gospel of Mark, the first written narrative account.<sup>559</sup> Strangely, though Mark ends in a shroud of mystery concerning the resurrection of Jesus. Whether this mystery was result of a *vorlage* edited by Mark, or the narrative genius of the Markan author himself, the tomb was simply empty (Mk 16.4–6), and the visiting women, shocked, are told that they can find Jesus if they go to Galilee (16.7).<sup>560</sup> Not to be overlooked, the earliest ending does not provide a

---

<sup>557</sup> See Christopher F. Evans, *Resurrection*.

<sup>558</sup> The resurrection accounts both pre and post-Easter are some of the most controversial and widely-discussed passages in the entire Bible. However, it is not only outside my scope of concern to deal with all of the controversies surrounding these texts, it is also impossible within the limitations of this chapter. My purpose in the pages that follow is not to plumb the depths of resurrection controversies that fill the pages of modern scholarship. As my concern is with the questions addressed and left by the narratives, I have chosen to deal with the texts as literary units as long as their unity can be attested prior to the mid-fourth century. The intermediate ending of Mark will not be considered as the earliest attestations are found in Codex Bezae Cantabrigiae (fourth or fifth century) and various minuscules (eleventh and twelfth centuries) respectively. See Adela Yarbro-Collins, *Mark*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 802–806; and the longer ending of Mark will not be given consideration as it dates to the second century, and contains a bricolage of traditions from the other gospels, which will be covered, see D. C. Parker, *The Living Text of the Gospels* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 126–137. John is treated as a literary unit including chapter 21 as there is no extant textual evidence of the gospel narrative in circulation without this chapter, see Archibald M. Hunter, *The Gospel according to John*, CBC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 191.

<sup>559</sup> Acknowledging the many difficulties of authorship with all four gospels, I have chosen to use their traditional names as authorial names for sake of ease and clarity.

<sup>560</sup> E. L. Bode, *The First Easter Morning*, AnBib 45 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1970) 25; John Dominic Crossan, “Empty Tomb and Absent Lord,” in *The Passion in Mark: Studies on Mark 14–16*, ed. W. H. Kelber (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 145; Ulrich Wilckens, “The Tradition History of the Resurrection of Jesus,” in *The Significance of the Message of the Resurrection for Faith in Jesus Christ*, ed. C.F.D. Moule, SBT 2.8 (London: SCM, 1968), 69; Pheme Perkins, after surveying the various positions

picture of the risen Christ.<sup>561</sup> This suggests to some that a Jewish audience would have envisioned a direct ascension into heaven and exaltation to glory, and that this passage says nothing about the nature of the resurrected body that ascended to heaven.<sup>562</sup>

However, hypothetical suggestions about what might have been assumed betray the nature of this mysterious ending. Ultimately, Mark leaves his readers with far more questions than answers. What is the *precise* nature of this body that left the tomb? how did Jesus get from Jerusalem to Galilee? and, will we see him again? These questions begin to frame expectations of the presence of the resurrected Jesus.

Matthew's account begins to answer some of these questions, but in so doing he creates more. In addition to Mark's empty tomb, fearful women, and angel announcing the vacancy, he echoes Ezek 37.12–13, Zech 14.4–5, and possibly Isa 27.51–53,<sup>563</sup> to tell

---

believes that “the argument for a pre-Markan tradition seems stronger than that which holds that the story is entirely a Markan creation” Perkins, *Resurrection*, 115.

<sup>561</sup> There are some who see the transfiguration account (Mk. 9.2–13). See esp. K.G. Goetz, *Petrus als Grunder und Oberhaupt der Kirche und Schauer von Gesichten nach den altchristlichen Berichten und Legenden: Eine Exegetischgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1927), 76–89. However, the misplaced resurrection position has been sharply critiqued by recent scholarship, see C.H. Dodd, “The appearances of the Risen Christ: An Essay in Form-Criticism of the Gospels,” *Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R.H. Lightfoot*, ed. D. Nineham (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955), p. 9–35. Given the unprovable nature of the form-critical hypothesis, it should not provide strong evidence in either direction for understanding the state of the resurrected self.

<sup>562</sup> PHEME PERKINS, “The Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth,” in *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research*, eds. B. Chilton and C.A. Evans (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 437. See also Adela Yarbro-Collins, “Ancient Notions of Transferal and Apotheosis in Relation to the Empty Tomb Story in Mark,” in *Metamorphoses: Resurrection, Body and Transformative Practices in Early Christianity*, eds. J. Økland and T.K. Seim, Ekstasis 1 (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009) 41–57, who argues that the Markan empty tomb and resurrection of Jesus is analogous to the ascension of Elijah in 1–2 Kings and the apotheosis of the Roman Emperor. Yarbro-Collins notes specifically that the absence of narrated appearances of the resurrected Jesus prohibit us from determining whether the body should be read as theophanic or realistic, (47).

<sup>563</sup> See Dale C. Allison Jr., “The Scriptural Background of a Matthean Legend: Ezekiel 37, Zechariah 14, and Matthew 27” in *Life Beyond Death in Matthew's Gospel: Religious Metaphor or Bodily Reality?*, ed. Wim Weren, Huub van de Sandt, and Joseph Verheyden, BTS 13 (Leuven: Peeters, 2011, 153–88; Donald P. Senior, “The Death of Jesus and the Resurrection of the Holy Ones (Mt. 27:51–53),” *CBQ* 38 (1976) 312–29; Daniel M. Gurtner, *The Torn Veil: Matthew's Exposition of the Death of Jesus*, SNTSMS 139 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) 146–51; Wim J.C. Weren, *Studies in Matthew's Gospel:*

of “many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many.”<sup>564</sup>

Further, and more importantly, Matthew’s gospel includes an attempted cover-up for the missing body, replete with bribery and lies, sandwiched between two encounters of the risen Jesus with his followers.<sup>565</sup> First he appears to and greets the two Marys on their walk back from the tomb, and in their surprise they grab onto Jesus’s feet and worship him.<sup>566</sup> Then he meets with his disciples on a pre-designated mountain in Galilee and is recognized by some and doubted by others (Matt 28.17), at which time they received a commission that is based on Jesus’s newly established authority, to teach, baptize, and obey. With Matthew, the reader is still left with questions concerning the nature of Jesus’s resurrected body, though they are more directed. He can be touched and held (28.9), but also appears unrecognizable to some (28.17).<sup>567</sup> He can appear at will,

---

*Literary Design, Intertextuality, and Social Setting*, BibInt 130 (Boston: Brill, 2014), 215–221; Timothy Wardle, “Resurrection and the Holy City: Matthew’s Use of Isaiah in 27:51–53,” *CBQ* 78 (2016): 666–681.

<sup>564</sup> πολλὰ σώματα τῶν κεκοιμημένων ἁγίων ἠγέρθησαν. The use of the phrase σώματα τῶν κεκοιμημένων implies, for Kenneth Waters (and rightly in my estimation), that the author expected a “corporeal event in space-time, not just an occurrence in the spirit realm.” Kenneth L. Waters, “Matthew 27:52–53 as Apocalyptic Apostrophe: Temporal-Spatial Collapse in the Gospel of Matthew,” *JBL* 122 (2003): 489–515 (508).

<sup>565</sup> The cover-up story between these encounters was likely included to explain the genesis of a common rumor that the body of Jesus had not risen from the dead but had been stolen by the disciples. But notice, the presence of this rumor tells us that there were at least two interpretations of what happened to the body of Jesus and *both* of these interpretations operate from the assumption that the tomb was empty and that the corpse of Jesus was no longer where it had been laid. See Weren, *Studies*, 79; cf. James D.G. Dunn, *The Evidence for Jesus: The Impact of Scholarship on Our Understanding of How Christianity Began* (London: SCM, 1985), 67. This cover-up story leads Wim Weren to conclude that “Matthew is very much interested in affirming that Jesus’s renewed life is characterised by bodily aspects,” Weren, *Studies*, 80.

<sup>566</sup> Matthew uses his characteristic designator of surprise, continuity, and significance (ἰδοὺ). Antonio Vargas-Machuca, “(καὶ) ἰδοὺ en el estilo narrativo de Mateo,” *Biblica* 50.2 (1969) : 233–244.

<sup>567</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*, 644: “There was something different about him, something which his closest friends and followers could not put their finger on at the time, something which seemed to enable him to do

surprising his guests (28.9–10), and yet is with his disciples always (28.20). Will one be able to recognize him when he appears? When will he arrive? And how is he ever-present with his disciples?

Among the synoptics, the two-volume work of Luke–Acts is unquestionably the most concerned with clarifying the nature of the resurrected Jesus. Building from Mark and Matthew, Luke inform us of another meeting that occurred while two disciples were walking on the road to Emmaus talking with one another about current events (Luke 24.13–14). Jesus appeared suddenly among these two and began to walk with them, though their eyes were held back from recognizing him.<sup>568</sup> After an extended conversation, he joined them for a meal, broke bread and was recognized only after their eyes were opened.<sup>569</sup> Further, Jesus suddenly appeared to his disciples who were startled and thought they were seeing a spirit (*pneuma*),<sup>570</sup> though Jesus relieves their concerns by showing his hands and feet and inviting them to touch him so as to prove that he had “flesh and bones” (σάρκα καὶ ὀστέα), and eating a piece of broiled fish. For Luke, even

---

different things . . . This was Jesus all right, but there was a mystery about him which even those who knew him best were now unable to penetrate.”

<sup>568</sup> αὐτῶν ἐκρατοῦντο τοῦ τοῦ μὴ ἐπιγινῶναι αὐτοῖς; The use of a theological passive verb suggests that the Emmaus disciples would normally have recognized Jesus; however, their eyes were supernaturally kept from recognition. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (X–XXIV)*, (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), 1563–8; see also Stephen T. Davis, “‘Seeing’ the Risen Jesus,” in *The Resurrection: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Resurrection of Jesus*, eds. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O’Collins (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 136 who posits “perhaps a camera could have taken a picture of him”; contra. Grant Osborne, *The Resurrection Narratives: A Redactional Study*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1984), 238.

<sup>569</sup> αὐτῶν δὲ διηνοιχθήσαν οἱ ὀφθαλμοί; The sudden appearance and disappearance of Jesus would not be strange to Hellenistic readers as similar stories accompany other significant figures such as Romulus (Ovid *Fast.* 2:489). See Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Sacra Pagina 5 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 398.

<sup>570</sup> Or perhaps a ghost (φαντάσμα) as Codex Bezae attempts to clarify.



the ascension is a physical event as the body of the resurrected Jesus floats into the sky by means of a cloud<sup>571</sup> as a demonstration to the disciples of his triumph over death and inauguration of the “age to come.”<sup>572</sup>

Luke–Acts goes to great lengths to demonstrate that the resurrection was a physical event, yet in spite of its physicality the body of Jesus was different.<sup>573</sup> It was not limited as before, could appear and disappear at will, yet also eat food and be touched. Even after Jesus’s embodied departure, his presence can be felt throughout Acts. He is seen watching over Stephen and the mob that kills him (Acts 7.55–56), he meets Saul near Damascus as a light from heaven and a voice (9.3–5); and instructs Ananias to receive Saul (9.10–16). Luke’s resurrected Jesus is unquestionably physical; he can walk, eat, and be touched. However, he is also different in some very significant ways. He can appear in the presence of his disciples at will, he watches from the heavens, he can visit followers or non-followers without announcement (Acts 9.1–19) and can conceal his identity while conversing with people. Our questions, now, begin to take a new direction. How can we know if we are talking to Jesus since his identity is often concealed? Is there

---

<sup>571</sup> Or concealed by a cloud, depending on how one translates ὑπέλαβεν. Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 27.

<sup>572</sup> Arie W. Zwiep, “The Ascension of the Messiah: An Inquiry into the Ascension and Exaltation of Jesus in Lukan Christology” (PhD diss., University of Durham, 1996), 22. Some think the physicality of the ascension is a direct invention of the Lukan author with no basis in prior tradition, see A.R.C. Leaney, “Why There Were Forty Days Between the Resurrection and the Ascension in Acts 1,3,” in *StEv 4 (TU 102)*, ed. F.L. Cross (Berlin: Akademie, 1968), 417, however, given the physical cues in both Mark and Matthew as discussed above, it is far more likely that physicality in the resurrection and ascension were ideas with vast circulation prior to Luke–Acts.

<sup>573</sup> The physicality is so clear and direct that some have proposed the idea that Luke was writing to explicitly counter a gnostic or docetic strain of thought. C.K. Barrett *Luke the Historian in Recent Study*, (London: Epworth, 1961), 62–64; C.H. Talbert, “An Anti-Gnostic Tendency in Lukan Christology,” *NTS* 14 (1968): 259–271.

any way to anticipate a visit, or is it always unexpected? Does he watch us at all times, as when he was watching the martyrdom of Stephen?

The final canonical account rounds out the opening narrational questions of Jesus's post-resurrection nature, thrusting us fully into the extra-canonical debates and narratives. Jesus's first visit is to Mary Magdalene, who does not recognize him and mistakes him for the gardener who carried away the missing corpse (Jn 20.14–15; cf. Luke 24.16, 3).<sup>574</sup> When she does recognize him, she embraces his physical body.<sup>575</sup> On two occasions following this, the reader finds the disciples fearfully huddled in a room behind a “locked” door (Jn 20.19, 26). Jesus, without notice, joins them by passing through the locked door (20.19–20), yet he then demonstrates his physical nature by showing his hands and side (presumably the wounds he received on Friday).<sup>576</sup> These unannounced visits appear to answer our questions of out of both sides of the mouth. He clearly has physical characteristics—and he demonstrates that point (20.20, 27)—but he can act as if

---

<sup>574</sup> There is likely a narrative-theological purpose behind John's identification of Jesus as the mistaken gardener; however, my concern lies instead with questions concerning the nature and activity of the resurrected body and how those questions shape the daily existence of the average Christian. See John Suggit, “Jesus the Gardener: The Atonement in the Fourth Gospel as Re-Creation,” *Neot.* 33.1 (1999): 161–168; This could be meant to imply something about the nature of the resurrected body and place it in line with the ability of either Greek deities to disguise, conceal, or transform themselves, or Jewish angels who could go unnoticed when encountering humans. See Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 2:1190–1191, esp. n. 207–210.

<sup>575</sup> Physicality is implied by Jesus's command to not hold on in 20.17. The emotional context of the encounter along with the present imperative ἄπτον with μή should best be read as “stop holding on to me” so that we envision Mary clinging to Jesus's feet, similar to Matt 28.9–10, rather than insistently poking him. See Keener, *John*, 2:1193.

<sup>576</sup> One significant strain of Jewish tradition believed the body would be resurrected in the same form that it was killed, before being healed. See Keener, *John*, 2:1202 n.310. However, there is a compelling case to be made that the wounds remain on the body for a theological purpose, see Shelley Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017). Either way, it appears that John's narrational purpose for including the wounds is to provide evidence of the real physical nature of the resurrected Jesus; i.e. he is not a ghost or apparition.

he is incorporeal.<sup>577</sup> These visits, along with the puzzlement over who he was at breakfast on the beach (21.12) emphasize a sense of sameness and difference, continuity and discontinuity.<sup>578</sup> John's account leaves the reader of the canonical gospels with a sense of mystery. Jesus can visit, unannounced, and you might notice him (20.20, 26), or not (20.15, 21.4, 12). He can pass through locked doors (20.19, 26), and join you for a meal (21.12) or meet you in the sacramental meal (6.48–56).<sup>579</sup>

Readers of the canonical gospels leave with a host of questions that would consequently shape perceptions concerning the nature of Jesus in the resurrection. The post-resurrected Jesus left behind his grave clothes and exited the tomb, yet he also had incorporeal characteristics. He can appear unannounced and unrecognizable to suddenly join you in conversation. A locked door cannot keep him out, yet his wounds remain and can be touched. He can join you for a meal and he is always present in the weekly sacramental meal—in some way. Further, even after his ascension, he continues to watch

---

<sup>577</sup> Alan Segal, *Life after Death*, 457, helpfully emphasizes that this is not a demonstration of his spiritual nature as much as it is proof of the “miraculous nature of Jesus’s resurrection body, what happened after he materialized inside the room was a demonstration of the physicality of the resurrection body.”

<sup>578</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*, 679.

<sup>579</sup> John 6.48–56 serves as an important link between the present chapter of this project and chapter three as it demonstrates a connection between the ideas of the resurrection and the material action of the eucharist. While some commentators think this text is either correcting faulty sacramentalism, see Gary M. Burge, *The Anointed Community: The Holy Spirit in the Johannine Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 186–187, or not concerned with sacramentalism at all, see Paul N. Anderson, *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel: Its Unity and Disunity in the Light of John 6*, WUNT 2.78 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1996), 134, the best reader-responsive understanding of this passage sees a mysterious connection between the physical body of Jesus, the resurrection, and the eucharist. To be clear, I am not advocating that John *intended* this in his gospel, but that the readers would *most likely* read this connection, see Wilbert Francis Howard, *The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: Epworth, 1945), 265–266. Alan Segal, *Life after Death*, 457–458, sees an explicit connection between resurrection and eucharist: “v. 56 links the presence of Jesus in his resurrected state with the ritual itself. That is where and how he is physically present to the church of his believers, and not in visions.” My implication, here, is that the weekly participation in the eucharist served as a reminder of the mysterious, physical nature of Jesus’s resurrected self.

over his disciples, can meet them when he desires, and is ever present through the communication of his spirit. Thus, we leave the canonical testimony with two governing motifs surrounding the nature of the resurrected Jesus, which will shape the debates and narratives that develop in the years that unfold: his unexpected presence and a curious physicality.

### *Theological Clarification*

Following the canonical accounts, and occurring alongside the theological development of the self as comprised of dualistic flesh-body and soul, both dependent yet independent from one another, there was a growing concern to define the nature of the post-resurrection Jesus. A division between these two theological debates (the human self, and the post-resurrection nature of Jesus) is a superficial one, as they occur alongside one another and the latter is often used as evidence for the former. Nonetheless, I have chosen to examine the debates concerning the nature of Jesus's body separate from those concerning the nature of the human self for the purpose of showing two consequences for the theology of the resurrection. In the first section, I sought to demonstrate the creation of the disciplinary soul through the theology of the resurrection. In this section, I will seek to show how questions surrounding the nature of Jesus's post-resurrection body led to number of questions and ideas concerning the role of Jesus in the day-to-day lives of early Christians which developed through both theological discourse and narrational articulation.

Among the earliest writers in the second century, the resurrection of Jesus was assumed, and his post-resurrection body is usually seen as raised in the flesh. 1 Clement, for example, bases the future resurrection on the reality of the resurrection of Jesus

(42.3), and the author of 2 Clement, while not mentioning the resurrection of Jesus specifically, builds on this assumption by adding that it should be understood as the resurrection of the flesh for judgment (9.1–6). Further, Ignatius, more in conversation with docetic tendencies among early Christian thought, draws heavy attention to the material reality of Jesus’s persecution, crucifixion, death, and resurrection (*Trall.* 9.1–2),<sup>580</sup> a point that is detrimental for correct Christian belief elsewhere in Ignatius (*Phil.* 8.2; *Smyrn.* 2.1), as well as in Irenaeus’s depiction of Polycarp (*Haer.* 3.3.4).<sup>581</sup> Jesus appeared in the flesh, after the resurrection, not as a bodiless demon, and even ate with the disciples and asked Peter to touch him as proof of this fact (*Smyrn.* 2.1–3.3). This emphasis is also found in the apocryphal *Epistula Apostolorum* wherein the apostles listen to Jesus, touch him, and witness his footprints on the ground (*Ep. apost.* 2, 11).

The emphasis on the flesh implies a counter view that we are simply not privy to, given the absence of texts. However, by the time we reach the great expositors of the resurrection, Tertullian, Irenaeus, and Origen, the variables of this heated debate begin to take shape. Full treatment of any one of these figures and their respective texts on resurrection could fill a whole monograph. I seek to emphasize only a few points in these texts to show the ways by which the questions surrounding Jesus’s resurrection are handled.

---

<sup>580</sup> cf. Barn. 5.5ff; see esp. Justin, *1 Apol.*, ch. 9 who goes back to Luke’s account of meals with the post-resurrection proof against those who argue for an exclusively ‘spiritual’ resurrection.

<sup>581</sup> The verb “truly” (ἀληθῶς) in Ign. *Trall.* 9.1–2 should be read as an emphasis on the historical and material reality of these events, see Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1985) 153; cf. Ign. *Smyrn.* 1.1–2.

Tertullian begins his treatise *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* by directly confronting those ideas either outside the boundaries of the church, or inside (such as found in Marcion and Basilides) that Jesus's pre or post-resurrection body was not comprised of flesh (chs. 1–4). Indeed, for Tertullian the matter of the fleshly body of Jesus is one that distinguishes the heretic (ch. 3), a point seen clearly in his engagement with Marcion (Tert. *Marc.*, 4.43.6–7).<sup>582</sup> For Tertullian, just as Jesus died in the flesh, he was raised in the flesh (ch. 18). Both Tertullian and Irenaeus address the questions that arise from Paul's saying that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom," and both conclude that it should not be understood as a denial of fleshly resurrection (Tert. *Res.*, 48, 50), but should be seen as a reference to those who are not indwelt with the divine Spirit (Iren. *Haer.*, 5.9.1–4). Irenaeus further emphasizes the fleshly resurrection of Jesus by noting that the emphasis on "spiritual" in 1 Cor. 15.44 should not be a reference to the removal of flesh, but rather of the partaking of the spirit (*Haer.*, 5.6.2). Instead, the marks of the nails demonstrate the continuity of physicality, something all Christians will also experience (*Haer.*, 5.7.1).

Up to this point, the polemical emphasis has been on the defense of Jesus's flesh. This is not surprising when we consider the ways by which the canonical Gospel accounts also emphasized the desire to flesh out the empty tomb. But at this point I want

---

<sup>582</sup> An important contribution to this theological development is found in Markus Vinzent, *Christ's Resurrection in Early Christianity and the Making of the New Testament* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011). According to Vinzent's contestable theory, all of the resurrection questions (to include the authorship of the canonical gospels, discussed above) arose as a response to Marcion's rediscovered emphasis on Paul's idea of resurrection which was largely ignored by the church prior to the mid-second century. Marcion, then, developed a spiritual reading of Pauline resurrection that is countered by a flesh-and-blood reading of Jesus's post-resurrection body. See esp, pgs. 91, 111, 118. I remain unconvinced of Vinzent's reading and think it is more likely that the questions dealt with in the canonical gospels were similarly picked up and answered with different explanations by many, Marcion perhaps one of the most notable.

to return to the questions that arose from Paul and the canonical Gospels, because they were not exclusively focused on whether he had flesh or not. The first question was the precise nature of the resurrected body which, as we have seen, veered toward the flesh in the patristic debates in response to counter positions. This trajectory was made at the expense of the curious accounts of Jesus passing through locked doors and arriving unannounced.<sup>583</sup> The second question concerned one's ability to recognize the post-resurrection Jesus when meeting him, another question largely ignored. And the third question concerned whether Jesus would continue to show up to meet his disciples or watch over his disciples as he does periodically through Acts, another question largely ignored. The polemical nature of this debate emphasized the flesh at the expense of its transformation. This does not remain the case for long.

Origen, as we noted before, seeks to chart a middle path between an emphasis on Jesus's flesh, and the transformation that occurs in the resurrection. By virtue of his desire for nuance he touches on a number of the questions listed above, which are ignored by earlier expositors.<sup>584</sup> Keeping in step with his idea of the body always in flux,<sup>585</sup> he emphasizes the transformation of the corporeal nature's substance through the resurrection (*Princ.* 6.7). This transformation allows the resurrected body to pass into whatever condition God wishes (*Princ.* 6.6). The body, then, is the same one that died, but is now incorruptible, deathless, and transformed (*Princ.* 3.6.4). Origen's explanation

---

<sup>583</sup> With the exception of a brief comment by Irenaeus (*Fragments of Lost Writings*, 52), the main expositors of the resurrected Jesus do not deal with this question.

<sup>584</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*, 527.

<sup>585</sup> See Bynum, *Resurrection*, 65.

of the resurrected body not only seeks to nuance the flesh with corporeal transformation, but it also brings back the question of recognizing the body. In point of fact, Origen deals specifically with this question in saying that the post-resurrected nature of Jesus is unable to be recognized without aid (*Cels.* 2.65) and capability (*Cels.* 2.67).

This brief overview of Patristic explanations of Jesus's post-resurrection body is not designed to detail all of the complexities present in this debate. Rather, it is merely intended to show that the questions which arise from Paul and the Gospels concerning the nature and state of the post-resurrection Jesus become formative in early Christian identity. This is not a disputed point. It is clear, from this brief overview that there are many in the early Christian community wrestling with the nature of Jesus's post-resurrection body. There are those who seek to emphasize a flesh-and-blood, post-resurrection body (Ignatius, Clement, Tertullian, Irenaeus), those who seek to emphasize a spiritual and immaterial, post-resurrection body (Marcion, Valentinus, Basilides), and those who seek to maintain the physicality of the post-resurrection body while also emphasizing the transformation that occurs in the resurrection (Origen). And in the midst of these competing views, and burgeoning questions surrounding the post-resurrection nature of Jesus, a collection of literature begins to explore what it might mean for the day-to-day existence of the Christian that Jesus might appear and be unrecognizable and transformed.

### **Narrative Engagement: Meeting the Body (of Jesus)**

As the canonical picture of the resurrected Jesus began to spread and take root through theological clarification, other competing and elucidating pictures,



understandably, bubbled up in the extra-canonical accounts.<sup>586</sup> Throughout this literature we experience what it would mean to meet the risen Jesus in ways that mirror the canonical gospels, though sometimes the reflection is more akin to that produced by a funhouse mirror, where one element from the questions arising through the canonical accounts is expanded and enlarged at the expense of another. Building on these questions, two elements persist throughout this literature. First, in line with the gospel accounts of post-resurrection appearances, Jesus often appears unannounced to either direct or correct his followers. Second, working in conversation with the theological clarification surrounding his nature, he is often unidentifiable, taking new and changing forms

A comment on these texts is in order. The extra-canonical stories are a treasure-trove of information on the formation of early Christian identity. Ample evidence suggests a relatively wide distribution of extra-canonical texts among the laity. Consider, for example, Eusebius's account of Serapion, the bishop of Antioch (199–211 CE) learning that Christians in Rhossus were reading the *Gospel of Peter*.<sup>587</sup> Initially judging it a harmless pseudepigraphal work in which the laity found interest, he soon sought to

---

<sup>586</sup> The term “extra-canonical” is used to describe the range of literature that relates stories of Jesus yet are not found in the orthodox canon. Though many of these writings eventually found themselves outside the spectrum of acceptance by proto-orthodox belief, they were nonetheless circulating in early Christian circles both proto-orthodox and heterodox. And though many of these texts present docetic or gnostic pictures of Jesus we should understand, with Bart Ehrman, that the lines between “acceptable” and “abberant” beliefs were often blurred among “popular” Christian literature of the second and third centuries . . . written for and read by general audiences not overly concerned with theological niceties.” For this reason, the apocryphal acts and gospels are puzzling in that they sometimes provide orthodox views of Jesus, and other times heretical views. Ehrman concludes: “this is due both to their nature (“Romances” for popular consumption) and to the time of their writing, when such distinctions cannot have been clearly made.” Bart D. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture* (New York: Oxford, 1993), 10–11.

<sup>587</sup> Larry W. Hurtado, “Who Read Early Christian Apocrypha?” in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Apocrypha*, eds. Andrew Gregory and Christopher Tuckett (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 155–156.

refute and restrict the text after concerns with some of the potentially deviant ideas within (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.12.1–6). This is unsurprising. Leaders of religious movements always *try* to direct their followers in what they should/should not read based on lines of orthodoxy. This is as true today as it appears to have been in antiquity. However, many diverse texts often wind up in the hands of the laity that, if clergy knew of or about, would prefer they not be there. This is likely the milieu and setting of early Christian extra-canonical texts—written as supplementary works not for any given group, but for early, curious Christ followers.<sup>588</sup> These texts, then, are important for our inquiry as they give us a glimpse into the early-Christian imagination *before* it was policed by, or ignored because of the standards of orthodoxy.<sup>589</sup> The texts in question post-date the canonical gospel accounts and provide a picture of how the early Christian imagination handled the appearing and disappearing body of the resurrected Jesus that we encountered earlier.

### *The Unexpected Visitor*

The extra-canonical texts take the surprising canonical visits of Jesus and magnify them. Jesus often appears at both unexpected and expected (or desired) times. He comes through visions (Acts Andr. 8; Acts Paul PH p. 7; Acts Pet. 1, Ker. Pet. H XVII 19), or in real-time encounters, either appearing in real time and space to a character who is awake

---

<sup>588</sup> See Frederick Wisse, “The Use of Early Christian Literature as Evidence for Inner Diversity and Conflict,” in *Nag Hammadi, Gnosticism, and Early Christianity*, eds. Charles W. Hedrick and Robert Hodgson, Jr. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1986), 187–188; Hurtado, “Who Read Early Christian Apocrypha?,” 155–160.

<sup>589</sup> The proliferation of these ideas and the wide-readership is evidenced by the infusion of extra-canonical ideas in early Christian art. Cartlidge and Elliot argue that the ideas found in extra-canonical texts had a strong impact and endurance in the laity as evidenced by artistic representation. David R. Cartlidge and J. Keith Elliot, *Art and the Christian Apocrypha* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 16–20.

(rather than asleep), appearing to more than one person, carrying on an extended conversation with the character, or sharing a meal with his conversation partner (Acts pet. 5, 28, 35; Acts Thom. 1–2, 27, 153; Acts Pet. 12 Apos., pg 8, 11; Acts Andr. Mth., 28–33; Gos. Heb. in Jerome, *Vir. Ill.*, 2). The goal of these visits is to provide direction to the character at a crossroads in life. For example, he instructs Paul to become a physician to those who are in Spain in one text (Acts Pet., 1), and later tells him to go to Rome where Jesus will be crucified afresh (Acts Paul, PH p. 7).

Unlike the linear development of the resurrected body of Jesus in the canonical accounts and theological debates, the majority of these texts leave the question of the nature of his body unexplained; however, several attempt an explanation. The extra-canonical narratives are not always clear on how one ought to think of Jesus's appearance.<sup>590</sup> In other words, it is left up to the reader to decide. Sometimes his body appears solid with flesh that can be touched (*ep. Apost.*, 12), sometimes immaterial without flesh (Gos. Phil., 23a–c; Acts John 93.1–4), and sometimes fleshly but with the true flesh (Gos. Phil., 72c). Sometimes he leaves footprints (*ep. Apost.*, 11), and other times he does not (Acts John, 93.11–13). A coherent perspective of the nature of Jesus's resurrected body does not exist in the extra-canonical literature, indeed sometimes a diversity of perspective is found in a *single text* (Gos. Phil., 23, 72)! While the early, extra-canonical literature attempts to work this idea out to varying degrees, the important and universal point seems to be quite simple: Jesus appears.

---

<sup>590</sup> In some texts, like the *Acts of John* or the *Apocryphon of John* Jesus is sometimes physical and sometimes non-physical. His bodies consistency changes from soft to hard, material to immaterial. Though he does not exhibit physical characteristics like eating, blinking, or leaving footprints. See Paul G. Schneider, *The Mystery of the Acts of John*, DDS 10 (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1991), 88–90.

But more than simply appearing at will, Jesus, continuing the trajectory of the canonical accounts, always comes unannounced, often surprises those whom he is visiting, and disappears suddenly (Acts Thom., 154). His arrivals are for instruction, warning, and correction. For example, in the *Acts of Andrew and Matthias* Jesus, in hidden form, has a conversation with his disciples to ensure they would follow his commands (Acts Andr. Mth., 5). This appearance prompts Andrew to remind the disciples that Jesus is never far (Acts Andr. Mth., 21). Elsewhere, he arrives in the stands of the arena to watch Thecla's persecution (Acts Paul, 21), and in another account makes a cameo appearance when Peter baptizes Theon (Acts Pet., 5).

These unexpected arrivals pepper the extra-canonical literature, but one in particular stands out as a notable example that highlights the danger associated with the surprising visits. The *Acts of Thomas* begin with the disciples in one room, divvying up missionary efforts. Judas Thomas, by lot, is commissioned to go to India; however, he objects because of his "weakness of the flesh" (1.1). Unexpectedly, Jesus appears to Thomas at night to emphasize his call to India, but again Thomas objects, "he would not obey." Jesus, though, would not be outdone. He appears instead to Abban, an Indian merchant who was in Jerusalem to purchase a carpenter for the Indian King Gundaphorus. Jesus appeared to Abban saying, "I have a slave who is a carpenter, and wish to sell him" (1.2). After receiving payment, Jesus wrote a deed and forced Thomas to India. The surprising encounter between Jesus and Thomas has the extra effect of demonstrating the danger associated with disobeying the Lord's commands. Had Thomas obeyed the decision of the lots he, presumably, would not have had a visit from Jesus.

Further, had he obeyed Jesus when he appeared he, presumably, would not have lost his identity through slave exchange.<sup>591</sup>

### *The Polymorphic Visitor*

Jesus's resurrected appearances in the extra-canonical texts are often sudden and unexpected, and as *Thomas* proves, not always welcome. But the sudden appearance of Jesus is not the only dilemma posed to the reader of the extra-canonical texts. It is often the case that when Jesus arrives, he is unrecognizable because he changes form. The post-resurrection body of Jesus, throughout both docetic, gnostic, and orthodox accounts, appears as a shapeshifter—a polymorphic self who takes different forms in his encounter with humans in the flesh.<sup>592</sup> This is not surprising, given the small opening for polymorphism in the canonical accounts through both metamorphosis (Mk 9.2–3; Matt 17.1–2; Luke 9.29, see esp. Mk 16.12) and multiple experiences of misrecognition (Jn 20.14; 21.12). However, as we enter the world of second and third century Christianity, the polymorphic Christ takes on a life of his own.

Jesus appears in a host of different images throughout this literature. We find him greeting his disciples as a child (Ap. John, 2, Acts Pet., 21, Acts Pet. Andr., 2, 15), a

---

<sup>591</sup> The opening act of this narrative is rife with geographical references tying Thomas to Jerusalem, Abban to “the south country,” and Jesus to Bethlehem. And yet, because of Thomas’ unwillingness to follow the lot’s decision, he is reduced to a slave, sold for the purpose of the *κύριος*, Jesus. Thomas’ fear of losing his Hebrew identity was realized through Jesus’s slave exchange. Jennifer Glancy draws attention to this loss of identity by highlighting the creation of a double enslavement through the sale under one Lord (Jesus) into the control of another King (Gundaphorus), Jennifer Glancy, “Slavery in *Acts of Thomas*,” *J ECS* 2.2 (2012): 3–21. Further, slave relocation was designed to separate the slave from familiar surroundings, language, and people and thereby reconstruct identity, see Keith R. Bradley, “‘The Regular, Daily Traffic in Slaves’: Roman History and Contemporary History,” *CJ* 87 (1992): 135–138.

<sup>592</sup> Orthodox writings use polymorphism in a more restrained way to communicate Jesus’s transcendence over death. Paul Foster, “Polymorphic Christology: Its Origins and Development in Early Christianity,” *JTS* 58.1 (2007): 66–99.

young man (Acts Thom., 54, 153), a bald man with either a thick beard or fresh stubble (Acts John, 89.1–3), a small and ugly man (Acts John, 89.11), a reflection of the viewer (Gos. Phil., 57.28–58.10), one of his disciples (Acts Paul, 21, Acts Thom., 11) or a handsome man resembling an official (Acts Pet. 12 Apos., 8).

One example in particular highlights the significance that the polymorphic Christ had on the response of individuals. In the *Acts of Andrew and Matthias* Jesus appears to Andrew, instructing him to travel to the land of the cannibals where Matthias is teaching, and deliver him from becoming dinner (Acts Andr. Mth., 4).<sup>593</sup> Andrew and other disciples follow the command and board a small boat with three other men onboard, whom the reader is told are Jesus and two angels, but the characters remain unaware. Jesus, concealed as a sailor, engages Andrew in an extended conversation. He praises him for being a Jesus follower, attributes the calming of the sea to his faithfulness, asks why the Jews did not follow Jesus, and listens attentively as Andrew explains the ministry of Jesus (Acts Andr. Mth., 8–15). It is only after falling asleep and being carried off the ship by angels that Andrew realized who the captain really was (Acts Andr. Mth., 16). Andrew concludes that Jesus's transformation was a test to ensure Andrew and the disciples were following commands (Acts Andr. Mth., 17). Thinking his sin was the cause of Jesus's concealment, and knowing the Lord is never far from his servants, Andrew pleads with Jesus to reappear. And that he does in the form of a child (Acts Andr. Mth., 18) to reassure Andrew.

---

<sup>593</sup> *Acts of Andrew and Matthias* was probably composed after the *Acts of Andrew* (ca. 190 CE) and before the death of Origen (254 CE). See Peter M. Peterson, *Andrew, Brother of Simon Peter*, SNT 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1958), 32–33.

### *Preparing for an Arrival*

Though the unexpected and diverse arrivals of the polymorphic Christ can provide clues to the Christological formulations of early Christian groups and authors, my goal is different.<sup>594</sup> Theological formulas reside behind these narratives, but once in the hands of the readers these texts are best understood as popular texts, produced and read by a wide range of communities and people, with the intention of entertaining, instructing, and encouraging early Christ followers.<sup>595</sup> As such, my concern with extra-canonical narratives lies with the formation of the reader/listener's imagination vis-à-vis her encounter with this unexpected, polymorphic visitor.

While it is admittedly impossible to climb into the mind of the real readers of the second and third centuries, I think we can nonetheless identify some elements of how the imagination would evolve by paying attention to both character responses and descriptions of the post-resurrection visits. What I mean by this is that, typical of ancient literature, characters are used to instruct the readers in the way that they *ought to* think about and respond to the matter at hand, in this case that matter is an unexpected visit with the polymorphic Jesus.<sup>596</sup> Additionally, descriptions made of Jesus by the characters

---

<sup>594</sup> David R. Cartlidge, "Transfigurations of Metamorphosis Traditions in the Acts of John, Thomas, and Peter" *Semeia* 38 (1986): 59–66.

<sup>595</sup> This is not to discount the extensive debate concerning the origins and genre of the apocryphal acts. In my estimation, seeing these texts as folk-lore based on a rough romance genre as Rosa Söder posited in 1932, and Dennis MacDonald re-engaged in 1983, is the best way to understand the diversity of content present in the narratives. See Rosa Söder, *Die apokryphen Apostelgeschichten und di romanhafte Literatur der Antike* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1932); Dennis R. MacDonald, *The Legend and the Apostle: The Battle for Paul in Story and Canon* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1983). For a survey of perspectives on their genre see Virginia Burris, *Chastity as Autonomy: Women in the Stories of Apocryphal Acts*, SWR 23 (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellon Press, 1987), 7–30. See also, François Bovon and Éric Junod, "Reading the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles" *Semeia* 38 (1986) 169–170.

<sup>596</sup> I am referring to the ability of a text to bring a reader into the narrative so that she can identify with the internal characters. Steven Mailloux notes that narratives cause the reader to judge characters as the first

inform the reader how she ought to envision him. Take for example the description provided by the *Acts of John*, where, upon reflecting on his shape-shifting form, John describes Jesus as the one whose eyes never close but are always open (Acts John, 89). Or the *Acts of Thomas* where we find Thomas explicitly call his lord the polymorphic Jesus, who has the power to see all things (Acts Thom., 157), is sleepless and always keeps watch on those who sleep (Acts Thom., 66), and who is always invisibly with him (Acts Thom., 165).

In the extra-canonical accounts, Jesus's presence extends beyond apostles into the lives of average Christians. The *Acts of Thomas*, for example, reminds its readers that even those who don't bump into Jesus are still at risk of an unseen encounter by describing Jesus as the one who appears at all times, is not always seen with bodily eyes, yet who is never hidden from the soul (Acts Thom., 53, 65). Or, stated elsewhere in another way: "only the inner eyes see Jesus Christ" (Acts Thom., 21, cf. 18). Perhaps most important for the lives of early Christians, Jesus often appears in the liturgical life of his followers. He arrives as a young man before the consumption of the eucharist (Acts Thom., 27) and is requested and expected to join the believers in fellowship in the eucharist (Acts Thom., 49). Sharing in the eucharist is the means by which the disciples

---

step in the process of effecting self-evaluation and identification with the character, Steven Mailloux, "Learning to Read: Interpretation and Reader-Response Criticism," *SLI* 12.1 (1979): 104. This was more pronounced in Roman antiquity whereby characters were expected to serve as models for imitation, Theodore J. Weeden, Sr. *Mark: Traditions in Conflict* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1971), 14–15. See also Joel F. Williams, *Other Followers of Jesus: Minor Characters as Major Figures in Mark's Gospel*, JSNTSup 102 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 84–88. It was typical of ancient literature to present characters as "good" or "bad" types to be emulated or eschewed, and the canonical accounts extend the adjudication of type beyond characteristics, to include or emphasize the character's response to Jesus. See Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "The Jewish Leaders in the Gospel of Mark: A Literary Study of Marcan Characterization," *JBL* 108.2 (1989): 279–281.



are able to be “made perfect” (Acts Thom., 26, 27, 49–51, 158), a necessary trait as Jesus will not remain with them if the soul is not cleansed of “every wicked temptation” (Acts Pet., 18). Indeed, Jesus is revealed not to idolaters and sinners, but to those with a pious and pure mind (*Ker. Pet.*, H XVII 16–17), as such, the response one should have following a visit from the Christ should follow suit: “abstain from fornication and avarice and the service of the belly . . . for fornication blinds the mind and darkens the eyes of the soul” (Acts Thom., 28). As we encounter these narratives, the arrival or potential arrival of Jesus, is not presented as a historical fact that “happened back then,” as might (but not necessarily) be taken from the canonical accounts. Rather, they direct the reader to live with the expectation that it could happen at any time.

Even in the polemically produced theology of the resurrection, as outlined above, the expectation of a visit with Christ is present, though it looks different from the extra-canonical narratives. It is surely noteworthy that, among all of the theological disputes and debates in the second and third centuries, CE, this idea of the appearance of Jesus is not discussed. So far as I can tell, no writer in the proto-orthodox tradition disputes the fact that Jesus can appear at will to his followers. However, while it is not disputed, it is also not articulated as a positive element in proto-orthodox theology. While evidence limits a solid conclusion as to why this element of the Christian experience is ignored, we can, I think, produce an educated guess. Given the expectations of visits, and the proto-orthodox desire to control the boundaries of the Christian community, it appears that the common understanding of Jesus’s constant, or surprising presence is subsumed under the doctrine of Christ’s presence in the eucharist.

For Ignatius, the bishop who administers the elements stands “in the place of God” (*Magn.*, 6.1) and the risen “Lord Jesus Christ” (*Poly.*, 9.1), as a “type of God” who deserves the respect of Jesus himself (*Trall.*, 3.1).<sup>597</sup> While the bishop is the one who hands out the bread and wine, as a “medicine of immortality” (*Eph.*, 20.2), it is in fact Christ who presides through that bishop.<sup>598</sup> For Justin, the elements are the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus, designed to nourish the flesh and blood of the Christian through assimilation (*1 Apol.*, 66), and for Tertullian, the shared understanding of the real presence of Jesus’s flesh and blood in the Eucharist is evidence for the real flesh and blood body of Jesus in the incarnation and resurrection (*Marc.*, 4.40).<sup>599</sup> And for Origen, Jesus himself is present to communicate the Eucharist to his followers (*Hom. Jer.* 12.2).

Whether one meets Jesus in a dream, on the road, or in the Eucharist, the expectation of a meeting is firmly entrenched in the minds of the early Christian community through the debates and narratives which fill out the questions left by Paul and the Gospels. This expectation would have profound impact on the daily life of the average Christian. Christ might appear at any time, and in any shape. But even if he does not appear throughout the week, each Sunday, the Christian would enter the gathering, moving through rooms and partitions based on his rank, to encounter the risen Christ in the eucharist, and he would do all this with the understanding that Jesus may be watching him at any moment. He *might* see Jesus, but he need not have a visible encounter for the

---

<sup>597</sup> Cf. Cyprian, *Ep.*, 63.14

<sup>598</sup> Mazza, *The Celebration of the Eucharist*, 100; cf. Justin, *1 Apol.*, 65.

<sup>599</sup> This line of reasoning leads Mazza to conclude that the idea of Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist was shared among proto-orthodox and heterodox Christians. Mazza, *The Celebration of the Eucharist*, 118–119.

common knowledge that Jesus is always present and always visible to the inner eyes, especially in the eucharist.<sup>600</sup>

This is an expectation that travels with the Christian everywhere he goes, for he cannot hide behind locked doors, nor can he avoid Jesus on a boat. He might not even know if the person he is talking to is the resurrected Lord, testing his faithfulness. And this expectation is also one that is reinforced on a weekly basis in both the feast of the eucharist, and the communal readings.

Jesus is very much alive, and the nature of his body is such that it can appear at any time in the guise of anyone. But even when he does not appear, his eyes are never closed, and he is never far from his follower. This expectation of visitation is an expectation of the constant *potential* of observation. Jesus might be watching at any given moment in a way that was never before imagined under Caesar. Sure, Caesar's portraits proliferated throughout the empire as a stand-in for him, but no one legitimately thought that Caesar watched his empire through the statues. By contrast, one never knows where Jesus is, and one never knows when Jesus will appear. Like Deby Stamm-Loya who, in 1972, met him by her bed, or Judas Thomas whom he sold into slavery, the early Jesus follower lived with and internalized this expectation.

It is, I think then, not coincidental that visits from the resurrected Jesus prompt careful attention to one's life and purity. If an unexpected visit from Jesus is perceived as

---

<sup>600</sup> See Paul H. Jones, *Christ's Eucharistic Presence: A History of the Doctrine*, AUSTR 157 (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 36–37. On the history of the eucharist as making Jesus present and entering his presence, see Thomas O'Loughlin, *The Eucharist: Origins and Contemporary Understandings* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 28.

a test, and his presence is dependent on faithfulness and purity, then the response preached by Thomas would follow:

“abstain from fornication and avarice and the service of the belly . . . for fornication blinds the mind and darkens the eyes of the soul . . . And covetousness puts the soul in agitation in the midst of the body . . . and the service of the belly makes the soul dwell in care and sorrow . . . but expect the coming of Jesus, and hope in him, and believe in his name, because he is the judge of the dead and the quick, and he shall recompense every man, according to his works at his last coming” (Acts Thom., 28).

Thomas, in response to this unexpected visit, connects the movement and use of the body with the discipline of the soul. A visit from Jesus prompts actions in the body, such as restraint from improper sex, material wealth, theft, and gluttony.<sup>601</sup> All three bodily actions impact the soul and its status on the day of Jesus’s return. And while reflection on the importance of these actions comes post-appearance, the requirement to follow them extends into the future, when the subject could potentially experience another visit, perhaps even of judgment. But even if another visit does not come, he knows, nonetheless, that the resurrected Jesus never closes his eyes or sleeps. He could be watching at any given time. The subject, in the words of Foucault, will “never know whether he is being looked at at any one moment; but he [is] sure that he may always be so.”<sup>602</sup>

---

<sup>601</sup> Compare with Achilles Tatius, *Leuc. Clit.*, 2.29, cited by Albertus Frederik Johannes Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas: Introduction, Text, and Commentary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., NovTSup 108 (Boston: Brill, 2003), 86, as an example of how well known this treatment of virtues in connection with the soul was in Hellenistic popular literature. Yet Achilles Tatius, while concerned with virtues, emphasizes a list of virtues unrelated to the function of the body: shame, grief, and anger. These virtues are not said to darken the soul, or put it at danger for judgment, but rather restricts freedom and liberty. This is a subtle, but important contrast.

<sup>602</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 201.

In the mind of the Christian subject, cultivated through the theological and narrational imagination, the resurrected Jesus becomes a central point of observation, or a single gaze that is inescapable from which a series of relays develop.<sup>603</sup> While we cannot conclude that this is panopticism in its fully-formed sense, as the goal of panoptic surveillance is the increase of productive function,<sup>604</sup> we can conclude that the formation of the Christian subject is taking place alongside the formation of the disciplinary technique of hierarchical observation.

### **Conclusion**

Hierarchical observation is vital to disciplinary power. And an internal self that can be disciplined is vital to hierarchical observation. The two need each other like fish need water. Without an internal self that is dependent on the body, but not identical to it, observation cannot work properly because observation's goal is the examination which ensures the body is responding appropriately. This chapter has demonstrated that the idea of resurrection was instrumental in bringing both of these elements into play for the early Christian communities.

This development occurred through a mutually reinforcing process of imagining the resurrected body of the believer and imagining the nature and state of the post-resurrected body of Jesus. Based on my larger thesis, it is unsurprising that the proto-orthodox movement, which articulated the human self in these ways, became the prominent party in the fourth century. I am not proposing that Tertullian and others meant

---

<sup>603</sup> Ibid., 173–174.

<sup>604</sup> Ibid., 174–175.

what Foucault meant when they talked about the soul. They did not. But their articulation of an immortal component of the self, deeply related to the body, but existing in an intermediate state awaiting the resurrection, was a significant move forward in the modern, disciplinary understanding of the human self, as soul and body, intertwined yet independent.

With a soul in tow, the Christian can live her life in a state of constant expectation of being watched or visited along with the consequences that come from that. She does not know when or if Jesus will visit, nor does she know if she will recognize him when he does. But she does know that he sees all things, never sleeps, might be watching at any moment, and will meet her in the Eucharist. For this reason, she must watch the movements of her body, and thereby discipline the soul. This power of observation is far greater than that which Caesar could ever yield. And the judgment that might result is far more consequential than that which Caesar could ever threaten. In the end, the hope of the Christian is salvation from the wrath of a resurrected Lord who might always be watching, and this begins a life of constant discipline, and constant repentance post-baptism.<sup>605</sup>

---

<sup>605</sup> Foucault, *Government*, 131.

## Chapter Seven: Resurrection in a Hostile Environment

“To say that the sovereign has a right of life and death means that he can, basically, either have people put to death or let them live . . . it means that in terms of his relationship with the sovereign, the subject is, by rights, neither dead nor alive.”

--Michel Foucault<sup>606</sup>

### Introduction

We enter our final examination of the material and textual evidence for disciplinary mechanisms of power at play in the early Christian communities by approaching the act of death itself. Death is a fitting end to our investigation, as any challenge to sovereign power at its core is a challenge to the sovereign's ability to take life and thereby restore his honor.<sup>607</sup> My basic contention in this dissertation is that the early Christian theology of resurrection functioned subversively by activating underlying disciplinary mechanisms of power, thereby creating a realm within which inhabitants of the empire could envision themselves outside of the power of Rome. Thus far I have produced evidence to demonstrate disciplinary formation: the early Christian subject was formed through the control of time and activity, the separation of the individual from the crowd and commensurate placement within rank, and creation and observation of the soul. However, one problem remains—the sovereign's most “basic attribute . . . [the] right of life and death.”<sup>608</sup>

---

<sup>606</sup> Michel Foucault, *Society*, 240.

<sup>607</sup> Ibid., 240–241; *Discipline*, 34–35, 48.

<sup>608</sup> Foucault, *Society*, 240.

Put another way, if all that I have argued thus far holds true, then the Christian subject was being formed through the mechanisms and instruments of disciplinary power, which grew out of the primacy of the idea of resurrection. To be clear, this formation in itself constitutes a challenge to sovereignty in the way that the continued evolution and coalescence of disciplinary power in the monastic movements of the Middle Ages served as a social opposition against the dominant apparatus of sovereignty of its time.<sup>609</sup> However, it is not enough to overturn the foundation of sovereign power since, for the early Christian movement, Caesar continued to maintain his most basic attribute—death—and therefore continued to maintain power. This chapter will conclude my investigation by demonstrating how the idea of the resurrection not only spread through disciplinary mechanisms to shape the early Christian subject in a way that was different from the dominant apparatus of power (seen in chs. 4–6), but also created a subject who need not fear the sword of the emperor, because its blade was dull. Through the idea of resurrection, Caesar lost his right of death over those who proclaimed “that there is another king named Jesus” (Acts 17.7).

There are two central elements to look at when examining the early Christian response toward death: the spectacle of martyrdom, and the care for the corpse. Either of these elements could produce an entire volume of analysis, as has been done many times before. But to look at the Christian response to death *as it relates to* Caesar’s sovereign

---

<sup>609</sup> Foucault, *Psychiatric Power*, 64-66.



power we must put the two together. After all, it was the martyr who shaped the early Christian articulation of material resurrection *and* practices stemming from that idea.<sup>610</sup>

This relationship, between the action of the martyr and the corpse of the common Christian, will structure this chapter. In the first part I will address the ways by which the early Christian community embraced the spectacle of death. By leaning upon the many scholars who have come before, I will demonstrate that the Christian martyr was designed to be a demonstration of Caesar's power; however, she did not play the part and instead robbed Caesar of his most basic right. However, the martyr, like every other common Christian, still died. In the second part I will address the ways by which the early Christian community cared for the dead in a way that continued the martyr's resistance.

The challenge of this chapter, then, is to demonstrate from our limited material evidence that practices surrounding martyrdom, dying, and the care of the dead in early Christian world pointed the Christian subject beyond the power of death and consequently, the power of the sovereign. This task might appear simple, after all, resurrection overturns death, death is to be feared, and the emperor holds the right to take death. However, there are two problems with this simple conclusion. First, as I have argued throughout this dissertation, an idea is only as good as the material conditions it produces. One can *speak about* the resurrection all day long, but if material life is not conditioned by that idea it will not affect the mechanisms of power that are used to shape the individual. Second, as we will see momentarily, Christian burial practice differed

---

<sup>610</sup> See Bynum, *Resurrection*, 43–44.

from its pagan and Jewish neighbors in only slight ways. Nonetheless, I believe that the differences in the practices that early Christians adopted, though subtle, are sufficient to demonstrate my final claim: that the imperial right to death is undermined by the idea of the resurrection as practiced in the rituals surrounding death and dying, stemming from the spectacle of the martyr.

### **The Spectacle of Martyrdom**

When we enter the world of the early Christian martyr, we enter an alien landscape. The world of the martyr is a world of embellishment and exaggeration, where women turn into men,<sup>611</sup> fire fails to burn, and blood extinguishes the flames.<sup>612</sup> Further, as is well recognized among scholars of early Christianity, persecution leading to martyrdom was not nearly as prominent as the martyrologies would have us believe. Prior to the decree of Decius in 250 CE, persecution was local and sporadic, dependent on the inclinations of local imperial administrators.<sup>613</sup> Candida Moss helpfully clears the field of misconceptions:

Between the death of Jesus around 30 CE and the ascension of Constantine in 313, Christians died as the result of active measures by the imperial government only (1) immediately following the Great Fire of Rome in 64, (2) around 250, during the reign of Decius, (3) briefly during the reign of Valerian in 257–58, and (4) during the “Great Persecution” under the emperor Diocletian, which lasted from 303 to 305 and was renewed by Maximinus Daia between 311 and 313.<sup>614</sup>

---

<sup>611</sup> Mart. Perp. Fel. 10.7

<sup>612</sup> Mart. Pol. 15–16.

<sup>613</sup> Candida Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom: Diverse Practices, Theologies, and Traditions*, ABRL (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2012), 12.

<sup>614</sup> Candida Moss, *The Myth of Persecution: How Christians Invented a Story of Martyrdom* (New York: HarperOne, 2013), 129.

This is roughly ten total years of persecution by imperial authorities. Yet throughout the years that separated these persecutions, stories of the martyrs accumulated and grew. The martyr became a hero to be emulated and remembered.

The local and sporadic nature of martyrdom prior to 250 CE does not mean, of course, that the fear was not real. Indeed, the proliferation of martyr narratives demonstrates the fear of uncertainty in the collective imagination of this minority group. But this proliferation also exacerbated that fear by bringing the common Christian into the arena through narrational imagination. Even when not persecuted, Christians were not popular in the empire. The proliferation of martyrdom stories in the early Christian community, coupled with widespread popularity of the gladiatorial games throughout the empire, had the ability to shape Christian identity with the sands of the arena.

### *Christian Gladiators*

War has always been a dirty affair. It ravages countries, leaders, and homes. But for Rome, the refuse of war was redesigned for the pleasure of empire in the form of the gladiator. Of course, war filled the tank of the gladiatorial machine only in the early republic when the headlines were filled with accounts of battles throughout the surrounding world.<sup>615</sup> But once the reservoir of war captives had dried up, the spectacle of the gladiator had become firmly etched in the collective mind of the empire. By the first half of the first century CE, more than half of the gladiators who competed in the arena were free volunteers fighting for honor.<sup>616</sup>

---

<sup>615</sup> Carlin A. Barton, *The Sorrows of the Ancient Romans: The Gladiator and the Monster* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 13.

<sup>616</sup> George Ville, *La Gladiature en Occident des origines à la mort de Domitien* (Rome : École française de Rome, 1981), 255. On the transition of gladiatorial games from sacrifice in response to the death of a prominent community member see Paul Plass, *The Game of Death in Ancient Rome* (Madison, WI:

Gladiatorial combat was always centered on death and individual mortality; it was introduced into Roman life as a way to publicly honor a deceased person of high standing. However, by the time of the late republic the gladiator's popularity had moved beyond the funerary realm.<sup>617</sup> This move occurred most directly during Augustan rule, wherein the private honor of the spectacle was merged with the public power of the imperial seat. Augustus took control of the arena. He placed strict limitations on the amount of gladiatorial shows Roman praetors could fund while in office. They were allowed two shows, limited to 120 participants.<sup>618</sup> The imperial seat also established imperial gladiatorial training centers, built the first stone amphitheater, and, by the time of Domitian, required the games be presented by the emperor himself, or a relative or magistrate as representative, the *editor* of the games.<sup>619</sup>

In the imperial period the gladiatorial battles were a public spectacle of Caesar's power over the surrounding lands, and they were designed to unite the public and bring them face to face with life, death and Caesar's control of both.<sup>620</sup> The gladiator became an image to remind the Roman public of the necessity to side with the powerful, and

---

University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 29–30; I. Weiler, *Der Sport bei den Völkern der Alten Welt* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1981), 228–32; Thomas Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 2, 5.

<sup>617</sup> Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators*, 5–8, 34.

<sup>618</sup> Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators*, 5–8.

<sup>619</sup> Roland Auguet, *Cruelty and Civilization: The Roman Games* (New York: Routledge, 1972), 28–31; Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators*, 5–8. The requirement of imperial presentation did not seem to limit games from being organized in provincial towns where the priests of the imperial cult, or wealthy citizens would organize the them; Fik Meijer, *The Gladiators: History's Most Deadly Sport*, trans. Liz Waters (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004), 33.

<sup>620</sup> Meijer, *The Gladiators*, 33 Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators*, 13, 35.

willingly offer one's life when Caesar requires it.<sup>621</sup> Augustus monopolized the power of the arena. He gave the gladiatorial spectacle a front row seat on the ceremonial calendar that structured Roman life and used it, as he did the imperial cult, to form Roman identity.<sup>622</sup> As such, the games, and the imperial presence at those games either physically or by statue or empty chair, coalesced society around his person.<sup>623</sup>

Because of this intimacy between the gladiatorial battles and the formation of Roman identity, a connection between the imperial cult and the administration of the games quickly materialized.<sup>624</sup> The popularity of the games grew as the imperial cult took a primary role in their organization with the priests arranging them during imperial festivals, at which times the martyrdom of Christians usually took place.<sup>625</sup> In the provincial games, imperial priests, on behalf of the province's high priest would normally preside over the spectacle as a form of liturgy.<sup>626</sup>

But the arena of gladiatorial combat was much more than a culturally unifying event. It was the preeminent place in the empire where Caesar could demonstrate his sovereign power over life and death. Public execution was a regular occurrence in the empire, but most execution sites where the condemned would be hanged or crucified

---

<sup>621</sup> Barton, *Sorrows*, 39; See Seneca, *Tranq.*, 14.4.

<sup>622</sup> Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators*, 41.

<sup>623</sup> Duncan Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West*, 3 vols., EPRO 108.1 (New York: E.J. Brill, 1987–2004), 2.1:575

<sup>624</sup> This is made most clear in the incorporation of an altar and temple at the amphitheater in Lugdunum. See Alison Futrell, *Blood in the Arena: The Spectacle of Roman Power* (Austin: University of Texas, 1997), 83–85.

<sup>625</sup> Fishwick, 2.1:577

<sup>626</sup> Fishwick, 3.3:306

remained unadorned and uncelebrated, “a bald testimony to the power to punish.”<sup>627</sup> By contrast, only those executions made in the arena received formalization in art and architecture. Melissa Dowling speculates that this formalization is due to the fact that it was only in the arena where Caesar’s right over life could truly be seen through the possibility of clemency.<sup>628</sup>

In no other medium of execution of the individual was the possibility of clemency found, but in the arena the vanquished could hope for life granted by the emperor (or his representative) due to the appeal of the crowd. The imagery surrounding the games visualizes this hope in scenes found on reliefs, mosaics, lamps, and ornaments highlighting a humiliated gladiator holding out his right hand in an appeal for clemency.<sup>629</sup> Scenes of the defeated gladiator imploring the *editor* for life or being granted clemency outnumber those of the defeated or dead gladiator. “The important moment in the games is the moment when mercy hangs in the balance.”<sup>630</sup> While death and personal immortality was both the genesis and motivator for the games, their focus in the imperial period quickly turned to that of Caesar’s ability to control that very death in the act of clemency.

Caesar’s ability to control death, as exemplified in the arena, extended from the slaves whose blood stained the sand, to the senators who watched the games. In chapter three, I briefly mentioned an account describing this fear, but it deserves to be quoted at

---

<sup>627</sup> Dowling, *Clemency*, 224.

<sup>628</sup> Ibid., 224. See also Plass, *The Game of Death*, 163–167.

<sup>629</sup> Dowling, *Clemency*, 230; cf. figures 14–16 in Dowling, *Clemency*.

<sup>630</sup> Ibid., 230.

length at this point. Dio Cassius recounts the fear of Caesar's power that penetrated the senatorial ranks from the arena floor:

This fear was shared by all, by us [senators] as well by the rest. And here is another thing that he did to us senators which gave us every reason to look for our death. Having killed an ostrich and cut off its head, he came up to where we were sitting, holding the head in his left hand and in his right hand raising aloft his bloody sword; and though he spoke not a word, yet he wagged his head with a grin, indicating that he would treat us in the same way. And many would indeed have perished by the sword on the spot, for laughing at him.<sup>631</sup>

Emperor Commodus was well known for his outrageous behavior, lavish spending on the games, and poor treatment of the elites. But the senatorial fear that drips from the stylus of Dio Cassius is an example not of Commodus's character but of his power made manifest in the spectacle of the arena, power that was available and employed well before Commodus's reign.

Gladiatorial combat in the arena was, then, much more than mere spectacle or entertainment. It was the public enactment of Caesar's power.<sup>632</sup> But, as Foucault is quick to remind us, where there is power there is resistance, and this is seen most clearly in the figure of the gladiator. The gladiator differed from the everyday criminal who entered the arena for execution, he might die, but he was trained and set apart for both shame and honor. Gladiators occupied a precarious position in Roman society. The gladiator was located at the bottom of the social order and regarded as a slave, yet also seen as one who can both possess and display the height of Roman virtues.<sup>633</sup> Outside of the arena he was

---

<sup>631</sup> Dio Cassius, *Hist. rom.* 73.1–2.

<sup>632</sup> For the political function of the games and the public's participation in imperial authority, along with the role of death in the games as a restoration of law and the reestablishment of the sovereign see Futrell, *Blood in the Arena*, 46–47.

<sup>633</sup> Meijer, *The Gladiators*, 42.

an object of fascination and scorn, but inside he could earn honor and postpone death. There is a mixture of both the demonstration of Caesar's power and resistance to that power found in the body of the gladiator.

But the gladiator, as fascinating as he is to the modern imagination, is not my focus. The martyr is. At first glance these two are worlds apart, the former is trained and equipped for staged combat to demonstrate the need to give oneself up for Caesar or earn honor, and the latter is placed in the arena to be shamed by the imperial power and demonstrate the danger of siding against Caesar. But on second glance, the distance between the two is not as far as we might suppose, as Carlin Barton emphasizes, the martyr resides within the same "close and complex discourse of honor and sacredness."<sup>634</sup> In both characters, the pursuit of honor and the resistance to power can be found. I want to suggest, though, that there is more that connects the martyr with the gladiator than honor; namely, power and allegiance. That is, the martyr stood in competition with the gladiator in the arena, both were bound to their death by a *sacramentum* (oath), but each would compete under a different *editor*.<sup>635</sup> In this competition, the death of the gladiator was both the same and different from that of the martyr. The former served to reinforce Caesar's power over life, the latter served to remove it.<sup>636</sup>

---

<sup>634</sup> Carlin Barton, "Savage Miracles: The Redemption of Lost Honor in Roman Society and the Sacrament of the Gladiator and the Martyr," *Representations* 45 (1994): 41.

<sup>635</sup> Carlin Barton, *Sorrows*, 25 n.48

<sup>636</sup> This is not to imply that most of the games were held in Rome, they were not. In fact, when we consider Christian martyrdom, it is likely the case that very few Christians died in Rome and fewer died in the Colosseum. Most died in North Africa and the eastern Empire; however, absence of Caesar's physical presence did not imply that his power was not behind the games. After Augustus, all games were overseen



For Tertullian, the martyr was the “most accomplished gladiator”<sup>637</sup> who stood in the arena under the oath of the *sacramentum*.<sup>638</sup> The martyr “fights” furiously in the arena as a soldier sealed by this *sacramentum* to maintain witness to the faith through wounds, dismemberment, and death.<sup>639</sup> For Cyprian, the martyr becomes a spectacle of the Lord and “acceptable to the eyes of God through the solemn *sacramentum*.”<sup>640</sup> As Barton notes, the correlate for the martyr is not the Roman Soldier who fights on the battlefields abroad, but the warrior of the arena, “where the most profound degradation was linked with the greatest exultation and glory.”<sup>641</sup> For both Tertullian and Cyprian, the martyr was bound to the arena in a way that only the gladiator was—through a sacred oath.

The gladiator’s oath united his body and soul to his master and sealed his fate in the arena where he would be “burned, bound, beaten, beheaded, or anything else that [his master] ordered.”<sup>642</sup> This contractual arrangement turned the shame of the arena into an opportunity for the gladiator to turn his fate into honor; therefore, the failure to pursue this fate would lead to shame.<sup>643</sup> However, while the gladiator had opportunity to redeem

---

by the emperor, whether he was present or not. See Donald G. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 243.

<sup>637</sup> Tertullian, *Mart.* 1.3

<sup>638</sup> Tertullian, *Mart.* 3.1

<sup>639</sup> Tertullian, *Sorp.* 4.5

<sup>640</sup> Cyprian, *Ep.* 10.2.3

<sup>641</sup> Barton, “Savage Miracles,” 56.

<sup>642</sup> Petronius, *Satyr.* 117 (Branham and Kinney); see also Seneca, *Ep.* 71.23; Barton, *Sorrows*, 14.

<sup>643</sup> Barton, *Sorrows*, 14–15.

his death, his sacrifice was done in the service of the emperor. He might have been bound to his master, but he served at the will and command of Caesar.

Not so for the Christian martyr. When Perpetua, for example, entered the arena the *editor* of the show was not Caesar, but God. Her honor was not found in the Roman spectacle, but in her relationship with the martyrdom of Jesus. And her *sacramentum* was not the gladiatorial oath, but the baptismal pledge of faith.<sup>644</sup> The Christian martyr was bound to Christ through baptism and thus compelled to enter the arena voluntarily and receive her death boldly. This was how gladiators died under the watchful eye of Caesar, not how criminals were supposed to die. There is an important distinction to be made here. The gladiator was evidence of the sovereign right to life through the control of death. The fierce struggle of two men on the sands of the arena forced the Roman audience to confront the power of death, and if they proved themselves by their skill and struggle, they would gain victory—life to fight again, or honor in death.<sup>645</sup> Both outcomes served to demonstrate the power wielded by Caesar. To the crowd, the right to life and the act of death was not the result of the combatant but the emperor, or the *editor* who represented him.<sup>646</sup>

---

<sup>644</sup> Nathaniel P. DesRosiers, “Oath and Anti-Oath: Alternating Forms of Community Building in the Third Century,” in *Religious Competition in the Third Century CE: Jews, Christians, and the Greco-Roman World*, eds. Jordan D. Rosenblum, Lily C. Vuong, and Nathaniel P. DesRosiers (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht GmbH & Co., 2014), 100. It is worth noting that Tertullian does distinguish the Christian *sacramentum* from a pagan oath, suggesting that what is in reference is the ritual of baptism itself, not an actual oath. Tertullian, *Spect.* 24. For the varied meaning of *sacramentum* in Tertullian, see William A. Van Roo, *The Christian Sacrament* (Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1992), 37.

<sup>645</sup> Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators*, 35; Barton, *Sorrows*, 31.

<sup>646</sup> Barton, *Sorrows*, 19.

But the Christian was wholly different. She entered the arena not during the evening games when the gladiators would demonstrate their virtue in struggle, but at noonday when the criminals would be killed without the opportunity of honor. Yet, her death is inscribed by Christian sources as a victory similar that of the gladiator. She is, according to Cyprian, a warrior of Christ who will receive the reward of victory over death<sup>647</sup> if she maintains the *sacramentum* in torture under the watchful eye of God<sup>648</sup> and Christ, who searches the interior of the heart.<sup>649</sup> Those who abandon the *sacramentum* during times of persecution and torture are worthy of excommunication.<sup>650</sup> In the martyr's appropriation of gladiatorial honor, the right of death is stripped from Caesar who can no longer offer clemency to the martyr, because she has no interest in it. Her reward is resurrection.

### *Training for Martyrdom*

The body of the early Christian martyr has always captivated the minds of society, this was certainly the case in the early centuries of Christian existence, but it is no less true in modern scholarship.<sup>651</sup> Among the many modern analyses of the act of

---

<sup>647</sup> Cyprian, *Ep.* 10.3; cf. *Letters of the Churches of Lyons and Vienna* 1.43

<sup>648</sup> Cyprian, *Ep.* 10.4

<sup>649</sup> Cyprian, *Ep.* 10.5

<sup>650</sup> Cyprian, *Laps.* 6, 13.

<sup>651</sup> Studies on the martyrs and *acta martyrum* are too numerous to list, an apt demonstration of their captivating power. For the sake of reference, I note only a few of the more recent, influential texts that I have found most helpful: Judith Perkins, *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* (London: Routledge, 1995); Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); Elizabeth A. Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory: Early Christian Culture Making* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); Robin Darling Young, *In Procession before the World: Martyrdom as Public Liturgy in Early Christianity* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2001); Brent D. Shaw, "Body/Power/Identity: Passions of the Martyrs," *J ECS* 4 (1996): 269–312; Nicole Kelley, "Philosophy as Training for Death: Reading the

martyrdom, several draw attention to the use of martyrologies in preparation, or training, for martyrdom.<sup>652</sup> That is, though early martyrologies do not provide a completely accurate historical representation of the events they describe, they do provide a glimpse into how the stories of these counter-gladiators in the arena could be used to transfer the spirit of the martyr into the life of the larger Christian community.<sup>653</sup>

Shortly after the memory of the martyr had taken root in the collective imagination of the early Christian community, training became part of the martyr's story and role in the community. Polycarp, for example, attained the courage to endure his time in the arena,<sup>654</sup> and the memory of Polycarp becomes "a memorial for those who have already fought the contest and for the *training and preparation* of those who will do so one day."<sup>655</sup> The reader/listener of the story is called to desire an entrance into the resurrection that resembles Polycarp.<sup>656</sup> The spread of the fear of the arena through stories of the martyrs led to calls for the community to zealously train for their moment of struggle through fasting, prayer, the eucharist, singing, and regular meetings.<sup>657</sup>

---

Ancient Christian Martyr Acts as Spiritual Exercises," *ASCH* 75:4 (2006), 723–747; Candida Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom*.

<sup>652</sup> See esp. Kelly, "Philosophy as Training,"; Donald W. Riddle, *The Martyrs: A Study in Social Control* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931), 27–76.

<sup>653</sup> This is similar to the way that the spirit of the gladiator was a useful tool for training larger Roman society. As Barton notes, Seneca uses the gladiator's presence in the arena as a model for the wise man (*Tranq.* 11.1–6). See Barton, *Sorrows*, 18.

<sup>654</sup> Mart. Pol. 2

<sup>655</sup> Mart. Pol. 18

<sup>656</sup> Mart. Pol. 22

<sup>657</sup> Tertullian, *Fug.* 1; Cyprian, *Ep.* 53.4, 55.1; 3.2, 4; Mart. Perp. Fel. 6.1;

Discipline of the body, then, becomes a means of readying oneself for her encounter with death by Roman hands.<sup>658</sup>

Further, as Nicole Kelley has demonstrated, the martyr texts themselves serve as a means of preparation by writing the story of the martyr through the language of scriptural maxims intended for recitation and memorization, displaying the martyr as an imitation of Christ, and showing the contest from a God's-eye perspective.<sup>659</sup> The battle was not overseen by the emperor or the *editor* of the games, as Apollonius says "it is through God that we are what we are. For this reason we make every effort not to die a coward's death. Indeed, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's."<sup>660</sup>

The martyr was written into the arena not as a victim fearfully awaiting punishment, but as a warrior entering a contest against the imperial state in league with the Devil.<sup>661</sup> In the words of Judith Lieu, the martyrs "who go to their deaths are not victims but the central actors in a drama through which a new way of understanding is created and maintained."<sup>662</sup> But, as evidenced by Germanicus, fighting does not look like the gladiator who seeks life through victory or honorable defeat, rather, to "fight

---

<sup>658</sup> See especially Tertullian, *On Fasting*, 12.2

<sup>659</sup> Nicole Kelley, "Philosophy as Training," 739–746.

<sup>660</sup> Mart. Apol. 27–28.

<sup>661</sup> In a way that reminds us of Paul's connection between the "rulers of this age" and demonic forces, the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* the various devices of torture and execution used by Rome are mere "strategems [of] the Devil" (Mart. Pol. 3). This theme is also found in the *Martyrdom of Perpetua* wherein Perpetua has a vision of herself as a gladiator in combat with an Egyptian who is the Devil (Mart. Perp. Fel. 10). The connection between Roman punishment and Satanic forces is seen most clearly throughout the *Martyrs of Lyons* in which the actions of the punishment of Rome is consistently re-interpreted as the attacks of Satan; see also Young, *Procession*, 35–36.

<sup>662</sup> Judith Lieu, *Neither Jew nor Greek? Constructing Early Christian Identity*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 213.

manfully” is to pursue death, even by pulling the beasts on top of you to expedite your transition into the eternal state.<sup>663</sup> With proper training, one might share in the cup of Christ, achieve “the resurrection unto eternal life,” and win “the crown of immortality.”<sup>664</sup> But the opposite of success is also written into these as a means of warning and encouragement to greater preparation. Those who are unable to achieve the crown and endure the persecution are described as “untrained, unprepared, and weak, unable to bear the strain of a great conflict.”<sup>665</sup>

However, as many have emphasized, most of the Christians reading these martyr accounts would not undergo persecution and death in the arena. There are no known persecutions by the Roman state prior to 64 CE and until 250 persecutions were sporadic and localized. The first general persecutions did not develop until the mid-third century with Decius.<sup>666</sup> Why, then, train a community for an experience that the vast majority would not experience? The answer comes down to basic apologetics. As Candida Moss has shown, the boundary separating the martyr acts and the second century apologies “is at best permeable.”<sup>667</sup> The apologists weave martyrdom throughout their accounts and the martyrologies serve the apologetic purposes of the church. They were used to draw boundaries and shape identity in contrast with the Roman Imperial order.

---

<sup>663</sup> Mart. Pol. 3

<sup>664</sup> Mart. Pol. 14, 18; Sib. Or. 2.34; *Letter of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne* 1.36, 42

<sup>665</sup> *Letter of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne* 1.11; see Kelley, “Philosophy as Training,” 726; Young, *Procession*, 36.

<sup>666</sup> G.E.M. De Ste. Croix, “Why Were the Early Christians Persecuted?” in *Christian Persecution, Martyrdom, and Orthodoxy*, eds. G.E.M. De Ste. Croix, Michael Whitby, and Joseph Streeter (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 106–107.

<sup>667</sup> Candida Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom*, 16.

To be clear, there were real martyrs and real persecutions, but the narratively constructed martyr was a tool for group and individual training and identity formation. The Christian was to prepare as if he were to enter the arena, even if that entrance was highly unlikely. The narratives taught him how to boldly address the judge and the ruling authorities with confidence in witness of Christ. Like Appolonius, his training will prepare him to stand before the governor confidently defending the faith and challenging the governor.<sup>668</sup> They taught her how to endure the physical pain and strengthen oneself so that, like Blandina, the martyr's body might weaken the resolve of the torturer.<sup>669</sup> The martyr should find her strength renewed "like a noble athlete" when she confesses "I am a Christian; we do nothing to be ashamed of."<sup>670</sup> They taught her how to enter the arena like a gladiator, responding to the challenge by not averting the eyes, like Perpetua whose power of gaze caused the crowd to blink.<sup>671</sup> And they taught him to chase after virtue in death at all costs. Like Tertullian, he can look at the pyre about to be set on fire and envision himself in a triumphal chariot.<sup>672</sup> The Christian was called to see her life as gladiatorial training for her upcoming event. In the words of Leonard Thompson, "the martyrologies themselves became recipes for exemplary behavior at the trials and

---

<sup>668</sup> Mart. Apol. 1–44.

<sup>669</sup> *Letters of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne* 1.18

<sup>670</sup> *Letter of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne* 1.19

<sup>671</sup> Mart. Perp. Fel. 18.2; cf. Plutarch, *Publ.* 17.3; Barton compares Perpetua's eye-contact with the report of Pliny the Elder that there were only two gladiators in Caligula's *ludus* of 20,000 who could keep from blinking in the face of danger (*Nat.* 11.54.144), Barton, "Savage Miracles," 48–49.

<sup>672</sup> Tertullian *Apol.* 50.4

executions, for example, how to respond to questions, what gestures to make and what facial expressions to wear, and how to display suffering as normative, not abnormal.”<sup>673</sup>

### *The Contest of Power*

Early Christian martyrologies lived in the realm of religious contestation. They were far more than stories provided for an interested public. They took a page out of Paul’s apocalyptic theology—old cosmos in competition with new creation—and constructed a view of the empire and its inhabitants that filled in the particulars of that cosmic struggle. The martyr was, in a very real way, identifying with the crucifixion of Jesus at the hands of injustice and violence. In response, she would receive victory in the resurrection from the dead. These stories challenge the ideological structure of the Roman Imperial order, and subsequently ingrain that challenge and the struggle that goes along with it into the early Christian subject.

To be clear, the observation of the martyrologies as imperial contestation is not unique. It has shown up in the work of many scholars, most notably Judith Perkins, Elizabeth Castelli, Robin Darling Young, and Catharine Edwards.<sup>674</sup> But while there is unquestionably a critique that is made against the larger social and hierarchical order in the empire through martyrdom, at its core, martyrdom is about death and life. Martyrologies, then, are about training for death and life. The primary critique that the

---

<sup>673</sup> Leonard L. Thompson, “The Martyrdom of Polycarp: Death in the Roman Games,” *JR* 82 (2002): 41; cited in Kelley, “Philosophy as Training,” 728–9.

<sup>674</sup> Perkins, *Suffering Self*, Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory*, Young, *In Procession Before the World*, Catharine Edwards, *Death in Ancient Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007)



story of the martyrs makes is that Caesar's blade is blunt. These martyrologies showcase a struggle of power that is consistently lost by the Roman Empire.

The contest began at court when the accused Christians stood before the governor and engaged in a lengthy back-and-forth conversation. Time and again the Christian was given opportunity to recant, swear by the emperor's genius, and sacrifice to the gods. The well-trained martyr, though, was unflappable in the face of such pressure.<sup>675</sup> This, of course, was a problem for the magistrate. A Roman trial was a struggle of power and "a contest about truth . . . if a magistrate could force a Christian to recant, he won; if not, he lost."<sup>676</sup> Torture prior to execution was designed to bleed the truth from the subject, hence the decision of an Alexandrian judge in one instance to skip torture and move immediately to execution out of the fear of being defeated by a woman.<sup>677</sup> The unwillingness of the accused Christians to recant and honor the genius of the emperor is, ultimately, a failure of the governor's power. Torture did not work, and its deficiency is found in the martyr's desire for death, resurrection, and subsequent judgment.<sup>678</sup>

---

<sup>675</sup> For a clear example of this resistance before the civil magistrate see Mart. Apol. 1–45, wherein Apollonius presents a reasoned case to the governor Perennis leading Perennis to desire to release Apollonius but restricted from doing so due to the emperor's demands. Instead, Perennis gives Apollonius a merciful death by allowing his legs to be broken. But this strong resistance is not limited to Apollonius, it shows up in almost every martyr account: Mart. Just. 1.2–4.6; *Letters of the Churches of Lyons and Vienna*, 1.11; *Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs*, 2–14. The contrast between the governor's frustration and the martyr's resistance is seen most clearly in the Mart. Carp. 9, wherein the proconsul's "angry" command to "sacrifice to the gods" is met with Carpus "gentle smile" and call for the destruction of the gods.

<sup>676</sup> David Potter, "Martyrdom as Spectacle," in *Theater and Society in the Classical World*, ed. Ruth Scodel (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 64. See the account of Epicharis in Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.51, 57, a conspirator against Nero whose endurance under torture is interpreted as a humiliation of the torturers and their inability to extract truth.

<sup>677</sup> Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.41.18

<sup>678</sup> Judgment is a consistent theme that arises in the martyrologies. It is presented as the future event, post-resurrection, in which the martyrs will be vindicated and the persecutors will be punished. See Mart. Pol. 11–12; Mart. Perp. Fel., 18.9; Mart. Carp. 40 Mart. Just. 5.6; Mart. Apol. 37; Mart. Pion. 1.24, 7.4. Judgment was sometimes placed in the context of the arena wherein the coming of Christ would result in a

But the martyr accounts do not end in the courtroom, they bring the reader onto the sands of the arena to experience the result of the Christian's decision to endure her contest with the governor. It is in the arena where Felicitas transforms from a midwife to a gladiator, ready for her baptism of blood.<sup>679</sup> And yet, as we have already seen, when the Christians entered the arena, it was not with the gladiators. Their blood would stain the sand in the morning or the middle of the day. Gladiatorial combat was the climax of the games, and it did not take place until the afternoon. Preceding the main entrée was animal hunts and slaughter in the morning, and the public execution of common criminals at midday.<sup>680</sup> Christians went to their death normally at the midday celebration of law and order, when most of the crowd had vacated the arena to grab lunch prior to the main event and all who remained were the bloodthirsty spectators desiring to see "the most brutal of the day's events."<sup>681</sup> It was during this time, when the criminals stood on the sand without equipment, training, or the honor of the *sacramentum* that the real bloodshed was seen and the cry of fear was heard.<sup>682</sup>

---

spectacle under the eye of Christ who would show no compassion, just as the Christians had received no compassion. See Tert. *De Spec.* 30.3–5, 7; Lact. *De mort. Pers.* 50.7, as summarized by Elizabeth Castelli: "the closing chapter of Tertullian's polemic promises a last act that will literally bring down the house," Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory*, 118.

<sup>679</sup> Mart. Perp. Fel. 18.4

<sup>680</sup> Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators*, 55; Thompson, "Martyrdom of Polycarp," 32, links the morning hunts and the midday executions with the demonstration of Rome's power over nature and ability to correct legal imbalance, respectively. Both of these demonstrations of power were designed to demonstrate protection of the empire from both the natural and the human threat to life, Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators*, 90–91. They should be understood as a spectacle of Caesar's right over life.

<sup>681</sup> Thomson, "Martyrdom of Polycarp," 33. See also Kyle, *Spectacles*, 244, "They died in the arena, but not as gladiators; they were thrown to the beasts, but not as *bestiarii*. As cheap, non-bellicose *noxii*, they suffered the worst atrocities of *summa supplicia*." They were perceived as criminals of the state and died as such, it was the Christian narrativization of these deaths "that turned Roman prosecutions for religious treason into Christian persecutions for faith."

<sup>682</sup> Edwards, *Death in Rome*, 211.

The audiences expected to witness a series of events carried out in a particular order, and to witness behavior of a consistent type. They expected to see a picture of society's power painted upon the canvas provided by the bodies of the condemned . . . they expected to see penitence and terror in the condemned, they expected to hear the scream, and they expected to see the terror in their faces as they confronted the beasts or the other savage forms of execution which were employed in the arena.<sup>683</sup>

The disconnect between the crowd's expectation and the martyr's experience, however, was not in the status of the accused Christians as criminal of the state, or in the violence of the event. Both of those elements were in order. Rather, the disconnect was found in the way the accused Christians envisioned themselves—they were not fearful criminals afraid of their death, but honorable gladiators pursuing the victor's crown, the resurrection of the body.

The problem of the Christian martyr in the arena was that he did not play the part assigned to him by Caesar. His desire for death, resurrection, and subsequent judgment did not play well with the arena's demonstration of imperial power. Rather than following the script, the Christian martyrologies recount stories of Rome's political impotence when confronted with the martyr who does not fear death. The trial and execution required a successful conclusion wherein the accused would confess then die in fear, when this did not happen the entire process served to undermine the state's authority.<sup>684</sup> Christian martyr acts, by transforming the martyr into a gladiator who boldly and willingly conquered death, jeopardized the power that was supposed to be on display. In the words of David Potter "the criminal was not on a par with the great figures who won fame and fortune as athletes or gladiators. The condemned was a prop, deprived of

---

<sup>683</sup> Potter, "Spectacle," 53.

<sup>684</sup> Ibid., 54.

self, something for the real stars to play with.”<sup>685</sup> And yet, through the martyr’s self-transformation from victim to victor, the condemned became the star who resists Caesar’s right to death.

If the martyr accounts are to be trusted, then it appears that this form of resistance through the bold pursuit of death was recognized by the Roman authorities, and as such arrangements were made to prohibit it. After the Decian persecution of 250 C. E., which produced many of the martyr accounts, there was change in the way Christian martyrs were treated when Valerian commenced the next wave of persecution in 257 C. E. This change is made most evident in the *Acts of Cyprian*. Cyprian was arrested and sent into exile under the Valerian decree. Soon thereafter he was brought before the new governor, Galerius Maximus in Carthage. Despite the fact that many people, pagan and Christian, had come out to witness this event, the exchange between Galerius and Cyprian is straightforward and short, and contains no torture or coercive elements. Cyprian simply acknowledges his resistance to sacrifice because of his Christian identity, and Galerius, in a rather straightforward way, reads his verdict from a tablet: death by decapitation. He is brought behind the proconsular residence, followed by many Christians, and beheaded. There are no beasts, pyres, or bloodthirsty crowds. It is a rather clean affair without public recognition.

This trend continues in other Valerian martyrologies. In the *Martyrdom of Marian and James*, the prefect is the bloodthirsty one, not the crowd. Though the narrative

---

<sup>685</sup> Ibid., 65.

interprets the event as a contest, there is little description of a courtroom exchange.<sup>686</sup> Rather, the majority of the narrative recounts the accused Christians sitting in jail, waiting for the day when the executioner would, with little fanfare, decapitate them. They were executed without a crowd, by the river, and the absence of an arena caused the author to construct one out of the imagination—“a river valley ran with high banks on either side, and the heights on both sides also served as a theater.”<sup>687</sup> Again in the *Martyrdom of Montanus and Lucius*, the accused Christians wait in prison until, after a short exchange with the prefect, they are sentenced to death by decapitation with no additional torture, though the populace called for it.<sup>688</sup> This is not to imply simple decapitation of Christians did not exist prior to the Valerian persecutions; however, the narrative sources prior to Valerian recount extended conflict of trial and few decapitations, whereas those after contain short trials with many decapitations.

Though there are other reasons for this shift from the arena to private decapitation, it is indicative of an attempt to avoid the loss of imperial power through the spectacle of the martyr.<sup>689</sup> The accused Christian was supposed to play the game and die in fear, but when the martyr, like Perpetua, boldly moved the executioner’s blade to the throat in pursuit of death, the power of the emperor was challenged. She played the part of a gladiator fighting under a different *editor*. The move to private decapitation away

---

<sup>686</sup> Mart. Mar. James. 3.4–5.

<sup>687</sup> Mart. Mar. James 11.9; see Potter, “Spectacle,” 81n.65.

<sup>688</sup> Mart. Mont. Luc. 17, 20–21.

<sup>689</sup> The Valerian persecutions were largely focused on leaders among the Christian community who were more likely to come from the upper order of society. After 212 C. E. decapitation became a privileged death intended to lessen physical pain among the *honestiores*. See Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators*, 69, 78; Potter, “Spectacle,” 69–71; and Kyle, *Spectacles*, 248.

from the crowds and the arena signals the recognition of danger that the martyr and his trust in the resurrection posed by disturbing the public reinforcement of social order and imperial power.

By taking upon the role of the gladiator, the martyr stood up to the tyrannical authority of empire in a way that the classical hero never could. The martyr was not simply out to pursue honor and fame, but true glory, eternal life, and a front-row seat at the judgment day when his executioner would meet the true judge.<sup>690</sup> Caesar's clemency mattered little to him; death was merely the first step in the process of gaining immortal life.

### **Care for the Corpse**

However, as bold as the martyr was, in the end his body would fall lifeless to the ground, along with the countless other bodies of gladiators, criminals, and animals. Killing was the easy part, disposal was the challenge. The Roman machine of death produced, quite literally, tons of flesh that had to be disposed of, and disposal was a reflection of the individual's status. Gladiators who fought bravely were carried through the gate of death and allowed proper burial, but the corpses those who died at the midday executions were further humiliated through mutilation and were then dragged through the streets by hooks.<sup>691</sup> After the humiliation, though, the bodies had to go somewhere, and where they went is largely a mystery. It is likely the case that they were dumped in

---

<sup>690</sup> Carole Straw, "'A Very Special Death': Christian Martyrdom in its Classical Context," in *Sacrificing the Self: Perspectives on Martyrdom and Religion*, ed. Margaret Cormack (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 41.

<sup>691</sup> Kyle, *Spectacles*, 155–156, 160.

various pits, or fields (*puticuli*) outside the city,<sup>692</sup> or disposed in the Tiber, or another source of water as the burning of criminal corpses (in part or full) was generally used to continue the insult, rather than as a means of regular disposal.<sup>693</sup>

Part of the dilemma with criminal corpses was the lack of people desiring to provide decent burial or be associated with the condemned and shamed corpse.<sup>694</sup> However, this fear of association was not found among the Christian martyrs. Rather, they interpreted the martyr's death as victory and worthy of proper burial, and not merely for the purpose of honor but to await the resurrection of the flesh. The imperial response to the Christian corpse can begin to clue us in on the ways by which Christian care of the dead continued the contest with Caesar's right of life and death from the grave.

The final section of this chapter will explore the Christian response to death in burial rituals, a fitting end given this act is the final one the Christian can participate in while she waits for the resurrection. As Ian Hodder reminds us, burial rituals are not passive reflections of life, but active and meaningful constructions that allows the self to become in death what she was not in life.<sup>695</sup> Through burial ritual the martyr, and by extension the common Christian, was made able to resist the imperial judgment of death. This resistance took place through three forms: communal care for the corpse,

---

<sup>692</sup> See Kyle, *Spectacles*, 177 n. 53; Rodolfo Laciani, *The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome* (New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1897), 409.

<sup>693</sup> On the dangers and challenges of burning corpses for disposal see Kyle, *Spectacles*, 169–170.

<sup>694</sup> Kyle, *Spectacles*, 162.

<sup>695</sup> Ian Hodder, *The Present Past: An Introduction to Anthropology for Archaeologists* (London: B.T. Batsford, Ltd., 1982), 141, 146.

descriptions of the dead, and placement of the bodies. These three forms interact to create a perspective of the dead that countered the Roman attempt to defang the resurrection.

### *Defanging the Resurrection*

Pagan critics quickly picked upon on the Christian desire to preserve the corpse and provide proper burial *for the purpose of resurrection*. Eusebius recounts a story from the persecution at Lyon in 177 CE that demonstrates this point. Many of the condemned died by strangulation in prison and were subsequently fed to the dogs and guarded so that the remains could not be gathered. The pieces that remained behind were incinerated so as to deny burial. Other corpses were placed in the open for six days under guard, then burned and their ashes swept into the Rhône. The Christian community plead with Roman officials and even offered payment to collect the remains but they were consistently rebuffed, as they desired to “rob the dead of their rebirth” and remove all “hope of the resurrection,” saying “now let’s see if they’ll rise again, and if their god can help them and save them from our hands.”<sup>696</sup> In another account, Ignatius sought to be digested entirely by the beasts or destroyed by fire to prevent his followers from endangering themselves in the pursuit of remains.<sup>697</sup>

The followers of Polycarp expressed anxiety about their inability to recover his remains, an act made by the “Evil One” who desired to restrict Polycarp from taking up the “garland of immortality.” Nonetheless, following a conflict with the Jews, the

---

<sup>696</sup> Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 1.61–62.

<sup>697</sup> Ign. *Rom.* 4.1–2, 5.2–3; Kyle, *Spectacles*, 245. Bynum draws attention to the dating of this account and argues that it precedes the intense concern with the re-animation of material particles for the continuity of the self, Bynum, *Resurrection*, 27–28.



Christians were able to collect up the remains and bury them as a memorial and training tool.<sup>698</sup> This continued into the early-fourth century when seven Christian virgins in Ancyra were weighed down and thrown into a lake to drown, while soldiers were placed to guard the lake. Because of both a local festival and a storm, the Soldiers left, allowing someone to cut the ropes, retrieve the bodies, and bury them. When this was discovered, they were exhumed and incinerated.<sup>699</sup> Exhumation of buried Christians for the purpose of scattering the bodies and casting them into the water is also recounted by Hippolytus and Eusebius.<sup>700</sup>

When the right of burial is removed from the Christian martyrs, the theology of resurrection had to wrestle with the question of continuity of identity. This generally went in the direction of the God's power effecting the re-creation of material bits that were spread throughout the world. But, so far as I can tell, no one has pursued the question of why imperial authorities sought to prohibit Christian burial. That is, if imperial authorities said that the prohibition was done to prevent hope in the resurrection, and yet Christians responded by demonstrating that resurrection was not contingent on the presence of an intact body, where is the disconnect? Or, why did Roman society think this would be a deterrent in the first place? Likely because *they* saw the proper disposal of the body as necessary for existence in the afterlife.

---

<sup>698</sup> Mart. Pol. 17–18.

<sup>699</sup> Mart. Theod. 13–20; see Kyle, *Spectacles*, 252; Stephen Mitchell, “The Life of Saint Theodotus of Ancyra,” *Anatolian Studies* 32 (1982): 94.

<sup>700</sup> Hippolytus, *Comm. Dan.* 4.51; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.*, 8.6.6–7.

Dag Endsjø, after surveying literary accounts that discuss the unburied body, concludes that the destruction of the body prior to the funeral ritual was seen as the “most horrific fate possible,” so that images of animals, birds, and fish eating the flesh of fallen soldiers symbolized complete annihilation.<sup>701</sup> This is seen most clearly in the first century, CE example of Clitonymus who was murdered and disposed of in a river, yet was considered fortunate because “he was recovered and ‘his whole body from head to foot’ could properly be buried.”<sup>702</sup> In the pagan mind and by pagan logic, denial of burial for the Christian would naturally result in denial of resurrection, just as it would result in denial of the afterlife.

It should be noted that Roman restriction of Christian burial was not universal, as evidenced by other examples like that of Perpetua, rather, it was dependent on geography or governing discretion.<sup>703</sup> Further, the means of disposal of these corpses follow traditional practices for dealing with religious threat and contamination, though it does appear to be compounded in the case of Christians. These considerations aside, it is nonetheless reasonable to conclude with Donald Kyle that the Christian hope of the resurrection should provide the interpretive grid for understanding the especially harsh abuse placed on Christian corpses and their disposal.<sup>704</sup> The fact that Roman practice was done in response to the Christian idea of resurrection (or was at least interpreted as such)

---

<sup>701</sup> Endsjø, *Greek Resurrection Beliefs*, 33. See ch. 3 for a complete discussion of the Graeco-Roman focus on the burial of the body and its importance for the afterlife.

<sup>702</sup> Ibid., 35, quoting from *AnthLyrGraec* 7.388.

<sup>703</sup> See Brent D. Shaw, “The Passion of Perpetua,” *PP* 139 (1993): 42.

<sup>704</sup> Kyle, *Spectacles*, 243, 252.

is demonstrated in the Christian response. And this response expands beyond the body of the martyr to include all Christian dead who can, in death, resist the emperor's right to life through how the community cared for the corpse, what they said about the dead, and where they put the bodies.

### *Burial Practices*

As we saw in chapter six, the Christian articulation of resurrection developed during the time of wide-spread persecution, and it was this context that led to an emphasis on the flesh for the sake of maintaining the self through material continuity. This theological development served as a means of combatting Roman attempts at prohibiting the resurrection by demonstrating that "God the Sovereign" has the power to restore even matter vaporized by fire.<sup>705</sup> Building on this theological development, which was discussed at length in chapter six, what we see is that the ideological resistance to Roman defilement of the martyr's corpse did not remain in the world of ideas, it also had material implications in the embrace of the physical body, post-death.

I should begin this discussion, though, by clearing the table of an erroneous idea that can, at first glance, appear compelling. Christians, like their Jewish counterparts, buried the bodies of their dead. This practice was in keeping with the Jewish custom of inhumation and the example of the burial of Jesus.<sup>706</sup> At the inception of Christian inhumation, the rest of the empire disposed of the corpse through cremation. However, while Christianity rose to prominence, the rest of the empire was also in the process of

---

<sup>705</sup> Tatian, *Or. Graec.* 6.2; cf. Minusius Felix *Oct.* 11.1–2.

<sup>706</sup> A.D. Nock, "Cremation and Burial in the Roman Empire," *HTR* 25.1 (1932): 335

shifting from cremation to inhumation.<sup>707</sup> Quite simply, cremation was hot until the beginning of the second century C. E., at which point inhumation began to expand from Rome to the extensions of the empire, slowly dislodging the prominence of cremation.<sup>708</sup> By the end of the second century inhumation was normal for the elite, so that by the mid-third century Herodian of Antioch could refer to inhumation as the “custom of men,” and by the end of the third century it had likely reached to the furthest reaches of the Western empire.<sup>709</sup> This appears to be a simple equation of correlation—the rise of Christianity and its focus on the body led to the commensurate rise of inhumation in the empire—and it has been read as such many times over.<sup>710</sup> However, burial practices in the empire appear to have changed with relative fluidity, and this shift to inhumation began independent of the rise of the Christian movement.<sup>711</sup>

Though it is tempting to associate this general expansion of inhumation with the commensurate rise of Christianity, we are reminded by scholars of Roman history to not succumb to the temptation.<sup>712</sup> Christianity happened to spread during a time of general

---

<sup>707</sup> Macrobius, in describing the natural heat of females in the late-fourth, early-fifth century, could say that cremation is a practice relegated to the library. *Sat.* 7.7.5.

<sup>708</sup> J.M.C. Toynbee, *Death and Burial in the Roman World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971), 33–34.

<sup>709</sup> Ian Morris, *Death-Ritual and Social Structure in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 56; Herodianus, *Hist.* 4.2.2; Morris, 66–68.

<sup>710</sup> For an overview of theories in explanation of this shift see G. Koch and H. Sichtermann, *Römische Sarkophage* (Munich: Beck, 1982), 23–30.

<sup>711</sup> Toynbee, *Death and Burial*, 39–40.

<sup>712</sup> Nock, “Cremation and Burial”; John Bodel, “From *Columbaria* to Catacombs,” in *Commemorating the Dead: Texts and Artifacts in Context*, eds. Laurie Brink, O. P. and Deborah Green. (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 181–186. Ian Morris, *Death-Ritual*, 31–32.; Géza Alföldy, “The Crisis of the Third Century as seen by Contemporaries,” *GRBS* 15.1 (2003): 89–111.

upheaval in the empire. While the message of the resurrection was being proclaimed in the *aula ecclesiae* throughout the empire in the late-third century, Rome was engaged in two major wars on the eastern and western borders, simultaneously. Additionally, Gaul was on the brink of breaking away along with the eastern provinces, and the plague and currency inflation began to infest the cities throughout the empire.<sup>713</sup> The question of whether we can call this period the “third century crisis” is one I’ll leave to historians of Rome, though I am inclined to lean toward a positive answer.<sup>714</sup> But whether we call it a crisis or an upheaval, the empire was in a time of uncertainty, characterized by fragmentation and regional specificity. Ian Morris convincingly argues that the shift from cremation to inhumation, “the biggest single event in ancient burial,” was a practice that came from the elite’s fascination with eastern ideas and was employed as a social symbol able to paste together the fragmented empire, so that east and west became united in ritual during a time of crisis and uncertainty.<sup>715</sup> However, though we must conclude that inhumation began in earnest well before Christianity could make any significant dent in imperial practice, we can still conclude with Morris that this unity through ritual assisted the rapid spread of the young movement.<sup>716</sup>

---

<sup>713</sup> Wolf Liebeschuetz, “Was there a Crisis of the Third Century?” in *Crises and the Roman Empire* eds. Olivier Hekster, Gerda de Kleijn, and Daniëlle Slootjes (Boston: Brill, 2007), 18.

<sup>714</sup> See Liebeschuetz, “Was there a Crisis?”; Lukas de Blois, “The Crisis of the Third Century in the Roman Empire: a Modern Myth?” in *The Transformation of Economic Life under the Roman Empire*, eds. Lukas de Blois and J. Rich (Boston: Brill, 2002). De Blois, “The Third Century Crisis and the Greek Elite in the Roman Empire,” *Historia* 33 (1984): 358–77.

<sup>715</sup> Ian Morris, *Death-Ritual*, 31, 68.

<sup>716</sup> See Bodel “From Columbaria to Catacombs,” 181 n.9; Ian Morris, *Death Ritual*, 68.

If burial practices did not differ significantly between Christians and pagans, can we then conclude that Christian burial practice substantially challenged Roman Imperial power? I think we can conclude this, but our conclusion comes not through correlation between inhumation and Christian expansion. Rather, we can arrive at this conclusion by a more nuanced understanding of the interrelationship between the idea of resurrection and the subtle ways Christians infused material practice with that idea.

Christians, like other inhabitants of the empire in the late-second through early-fourth centuries, placed importance on the body in burial.<sup>717</sup> To be clear, Christian concern with the corpse and burial in the early centuries was not pronounced. If anything, the paucity of evidence might lead us to conclude that Christian leaders left the question of burial and care of the dead to the discretion of the family group, as was customary.<sup>718</sup> However, to envision a wide chasm between the Christian community's ideas and the burial practices of early Christians is an overstep.<sup>719</sup> There is ample evidence to suggest

---

<sup>717</sup> This importance on the body, though, should be contrasted with that of traditional Graeco-Roman ideas of the afterlife. After surveying a series of epitaphs and cenotaphs, Dag Endsjø concludes that "the state of one's bodiless existence in Hades depended on the state of the body. As the classics scholar Emily Vermeule points out, the form of the disembodied soul would forever reflect how the body was at the time of passing or at the time of obsequies." See Dag Øistein Endsjø, *Greek Resurrection Beliefs*, 31; Emily Vermeule, *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 49.

<sup>718</sup> Rebillard, *Care of the Dead*, 29. This conclusion, though, ignores the complexity of family and group dynamics in human burial and funeral practices. If Christianity was as small and socially insignificant, as Rebillard contends, then families, naturally, would not be inclined to provide the group access to the corpse of a loved one. Once dead, the person's wish could not be voiced, and need not be followed. I recall a time when a single man from my congregation died. His next of kin, whom we did not know, had him cremated. When I contacted her to offer funeral services at the church she ignored me. Families of the dead do not necessarily care about the social connections made by the living, but this does not imply that those social organizations (i.e. the early Christian community) are disinterested in burial practices.

<sup>719</sup> Rebillard, *Care of the Dead*, has offered a helpful overview of the limitations present in evidence surrounding early Christian care of the dead. However, his revision of the common history often goes too far. One gets the impression that Rebillard wants to erase the connection entirely between the early Christian community and burial practices, for example he says that "in Late Antiquity, Christianity was not concerned with the burial of the dead nor even, to a great extent, with their memory" (177). However, this conclusion is reached on the basis of an argument from silence. Simply because there is not clear evidence

that the early Christian communities were concerned with the status of the body in burial. For example, the early-third century saw outcry against Christian burial grounds in North Africa,<sup>720</sup> and it appears that the Christian practice of burying the poor was a matter of charity.<sup>721</sup> In Alexandria there are sermons that reflect upon Christian gatherings for the martyrs,<sup>722</sup> and orders are issued prohibiting Christians from gathering at the *koimeterion*.<sup>723</sup> In Rome, in the early-third century, the bishop of Zephyrinus placed the deacon Callistus over a *koimeterion* (likely Area I of the catacombs that bear his name),<sup>724</sup> and by the mid-third century the bishops would have their corpses placed in a crypt in that very catacomb.<sup>725</sup>

While the specified rituals and rules surrounding Christian burial were not uniform or well-defined, it would be a mistake to see this lack of definition as a lack of interest in the dead. The surrounding Roman society understood this as they repeatedly attempted to restrict Christians from collecting and burying the bodies of the martyrs. Christian concern with the dead, specifically with the inhumation of the whole body, intensified with admiration for the martyr and his or her power and example of imitating

---

or direction for communal burial or funeral rituals does not imply that the concern was not there. As I will demonstrate in the paragraph that follows, there is ample evidence to conclude that early Christians were concerned with burial though this concern was underdeveloped and lacked uniformity, and was likely often rebuffed by families of the dead who did not belong to the Christian community.

<sup>720</sup> Tertullian, *Scap.* 3.1; cf. *Apol.* 37

<sup>721</sup> Tertullian, *Apol.* 39.5–6; cf. Hippolytus, *Trad. AP.* 40.

<sup>722</sup> Origen, *Hom. Jer.* 4.3.16

<sup>723</sup> Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 7.11.10.

<sup>724</sup> Hippolytus, *Haer.* 9.12.

<sup>725</sup> Barbara Borg, *Crisis and Ambition: Tombs and Burial Customs in Third-Century CE Rome* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 75–76.

Christ.<sup>726</sup> But the importance of the martyr's body quickly spread to all the Christian dead, either through desired proximity in burial with the martyr, or the translation of the status of the martyr's soul (in heaven) to all Christian believers.<sup>727</sup> The burial of the martyrs intensified the growth of Christian catacombs and provided an anchor onto which the graves of the common Christian dead could amass.<sup>728</sup>

The martyr's body was an adhesive that brought the Christian community together in life and death. And while the preservation of the intact body of the martyr was by no means a prerequisite for resurrection (an idea promoted by their pagan critics but roundly rejected by Christian authors), the idea of resurrection infused the Christian practice of burial with new meaning.<sup>729</sup> When they gathered to commemorate the dead, they would sing, pray, and celebrate the Eucharist.<sup>730</sup> Presumably, this began primarily for the martyrs in celebration of their "actual birth,"<sup>731</sup> but it nonetheless expanded to the sharing of funeral meals throughout the catacombs and nearby, a practice borrowed from

---

<sup>726</sup> Jill Harries, "Death and the Dead in the Late Roman West" in *Death in Towns: Urban Responses to the Dying and the Dead, 100–1600*, ed. Steven Bassett (New York: Leicester University Press, 1992), 60–61.

<sup>727</sup> Liro Kajanto draws attention to this translation of the martyr's status to all Christian dead by looking at a hymn 10 of Prudentius and poem 31 of Paulinus of Nola. In both of these examples, the idea of the soul's immediate ascent into paradise while awaiting the bodily resurrection is applied to the righteous dead, even though the theological writers were more inclined to limit immediate ascent to the martyrs alone. Kajanto ascribes this expansion to the context of psychological grief in the burial of loved ones. This is an example of practice diverging from doctrine in emotionally charged situations. See Liro Kajanto, "The Hereafter in Ancient Christian Epigraphy and Poetry," *Acta Philologica Fennica* 12 (1978): 32–37.

<sup>728</sup> Bodel, "From Columbaria to Catacombs," 234. This is not to imply that all Christians were buried together in catacombs. Most Christians were buried in family tombs beside their pagan neighbors.

<sup>729</sup> Rebillard, *Care of the Dead*, 103.

<sup>730</sup> *Did. apost.* 61.1–12; Tertullian, *An.* 51.6; *Const. ap.* 6.30

<sup>731</sup> Tertullian *Cor.* 3.3



pagan practice that had to be critiqued and corrected on numerous occasions.<sup>732</sup>

Christians were concerned with burying and caring for the whole body, but not like their pagan neighbors were. Their rituals were small and devoid of extravagance by design, lacking perfume, ointment, or floral crowns.<sup>733</sup> The funeral is rather described as a humble affair to instill confidence and tranquility as they await the resurrection from the dead.<sup>734</sup> The martyr, then, far from being a deterrent to Christian hope, became its greatest ally in emphasizing the importance of the body in the tomb as a token of the resurrection.

### *Talking about the Dead*

But the care of the dead was infused with hope through more than an emphasis on inhumation. What was equally important was how the body was described by the Christian imagination. As discussed earlier, early Christian funerals lacked uniformity, and were criticized for being austere and simple. This was likely due to the meaning behind the burial and commensurate funeral. While the pagan neighbor saw the burial as important for the security of the soul's position in the afterlife, the Christian saw it as a holding spot, or a waiting room between physical life and the resurrection.

Recall, the resurrection was articulated in a way that did not *require* the body to be intact and inhumed; however, when inhumation was possible, its temporary state of burial was emphasized. Said clearly from the pulpit of Chrysostom, Christians meet in

---

<sup>732</sup> Rebillard, *Care of the Dead*, 144–147.

<sup>733</sup> Minucius Felix *Oct.* 11.4; 28.3–4; *Saturn.* 7.7.5

<sup>734</sup> Minucius Felix *Oct.* 38.2; see also John Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 88, wherein he argues that grand funerals are evidence that one does not yet believe in the resurrection.

the *koimeterion* (meaning “to lie down” or “to sleep”) “in order that we should know that the dead, while they may lie here, are not dead, but are asleep and at rest.”<sup>735</sup> The *Didascalia Apostolorum* describes the Eucharist at the tomb of the martyr as a celebration “for the death of those who sleep,”<sup>736</sup> while Tertullian describes the annual celebration as the anniversary of the martyr “falling asleep.”<sup>737</sup> The Christian corpse was merely asleep, waiting to be woken by God.

Of course, the idea of the corpse as “sleeping” was not unique to early Christian sermons epigraphy. The idea is also found among Jews, especially in the Hebrew Bible, and the larger Greco-Roman society, especially among their philosophers.<sup>738</sup> Though, when employed by Christians it takes a more profound turn toward the morning, at which time the sleeping corpse will awaken. From the early-third century on, almost every Christian epigraph assumes the resurrection and sees the inhumed corpse as simply “sleeping,” “resting,” or “lying” in the earth.<sup>739</sup> In slight contrast with the Roman epigraphical reminder that the dead is in a state of “eternal sleep” or “everlasting delivery from toil and care,” an epitaph by Marcellinus’s deacon shows the body sleeping peacefully in the grave, awaiting the final judgment and the resurrection of the flesh.<sup>740</sup>

---

<sup>735</sup> Chrysostom, *Coemet.* 49.

<sup>736</sup> *Did. apost.* 61.9.

<sup>737</sup> Tert. *Mon.* 10

<sup>738</sup> Marbury B. Ogle, “The Sleep of Death,” *MAAR* 11 (1933): 81–117.

<sup>739</sup> Brent D. Shaw, “Latin Funerary Epigraphy and Family Life in the Later Roman Empire,” *Historia* 33 (1984): 482.

<sup>740</sup> ICVR 10183, in Kajanto, “The Hereafter,” 44.

For this epitaph, as for the hymn of Prudentius, the body sleeps, while the soul waits for it to be given new life.<sup>741</sup>

The burial of Christian bodies did not require elaborate funerals because this was merely one step in a longer journey. In the words of John Bodel, “tombs in this age were no longer final destinations but mere way-stations, places for resting—*refrigerium*, in the contemporary Christian parlance—on the way to salvation and resurrection.”<sup>742</sup> And while this was true for those who had died peacefully, it was also true for those who had been incinerated in the flames of persecution. Death was not the end, it was merely the call for bed-time, for the Christian body to sleep until the resurrection. As such, ritual practices were not as elaborate as those found among the pagans who were saying goodbye to the body for the final time.

### *Placing the Bodies*

The final element in the Christian response to death that formed a challenge to the sovereign’s power over life is found in the placement of the bodies. But before we get into the larger discussion of catacombs and Christian burials we must, again, clear the table of some misconceptions that have dominated the field of catacomb research for many years. Through the recent work of several important scholars, most notably Éric Rebillard, John Bodel, and Barbara Borg, a consensus has largely been reached that

---

<sup>741</sup> Kajanto, “Hereafter”, 36. When considering the scarcity of references to the resurrection in Roman epigraphs, Kajanto concludes that the resurrection of the body, though seldom explicitly mentioned, was always tacitly assumed, (53). The larger question for Kajanto concerns the status of the soul after death which is sometimes presented as residing in paradise, and sometimes also asleep awaiting resurrection, (48).

<sup>742</sup> Bodel, *Columbaria to Catacombs*, 234.

Christians were not unique in their placement of bodies.<sup>743</sup> That is, contrary to previous ideas, they did not invent the catacombs, nor did they (with a few exceptions) operate entire catacombs.<sup>744</sup> Burial and funeral rites in the empire, by and large, were handled by the nuclear family, or a *collegia* when there was no family.<sup>745</sup> For this reason Christian burials are normally intermingled with pagan burials in larger family plots.<sup>746</sup>

However, as I mentioned above, the lack of a structured burial process and established early burial grounds does not imply that the early Christian community was unconcerned with burial. Rather, I think a more stable conclusion that takes account for the human factor and group/family dynamics is that, given the wide-spread practice and cultural expectation of family burial, the Christian community did not have social standing, providing them the ability to create communal burials.<sup>747</sup> When that ability *was provided*, they did organize their burials communally.

The evidence strongly suggests that Christians did purchase burial plots for the purpose of providing a resting place for the poor. The clearest example of this is found in Area I of catacomb Callistus.<sup>748</sup> Furthermore, as emphasis on the power inherent to the martyr's bones developed, Christians sought to locate their family burial plots close to the

---

<sup>743</sup> See Rebillard, *Care of the Dead*; Bodel, "Columbaria to Catacombs"; and Borg, *Crisis*.

<sup>744</sup> See esp. Mark J. Johnson, "Pagan-Christian Burial Practices of the Fourth Century: Shared Tombs?" *J ECS* 5.1 (1997): 59.

<sup>745</sup> Rebillard, *Care of the Dead*, 40.

<sup>746</sup> Mark J. Johnson, "Pagan-Christian Burial Practices."

<sup>747</sup> This observation is made by Johnson; however, he nonetheless concludes that the implication is that "the 'conflict' of pagans and Christians ended at the grave." See Johnson, "Pagan-Christian Burial Practices," 59.

<sup>748</sup> For the most up-to-date analysis of this area see Borg, *Crisis*, 75–79.

tombs of the martyrs.<sup>749</sup> Though Christians certainly did not invent the catacombs, this form of underground burial employed first by pagans and Jews, lent itself to the Christian appropriation of Roman family burial, redefined in spiritual terms. The catacombs were limitless in their expansive potential and, by grouping Christians together, they communicated the idea that in burial, they were all brothers and sisters in Christ, united in their hope of the resurrection. They were a “*familia* of brothers and sisters in Christ,” an idea that expanded the Roman emphasis on household burial.<sup>750</sup> While their pagan neighbors would gather to remember their family members who had fallen into an eternal sleep, Christians would gather to commemorate their fallen family of infinite size.<sup>751</sup> This idea, says Bodel, allowed Christians to expand their “family” burial plots “to a size that soon dwarfed even the largest of imperial households.”<sup>752</sup>

To be clear, this is not to imply that all early Christians buried their dead together in common plots. Archaeological evidence clearly demonstrates that this was not the case. However, when they did it signaled a particular view of the community in relation to the rest of the Roman world. They were a family, a very large family, whose collective burial grounds could rival that of the largest imperial household. But more important than this, these underground burial grounds were never intended to be the final resting place of

---

<sup>749</sup> L.V. Rutgers, *Subterranean Rome* (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 75–77. Rutgers notes that “in almost all early Christian catacombs of Rome one encounters ample evidence documenting the popularity of this custom. In fact, in any area where the density of graves is high, one can be sure that the area includes the grave of at least one early Christian martyr” (74–75). See also Bodel, “Columbaria to Catacombs,” 61.

<sup>750</sup> Harries, “Death and the Dead,” 60.

<sup>751</sup> Ibid.

<sup>752</sup> Bodel, “Columbaria to Catacombs,” 233; see esp. p. 234.

the Christian dead. They were a mere way-station for this family as they waited for the time to awaken in the resurrection.

Entrance into this familial, resurrection waiting-room brought the Christian into an underground, alien world where the stench of death was fresh, and the dark thin hallways were lit only by lamp.<sup>753</sup> Christians, in commemorating the dead would descend into Callistus catacomb by means of narrow and steep stairway, the martyr's staircase. They would walk single-file down the thin hallways carved out of the volcanic tufa stone until they arrived at the larger cubicles of the sacraments, still a tight fit for all who stand among the sleeping corpses, measuring only 10 ft. by 10 ft. with a ceiling height of 8 ft.; it was the temporary resting place for a family of Christians with means. While commemorating the dead, surrounded by his sleeping family, they would be reminded of the resurrection through a variety of artistic representations adorning the walls and ceiling above. Images of Jonah being released from the sea monster, Lazarus coming out of the tomb, and the good shepherd stood watch over their loved ones. And they are reminded, through picture, of their baptism into the death and resurrection of Jesus, and the hope of Christ's presence in the Eucharist.

Upon leaving the underground resting place, a visit to the crypt of the popes was necessary. There, buried only a few feet from those families down the hallway were the martyr and bishop Pontianus, Fabian, and Sixtus II, along with several other bishops. Christians who had maintained their *sacramentum* and were alive with Christ awaiting

---

<sup>753</sup> For a helpful introduction to the environment of the catacombs and the ways by which they stood in contrast to Roman power see Eric C. Smith, *Foucault's Heterotopia in Christian Catacombs: Constructing Spaces and Symbols in Ancient Rome* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014).

the resurrection and final judgment. Here, beneath the Roman countryside lay the bodies of those whom death could not keep, a family buried together awaiting the call to awaken.

Christian care of the dead, as can be seen, was not a direct affront to imperial power. Christians inhumed the body, or at least attempted to do so, just like their Jewish siblings in the first two centuries of the common era, and just like their Pagan neighbors in the centuries that followed. But their inhumation was not designed to facilitate the final transition, nor did it communicate an eternal sleep. For the Christian community, as evidence through the theological and epigraphical testimony, the inhumed body was merely asleep waiting for its wake-up call. This is most immediately seen in the care for the martyrs who were not dead at all, but alive in paradise.

For the earliest Christian theologians, it was the martyr alone who warranted an immediate presence in paradise, an idea shared with some sects of Second Temple Judaism. Martyrdom erased the sins of the individual thus granting the reward of the immediate presence with Christ, the one with whom they shared their sufferings, in the *refrigerium interim*,<sup>754</sup> an idea found in Rev 6.9–11 and echoed in 1 Clem. 5.4, 7; Mart. Pol. 2.7; *Herm. Vis.* 3.1.9–2.1; and elsewhere. The soul of the common Christian, by contrast, would rest awaiting the general resurrection.<sup>755</sup>

But the human experience of death is so emotionally charged that discussions and thoughts concerning the dearly departed often betray theological precision and force

---

<sup>754</sup> Kajanto, “The Hereafter,” 31; cf. Tertul. *Apol.* 50.16; Cyprian *Fort.* 13.

<sup>755</sup> Kajanto, “The Hereafter,” 29.

reconsideration of traditionally held values. This is precisely what is seen in early Christian care of the dead. Common Christians, who lacked the opportunity for martyrdom sought immediate ascension with the martyrs. Sometimes, they would simply assume the ascent when memorializing the dead. For example, a common Christian remembered in the hymn of Prudentius is described as being presently alive in heaven while the body rests in the grave.<sup>756</sup>

Christians also began the earnest pursuit of burial in close proximity to the martyr's body for assistance into the afterlife through the martyr's power.<sup>757</sup> This practice led eventually to the formation of new burial "families" large enough to rival the imperial burial chambers. In death, the sleeping corpse was brought beneath the rolling green fields through a series of tunnels and placed among her larger family. These tight spaces would remind the community of the hope of the resurrection through the many images surrounding the sleeping bodies.

In the end, it was not a single element of Christian care for the dead that produced a response to Roman Imperial power. Rather, it was a system of practices and descriptions that connected the common Christian with the martyr and demonstrated to the Eucharistic community that Caesar's blade was dull. His right to life through the judgment of death had been removed, for his victims were merely sleeping awaiting the final judgment.

## Conclusion

---

<sup>756</sup> Prudentius, *Hymn 10*.

<sup>757</sup> Paula J. Rose, *A Commentary on Augustine's De cura pro mortuis gerenda: Rhetoric in Practice* (Boston: Brill, 2013), 38. See *Life of Polycarp* (Alistair Stewart-Sykes), 20.24–9.



The sovereign's power is found most prominently in his right of life, and this is exercised in his right to take life or grant clemency. This right to kill was the foundation of the sovereign's authority, as Foucault reminds us, "power in this instance was essentially a right of seizure: of things, time, bodies, and ultimately life itself; it culminated in the privilege to seize hold of life in order to suppress it" and its symbol was the sword.<sup>758</sup> In this chapter I have attempted to demonstrate that the early Christian idea of the resurrection *not only* constructed a community made up of disciplined individuals (chs. 4–6), *but also* undermined Caesar's most basic element of power.

The arena was the place where Caesar's power was seen, felt, and heard most acutely. Its popularity spread throughout the empire and provided a space within which the inhabitants could see Caesar, or his statue or representative, take life or grant clemency. The accused Christian, as criminal against the state and by consequence against Caesar's person, was thrust into this political game and tortured as means of producing loyal adherents to the throne. However, she did not play the game according to the rules. The martyr envisioned herself as a gladiator who took up competition at the midday slaughter of criminals. She resisted clemency and embraced death, thereby taking from Caesar his most basic element of power.

In death, her body served as a memorial and training aid for Christians throughout the empire to prepare for their upcoming contest. And when possible, it was collected and inhumed to await the resurrection of the flesh. Her body, like the many common Christians who sought burial next to it, was merely asleep. She was in paradise with

---

<sup>758</sup> Foucault, *Sexuality*, 136.

Christ, an immortal existence that soon translated onto the rest of the common Christianity. These corpses would all wait and rest in *refrigerium* for what Tertullian calls the greatest spectacle, the return of the Lord and the resurrection of the dead,

“the Day of Judgment, which the nations do not expect, which they once mocked, when the aged of this world along with all its youth will be consumed in one fire. How great the size of the spectacle that day! How I will admire! How I will laugh! At that moment I will rejoice, I will gloat, watching all those emperors who, we were told, had been received in heaven, groaning in the deepest darkness along with Jove, himself, and their witnesses.”<sup>759</sup>

---

<sup>759</sup> Tertullian *Spect.* 30.1–3. Trans. Kimberly B. Stratton, “The Eschatological Arena: Reinscribing Roman Violence in Fantasies of the End Times” in *Violence, Scripture, and Textual Practices in Early Judaism and Christianity*, eds. Raanan Shaul Boustán, Alex P. Janssen, and Calvin J. Roetzel (Boston: Brill, 2010).

## **Chapter Eight: Summary and Conclusions**

This project is far reaching. It covers roughly two and a half centuries of Christian existence, spans geographical locations as far Syria in the east and Spain in the west, examines topics as broad as architecture and gladiators, and proposes a new reading for the implications of Paul's theology of the resurrection. Yet, I have attempted to tie them all together with the thread of disciplinary power. More precisely, I have proposed that they are, in fact, connected by the counter-imperial message inherent in the resurrection of Jesus, a message that challenged the sovereign power of Caesar. Through the instantiation of this theology onto the various material and textual origins of Christianity, they activate disciplinary mechanisms of power in the formation of the Christian subject.

From the outset, I sought to engage the literature I found most compelling concerning the resurrection as a subversive message that contributed to the spread of Christianity. Given the historical connection between martyrdom, imperialism, and resurrection, there is an unquestionable political message behind the resurrection of Jesus. What I noticed, though, was that this literature made assumptions without providing theoretical substance. That is, it assumed that an idea could function subversively without demonstrating how that idea can make it into the material lives of the ones who actually do the subverting. My proposal was that Foucault's categories of power explain how the subversive potential of resurrection could, and as I proposed did,

take root in reality and grow into a movement that challenged and changed an entire empire.

This project entailed a re-reading, or re-vision of many established conclusions in early Christian history. It was an attempt to compile many types and points of data and demonstrate a connection between those data points and a larger theory of power. By drawing these connections, I sought to demonstrate three interrelated conclusions: (1) that resurrection is, at its core a politically subversive message, (2) that the politically subversive message of resurrection was instrumental in forming the early material and textual history of Christian identity, and (3) that through this formation it activated disciplinary mechanisms of power thereby creating a space within which the Christian subject could envision life outside the power of Caesar. This connection, I propose, was instrumental in the rapid expansion of the early Christian movement, and it is *how* resurrection functioned subversively.

### **Summary of the Evidence**

Subversion was accomplished not by the mere existence of the idea of resurrection, nor by the simple preaching of that idea, but through the many forms and institutions that were shaped by that idea, thus creating Christian subjectivity in concert with both resurrection and the disciplinary mechanisms that it bred. I outlined, and charted these mechanisms in chapter three:

Four “Great Techniques” of Disciplinary Power	Three “Simple Instruments” of Disciplinary Power
Activity Control	Hierarchical Observation
Spatial Distribution	Normalizing Judgment
General Organization	Examination
Force Composition	

Table 1: Foucault’s categories of the techniques and instruments of disciplinary power as found in Foucault, *Discipline*, 141–169, 170–194.

My contention was that as the idea of resurrection made its way into the material and textual lives of early Christians, it began to cultivate many of the defining characteristics of these mechanisms. By cultivating these defining characteristics, it produced the early history of what later becomes a full-blown disciplinary society. In conclusion I will betray the order of my chapters to summarize the evidence laid out within, connecting them to Foucault’s techniques and instruments of disciplinary power. Thus, I will end by consolidating my evidence, and examining it from a systematic angle to view the connection with Foucault’s categories.

**Activity Control:** As the resurrection made its way into Christian articulations of the calendar, it both moved the central point of time away from the emperor and toward the resurrected Jesus and began a path toward greater precision and calculation in annual and weekly form. While this newly precise calendar was not linked to an “apparatus of production,”<sup>760</sup> nor was it as precise and detailed as found in the militaries and schools of the eighteenth century,<sup>761</sup> it nonetheless introduced an increasingly precise and uniform

---

<sup>760</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 153.

<sup>761</sup> *Ibid.*, 150.

set of rhythm and regularity. Foucault points to the monastic communities as the starting point for the control of activity, calling them the “great technicians of rhythm.”<sup>762</sup> However, as I have demonstrated, the emphasis on rhythm, calendar, and cycles of repetition began much earlier in the calendar explanations and debates, surrounding the day of the resurrection of Jesus. Early Christian calendar formation was, then, disciplinary in its precise application of time, but it was also subversive in its calendrical shift away from Caesar and toward the resurrected Jesus.

In addition to the ever-increasing calendrical precision came various attempts to standardize and define the activity that would take place on the weekly and annual day of the resurrection in the liturgy. Liturgical development was regionally diverse to begin, but as the years ticked by, by the time Christianity gained dominance in the fourth century that regional diversity coalesced into a relatively stable set of common practices across geographical boundaries.<sup>763</sup> This growing liturgical precision not only began to dictate the movements of the body on the day of the resurrection, it also centered around two bodily actions deeply tied to the resurrection: Baptism and the Eucharist. Though efficiency is not the goal of these prescribed actions, they nonetheless began to direct the movement of the body through concern over fasting, time of meeting, posture, clothing, and emotional disposition. The body is manipulated by authority and assigned movements correlative to the increasingly precise calendar.<sup>764</sup> Through growing liturgical precision, resurrection, became inscribed on the body

---

<sup>762</sup> Ibid., 149, 150.

<sup>763</sup> Johnson, *Rites of Christian Initiation*, 121, 157; see esp. his charts of comparison on pgs. 122, 157.

<sup>764</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 155.

**Genera Organization:** With the control of time came the commensurate organization of geneses, or hierarchical ranks. Based on one's proximity to the resurrection, in the Eucharist and among the baptized who await the return of the Lord, the Christian community was divided into ranks determined by training and initiatory rites. Through this hierarchical division of catechumens, baptized, and, eventually, clergy, the disciplinary time that was growing in precision and articulation was "imposed on pedagogical practice."<sup>765</sup> That is, various lengths of time for catechesis begin to take root, along with specific days for the transfer from the catechumenate to the community of believers. Catechetical training grew in specification, seen most clearly in Origen's catechetical school, and the process of baptismal transfer, from one rank to another, began to include a series of exercises imposed on the body, such as fasting, exorcism, and anointing, in addition to immersion. Foucault makes brief mention of the "long history" behind this technique, which is found in "religious . . . initiation ritual, [and] preparatory ceremony."<sup>766</sup> I have simply attempted to demonstrate that proximity to the resurrection, and baptism into the death and resurrection of Jesus, begin the formation of this technique through the construction of the Christian.

**Spatial Distribution:** The organization of ranks was not merely done through textual articulation. Rather, it was inscribed on the body through architectural space that divided individuals by virtue of their proximity to the resurrection. Through the use of partitions and enclosures, the space of Christian meeting was broken up so that the individuals within that space were divided according to their rank and watched within those

---

<sup>765</sup> Ibid., 159.

<sup>766</sup> Ibid., 161.

divisions. Catechumens were trained in one space, and the baptized were overseen by the risen Christ in the Eucharist and represented by the bishop.

The use of partitions required the use of doorways within the space. Entrance into and movement throughout this partitioned space, in contrast to the Roman temple, constantly placed the subject on an individual journey through the resurrection, mediated by a series of doorways. This had the effect of individualizing bodies and distributing and circulating them throughout this space.<sup>767</sup> Foucault also briefly notes the beginnings of this process in the architectural design of the monastic cell. However, as I have attempted to demonstrate, its genesis and formation began much earlier, in the early Christian attempt to demarcate space according to rank.

**Force Composition:** Throughout my research on the material and textual origins of Christianity, I found nothing that resembled the composition of forces. That is, the construction of an efficient machine wherein the components of that machine are made interdependent, and controlled through a “precise system of command.”<sup>768</sup> This absence is likely due to the absence of productivity in the early formation of these disciplinary mechanisms, hence the reason why we cannot call the result of Christian growth a “disciplinary society,” and why the apparatus of disciplinary power does not gain dominance in the fourth century.

**Hierarchical Observation:** The Christian subject, who lived within this world of hierarchical organizations and partitioned space, was also in the process of being formed through theological debates that shaped her self-understanding, and created certain

---

<sup>767</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>768</sup> Ibid., 166.



expectations designed to discipline her life. First, the Christian self took on the make-up of a dualistic body-and-soul that was different from her Hellenistic and Jewish neighbors. Both body and soul were dependent on one another, and vital to the self's identity, though they were also independent and could exist apart from one another in death. This newly-formed self created an internal disposition whereby the actions of the external self, or body, could transfer onto, and thus discipline the internal self, or soul.

But more than this, through theological and narrational speculation, a growing expectation began to form that one could, and indeed would, encounter Jesus at unexpected times. This required a life of constant discipline and repentance. Jesus might show up unannounced and he might be unrecognizable upon that arrival. Yet even if he did not appear on the street in one's daily life, he was certain to meet you in the Eucharist, and be represented, or relayed, through the one administering the sacrament.

To be clear, there are differences between Foucault's panoptic gaze and the early Christian theological imagination. Most basic among these differences is the lack of architecture to enforce the gaze. Again, I reiterate, I am not arguing that these mechanisms have arrived in full form, rather, that their beginnings are found in the early Christian theology of the resurrection. What we find happening through the theological and narrational articulations of the post-resurrected Jesus is the formation a "perfect eye that nothing would escape," which is then relayed through a series of supervisors who expand the potential of the eye.<sup>769</sup> What sets this early Christian expectation apart from the basic idea that "God is watching," found in many religious traditions, is that there is

---

<sup>769</sup> Ibid., 173, 176–177.

an embodied enforcer of this surveillance who can arrive without notice, and who can use relay points through the Eucharist to communicate his presence. For Foucault, it is the expectation of surveillance that produces a self who corrects her behavior and disciplines her soul *not* out of fear of corporal punishment, but rather, out of the internal fear of being watched.

**Normalizing Judgment:** Normalizing judgment is a technique that works through the spatial distribution and hierarchical gaze. It places individuals in comparison with one another so that the self is defined by its place within the hierarchy. This is then reinforced through rewards for obedience and discipline for disobedience. I chose not to develop this technique because the evidence was too slim to make any solid conclusions. Though there appear to be elements at work in the admission to the Eucharist, and the reward of eternal life, it does not strike me as being connected deeply enough with the individual's value in comparison with other subjects.

**Examination:** Because the examination is the combination of hierarchical observation and normalizing judgment, and because evidence is lacking for normalizing judgment, the early Christian examination will not be as strong as the techniques listed above. Nevertheless, the presence of the hierarchical gaze through the resurrected Jesus and the Eucharist, along with the organization of ranks through spatial distribution does demonstrate the employment of this instrument to a degree. While each subject within the community is not documented and made into a case-study,<sup>770</sup> they are nonetheless made subject to a process of examination whereby the individual is deemed normal or

---

<sup>770</sup> Ibid., 189–192.

abnormal within the community and allowed to pass from one rank to another by virtue of this designation—from catechumen to baptized. Through the examination, the constant visibility of the self's actions to the resurrected Jesus function in an internal and invisible way so that the Christian subject is arranged based on his faithfulness to the teaching. For this reason, the baptismal transfer from catechumen to Christian is a highly ritualized and individualized process placing the subject in front of Jesus, or his representative and sometimes naked for inspection, anointing, exorcism, and baptism. The observation thus takes root inside the subject's life, on his soul, and prepares him for this ritual.

**Challenging Sovereign Power:** My contention throughout this project was that the theology of the resurrection was instantiated in material forms and through this process it developed and activated disciplinary mechanisms of power. This began the formation of Christian identity as the disciplined subject. The various mechanisms listed above all work together. In point of fact, they must work together. It is the coalescence of these force relations on a micro-level that leads to the formation of a system. At the time of Christianity's birth, sovereignty was the dominant form of power, centering on the Caesar's person and enforced through corporal punishment. However, this did not imply the absence of disciplinary power. Rather, it was always there, lurking beneath the surface.<sup>771</sup> What the theology of resurrection did was not create something new, but activate mechanisms that were dormant.

Recall, for Foucault, resistance is never singular, but always plural. What I have attempted to demonstrate is that the rise of these various, “mobile and transitory points of

---

<sup>771</sup> Foucault, *Security*, 8.

resistance”, spread out at “varying densities” resulted in a system defined by the subversive message of resurrection.<sup>772</sup> It is within this system that the Christian subject was formed, outside of the sovereign power of Caesar, and unafraid of his sword.

The aspect of challenge was described in chapter seven. Christian martyrdom and Christian burial practices served as a demonstration that the Christian could, and would resist the sovereignty of Caesar because punishment of the body no longer mattered. The Christian subject served a new king who watched over her soul, and when Caesar attempted to execute his sovereign power through beatings or death, the Christian martyr only grew stronger, and the Christian corpse slept in the grave awaiting her wake-up call.

### **The Challenge for this Conclusion**

Due to the far-reaching scope of my hypothesis, there are two critiques that I anticipate, based on two challenges inherent to my project. The first challenge of this project was that, for the thesis to work it *required* the breadth of analysis that I provided. However, with a wide-sweeping analysis comes the danger of missing the finer points of nuance. There are a handful of scholars in the world who could claim encyclopedic expertise in any one of the categories that I examined, let alone the whole bag. With that recognition in mind, I submit this project with a large dose of academic humility. I have put forth my greatest effort to become conversant in the debates surrounding these topics through both primary and secondary sources, though, I have undoubtedly missed some and thus failed to nuance some of my points. For that, I invite correction and engagement with my finer points as they relate to my larger thesis.

---

<sup>772</sup> Foucault, *Discipline*, 96.

Aside from the challenging task of becoming conversant in multiple fields of scholarship, the second challenge was in the application of a wide-sweeping hypothesis to a period filled with diversity. This project will undoubtedly receive criticism for this point. Modern scholarship on Christian origins places a heavy emphasis on diversity in contrast with older, generalizing scholarship. My conclusions were not designed to deny diversity, but rather to highlight the generalizations and trajectories that were present and developing during the spread of Christianity. Rather than attempt to document how these changes took place, or the degree of diversity present during the changes, I sought to work from the changes that did take place and connect those changes to a larger picture of power struggle. Large hypotheses require an established starting point, and I sought to locate the starting point for this project in the broader generalizations of Christian origins while not discounting, but also not emphasizing the diversity within these generalizations.

### **Final Conclusions and Contributions**

This project has suggested a new read of old evidence. It has proposed a new reason for the rapid spread of the Christian movement. And It has also sought to document the history behind the power relations Christianity spread throughout the ancient world. In pursuing these three aims, it has provided a contribution to the study of Christian origins as well as the study of Foucault and power.

First, this dissertation has suggested that the various changes and adaptations made by the early Christian movement in calendar formation, architecture, liturgy, burial practice, and theology are valuable not simply because they tell us something about the Christian movement and its surrounding environs. Rather, these changes and adaptations

are valuable when examined collectively because they tell us about the formation of the Christian subject. These changes, as I have proposed, shaped the Christian through the activation of disciplinary mechanisms of power. This contribution opens up a new space for understanding the sudden rise of the introspective self in the fourth century. Namely, the Christian was being shaped through mechanisms of power to self-discipline, and thereby become introspective.

Second, this dissertation has proposed an alternate, theoretical understanding for the expansion of the Christian movement. Namely, that it provided a space within which the power of Caesar was negated. The coalescence of disciplinary mechanisms of power within this movement, centering on the subversive idea of resurrection, actually worked subversively because it played into a larger contest of power. While there are undoubtedly other reasons that contributed to the expansion of this movement (theological, social, ideological, economic), the read I provide demonstrates that Christianity was successful where its siblings were not because it produced cleavages in the dominant system of power, thereby “fracturing unities and effecting regroupings.”<sup>773</sup>

Finally, this dissertation contributes to Foucault scholarship by exploring the early forms of disciplinary power mentioned throughout *Discipline and Punish* and seeks to explain the history behind the new set of power relations spread by Christianity that Foucault mentions but does not expand upon.<sup>774</sup> What I have attempted to demonstrate, is that while disciplinary power does not become dominant until the eighteenth century, its mechanisms begins to rear their head in the second through fourth centuries. This

---

<sup>773</sup> Ibid., 96.

<sup>774</sup> Foucault, “Why Study Power?,” 214.

activation of disciplinary mechanisms in turn shaped the Christian religion and formed the Christian subject.

## **Epilogue**

A natural question that arises out of my thesis is why, then, did Rome not become a disciplinary society following Christianity's successful subversion of the empire and its values? This question has many factors and variables associated with it; however, if I were to take my research past the mid-fourth century, as I hope to do in the future, I suspect we would find a clear answer to this question along the following lines.

Following the ascent of Constantine and dominance of Christianity in the empire, the church was both imperialized and given resources it had never before imagined. The combination of these two changes led to a movement back toward the sovereign power of the emperor, reinforced by the resurrected Christ as the absolute sovereign. That is, resistance was no longer needed now that common ground was established.

With this move, it appears that the mechanisms of disciplinary power explored throughout this dissertation, were detached from the political sphere and subsumed under the religious institutions, most notably the monastic movement, thus developing the notion of Christian pastoral power. This is why Foucault locates the beginnings of these mechanisms in monasticism. It would also comport with Foucault's analysis of pastoral power as that which arises in late-antiquity and develops through the medieval period, lives in the religious sphere, and turns into disciplinary power when it spread throughout the social body through the institutions of psychiatry, medicine, education and others.



## Bibliography

- Adams, Edward. *The Earliest Christian Meeting Places: Almost Exclusively Houses?* NTS 450. New York: Bloomsbury, 2013.
- Alföldy, Géza. "The Crisis of the Third Century as seen by Contemporaries." *GRBS* 15.1 (2003): 89–111
- Alkier, Stefan. *The Reality of the Resurrection: New Testament*. Translated by L. Huizenga. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013.
- Allison Jr., Dale C. "The Scriptural Background of a Matthean Legend: Ezekiel 37, Zechariah 14, and Matthew 27." Pages 153–188 in *Life Beyond Death in Matthew's Gospel: Religious Metaphor or Bodily Reality?* Edited by Wim Weren, Huub van de Sandt, and Joseph Verheyden. BTS 13. Leuven: Peeters, 2011.
- Anderson, Paul N. *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel: Its Unity and Disunity in the Light of John 6*. WUNT 2.78. Tübingen: Mohr, 1996.
- Ando, Clifford. *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire*. Classics and Contemporary Thought 6. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- Apostolic Fathers. Vol. 1. Translated by Bart Ehrman. LCL. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.
- Auguet, Roland. *Cruelty and Civilization: The Roman Games*. New York: Routledge, 1972. Bacchiocchi, Samuele. *Anti-Judaism and the Origin of Sunday*. Rome: The Pontifical Gregorian University Press, 1975.
- . "The Rise of Sunday Observance in Early Christianity." Pages 132–150 in *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*. Edited by Kenneth Strand. Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing, 1982.
- Baldovin, J. F. "Hippolytus and the Apostolic Tradition: Recent Research and Commentary," *Theological Studies* 64.3 (2003): 520–42.
- Barclay, John. Review of *The Spread of Christianity in the First Four Centuries: Essays in Explanation*, ed. W.V. Harris. *JRS* 97 (2007): 372–373.
- . "Why the Roman Empire was Insignificant to Paul." Pages 363–387 in *Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews*. Edited by John M. G. Barclay. WUNT 275. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.
- Barnard, L.W. *Justin Martyr: His Life and Thought*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967.

- Barrett, C.K. *Luke the Historian in Recent Study*. London: Epworth, 1961.
- Barton, Carlin A. "Savage Miracles: The Redemption of Lost Honor in Roman Society and the Sacrament of the Gladiator and the Martyr." *Representations* 45 (1994): 45–71.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Sorrows of the Ancient Romans: The Gladiator and the Monster*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Bauckham, Richard. "The Lord's Day." Pages 221–250 in *From Sabbath to Lord's Day*. Edited by D.A. Carson. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981.
- Baukland, Stephen. "Ritual, Bodies and 'Cultural Memory.'" Pages 49–56 in *Liturgy and the Body*. Edited by Louis-Mari Chauvet and François Kabasele Lumbala. Concilium 1995/3. London: SCM Press, 1995.
- Bauman, Richard A. *Crime and Punishment in Ancient Rome*. New York: Routledge, 1996.
- Beard, Mary. "A Complex of Times: No More Sheep on Romulus' Birthday." *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 33 (1987):1–15.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Writing and Ritual: A Study of Diversity and Expansion in the Arval Acta." *PBSR* 53 (1985): 114–162.
- \_\_\_\_\_, John North, and Simon Price. *Religions of Rome*. 2 vols. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Beckwith, Roger T. *Calendar and Chronology: Jewish and Christian*. AGJU 33. Boston: E. J. Brill, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Calendar, Chronology and Worship: Studies in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*. AGJU 33. Boston, Mass.: Brill, 2005.
- Beker, J. Christiaan. *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1980.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Triumph of God: The Essence of Paul's Thought*. Translated by Loren T. Stuckenbruck. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990.
- Bhatt, Shreyaa, "The Augustan Principate and the Emergence of Biopolitics: A Comparative Historical Perspective." *Foucault Studies* 22 (2017), 72–93.
- Birch, Bruce C. *Hosea, Joel, and Amos*. Westminster Bible Companion. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.

- Bode, E. L. *The First Easter Morning*. AnBib 45. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1970.
- Bodel, John. "From *Columbaria* to Catacombs." Pages 177–242 in *Commemorating the Dead: Texts and Artifacts in Context*. Edited by Laurie Brink, O. P. and Deborah Green. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008.
- Borg, Barbara. *Crisis and Ambition: Tombs and Burial Customs in Third-Century CE Rome*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Borg, Marcus. *Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1994.
- Bovon, François and Éric Junod. "Reading the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles." *Semeia* 38 (1986) 161–171.
- Boyarin, Daniel. *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999.
- Bradley, Keith R. "'The Regular, Daily Traffic in Slaves': Roman History and Contemporary History." *CJ* 87.2 (1992): 125–138.
- Bradshaw, Paul F. *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Reconstructing Early Christian Worship*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Re-Dating the *Apostolic Tradition*: Some Preliminary Steps." Pages 3–17 in *Rule of Prayer, Rule of Faith: Essays in Honor of Aidan Kavanaugh, OSB*. Edited by John Baldovin and Nathan Mitchell. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Maxwell E. Johnson, and L. Edward Phillips. Edited by Harold W. Attridge. *The Apostolic Tradition*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002.
- Brenk, Beat. *Die Christianisierung der spätrömischen Welt: Stadt, Land, Haus, Kirche und Kloster in frühchristlicher Zeit*. Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2003.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997.

- Bryan, Christopher. *Render to Caesar: Jesus, the Early Church, and the Roman Superpower*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Resurrection of the Messiah*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. *Theology of the New Testament*. Translated by K. Grobel. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007.
- Burge, Gary M. *The Anointed Community: The Holy Spirit in the Johannine Tradition*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987.
- Burris, Virginia. *Chastity as Autonomy: Women in the Stories of Apocryphal Acts*. Studies in Women and Religion 23. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellon Press, 1987.
- Bynum, Caroline Walker. *The Resurrection of the Body*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.
- Carr, Wesley. "The Rulers of the this Age: I Corinthians II.6–8." *NTS* 23 (1976): 20–35.
- Carrington, Philip. *The Primitive Christian Catechism: A Study in the Epistles*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940.
- Carter, Warren. *The Roman Empire and the New Testament: An Essential Guide*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2006.
- Cartlidge, David R. and J. Keith Elliot. *Art and the Christian Apocrypha*. New York: Routledge, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Transfigurations of Metamorphosis Traditions in the Acts of John, Thomas, and Peter." *Semeia* 38 (1986): 53–66.
- Castelli, Elizabeth A. *Martyrdom and Memory: Early Christian Culture Making*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.
- Chadwick, Henry. "The Calendar: Sanctification of Time." *ITQ* 66 (2001): 99–107.
- Charlesworth, James. "Where Does the Concept of Resurrection Appear?" Pages 1–21 in *Resurrection: The Origin and Future of a Biblical Doctrine*. Edited by James H. Charlesworth, C.D. Elledge, J. L. Crenshaw, et al. New York: T&T Clark, 2006.
- Churchin, Leonard A. *Roman Spain: Conquest and Assimilation*. New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1991.
- Clark, Elizabeth. *History Theory Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.

- Coarelli, Filippo. *Rome and Environs: An Archaeological Guide*. Translated by James J. Clauss and Daniel P. Harmon. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014.
- Cohen, Anthony. *The Symbolic Construction of Community*. London: Tavistock, 1985.
- Collier, Stephen. "Topologies of Power." *Theory, Culture & Society* 26.6 (2009): 78–108.
- Cone, James H. *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011.
- Conzelmann, Hans. *1 Corinthians*. Translated by James W. Leitch. Hermeneia. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1975.
- Cook, John Granger. "Roman Crucifixions: From the Second Punic War to Constantine." *ZNW* 104.1 (2013): 1–32.
- Corcilius, Klaus and Dominik Perler. *Partitioning the Soul: Debates from Plato to Leibniz*. Edited by Excellence Cluster Topoi. Berlin Studies of the Ancient World 22(Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2014).
- Cornelius, Zaitsev. "Ancient Philosophical Ideas of the Soul (Plato-Aristotelian Tradition and Stoicism) as a Source of Patristic Thought." *Studia Humanitatis* 3 (2014), <http://st-hum.ru/en/node/166>.
- Cousar, Charles B. *A Theology of the Cross: The Death of Jesus in the Pauline Letters*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990.
- Crossan, John Dominic. "Empty Tomb and Absent Lord." Pages 135–152 in *The Passion in Mark: Studies on Mark 14–16*. Edited by W. H. Kelber. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *God and Empire: Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now*. New York: HarperCollins, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Who Killed Jesus?: Exposing the Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Gospel Story*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_ and Jonathan L. Reed. *In Search of Paul: How Jesus's Apostle Opposed Rome's Empire with God's Kingdom* New York: HarperCollins, 2004.
- Cullman, Oscar. "Immortality of the Soul." Pages 9–53 in *Immortality and Resurrection*. Edited by Krister Stendahl. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Danielou, Jean. *The Bible and the Liturgy*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1956.

Danker, Frederick W. *Benefactor: Epigraphic Study of a Graeco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Field*. St. Louis, MO: Clayton Publishing, 1982.

Davies, James P. "Paul among the Apocalypses?: An Evaluation of the 'Apocalyptic Paul' in the Context of Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic Literature." PhD Diss. The University of St. Andrews, 2015.

\_\_\_\_\_. "What to Expect when You're Expecting: Maternity, Salvation History, and the 'Apocalyptic Paul.'" *JSNT* 38.3 (2016): 301–315.

Davis, J. G. "Factors Leading to the Emergence of Belief in the Resurrection of the Flesh." *JTS* 23 (1972): 448–55.

Davis, Stephen T. "'Seeing' the Risen Jesus," in *The Resurrection: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Resurrection of Jesus*. Edited by Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O'Collins. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Day, John. "A Case of Inner Scriptural Interpretation: The Dependence of Isaiah xxvi.13–xxvii.11 on Hosea xiii.4–xiv.10 (Eng. 9) and Its Relevance to Some Theories of the Redaction of the 'Isaiah Apocalypse'." *JTS* 31 (1980): 309–19.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Development of Belief in Life after Death in Ancient Israel." Pages 23–57 in *After the Exile. Essays in Honour of Rex Mason*. Edited by John Barton and David J. Reimer. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996.

de Blois, Lukas. "The Crisis of the Third century in the Roman Empire: a Modern Myth?" Pages 204–217 in *The Transformation of Economic Life under the Roman Empire*. Edited by Lukas de Blois and J. Rich. Boston: Brill, 2002.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Third Century Crisis and the Greek Elite in the Roman Empire." *Historia* 33 (1984): 358–77.

de Boer, Martinus C. *The Defeat of Death: Apocalyptic Eschatology in 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5*. JSNTSup 22. Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1988.

DeFelice, Jr., John F. "The Women of Pompeian Inns: A Study of Law, Occupation, and Status." PhD Diss. Miami University, OH, 1998.

de Ligt, Lukas. *Fairs and Markets in the Roman Empire: Economic and Social Aspects of Periodic Trade in a Pre-Industrial Society*. Dutch Monographs on Ancient History and Archaeology 11. (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1993).

- Denis-Boulet, Noële M. *The Christian Calendar*. Translated by P. Hepburne-Scott. Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism 113. New York: Hawthorne Books, 1960.
- Derrida, Jacques. “Force of Law: The ‘Mystical Foundation of Authority.’” Pages 3–67 in *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*. Edited by Michel Rosenfeld and David Carlson. New York: Routledge, 1992.
- DesRosiers, Nathaniel P. “Oath and Anti-Oath: Alternating Forms of Community Building in the Third Century.” Pages 93–104 in *Religious Competition in the Third Century CE: Jews, Christians, and the Greco-Roman World*. Edited by Jordan D. Rosenblum, Lily C. Vuong, and Nathaniel P. DesRosiers. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht GmbH & Co., 2014.
- De Ste. Croix, G.E.M. “Why Were the Early Christians Persecuted?” Pages 105–152 in *Christian Persecution, Martyrdom, and Orthodoxy*. Edited by G.E.M. De Ste. Croix, Michael Whitby, and Joseph Streeter. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Dickie, Matthew W. “Exclusions from the Catechumenate: Continuity or Discontinuity with Pagan Cult?” *Numen* 48.4 (2001): 417–443.
- Dillon, John. “Philo of Alexandria and Platonist Psychology.” Pages 17–24 in *The Afterlife of the Platonic Soul: Reflections of Platonic Psychology in the Monotheistic Religions*. Edited by Robert M. Berchman and John F. Finamore. Ancient Mediterranean and Medieval Texts in Context 9. Boston: Brill, 2009.
- Dittenberger, Wilhelm, ed. *Orientalis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae*. 2 vols. Leipzig: N. D. Hildesheim, 1903–5.
- Dix, Gregory. *The Shape of the Liturgy*. 2nd ed. Westminster, London: Dacre Press, 1949.
- Dodd, C.H. “The appearances of the Risen Christ: An Essay in Form-Criticism of the Gospels.” Pages 9–35 in *Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R.H. Lightfoot*. Edited by D. Nineham. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955.
- Doig, Allen. *Liturgy and Architecture*. New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Donner, Herbert. “The Separate States of Israel and Judah” in *Israelite and Judaeon History*. Edited by John H. Hayes and J. Maxwell Miller. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1977.
- Dowling, Melissa Barden. *Clemency & Cruelty in the Roman World*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2006.

- Doyle, Michael W. *Empires*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986.
- Drake, H.A. "Models of Christian Expansion." Pages 1–14 in *The Spread of Christianity in the First Four Centuries: Essays in Explanation*. Edited by William V. Harris. Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition 27. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
- Driver, Felix. "Bodies in Space: Foucault's Account of Disciplinary Power." Pages 113–131 in *Reassessing Foucault: Power, Medicine, and the Body*. Edited by Roy Porter and Colin Jones. Florence, KY: Routledge, 1998.
- Dugmore, C.W. "Lord's Day and Easter." Pages 272–281 in *Neotestamentica et Patristica: Eine Freundesgabe, Herrn Professor Dr. Oscar Cullman*. SNTS 6. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1962.
- Dunn, James D. G. *The Evidence for Jesus: The Impact of Scholarship on Our Understanding of How Christianity Began*. London: SCM, 1985.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977.
- Edlund, Ingrid E.M. *The Gods and the Place: Location and Function of Sanctuaries in the Countryside of Etruria and Magna Graecia (700–400 B.C.)*. Skrifter Utgivna Av Svenska Institutet I Rom 4:42. Stockholm: Paul Åströms Förlag, 1987.
- Edmonds III, Radcliffe G. "A Lively Afterlife and Beyond: The Soul in Plato, Homer, and the Orphica", *Études Platoniciennes* 11 (2014), DOI : 10.4000/etudesplatoniciennes.517.
- Edwards, Catharine. *Death in Ancient Rome*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.
- Egelhaaf-Gaiser, Ulrike. "Roman Cult Sites: A Pragmatic Approach." Pages 205–221 in *A Companion to Roman Religion*. Edited by Jörg Rüpke. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007.
- Ehrenberg, Victor and A.H.M. Jones. *Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Augustus and Tiberius*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976.
- Ehrman, Bart D. *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*. New York: Oxford, 1993.
- Eichrodt, Walter. *Theology of the Old Testament*. Translated by J. A. Baker. 2 vols. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967.
- Elliott, Neil. *The Arrogance of the Nations: Reading Romans in the Shadow of Empire*. Minneapolis, MN: 2008.



\_\_\_\_\_. "The Anti-Imperial Message of the Cross." in *Paul and Empire*. Edited by Richard Horsley. Harrisburg, PA: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 1997.

Endsjø, Dag. *Greek Resurrection Beliefs and the Success of Christianity*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009.

Eusebius. *Life of Constantine*. Translated by Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hall. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Evans, Christopher F. *Resurrection and the New Testament*. SBT 2.12. Naperville, IL: A.R. Allenson, 1970.

Evans, Craig A. "Mark's Incipit and the Priene Calendar Inscription: From Jewish Gospel to Greco-Roman Gospel." *JGRChJ* 1 (2000): 67–81.

Falk, Daniel K. "Jewish Prayer Literature and the Jerusalem Church in Acts." Pages 277–285 in *The Book of Acts in its Palestinian Setting*. Edited by Richard Bauckham. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Press, 1995.

Feeney, Denis. *Caesar's Calendar: Ancient Time and the Beginnings of History*. Sather Classical Lectures 65. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007.

Fejfer, Jane. *Roman Portraits in Context*. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008.

Fenwick, John. *Fourth Century Anaphoral Construction Techniques*. Grove Liturgical Study 45. Bramcote, Notts.: Grove, 1986.

Finn, Thomas M. *Early Christian Baptism and the Catechumenate: West and East Syria*. Message of the Fathers of the Church 5. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Early Christian Baptism and the Catechumenate: Italy, North Africa, and Egypt*. Message of the Fathers of the Church 6. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992.

Fishwick, Duncan. *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West*. 3 vols. EPRO 108.1. New York: E.J. Brill, 1987–2004.

Fitzmyer, Joseph. *First Corinthians*. AYBRL. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Gospel According to Luke (X–XXIV)*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985.

- Foster, Paul. "Polymorphic Christology: Its Origins and Development in Early Christianity." *JTS* 58.1 (2007): 66–99.
- Foucault, Michel. *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1974–1975*. Edited by Arnold I. Davidson. Translated by Graham Burchell. New York: Picador, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The History of Sexuality: Volume One, An Introduction*. Translated by Robert Hurley. New York: Pantheon books, 1978.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Interview on Truth and Power" in \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Le Combat de la chasteté," in *Dits et écrits*. 4 vols. Paris : Gallimard, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *On the Government of the Living: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1979–1980*. Edited by Michel Senellart. Translated by Graham Burchell. New York: Picador, 2012.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Psychiatric Power: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1973–74*. Edited by Jacques Lagrange. Translated by Graham Burchell. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977–78*. Edited by Arnold I. Davidson. Translated by Graham Burchell. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Society Must be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–76*. Edited by Arnold I. Davidson. Translated by David Macey. New York: Picador, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Space, Knowledge, and Power" Pages 349–364 in *Power*. Vol. 3 of *Essential Works of Foucault 1954–1984*. Edited by James D. Faubion. New York: The New Press, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Why Study Power? The Question of the Subject." Pages 208–226 in *Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. Edited by Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.
- Fredriksen, Paula. "Mandatory Retirement: Ideas in the Study of Christian Origins Whose Time has Come to Go." *SR* 35.2 (2006): 239–241.
- Freeman, Philip. *War, Women and Druids: Eyewitness Reports and Early Accounts of the Ancient Celts*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002.

- Furgeson, Everett. *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009.
- Futrell, Alison. *Blood in the Arena: The Spectacle of Roman Power*. Austin: University of Texas, 1997.
- Gager, John G. and E. Leigh Gibson. "Violent Acts and Violent Language in the Apostle Paul." Pages 13-21 in *Violence in the new Testament*. Edited by Shelly Matthews and E. Leigh Gibson. New York: T&T Clark, 2005.
- Gallagher, Shaun. "Hegel, Foucault, and Critical Hermeneutics." Pages 145–166 in *Hegel, History, and Interpretation*. Edited by Shaun Gallagher. New York: State University of New York Press, 1997.
- Garcia, Jeffrey Paul. "Creation, Composition and Condition: On Being Human in Early Judaism." PhD Diss. New York University, 2016.
- Geering, Lloyd. *Resurrection-A Symbol of Hope*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971.
- Georgi, Dieter. *Theocracy in Paul's Praxis and Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.
- Gibbon, Edward. *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Edited by David Womersley. 7 vols. London: Penguin Books, 1776–1788.
- Glancy, Jennifer. "Slavery in *Acts of Thomas*." *J ECS* 2.2 (2012): 3–21.
- Goetz, K.G. *Petrus als Grunder und Oberhaupt der Kirche und Schauer von Gesichten nach den altchristlichen Berichten und Legenden: Eine Exegetischgeschichtliche Untersuchung*. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1927.
- Goodman, Martin. *The Roman World: 44 B.C.–A.D. 180*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Goppelt, Leonhard. *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times*. Translated by R. Guelich. London: Adam & Charles Black, 1970.
- Gorman, Michael J. *Cruciformity: Paul's Narrative Spirituality of the Cross*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.
- Grant, Robert M. *Augustine to Constantine: The Rise and Triumph of Christianity in the Roman World*. San Francisco, CA: Harper Row, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Resurrection of the Body." *JR* 28.3 (1948): 188-208.

- Gurtner, Daniel M. *The Torn Veil: Matthew's Exposition of the Death of Jesus*. SNTSMS 139. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Hällström, Gunnar af. *Carnis Resurrectio: The Interpretation of a Credal Formula*. Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum, 86. Helsinki: Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters, 1988.
- Hamerton-Kelly, Robert G. *Sacred Violence: Paul's Hermeneutic of the Cross*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992.
- Hammer, Dean. "Foucault, Sovereignty, and Governmentality in the Roman Republic." *Foucault Studies* 22. (2017): 49–71.
- Hannah, Robert. *Greek and Roman Calendars: Constructions of Time in the Classical World*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2005.
- Harnack, Adolf. *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*. Translated from the 2<sup>nd</sup> German ed. by J. Moffatt. 2 vols. London, 1908.
- Harries, Jill. "Death and the Dead in the Late Roman West." Pages 56–67 in *Death in Towns: Urban Responses to the Dying and the Dead, 100–1600*, ed. Steven Bassett. New York: Leicester University Press, 1992.
- Harris, W.V., *Roman Power: A Thousand Years of Empire*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016.
- Hasel, Gerhard F. "Resurrection in the Theology of the Old Testament Apocalyptic." *ZAW* 92.2 (1980): 267–284.
- Hayes, John H. and J. Maxwell Miller, eds. *Israelite & Judean History*. London: SCM Press, 1990.
- Heilig, Christopher. *Hidden Criticism? The Methodology and Plausibility of the Search for a Counter-Imperial Subtext in Paul*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2017.
- Hengel, Martin. *Crucifixion in the Ancient World and the Folly of the Message of the Cross*. London: SCM Press, 1977.
- Hermann, Siegfried. *A History of Israel in Old Testament Times*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973.
- Hodder, Ian. *The Present Past: An Introduction to Anthropology for Archaeologists*. London: B.T. Batsford, Ltd., 1982.

- Hopkins, Clark. *The Discovery of Dura-Europos*. Edited by Bernard Goldman. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.
- Hopkins, Keith. "Christian Number and its Implications." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6.2 (1998): 185–226.
- Horace, *Odes*. Translated by David R. Slavitt. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014.
- Horsley, Richard A., and John S. Hanson. *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements in the Time of Jesus*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1985.
- Horsley, Richard A. *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New World Disorder*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Jesus and the Politics of Roman Palestine*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2014.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Jesus and the Powers: Conflict, Covenant, and the Hope of the Poor*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence: Popular Jewish Resistance in Roman Palestine*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation*. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society*. Harrisburg, PA: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order*. Harrisburg, PA: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2004.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008.
- Howard, Wilbert Francis. *The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London: Epworth, 1945.
- Hunt, Robert D. "Herod and Augustus: A Look at Patron-Client Relationships." *Studia Antiqua* 2.1 (2002): 3–24.
- Hunter, Archibald M. *The Gospel according to John*. CBC. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965.

- Hurtado, Larry W. *At the Origins of Christian Worship*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Press, 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Who Read Early Christian Apocrypha?" Pages 153–166 in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Apocrypha*. Edited by Andrew Gregory and Christopher Tuckett. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Jacques, Francis. "The Body and Rituality in the Liturgy." Pages 1–21 in *Liturgy and the Body*. Edited by Louis-Mari Chauvet and François Kabasele Lumbala. Concilium 1995/3. London: SCM Press, 1995.
- Jaeger, Werner. "The Greek Ideas of Immortality." Pages 54–96 in *Immortality and Resurrection*. Edited by Krister Stendahl. New York: Macmillan, 1965.
- Jeffers, James S. *Conflict at Rome: Social Order and Hierarchy in Early Christianity*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.
- Jenkyns, Richard. *God, Space & City in the Roman Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Jennings Jr., Theodore. *Outlaw Justice: The Messianic Politics of Paul*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013.
- Jensen, Robin. *Living Water: Images, Settings, and Symbols of Early Christian Baptism in the West*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.
- Jewett, Robert. *Romans*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006.
- Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Sacra Pagina 5. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992.
- Johnson, Mark J. "Pagan-Christian Burial Practices of the Fourth Century: Shared Tombs?" *J ECS* 5.1 (1997): 37–59.
- Johnson, Maxwell E. *The Rites of Christian Initiation: Their Evolution and Interpretation*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007.
- Johanny, Raymond. "Cyprian of Carthage." Pages 156–182 in *The Eucharist of the Early Christians*. Translated by Matthew J. O'Connell. New York: Pueblo Publishing, 1978.
- Jones, Paul H. *Christ's Eucharistic Presence: A History of the Doctrine*. American University Studies Theology and Religion 157. New York: Peter Lang, 1994.

- Jordan, Mark D. *Convulsing Bodies: Religion and Resistance in Foucault*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015.
- Kähler, Heinz. *Die Stiftermosaiken in der Konstantinischen Siedkirche von Aquileia*. Monumenta Artis Romanae 4. Köln: M. Dumont Schauberg Verlag, 1962.
- Kajanto, Liro. "The Hereafter in Ancient Christian Epigraphy and Poetry." *Acta Philologica Fennica* 12 (1978): 27–53.
- Käsemann, Ernst. *Commentary on Romans*. Edited and Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980.
- Kee, Howard Clark. "Defining the First-Century C.E. Synagogue: Problems and Progress." Pages 7–26 in *Evolution of the Synagogue: Problems and Progress*. Edited by Howard Clark Kee and Lynn H. Cohick. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press Intl., 1999.
- Keener, Craig S. *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*. 2 vols. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003.
- Kelly, J.N.D. *Early Christian Creeds*. 2nd ed. New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1960.
- Kelley, Nicole. "Philosophy as Training for Death: Reading the Ancient Christian Martyr Acts as Spiritual Exercises." *The American Society of Church History* 75:4 (2006), 723–747.
- Ker, James. "'Nundinae': The Culture of the Roman Week." *Phoenix* 64.3/4 (2010): 360–385.
- King, Karen. "Social and Theological Effects of Heresiological Discourse." Pages 28–49 in *Heresy and Identity in Late Antiquity*. Edited by Eduard Iricinschi and Holger M. Zellentin. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008.
- Klauck, Hans-Josef. *The Religious Context of Early Christianity*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003.
- Klijn, Albertus Frederik Johannes. *The Acts of Thomas: Introduction, Text, and Commentary*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., NovTSup 108. Boston: Brill, 2003.
- Klinghardt, Matthias. *Gemeinschaftsmahl und Mahlgemeinschaft: Soziologie und Liturgie fruhchristlicher Mahlfeiern*. Texte und arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter 13. Tübingen: Francke Verlag, 1996.

- Koch, Guntram. *Early Christian Art and Architecture: An Introduction*. Translated by John Bowden. London: SCM Press, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. and H. Sichtermann, *Römische Sarkophage*. Munich: Beck, 1982.
- Koopman, Colin. *Genealogy as Critique: Foucault and the Problems of Modernity*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013.
- Kovacs, Judith. "The Archons, the Spirit, and the Death of Christ: Do We Really Need the Hypothesis of Gnostic opponents to Explain 1 Cor. 21:6–16?" Pages 217–236 in *Apocalyptic and the New Testament: Essays in Honor of J. Louis Martyn*. Edited by Joel Marcus and Marion L. Soards. JSNTSup 24; Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1989.
- Kraabel, A. Thomas. "The Social Systems of Six Diaspora Synagogues." Pages 79–91 in *Ancient Synagogues: The State of Research* Edited by Joseph Gutmann. BJS 22. Ann Arbor, MI: Scholars Press, 1981.
- Kraeling, Carl H. *The Christian Building: Dura-Europos*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967.
- Krautheimer, Richard. *Corpus Basilicarum Christianarum Romae*. 5 vols. Vatican: Pontifical Gregorian Institute, 1937–1977.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 4th ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986
- Kristjánsdóttir, Steinunn. "Becoming Christian: A Matter of Everyday Resistance and Negotiation." *Norwegian Archaeological Review* 48 (2015):27–45.
- Kuhn, Heinz-Wolfgang. "Jesus als Gekreuzigter in der frühchristlichen Verkündigung bis zur Mitte des 2. Jahrhunderts." *ZTK* 72.1 (1975) 1–46.
- Kyle, Donald G. *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome*. New York: Routledge, 1998
- Leaney, A.R.C. "Why There Were Forty Days Between the Resurrection and the Ascension in Acts 1,3." Pages 417–419 in *StEv 4 (TU 102)*. Edited by F.L. Cross. Berlin: Akademie, 1968.
- Laciani, Rodolfo. *The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome*. New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1897.
- Leonhard, Clemens. *The Jewish Pesach and the Origins of the Christian Easter: Open Questions in Current Research*. SJ 35. New York: Walter De Gruyter, 2006.



- Levenson, Jon. *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel : The Ultimate Victory of the God of Life*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Levick, Barbara. *Augustus: Image and Substance*. Harlow, UK: Pearson Education, 2010.
- Levine, Lee. *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
- Liebeschuetz, Wolf. "Was there a Crisis of the Third Century?" Pages 11–20 in *Crises and the Roman Empire*. Edited by Olivier Hekster, Gerda de Kleijn, and Daniëlle Slootjes. Boston: Brill, 2007.
- Lieu, Judith. *Neither Jew nor Greek? Constructing Early Christian Identity*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016.
- Lods, Adolphe. *La croyance à la vie future et le culte des morts dans l'antique Israelite*. Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1902.
- Longnecker, Bruce W. *The Cross Before Constantine: The Early Life of a Christian Symbol*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Peace, Prosperity, and Propaganda: Advertisement and Reality in the Early Roman Empire." Pages 15–45 in *An Introduction to Empire in the New Testament*. Edited by Adam Winn. RBS 84. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016.
- Lopez, Davina. *The Apostle to the Conquered: Reimagining Paul's Mission*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010.
- Lynch, Richard. "Foucault's Theory of Power." Pages 13–26 in *Michel Foucault: Key Concepts*. Edited by Dianna Taylor. Durham: Acumen, 2011.
- Luz, Ulrich. "Theologi Crucis als Mitte der Theologie im Neuen Testament." *EvT* 34 (1974): 116–141.
- MacDonald, Dennis R. *The Legend and the Apostle: The Battle for Paul in Story and Canon*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1983.
- MacMullen, Ramsay. "How to Revolt in the Roman Empire." Pages 198–203 in *Changes in the Roman Empire: Essays in the Ordinary*. Edited by Ramsay MacMullen. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Judicial Savagery in the Roman Empire." *Chiron* 16 (1986): 147–166.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Second Church: Popular Christianity A.D. 200–400*. WGRWSup 1. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2009.

- Mailloux, Steven. "Learning to Read: Interpretation and Reader-Response Criticism." *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 12.1 (1979): 93–108.
- Malbon, Elizabeth Struthers. "The Jewish Leaders in the Gospel of Mark: A Literary Study of Marcan Characterization." *JBL* 108.2 (1989): 259–281.
- Martin-Achard, Robert. *From Death to Life: A Study of the Development of the Doctrine of the Resurrection in the Old Testament*. Translated by John Penney Smith. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1960.
- Martin, Dale. *The Corinthian Body*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.
- Martyn, J. Louis. "Apocalyptic Antinomies in Galatians." *NTS* 31.3 (1985): 410–424.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Apocalyptic Gospel in Galatians." *Int.* 54.3 (2000), 246–266.
- Matlock, R. B. *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul: Paul's Interpreters and the Rhetoric of Criticism*. JSNTSup 127. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.
- Matthews, Shelley. *Perfect Martyr: The Stoning of Stephen and the Construction of Christian Identity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Matyszak, Philip. *The Sons of Caesar: Imperial Rome's First Dynasty*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2006.
- Mazza, Enrico. *The Celebration of the Eucharist: The Origin of the Rite and the Development of its Interpretation*. Translated by Matthew J. O'Connell. Collegeville, MN.: The Liturgical Press, 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Origins of the Eucharistic Prayer*. Translated by Robert E. Lane. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995.
- McGowan, Andrew B. *Ancient Christian Worship*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014.
- McKay, Heather A. *Sabbath and Synagogue: The Question of Sabbath Worship in Ancient Judaism*. RGRW 122. New York: E.J. Brill, 1994.
- Megill, Allan. "The Reception of Foucault by Historians," *JHI* 48.1 (1987): 117–141.
- Meijer, Fik. *The Gladiators: History's Most Deadly Sport*. Translated by Liz Waters. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004.

- Mendez, Hugo. "The Orining of the Post-Nativity Commemorations." *VC* 68.3 (2014): 290–309.
- Metzger, Marcel. "Nouvelles perspectives pour la prétendue *Tradition Apostolique*." *Ecclesia Orans* 5 (1988): 241–259.
- Millar, Fergus. *The Emperor in the Roman World: 31 BC – AD 337*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977.
- Miller, Daniel. *Stuff*. Cambridge, Polity Press, 2010.
- Minear, Paul S. "The Crucified World: The Enigma of Galatians 6, 14." Pages 395–408 in *Theologia Crucis-Signum Crucis*. Edited by Carl Andresen and Günter Klein. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1979.
- Mitchell, Stephen. "The Life of Saint Theodotus of Ancyra." *Anatolian Studies* 32 (1982): 93–113.
- Morris, Ian. *Death-Ritual and Social Structure in Classical Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Morris, Leon. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988.
- Moss, Candida. *Ancient Christian Martyrdom: Diverse Practices, Theologies, and Traditions*. ABRL. New Haven, Yale University Press, 2012.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Myth of Persecution: How Christians Invented a Story of Martyrdom*. New York: HarperOne, 2013.
- Mussner, F. "Zur stilistischen und semantischen Struktur der Formel von 1 Kor 15,3–5." Pages 405–416 in *Die Kirche des Anfangs: Festchrift für Heinz Schürmann*. Edited by R. Schnackenburg et al. Leipzig: St. Benno, 1977.
- Nail, Thomas. "The Crossroads of Power." *Foucault Studies* 15 (2013): 110–128.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Theory of the Border*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Nicklesburg Jr., George. *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal life in Intertestamental Judaism*. HTS 56. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006.
- Niederwimmer, Kurt. *The Didache: A Commentary*. Edited by Harold W. Attridge. Translated by Linda M. Maloney. Hermeneia. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1998.

- Nielsen, Inge. *Housing the Chosen: The Architectural Context of Mystery Groups and Religious Associations in the Ancient World*, Contextualizing the Sacred 2. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepolis, 2014.
- Nielsen, Kai. *Naturalism and Religion*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1996.
- Nock, A.D. "Cremation and Burial in the Roman Empire." *HTR* 25.1 (1932): 321–359.
- Nongbri, Brent. *Before Religion: The History of a Modern Concept*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.
- Noreña, Carlos F. *Imperial Ideals in the Roman West: Representation, Circulation, Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Norris, Scott. "Roman Strategies of Control: Terror and Intimidation." PhD Diss. The University of Calgary, 2005.
- O'Brien, George Dennis. *Hegel on Reason and History: A Contemporary Interpretation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975.
- Ogle, Marbury B. "The Sleep of Death." *MAAR* 11 (1933): 81–117.
- Økland, Jorunn. *Women in their Place: Paul and the Corinthian Discourse of Gender and Sanctuary Space*. New York: T&T Clark International, 2004.
- O'Loughlin, Thomas. *The Eucharist: Origins and Contemporary Understandings*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015.
- Olsson, Birger. "The Origins of the Synagogue: An Introduction." Pages 27–36 in *The Ancient Synagogue: From its Origins until 200 C.E.* Edited by Birger Olsson and Magnus Zetterholm, CONBnt 39. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell Intl., 2003.
- Osborne, Grant. *The Resurrection Narratives: A Redactional Study*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1984.
- Osiek, Carolyn. Review of *The Earliest Christian Meeting Places*. By Edward Adams. *BTB* 45 (2015): 185–186.
- Owens, E..J. *The City in the Greek and Roman World*. New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Pagels, Elaine H. *Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas*. New York: Random House, 2003.
- Pelikan, Jaroslav. *The Shape of Death: Life, Death, and Immortality in the Early Fathers*. New York: Abingdon Press, 1961.

- Peppard, Michael. *The World's Oldest Church: Bible, Art, and Ritual at Dura-Europos, Syria*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016.
- Perkins, Judith. *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era*. London: Routledge, 1995.
- Perkins, Pheme. *Resurrection: New Testament Witness and Contemporary Reflection*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth." Pages 423–442 in *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research*. Edited by Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans. Leiden: Brill, 1994.
- Peters, Edward. *Torture*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996.
- Peterson, Peter M. *Andrew, Brother of Simon Peter*. SNT 1. Leiden: Brill, 1958.
- Petronius, *Satyricon*. Edited and Translated by R. Bracht Branham and Daniel Kinney. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996.
- Philo, *In Flaccum*. Translated by F.H. Colson. LCL. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941.
- Pillar, Edward. *Resurrection as Anti-Imperial Gospel: 1 Thessalonians 19b–10 in Context*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013.
- Plass, Paul. *The Game of Death in Ancient Rome*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995.
- Portier-Young, Anthea E. *Apocalypse against Empire: Theologies of Resistance in Early Judaism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011.
- Potter, David. "Martyrdom as Spectacle." Pages 53–88 in *Theater and Society in the Classical World*. Edited by Ruth Scodel. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1993.
- Price, Simon. "Religious Mobility in the Roman Empire." *JRS* 102 (2012): 1–19.
- Puech, Émile. *La Croyance des Esséniens en la Vie Future: Immortalité, Résurrection, Vie Éternelle?: Histoire d'une Croyance dans le Judaïsme Ancien*. 2 vols. *EBib* 21. Paris: Librairie LeCoffre, 1993.
- Quasten, Johannes. *The Ante-Nicene Literature after Irenaeus*. Vol. 2 of *Patrology* Allen, TX: Christian Classics, 1995.

- Quintilian, *The Lesser Declamations*. Translated by D.R. Shackleton Bailey. LCL. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006.
- Raczka, Gary Philippe. “The Lectionary at the Time of Saint John Chrysostom.” PhD Diss. The University of Notre Dame, 2015.
- Raffnsøe, Sverre, Marius Gudmand-Hoyer, and Morten S. Thaning, eds. *Michel Foucault: A Research Companion*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016.
- Raja, Rubina. “Staging ‘Private’ Religion in Roman ‘Public’ Palmyra: The Role of the Religious Dining Tickets (Banqueting *tesserae*).” Pages 165–186 in *Public and Private in Ancient Mediterranean Law and Religion*. Edited by Clifford Ando and Jörg Rüpke. RUV 65. Boston: De Gruyter, 2015.
- Rambo, Shelley. *Resurrecting Wounds*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017.
- Rawson, Elizabeth. “Caesar: Civil War and Dictatorship.” Pages 424–67 in vol. 9 of *Cambridge Ancient History*. Edited by J.A. Crook, Andrew Lintott, and Elizabeth Rawson. 12 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Regev, Eyal. “The Hellenization of the Hasmoneans Revisited: The Archaeological Evidence.” *Advances in Anthropology* 7 (2017): 175–196.
- Rendtorff, Rolf. *The Canonical Hebrew Bible: A Theology of the Old Testament*. Leiderdorp, The Netherlands: Deo Publishing, 2005.
- Riddle, Donald W. *The Martyrs: A Study in Social Control*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931.
- Rives, J. B. “The Decree of Decius and the Religion of the Empire.” *JRS* 89 (1999): 135–54.
- Rives, James B. *Religion in the Roman Empire*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007.
- Robinson, John A. T. *The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology*. SBT 5. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1952.
- Rordorf, Willy. “The Didache.” Pages 1–23 in *The Eucharist of the Early Christians*. Translated by Matthew J. O’Connell. New York: Pueblo Publishing, 1978.
- Rose, Charles Brian. *Dynastic Commemoration and Imperial Portraiture in the Julio-Claudian Period*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Imperial Image in the Eastern Mediterranean." Pages 108–120 in *The Early Roman Empire in the East*. Edited by Susan E. Alcock. Oxbow Monographs 95. Oxbow Books: Oxford, 1997.
- Rose, Paula J. *A Commentary on Augustine's De cura pro mortuis gerenda: Rhetoric in Practice*. Boston: Brill, 2013.
- Rudich, Vasily. *Religious Dissent in the Roman Empire: Violence in Judaea at the Time of Nero*. New York: Routledge, 2015.
- Rüpke, Jörg. *From Jupiter to Christ: On the History of Religion in the Roman Imperial Period*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Religion: Antiquity and its Legacy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Religion of the Romans*. Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Roman Calendar from Numa to Constantine: Time, History, and the Fasti*. Translated by David M. B. Richardson. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
- Russo, Nicholas V. "The Origins of Lent." PhD Diss. The University of Notre Dame, 2010.
- Saddington, Denis B. "Client Kings' Armies under Augustus: The Case of Herod." Pages 303–323 in *Herod and Augustus: Papers presented at the IJS Conference, 21<sup>st</sup>–23<sup>rd</sup> June 2005*. Edited by Nikos Kokkinos and David M. Jacobson. Leiden: Brill, 2009.
- Said, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1993.
- Samuel, Alan E. *Greek and Roman Chronology: Calendars and Years in Classical Antiquity*. Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft 1. München: Beck, 1972.
- Sande, Siri. "Huskirker og tituluskierker—salmer i heimen eller i badet?" *Kirke og Kultur* 104:7–18.
- Scheid, John. *The Gods, the State, and the Individual: Reflections on Civic Religion in Rome*. Translated by Clifford Ando. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.
- Schmidt, Thomas C. "Calculating December 25 as the Birth of Jesus in Hippolytus' *Canon and Chronicon*" *VC* 69.5 (2015): 542–563
- Schneemelcher, Wilhelm. *New Testament Apocrypha*, Translated from the German ed. R. McL. Wilson. 2 Vols. Louisville, Y.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991.

- Schneider, Paul G. *The Mystery of the Acts of John*. Distinguished Dissertations Series 10. San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1991.
- Schoedel, William R. ed., trans. 1972. *Athenagoras: Legatio and De Resurrectione*. OECT. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ignatius of Antioch*. Hermeneia. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1985.
- Schott, Jeremy. *Christianity, Empire, and the Making of Religion in Late Antiquity*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.
- Schrage, Wolfgang. "Das Verständnis des Todes Jesu Christi im Neuen Testament." Pages 67–77 in *Das Kreuz Jesu Christi als Grund des Heils*. Edited by F. Vierung. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus/Gerd Mohn, 1967.
- Schreiner, Thomas R. *Romans*. BECNT 6. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.
- Schwally, Friedrich. *Das Leben nach dem Tode nach den Vorstellungen des alten Israel und des Judentums einschließlich des Volksglaubens im Zeitalter Christi*. Gießen: Ricker, 1892.
- Schwartz, Seth. *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Roman Historians and the Rise of Christianity." Pages 145–160 in *The Spread of Christianity in the First Four Centuries: Essays in Explanation*. Edited by William V. Harris. Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition 27. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
- Schwiebert, Jonathan. *Knowledge and the Coming Kingdom: The Didache's Meal Ritual and its Place in Early Christianity*. JSNTS 373. New York: T&T Clark, 2008.
- Scott, James C. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985.
- Scranton, Robert L. "Interior Design of Greek Temples," *AJA* 50 (1946): 39–51.
- Segal, Alan F. *Life after Death: A History of the Afterlife in Western Religion*. New York: Doubleday, 2004.



- \_\_\_\_\_. "Life after Death: The Social Sources." In *The Resurrection: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Resurrection of Jesus*. Edited by Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O'Collins. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Senior, Donald P. "The Death of Jesus and the Resurrection of the Holy Ones (Mt. 27:51–53)." *CBQ* 38 (1976): 312–29.
- Setzer, Claudia. *Resurrection of the Body in Early Judaism and Early Christianity*. Boston: Brill Academics, 2004.
- Severy, Beth. *Augustus and the Family at the Birth of the Roman Empire*. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Shaw, Brent D. "Body/Power/Identity: Passions of the Martyrs." *J ECS* 4 (1996): 269–312.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Latin Funerary Epigraphy and Family Life in the Later Roman Empire." *Historia* 33 (1984): 457–497.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Passion of Perpetua." *Past & Present* 139 (1993): 3–45.
- Sider, R.J. "St. Paul's Understanding of the Nature and Significance of the Resurrection in I Corinthians xv 1–19." *NovT* 19 (1977): 124–141.
- Smith, Dennis. *From Symposium to Eucharist: The Banquet in the Early Christian World*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The House Church as Social Environment," Pages 3–21 in *Text, Image, and Christians in the Graeco-Roman World: A Festschrift in Honor of David Lee Balch*. Edited by C. Osiek and A.C. Niang. PTMS 176. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock.
- Smith, Eric C. *Foucault's Heterotopia in Christian Catacombs: Constructing Spaces and Symbols in Ancient Rome*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014.
- Smith, Jonathan Z. *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.
- Snyder, Graydon F. *Ante Pacem: Archaeological Evidence of Church Life before Constantine*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2003.
- Söder, Rosa. *Die apokryphen Apostelgeschichten und die romanhafte Literatur der Antike*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1932.

- Stambaugh, John. *The Ancient Roman City*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1988.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “The Function of Roman Temples.” Pages 554–608 in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt* 2.16.1, 1978.
- Stamper, John W. *The Architecture of Roman Temples*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Stark, Rodney. *The Rise of Christianity*. New York: Harper One, 1996.
- Steiner, Richard. *Disembodied Souls: the Nefesh in Israel and Kindred Spirits in the Ancient Near East, with an Appendix on the Katumuwa Inscription*. ANEM 11. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015.
- Stern, Sacha. *Calendars in Antiquity: Empires, States, and Societies*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Stevenson, Gregory. *Power and Place: Temple and Identity*, BZBW 107. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2001.
- Steward-Sykes, Alistair. Ed. and Trans. *Life of Polycarp. An Anonymous Vita from Third-Century Smyrna*. Early Christian Studies 4. Sydney, Australia: St. Pauls, 2002.
- Strabo, *Geographica*. Translated by H.L. Jones. LCL. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1917.
- Strand, Kenneth A. *The Early Christian Sabbath*. Ann Arbor, MI: Ann Arbor Publishers, 1979.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed., *The Sabbath In Scripture and History*. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing, 1982.
- Stratton, Kimberly B. “The Eschatological Arena: Reinscribing Roman Violence in Fantasies of the End Times.” Pages 45–76 in *Violence, Scripture, and Textual Practices in Early Judaism and Christianity*. Edited by Raanan Shaul Boustán, Alex P. Janssen, and Calvin J. Roetzel. Boston: Brill, 2010.
- Straw, Carole. “‘A Very Special Death’: Christian Martyrdom in its Classical Context.” Pages 39–57 in *Sacrificing the Self: Perspectives on Martyrdom and Religion*. Edited by Margaret Cormack. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Strousma, Guy. *The End of Sacrifice: Religious Transformations in Late Antiquity*. Translated by Susan Emanuel. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012.

- Staudt Calvin Clopp. *The Idea of the Resurrection in the Ante-Nicene Period*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1909.
- Suggit, John. "Jesus the Gardener: The Atonement in the Fourth Gospel as Re-Creation." *Neot.* 33.1 (1999): 161–168.
- Sutcliffe, E. F. *The Old Testament and the Future Life*. London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1946.
- Swinburne, Richard. *The Resurrection of God Incarnate*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Tacitus, *Agricola*. Translated by M. Hutton. LCL. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970.
- Talbert, C.H. "An Anti-Gnostic Tendency in Lucan Christology." *NTS* 14 (1968): 259–271.
- Talley, Thomas J. *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*. 2nd Ed. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1986.
- Tappenden, Frederick S. *Resurrection in Paul: Cognition, Metaphor, and Transformation*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2016.
- Taubes, Jacob. *The Political Theology of Paul*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004.
- Taussig, Hal. *In the Beginning was the Meal*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009.
- Thome, G. "Crime and Punishment, Guilt and Expiation: Roman Thought and Vocabulary," *Acta Classica* 35 (1992): 73–98.
- Thompson, Leonard L. "The Martyrdom of Polycarp: Death in the Roman Games." *JR* 82 (2002): 27–52.
- Toynbee, J.M.C. *Death and Burial in the Roman World*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971.
- Tromp, Nicholas J. *Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Nether World in the Old Testament*. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969.
- Tuan, Yi-Fu. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977.

- Uzan, Margo Strousma. "Jonas of Aquileia: A Gesture to Constantine the Great." Pages 55–72 in *Between Judaism and Christianity: Art Historical Essays in Honor of Elsheva (Elisabeth) Revel-Neher*. Edited by Katrin Kogman-Appel and Mati Meyer. Boston: Brill, 2009.
- Van Roo, William A. *The Christian Sacrament*. Rome: Editrice Pontificia Universita Gregoriana, 1992.
- Vargas-Machuca, Antonio. "(καὶ) ἰδοὺ en el estilo narrativo de Mateo." *Biblica* 50.2 (1969): 233–244.
- Velleius Paterculus, *Compendium of Roman History*. Translated by Frederick W. Shipley. LCL. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924.
- Vergil, *Aeneid*. Translated by Sarah Ruden. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.
- Vermeule, Emily. *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981.
- Ville, George. *La Gladiature en Occident des origins à la mort de Domitien*. Rome : École française de Rome, 1981.
- Vinzent, Markus. *Christ's Resurrection in Early Christianity and the Making of the New Testament*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011.
- Von Rad, Gerhard. *Old Testament Theology*. 2 vols. Translated by D.M.G. Stalker. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1965.
- Wainwright, Geoffrey and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, eds. *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Walker Jr., Wm. O. "Christian Origins and Resurrection Faith." *JR* 52.1 (1972), pp. 41–51.
- Walter, Nikolaus. "Leibliche Auferstehung? Zur Frage der Hellenisierung der Auferwecknungshoffnung bei Paulus." Pages 109–128 in *Pauls, Apostel Jesu Christi: Festschrift für Günter Klein zum 70. Geburtstag*. Edited by M. Trowitzsch. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998.
- Wardle, Timothy. "Resurrection and the Holy City: Matthew's Use of Isaiah in 27:51–53." *CBQ* 78 (2016): 666–681.
- Ware, James. "The Resurrection of Jesus in the Pre-Pauline Formula of 1 Cor 15.3–5." *NTS* 60.4 (2014): 475–498.

- Waters, Kenneth L. "Matthew 27:52–53 as Apocalyptic Apostrophe: Temporal-Spatial Collapse in the Gospel of Matthew." *JBL* 122 (2003): 489–515.
- Weeden, Sr., Theodore J. *Mark: Traditions in Conflict*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1971.
- Weiler, I. *Der Sport bei den Völkern der Alten Welt*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1981.
- Weren, Wim J.C. *Studies in Matthew's Gospel: Literary Design, Intertextuality, and Social Setting*. BibInt 130. Boston: Brill, 2014.
- White, Hayden. *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.
- White, Joel R. "Anti-Imperial Subtexts in Paul: An Attempt at Building a Firmer Foundation." *Biblica* 90.3 (2009): 305–333
- White, L. Michael. "Architecture: The First Five Centuries." Pages 693–746 in vol. 2 of *The Early Christian World*. Edited by Philip F. Esler. New York: Routledge, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Social Origins of Christian Architecture*. 2 vols. HTS 42. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, Intl., 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Scripting Jesus: The Gospels in Rewrite*. New York: Harper One, 1999.
- Widengram, Geo. "The Persian Period." Pages 489–538 in *Israelite & Judean History*. Edited by John H. Hayes and J. Maxwell Miller. London: SCM Press, 1990.
- Wiebe, Phillip H. *Visions and Appearances of Jesus*. Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 2014.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Visions of Jesus: Direct Encounters from the New Testament to Today*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Wiedemann, Thomas. *Emperors and Gladiators*. New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Wilckens, Ulrich. "The Tradition History of the Resurrection of Jesus." Pages 51–76 in *The Significance of the Message of the Resurrection for Faith in Jesus Christ*. Edited by C.F.D. Moule. SBT 2.8. London: SCM, 1968.
- Wilken, Robert L. *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*. New Haven: Yale, 1984.

- Williams, Joel F. *Other Followers of Jesus: Minor Characters as Major Figures in Mark's Gospel*. JSNTSup 102. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994.
- Winkler, Gabriele. "The Original Meaning of the Prebaptismal Anointing." Pages 58–81 in *Living Water, Sealing Spirit*. Edited by Maxwell E. Johnson; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995.
- Winn, Adam. ed., *An Introduction to Empire in the New Testament*. RBS 84. Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2016.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Striking Back at the Empire." In *An Introduction to Empire in the New Testament*. Edited by Adam Winn. RBS 84. Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2016.
- Wisse, Frederick. "The Use of Early Christian Literature as Evidence for Inner Diversity and Conflict." Pages 177–191 in *Nag Hammadi, Gnosticism, and Early Christianity*. Edited by Charles W. Hedrick and Robert Hodgson, Jr. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1986.
- Wolff, Hans Walter. *A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Hosea*. Edited by Paul D. Hanson. Translated by Gary Stansell. Hermeneia. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1974.
- Worrell, W. H. *The Coptic Manuscripts in the Freer Collection*. University of Michigan. Humanistic Series 10. New York: MacMillan, 1923.
- Wright, N.T. "Paul's Gospel and Caesar's Empire." Pages 160–183 in *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation: Essays in Honor of Krister Stendahl*. Edited by Richard A. Horsley. Harrisburg, PA: TPI, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Resurrection of the Son of God*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.
- Wright, W. "An Ancient Syrian Martyrology." *Journal of Sacred Literature and Biblical Record* (1866): 423–432.
- Yarbro-Collins, Adela. "Ancient Notions of Transferral and Apotheosis in Relation to the Empty Tomb Story in Mark." Pages 41–58 in *Metamorphoses: Resurrection, Body and Transformative Practices in Early Christianity*. Edited by Jorunn Økland and T.K. Seim. Ekstasis 1. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Mark*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Origin of Christian Baptism." Pages 35–57 in *Living Water, Sealing Spirit*. Edited by Maxwell E. Johnson. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995.

Young, Robin Darling. *In Procession before the World: Martyrdom as Public Liturgy in Early Christianity*. Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2001.

Zanker, Paul. *Pompeii: Public and Private Life*. Translated by Deborah Lucas Schneider. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998.

Zwier, Arie W. "The Ascension of the Messiah: An Inquiry into the Ascension and Exaltation of Jesus in Lukan Christology." PhD Diss. University of Durham, 1996.