

The use of the Jewish Scriptures by Early
Christian Greek Apologists 140–190 CE: Justin
Martyr, Tatian and Theophilus of Antioch

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Contents

Preface.....	i
Abbreviations.....	iii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: The Proof from Prophecy in Justin Martyr's <i>Apologia Maior</i>	39
Chapter 3: Tatian's <i>Oratio</i> and the Barbarian Writings.....	120
Chapter 4: The <i>Ad Autolycum</i> of Theophilus of Antioch: history and commentary.....	177
Chapter 5: Conclusion.....	229
Bibliography.....	241

Preface

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my dissertation has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the relevant Degree Committee.

Abbreviations

<i>1A</i>	Justin Martyr's <i>Apologia Maior</i> .
<i>2A</i>	Justin Martyr's <i>Apologia Minor</i> .
<i>AA</i>	Theophilus of Antioch's <i>Ad Autolyicum</i> .
<i>AC</i>	<i>In Theaetetum</i> [<i>Anonymous Commentary</i>].
<i>AH</i>	Heraclitus, <i>Homeric Problems</i> [<i>Allegoriae Homericae</i>].
<i>Aristeas</i>	<i>Letter of Aristeas</i> .
BCE	Before the Christian era.
<i>BETS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society</i> .
<i>BJRL</i>	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</i> .
<i>BNJ</i>	Worthington, I ed: <i>Brill's New Jacoby</i> (Brill, Leiden 2007-). Accessed via Online ed 2007- .
<i>BNP</i>	Cancik, H & Schneider, H eds: <i>Brill's New Pauly: Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World</i> English edition ed C F Salazar (Brill, Leiden 2002-). Accessed via Online ed 2006-.
C	Century.
CE	Christian Era.
<i>CAH9</i>	Bowman, A K, Garnsey, P & Rathbone, D eds: <i>The Cambridge Ancient History Volume 9 The High Empire, A.D. 70-192</i> Second ed (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2000).
<i>CAH12</i>	Bowman, A K, Garnsey P & Cameron, A eds: <i>The Cambridge Ancient History Volume 12 The Crisis of Empire A.D. 193-337</i> Second ed (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2005).
<i>CHC1</i>	Mitchell, M M & Young, F M eds: <i>The Cambridge History of Christianity Volume 1: Origins to Constantine</i> (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2006).
<i>DT</i>	Justin Martyr's <i>Dialogue with Trypho</i> .
ed(s)	editor /edited by.
<i>EstEcl</i>	<i>Estudios Eclesiásticos</i> .

<i>HE</i>	Eusebius: <i>The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine</i> (<i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>).
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i> .
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i> .
<i>J ECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i> .
<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i> .
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i> .
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> .
<i>LCL</i>	<i>Loeb Classical Library</i> .
<i>LSJ</i>	Liddell, Scott & Jones: <i>Greek-English Lexicon</i> .
<i>NCHB1</i>	Carleton Paget, J & Schaper, J: <i>The New Cambridge History of the Bible Volume 1 From the beginnings to 600</i> (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2013).
<i>NETS</i>	<i>New English Translation of the Septuagint</i> .
<i>NT</i>	New Testament.
<i>Oratio</i>	Tatian's <i>Oratio ad Graecos</i> .
<i>OT</i>	Old Testament.
<i>RAC</i>	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i> .
<i>rev</i>	revised.
<i>RevScRel</i>	<i>Revue des Sciences Religieuses</i> .
<i>RHE</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique</i> .
<i>SBL</i>	Society of Biblical Literature.
<i>SecCent</i>	<i>Second Century</i> .
<i>SMSR</i>	<i>Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni</i> .
<i>SP</i>	<i>Studia Patristica</i> .
<i>ST</i>	<i>Studia Theologica</i> .
<i>TLG</i>	Thesaurus Linguae Graecae.
<i>TLZ</i>	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i> .
<i>trans</i>	translation /translated by.

VC *Vigiliae Christianae.*
ZAC *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum.*
ZNW *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde
der älteren Kirche.*

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

By the mid 2C the movement inaugurated by followers of the crucified Jesus of Nazareth had existed for over a century. Emerging from its Palestinian Jewish roots, it had spread widely across the Roman Empire and established itself in a number of locations.¹ From the outset Christianity sought to make converts and was consequently brought into close contact with the wider non-Jewish population of the Empire.² Its adherents were few in number compared with the total population and Christian communities were small-scale when set against those of the Jews.³ Christians inherited from their Jewish origins authoritative texts, referred to here as the Jewish Scriptures,⁴ and from an early date also produced their own texts. Some of these were later gathered together to form the collection now known as the NT, while other Christian texts were written,

¹ M M Mitchell et al, 'Part IV: Regional Varieties of Christianity in the First Three Centuries' in *CHC1* 295-412 & M J Edwards 'Christianity A.D. 70-192' in *CAH12* 573-588.

² *CHC1* 314-412 & R MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire (A.D. 100-400)* (Yale University Press, New Haven 1984).

³ For the size of the Jewish population in antiquity: M Simon, *Verus Israel, a Study of the Relations between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire (135-425)* trans H McKeating (Oxford University Press, Oxford 1986) 33-34; for numbers of Christians: R Stark, *The Rise of Christianity: a Sociologist Reconsiders History* (Princeton University Press, Princeton 1996) & F Trombley, 'Overview: the Geographical Spread of Christianity' in *CHC1* 302-313.

⁴ This term describes the Jewish scriptures translated into Greek which were used by early Christians (sometimes referred to as the Septuagint or the LXX).

copied and preserved.⁵ It has therefore fairly been said that ‘the earliest Christians...created a literary culture.’⁶

A number of texts extant from the mid 2C onwards, commonly referred to as apologetic, mark a new stage in Christian literature. They were, at least ostensibly, addressed to Graeco-Roman⁷ audiences, although whether these were their real audiences will be considered below. At least some of their authors were converts to Christianity who had previously received a Graeco-Roman literary education. A striking feature of some of these texts is the extent to which they refer to the Jewish scriptures⁸ and it is not immediately obvious why this should be so. In debates with Jews, Christian writers, understandably, discussed the Jewish scriptures; both parties were familiar with the texts concerned, and how they should be interpreted was part of their dialogue.⁹ The position was not the same when the Christian gaze moved from the Jewish to the broader Graeco-Roman world. For if knowledge of the Jewish scriptures did not extend beyond Jewish communities before the advent of Christianity -- an assumption which will be tested below -- it is reasonable to ask why a Christian apologist in debate with non-Jewish non-Christians would refer to these texts so extensively.¹⁰

⁵ E.g. B D Ehrman ed, *The Apostolic Fathers LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 2003).

⁶ M M Mitchell, ‘The Emergence of the Written Record’ in *CHC1* 177-194, 191.

⁷ The term ‘Graeco-Roman’ is used throughout to describe the people and culture of the Roman Empire in the 2C CE (excluding Jews and Christians) and denoting, somewhat imprecisely, the mainstream culture of the time. It can be criticized on grounds of accuracy -- Jews and Christians may also be described as Graeco-Romans -- but is preferred to the term ‘pagans’ which has too many extraneous connotations.

⁸ Noted in J Carleton Paget, ‘The Interpretation of the Bible in the Second Century’ in *NCHB1* 549-583, 562 but not pursued further.

⁹ J M Lieu, *Image and Reality: the Jews in the World of the Christians in the Second Century* (T&T Clark, London 1996) 280-281.

¹⁰ E Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire 6 Volumes* (Dent, London 1910) 1 498 asserted long ago that such an argument would be ineffective: ‘But this mode of persuasion loses much of its weight and influence when it is addressed to those who neither understand nor respect the Mosaic dispensation.’

The Greek Apologists

Apologetic works either promote Christianity to non-Jewish non-Christians or defend it against criticism from them. Such a text cannot stand alone since it must form part of a dialogue between a Christian writer and a person or persons located outside the Christian community, even if there were no other written element(s) in the dialogue, or if whatever did exist does not survive. The emphasis in this study is on the arguments put forward in apologetic texts, so it is the contents of the works and the intentions behind them that are important, rather than the form in which a text is framed and the identity of the addressee(s) named in it.

Scholars have debated how the term apologetic should be used, which works should be included within the scope of the term and which authors should be referred to as apologists, and they have reached different conclusions. The earliest works of which notice survives, by Quadratus and Aristides, were addressed to the Emperor Hadrian on behalf of Christians.¹¹ Later works were also addressed to the Emperor, notably Justin Martyr's *Apologiae*, and the term apologetic can be restricted to petitions on behalf of Christians addressed to emperors or others in authority. Thus Parvis defines apologetic texts as works '...that address those with the power to decide policy concerning the execution of Christians, at either an empire-wide or a local level...'¹² She restricts the term to a series of texts beginning with Justin Martyr and ending with Tertullian, excluding works by Tatian and Theophilus of Antioch which are not addressed to authority figures. In contrast with this focus on the *form* of a text, however, other scholars emphasise the *intentions* of the authors. Norris, for instance, while recognizing the genesis of 2C Christian apologetics in petitions to the Emperor, favours a

¹¹ R M Grant, *Greek Apologists of the Second Century* (SCM Press, London 1988) 35-39.

¹² S Parvis, 'Justin Martyr and the Apologetic Tradition' in S Parvis & P Foster eds, *Justin Martyr and his Worlds* (Fortress Press, Minneapolis 2007) 115-127, 117.

broader definition. He describes the apologists as ‘...a series of authors who in the course of the second century composed and circulated addresses and pleas...to emperors and others in public authority on behalf of their fellow Christians’¹³ but goes on to point out that ‘apology in this narrow sense might of course pass over into direct refutation of critics of Christianity or attempts to establish the superiority of the Christian faith...’¹⁴

Similar sentiments are found in the works of Grant and Young, both echoing the emphasis on argument and intention. Thus Grant describes the apologist as a writer located within a minority group seeking to interpret the culture of that group to wider society¹⁵ and includes within his *Greek Apologists of the Second Century* all Greek Christian writings of the period addressed to non-Christian non-Jewish audiences.¹⁶ Young’s survey covers a similarly wide range of texts, her definition being that ‘...‘apology’ is...the end or purpose of a speech, particularly a speech for the defence in court, and then more loosely a defence or excuse offered in a less precise context or genre...’¹⁷ The approach adopted in this study reflects the broad descriptions of apologetic offered by these two scholars.

Apologetic writings and their audiences

The nature of the apologists’ audiences is a difficult issue which has been much discussed and not clearly resolved. It is, however, arguably unnecessary to reach a definitive conclusion for the purposes of this study since the main concerns here

¹³ R A Norris Jr, ‘The Apologists’ in F M Young, L Ayres & A Louth eds, *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2004) 36-44, 36.

¹⁴ Norris, ‘The Apologists’ 36.

¹⁵ Grant, *Greek Apologists* 9.

¹⁶ Grant, *Greek Apologists* 5-6.

¹⁷ F M Young, ‘Greek Apologists of the Second Century’ in M J Edwards, M R Goodman, S R F Price & C Rowland eds, *Apologetics in the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews and Christians* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 1999) 81-104, 91.

are with the contents of the apologetic texts and the arguments they contain. Each text is therefore examined as a repository of arguments which have been framed for the purposes of dialogue between Christians and non-Christians whatever the precise context which produced it.

Scholars have debated whether these works were aimed at external audiences of non-Christians -- and, if so, whether they ever reached them -- or whether they were not rather written for, and read exclusively by, Christian audiences. The form of the apologetic works is that they address named audiences outside Jewish and Christian communities and that they refer to questions posed and objections raised by the non-Christian addressees. Texts appear to assume some prior knowledge of the matters under discussion and to be part of an on-going debate; issues are introduced without background explanation and the audience is presented as having at least a degree of prior knowledge of Christianity. Some commentators have been inclined to treat apologetic works at face value: Daniélou, for instance, describes them as ‘...the missionary literature of the second century, the presentation of the Gospel to the pagan world...’, contrasting them with works of ‘catechical literature’ aimed at ‘...expounding the faith to converts...’¹⁸ A similar judgement is reached by Grant, who argues that ‘...apologists wrote for non-Christian groups or individuals to tell outsiders about Christian truth.’¹⁹

The form of a text in the ancient world could, however, merely be the frame in which an author presents his material²⁰ and it is possible that, despite appearances, the audiences for apologetic works were actually to be found among Christians.

¹⁸ J Daniélou, *Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture* trans J A Baker (Darton, Longman & Todd, London 1973) 9.

¹⁹ Grant, *Greek Apologists* 11.

²⁰ A good example is pseudonymous letter collections: P A Rosenmeyer, *Ancient Epistolary Fictions: the Letter in Greek Literature* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2001) 193-233.

The apologists make frequent use of techniques of literary artifice that were part of the rhetorical discourse of the time and the putative addressees could quite plausibly not be the real audiences.²¹ Thus some scholars have been inclined to treat the texts not so much as part of actual dialogues between Christians and Graeco-Romans, but rather as works that were in practice read wholly (or overwhelmingly) by Christians.²² Sceptical positions of this kind reflect the terms of a similar debate on Hellenistic-Jewish writings and particularly the contribution of Tcherikover. In a widely-quoted article he argued that, although such literature was externally-focused apologetic in form, it was not in fact part of a dialogue between Jews and non-Jews, but was written predominantly, if not exclusively, for -- and read by -- internal Jewish audiences.²³

Even if in spite of these arguments, apologetic works *were* aimed at non-Christians, however, it does not necessarily follow that they ever reached, or *a fortiori* significantly influenced, their intended audiences. As the editors of the 1999 collection, *Apologetics in the Roman Empire* put it, for instance: ‘... matter and style ensured that the apologists would not have been much read outside the Church.’²⁴ No reference to specific Christian apologetic texts is found in surviving non-Christian literature of the time, although this is an argument from silence and the low rate of textual survival from the period, coupled with the Christian bias to what does survive, prompts caution in drawing conclusions from this. Some non-Christian authors display an awareness of arguments in favour of

²¹ M J Edwards, M R Goodman, S R F Price & C Rowland, ‘Introduction: Apologetics in the Roman World’ in Edwards et al eds, *Apologetics* 1-13, 8-9. For apologists’ use of rhetorical discourse: R M Grant, ‘Forms and Occasions of the Greek Apologists’ *SMSR* 52 (1986) 213-226.

²² E.g. M J Edwards, ‘Apologetics’ in S A Harvey & D G Hunter eds, *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2008) 549-564, 550-551.

²³ V Tcherikover, ‘Jewish Apologetic Literature Reconsidered’ *Eos* 48 (1956) 169-193.

²⁴ Edwards et al, ‘Introduction’ in Edwards et al eds, *Apologetics* 9.

Christianity, notably Galen²⁵ and Celsus,²⁶ although their writings do not reveal the sources of their knowledge and do not refer to specific Christian works. Some modern scholars, notably Andresen and following him Droge,²⁷ have argued that Celsus was writing in response to Justin's *Apologiae* and must therefore have known the latter's work directly. The case is, however, based on perceived similarities in the arguments described by Justin and Celsus, rather than on any close textual connections or references, leaving many scholars unconvinced.²⁸ Indeed, the most direct links between Justin and Celsus proposed by Andresen have been undermined very effectively by detailed critical scrutiny.²⁹

To regard the apologists' audiences as necessarily *either* internal *or* external may, however, be to oversimplify. It is possible that these works were intended for both Christian and non-Christian readerships -- rather than exclusively for one or the other -- or that texts primarily aimed at external readerships were extensively utilised internally. Moreover, the boundaries between Christian and non-Christian were not necessarily clear,³⁰ and target audiences could have been located somewhere on the border between Christian and non-Christian, among

²⁵ Galen's writings date from the mid to late 2C CE. A few references to Christianity found in the large quantity of his surviving *oeuvre* betray a curiosity about Christian apologetic arguments: R Walzer, *Galen on Jews and Christians* (Oxford University Press, London 1949). For Galen's *oeuvre*: R J Hankinson, 'The man and his work' in R J Hankinson ed, *The Cambridge Companion to Galen* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2008) 1-33.

²⁶ The work of Celsus, normally dated to the late 2C CE, survives in significant quantity because Origen composed a comprehensive refutation of it in the mid 3C; but while he certainly betrays considerable knowledge of Christian ideas, Celsus makes no references to specific apologetic works: Origen, *Contra Celsum* trans H Chadwick (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1953).

²⁷ C Andresen, *Logos und Nomos: Die Polemik des Kelsos wider das Christentum* (De Gruyter, Berlin 1955) 345-372 & A J Droge, *Homer or Moses? Early Christian Interpretations of the History of Culture* (J C B Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen 1989) 76-77.

²⁸ E.g. E F Osborn, *Justin Martyr* (J C B Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen 1973) 168-170.

²⁹ G T Burke, 'Celsus and Justin: Carl Andresen revisited' *ZNW* 76 (1985) 107-116.

³⁰ J M Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World* (Oxford University Press, Cambridge 2004) 98-146.

new or potential converts, or among existing Christians considering the abandonment of their new faith. It is to readings of this kind that recent scholars, such as Nyström and Pretila, have been drawn.³¹

Scholarly debates over the nature of the original audiences may, however, be less important than they initially appear to be. The subject-matter of these works clearly lies in debates then current between Christians and non-Christians, since their authors would hardly have devoted their energies to discussing issues not live at the time. It is, however, quite possible that the apologists fashioned for use within their own communities texts which addressed concerns arising in externally-facing debates, so that even if their texts were written entirely for internal consumption, they were still concerned with issues of controversy between Christians and non-Christians, with how best to promote a Christian case to an external audience and respond to objections raised. Thus even where uncertainty persists concerning the nature of its original audience, examination of the contents of a text and of the arguments it contains can still be fruitfully undertaken.

The term audience can be used in a number of different senses and the discussion by Barclay, in his work on the 1C Jewish writer Josephus' apologetic work *Contra Apionem*,³² provides helpful clarification on the issue. He distinguishes three senses of the term audience: the declared audience, that is those who are addressed by the text, the implied audience, that is the ideal readers presupposed or 'constructed' by the text, and the intended audience, that is those whom the

³¹ D E Nyström, *The Apology of Justin Martyr: Literary Strategies and the Defence of Christianity* (Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2018) 19-66 & N W Pretila, *Re-appropriating 'Marvellous Fables': Justin Martyr's Strategic Retrieval of Myth in 1 Apology* (Pickwick Publications, Eugene 2014) 25-32.

³² Text in Josephus, *Contra Apionem* ed H St J Thackeray *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1926), trans in Flavius Josephus, *Against Apion* trans J M G Barclay (Brill, Leiden 2007).

author hopes will read it. Barclay points out that while the declared and implied audiences are ‘products’ of the text itself, determining the intended audience may involve drawing on evidence from outside the text -- where this is available -- and is the most difficult to identify.³³ Applying Barclay’s categories to Christian apologetic texts, the declared audiences are the named Graeco-Roman addressees, while the implied audiences are also found among Graeco-Romans, although perhaps scoped more broadly. The intended audiences are, however, not so straightforwardly defined; they may be found *either* among non-Christian Graeco-Romans *or* among members of Christian communities *or*, conceivably, among both.

Barclay’s category of implied audience fits best with the approach to audiences for apologetic texts adopted here. What constitutes such an audience can therefore be determined from within the text itself. Audiences will, however, always be referred to in this study as if they are external to Christianity; this is primarily a matter of convenience, designed to avoid the convoluted phraseology that would be necessary to recognize at every turn the different possibilities for actual audiences which have been discussed above. It is also in line with the way the texts present themselves.

The apologetic texts and the current study

This study does not deal with apologetic arguments as a whole, but specifically with the use they make of the Jewish scriptures. It is limited to the period 140–190 CE, which was a particularly fruitful one for apologetic writing; among the extant texts from those years three stand out both because they are substantial in themselves and because they make extensive use of the Jewish scriptures: Justin Martyr’s *Apologia Maior*, Tatian’s *Oratio ad Graecos* and the *Ad Autolyicum* of

³³ Barclay, *Against Apion* xlv-li.

Theophilus of Antioch.³⁴ Other texts (or what survives of them) are either too brief -- such as the works of Apollinaris and Melito³⁵ -- or, if more substantial, rule themselves out because they refer to the Jewish scriptures only very sparingly; thus Aristides' *Apologia*³⁶ and Athenagoras' *Legatio*,³⁷ both of which present arguments in favour of Christianity, but not on the basis of Jewish scriptural references,³⁸ exclude themselves from consideration.

Apologetic works are therefore read here as texts about texts, more specifically as Christian texts about Jewish scriptures. The apologists present portraits of Christianity which are constructs that may reflect reality, in whole or part, but that are also a representation of reality created by their authors, and it may be hard to see where reflection finishes and creation begins. The Jewish scriptures these authors discuss, quote from and interpret to their audiences are a central feature of the 'reality' of Christianity which they describe, and to some extent create,³⁹ so an appreciation of the way they portray the scriptures is important for a proper understanding of these works.

The apologists and the Jewish scriptures

Given the centrality of the Jewish scriptures for this study, it is critical to understand something of the nature of these texts and the form in which they

³⁴ Bibliographical references to the texts are given in the relevant chapter.

³⁵ Apollinaris is mentioned in Eusebius, *The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine* trans G A Williamson rev & ed with a new introduction by A Louth (Penguin, London 1989) (*HE*) 4.27 & 5.5. Extracts from Melito are quoted in Eusebius, *HE* 4.26. Grant, *Greek Apologists* 83-99 discusses both authors.

³⁶ *The Apology of Aristides on Behalf of the Christians*, ed J R Harris with an Appendix by J A Robinson (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1891).

³⁷ Athenagoras, *Legatio and De Resurrectione* ed W R Schoedel (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1972).

³⁸ *Apology of Aristides* ed Harris 82-84, in the Appendix by Robinson: he identifies a mere eight references to 'Scripture', only one of which is to the Jewish scriptures (2Macc 7:28), the remainder being to NT texts & Athenagoras, *Legatio* 154 (twelve references to the Jewish scriptures listed).

³⁹ For the role of texts in creating identities: Lieu, *Christian Identity* 27-61.

might have been available to Christian apologists. It is also important to appreciate the significance of describing them as scriptures.

The Jewish scriptures were the products of ancient Jewish communities, originally composed largely in Hebrew over an extended period of time.⁴⁰ Texts came to be grouped as Torah,⁴¹ Prophets, and the much looser category called Writings and to be regarded by the Jews as authoritative scriptures. The processes by which this happened -- and where the boundaries lay, around and between the different groupings of texts -- are recognised by scholars as complex and controversial issues.⁴² There were also texts, now commonly referred to as 'apocryphal', because they were ultimately excluded from some later biblical canons⁴³, which it is not incorrect also to include under the umbrella heading of Jewish scriptures.

The Hebrew scriptures were translated into Greek, probably by the Jews themselves, some time during, or after, the 3C BCE, and probably over several centuries.⁴⁴ It is these Greek texts, circulating among Hellenistic Jewish

⁴⁰ Recent summaries of the issues, with references to some of the extensive literature, are E Ulrich, 'The Old Testament Text and its Transmission' & J Schaper, 'The Literary History of the Hebrew Bible' in *NCHB1* 83-104 & 105-144.

⁴¹ Law is a common translation for Torah, although some scholars hold that Teaching is a more accurate rendering: B M Metzger & M D Coogan eds, *The Oxford Guide to Ideas and Issues of the Bible* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2001) 493.

⁴² A recent summary of the scholarly debates, with copious references to the literature, is J Barton, 'The Old Testament Canons' in *NCHB1* 145-164.

⁴³ J J Collins, 'The 'Apocryphal' Old Testament' in *NCHB1* 165-189.

⁴⁴ There is a large literature on the origin and development of the Greek Jewish scriptures. General works containing extensive references to the scholarship: G Dorival, M Harl & O Munnich, *La Bible grecque des Septante: du Judaïsme Hellénistique au Christianisme ancien* (Éditions du Cerf, Paris 1988); N Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context: Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible* trans W G E Watson (Brill, Leiden 2000); K H Jobes & M Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Baker Academic, Grand Rapids 2000) & J M Dines, *The Septuagint* (T&T Clark, Edinburgh 2004). For the broader cultural role of the Septuagint in ancient Judaism: T Rajak, *Translation and Survival: the Greek Bible of the Ancient Jewish Diaspora* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2009).

communities, which were familiar to early Christians⁴⁵ and which are referred to here as the Jewish scriptures. They are sometimes called the Septuagint, a term originally applied only to the Greek translation of the Torah,⁴⁶ although commonly used in modern literature to refer to translations of the Hebrew scriptures generally.⁴⁷ The term Septuagint is helpful in distinguishing that set of translations of the Hebrew scriptures from other renderings into Greek undertaken from the 2C CE onwards, such as those of ‘the Three’, which were used by Jews (generally) rather than Christians.⁴⁸ The Jewish scriptures in Greek were the core texts of Hellenistic Jewish culture; they were regarded as authoritative by Jews, as is evident from *Aristeas*⁴⁹ and the work of Philo⁵⁰ and Josephus.⁵¹ The term Jewish scriptures is imprecise, however, and should not be

⁴⁵ Considered in literature on the development of the ‘Christian Bible’, e.g. M Hengel, *The Septuagint as Christian Scripture, its Prehistory and the Problem of its Canon* trans M E Biddle (T&T Clark, Edinburgh 2002). A perspective from a scholar of Judaism is Rajak, *Translation* 278–313.

⁴⁶ The earliest surviving version of the so-called Legend of the Septuagint, *Aristeas*, identifies seventy-two translators (later versions of the legend amended the number to seventy—hence Septuagint), and refers only to the translation of the Torah: *Aristeas to Philocrates, Letter of Aristeas* ed & trans M Hadas (Wipf & Stock, Eugene 1951) and A Wasserstein & D J Wasserstein, *The Legend of the Septuagint from Classical Antiquity to Today* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2006).

⁴⁷ As is shown by the titles of some of the works on the Greek Jewish scriptures noted above: Rajak, *Translation* 14–16.

⁴⁸ The relationship between the translations of ‘the Three’, Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion, and the Septuagint is discussed in Jobes & Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* 37–43; Fernández Marcos, *Septuagint* 109–154 & Rajak, *Translation* 290–313.

⁴⁹ *Aristeas* is discussed below. The text contains lavish praise of the scriptures e.g. on the part of the Egyptian King: *Aristeas* 312–320.

⁵⁰ Seen generally in the respectful way in which Philo approaches the Greek scriptures in his various commentaries (J R Royse, ‘The Works of Philo’ in A Kamesar ed, *The Cambridge Companion to Philo* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2009) 32–64) and specifically in his account of the Legend of the Septuagint: Philo, *De Vita Mosis 2 Volumes* ed F H Colson *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1935) 2 25–44.

⁵¹ Seen in the way Josephus retells the scriptural narrative in his *Jewish Antiquities* (Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* ed H St J Thackeray, R Marcus & L H Feldman *9 Volumes LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1930–1965) and in his comments on the scriptures in *Contra Apionem*: Barclay, *Against Apion* 1.37–42.

taken to describe a bounded set of texts whose make-up was clearly established in the 2C CE.⁵²

The earliest Christians were, of course, Jews and invoking the scriptures they inherited from Judaism was a significant feature of early Christian texts. This is seen in different ways in NT texts, in the canonical gospels, the letters of Paul and in Revelation and, in acknowledgment of this, the study of ‘the OT in the NT’ is a recognised part of scholarship.⁵³ The significance of the Jewish scriptures is also evident in other 1C and 2C Christian texts, in the Apostolic Fathers, for instance.⁵⁴

The importance of the scriptures for Christians was in large measure associated with the promotion of Jesus Christ as the Jewish Messiah. Their distinctly Christian interpretations of the scriptures differed from, and indeed placed them in conflict with, those Jews who retained an allegiance to the traditions of Judaism. In the 2C the Jewish scriptures have thus been described as being *inter alia* ‘a tool in polemical encounters with Jews’⁵⁵ in the hands of Christian writers. A notable example is the *Epistle of Barnabas* which argues forcefully in favour of Christian and against traditional Jewish interpretations of the scriptures.⁵⁶ Use of these texts was therefore not something new in the apologists’ writings; what was novel was reference to them in texts addressed, ostensibly at least, to audiences outside Christianity or Judaism.

⁵² L M McDonald, ‘Canon’ in J W Rogerson and J M Lieu eds, *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Studies* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2006) 777-809 & M W Holmes, ‘The Biblical Canon’ in Harvey & Hunter eds, *Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* 406-426.

⁵³ Examples of the extensive literature: C H Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: the Sub-Structure of New Testament Theology* (Nisbet & Co, London 1952) & S Moyise, *Evoking Scripture: Seeing the Old Testament in the New* (T&T Clark, London 2008).

⁵⁴ Ehrman, *Apostolic Fathers LCL*.

⁵⁵ Carleton Paget, ‘Interpretation of the Bible’ 549.

⁵⁶ J Carleton Paget, *The Epistle of Barnabas: Outlook and Background* (J C B Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen 1994) 69-70.

Christian authors of the 2C did not necessarily have access to full texts of the Jewish scriptures and material may have reached them through extracts, summaries or perhaps orally, or possibly through quotations and references in the writings of others. Written texts were scarce in the ancient world; ‘publication’ was only achieved by manual copying⁵⁷ and the Jewish scriptures represented a large corpus of texts. Indeed, scholars recognise that handbooks and extract collections were forms in which material from literary and philosophical works was transmitted⁵⁸ and there is evidence that among Jews ideas and texts from the Jewish scriptures were accessed in the form of extracts or summaries.⁵⁹ Such practices influenced emerging Christianity and the theory that *testimonia*, or collections of prophetic proof-texts from scripture, were in circulation in early Christian communities has gained considerable currency. This was prompted particularly by the work of Dodd⁶⁰ and then developed by other scholars; Albl has provided a review of the field.⁶¹ The most notable application of the *testimonia* thesis in the 2C context -- Skarsaune’s work on the sources used by Justin -- shows how his scriptural quotations were derived from more than one distinct testimonial tradition.⁶²

⁵⁷ H Y Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: a History of Early Christian Texts* (Yale University Press, New Haven 1995).

⁵⁸ H Chadwick, ‘Florilegium’ in *RAC* 7 1131-43 & M C Albl, ‘And Scripture cannot be broken’ *The Form and Function of the Early Christian Testimonia Collections* (Brill, Leiden 1999) 73-81.

⁵⁹ Albl, ‘And Scripture cannot be broken’ 81-93. For Qumran evidence: G J Brooke, ‘Thematic Commentaries on Prophetic Scriptures’ in M Henze, *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 2005) 134-157.

⁶⁰ Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, especially 28-110.

⁶¹ Albl, ‘And Scripture cannot be broken’ 7-69 for a literature review & 97-158 for Christian *testimonia* collections. A note of caution has, however, recently been struck in Carleton Paget, ‘Interpretation of the Bible’ 556: ‘In the absence of unambiguous evidence for the existence of testimony books, certitude about their existence is impossible.’

⁶² O Skarsaune, *The Proof from Prophecy: a Study in Justin Martyr’s Proof-Text Tradition: Text-Type, Provenance, Theological Profile* (Brill, Leiden 1987) 139-242.

Scripture

The term 'scripture' has been used up to now in the phrase 'Jewish scriptures' without explanatory comment. It is a modern term, and a term of convenience, useful in the current context, although its meaning requires clarification.⁶³ In the context of the debate on the development of the biblical canon Ulrich⁶⁴ has provided the following helpful definition:

'A book of scripture is a sacred authoritative work believed to have God as its ultimate author, which the community, as a group and individually, recognizes and accepts as determinative for its belief and practice for all time and in all geographical areas.'⁶⁵

This is quite a precise definition, which views scripture as necessarily determinative for belief and practice, not simply as inspired (and inspirational) text. Use of the word 'authoritative', however, begs the question as to what *that* term means; again Ulrich provides a definition:

'An authoritative work is a writing which a group, secular or religious, recognizes and accepts as determinative for its conduct, and as of a higher order than can be overridden by the power or will of the group or any member.'⁶⁶

⁶³ This is not always the case; the chapter entitled 'The Uses of Scripture in Hellenistic Judaism' in Rajak, *Translation* 210-238 uses the term 'scripture' without discussing what it means.

⁶⁴ E Ulrich, 'The Notion and Definition of Canon' in L M McDonald & J A Sanders eds, *The Canon Debate* (Hendrickson, Peabody 2002) 21-35.

⁶⁵ Ulrich, 'Notion and Definition' 29.

⁶⁶ Ulrich, 'Notion and Definition' 29.

Once more the idea of a text being determinative for conduct is present, and it is striking that both definitions stress what a group or community ‘recognizes and accepts’. Thus there is not something inherent in a text which qualifies it as scripture; what is critical is the attitude taken towards it, the way in which it is viewed and treated by those who possess or use it.

These definitions fit well the texts sacred to the Jews and the term Jewish *scriptures* is therefore appropriately applied to them. It is worth noting, however, given the focus of this study, that the Graeco-Roman literary tradition did not have an analogous set of sacred texts fitting the definition of scripture employed here.⁶⁷ The Homeric epics have sometimes been seen as a parallel for the Jewish scriptures, but the comparison is a misleading one. Finkelberg and Stroumsa draw a helpful distinction between literary and religious canons, placing the works of Homer in the first category and the Jewish scriptures in the second.⁶⁸ In a further work Finkelberg⁶⁹ has developed the concept of the ‘foundational text’ which she defines as having three criteria: that it occupies the central place in education: that it is the focus of exegetical activity aimed at defending it from any form of criticism: and that it should be the vehicle by which the identity of the community to which it belongs is articulated.⁷⁰ She claims that both Homer and the Bible meet these criteria and that both should therefore be seen as

⁶⁷ Neither Egyptian priestly records referred to by Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History 12 Volumes* ed C H Oldfather *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1933–1967) 1 69.7 nor the Roman *Books of the Pontifices* referred to in ancient sources (J A North, ‘The Books of the *Pontifices*’ in C Moatti ed, *La Mémoire perdue: recherches sur l’administration Romaine Romaine* (École Française de Rome, Rome 1998) 45–63) would have been at all analogous.

⁶⁸ M Finkelberg & G G Stroumsa, ‘Introduction: Before the Western Canon’ in M Finkelberg & G G Stroumsa eds, *Homer, the Bible and Beyond: Literary and Religious Canons in the Ancient World* (Brill, Leiden 2003) 1–8.

⁶⁹ M Finkelberg, ‘Canonising and Decanonising Homer: Reception of the Homeric Poems in Antiquity and Modernity’ in M R Niehoff ed, *Homer and the Bible in the Eyes of Ancient Interpreters* (Brill, Leiden 2012) 15–28.

⁷⁰ Finkelberg, ‘Canonising’ 16.

foundational texts. The standard for scripture set out above is, however, much more exacting than the one Finkelberg sets for her ‘foundational text’; it includes the notions that a text is ‘believed to have God as its ultimate author’ and that it is recognised and accepted ‘as determinative for its belief and practice for all time’. These features are characteristic of the Jewish scriptures but not the Homeric epics, so while both texts may be described as foundational, the latter cannot be described as scripture.

The Jewish scriptures and the Graeco-Roman world

It has been the implication hitherto that non-Christian non-Jews were not familiar with the Jewish scriptures already and that the apologists brought these texts to their attention for the first time. This assumption needs to be tested, however, and there are a number of ways of doing this. First, it can be asked whether Judaism was a proselytizing religion; if so, then the scriptures, which were central to Judaism, would doubtless have featured in any dialogues with non-Jews aiming to attract converts. Second, Hellenistic Jewish literature can be explored to see whether it shows Jewish writers actively promoting their scriptures to non-Jewish audiences. Third, Graeco-Roman writings can be examined to establish the extent to which their authors reveal knowledge or awareness of the Jewish scriptures. Analysis of these three strands of evidence will show that the extent to which the apologists’ Graeco-Roman audiences were familiar with the Jewish scriptures before the advent of Christianity was at best likely to have been very limited.

Alexander’s conquests in the 4C BCE provided the impetus to accelerate movement of Jews outside Palestine and encourage the growth of a diaspora of Jewish communities in Greek cities of the Eastern Mediterranean.⁷¹ This brought

⁷¹ J M G Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: from Alexander to Trajan (323BCE-117CE)* (T&T Clark, Edinburgh 1996).

Jews into close proximity with non-Jews and, although the extent to which they integrated or remained separate has been debated,⁷² opportunities clearly existed for proselytising activity. Some scholars, from Harnack onwards, have argued that such activity was significant, and indeed successful.⁷³ Studies by McKnight⁷⁴ and Goodman⁷⁵ concluded independently, however, that Jewish missionary activity was not of great significance in the ancient world. For both scholars the argument is essentially the same: that the evidence is simply insufficient to support the case. They acknowledge that Jews may have been receptive to proselytes and that there are examples of non-Jews becoming sympathisers towards, or even converts to, Judaism. Both regard such evidence as limited, however, and insufficient to support the contention that missionary activity was widespread; these conclusions have more recently been endorsed by a further study by Riesner.⁷⁶ The work of other scholars, notably Bird,⁷⁷ and especially Carleton Paget,⁷⁸ has supplied something of a corrective in suggesting that missionary activity was perhaps a more significant phenomenon than McKnight and Goodman allowed for. This has not led these scholars to contend that any such missionary activity provided the route by which the Jewish scriptures became

⁷² Analysed by Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean* 92-102 in terms of Assimilation, Acculturation and Accommodation.

⁷³ See A Harnack, *The Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries 2 Volumes* trans J Moffat (Williams and Norgate, London 1904-1905) 1 1-18; E Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 BC—AD 135)* new English rev version eds G Vermes, F Millar & M Goodman III/I (T & T Clark, Edinburgh 1986) 150-176 and more recently L H Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian* (Princeton University Press, Princeton 1993) 288-382.

⁷⁴ S McKnight, *A Light among the Gentiles: Jewish Missionary Activity in the Second Temple Period* (Fortress Press, Minneapolis 1991).

⁷⁵ M Goodman, *Mission and Conversion: Proselytising in the Religious History of the Roman Empire* (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1994).

⁷⁶ R Riesner, 'A Pre-Christian Jewish Mission?' in J Ådna & H Kvalbein, *The Mission of the Early Church to Jews and Gentiles* (Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2000) 211-250.

⁷⁷ M L Bird, *Crossing Land and Sea: Jewish Missionary Activity in the Second Temple Period* (Hendrickson, Peabody 2010).

⁷⁸ J Carleton Paget, *Jews, Christians and Jewish Christians in Antiquity* (Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2010) 149-183.

significantly well known outside Jewish circles, however, which is the critical point for this study.⁷⁹

Surviving Hellenistic-Jewish literature provides some evidence of Jewish history and culture being promoted to external audiences. This did not entail bringing the scriptures to their attention to any marked extent, however, and where the externally apologetic impetus is clearest -- with Josephus -- there is no apparent desire to promote the actual texts of the scriptures to non-Jews.

The most substantial item of Hellenistic-Jewish literature, the Septuagint translation, made it possible for Greek-speaking non-Jews to read the Jewish scriptures, at least if they were able to gain access to it. The text itself provides scant clues as to why translation from Hebrew into Greek was undertaken. There is one tantalising reference in the Prologue to Sirach, when translation is being discussed, that ‘...those who love learning be capable of service to outsiders...’⁸⁰ This could be taken to indicate that translation into Greek was, at least in part, undertaken for the benefit of those outside Jewish communities, although the reference is ambiguous and far from conclusive. *Aristeas* provides evidence of a tradition -- clearly extant in the ancient world -- that the Septuagint was regarded from its inception as performing an apologetic function. It describes how the translation project was initiated by Ptolemy of Egypt in the 3C BCE so that a copy of the Greek version could be deposited in his Library at Alexandria, where it would be available for non-Jews to read.⁸¹ There are clearly fictional

⁷⁹ That Judaism could embrace a ‘universalist’ outlook has been well argued by T L Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles: Jewish Patterns of Universalism (to 135 CE)* (Baylor University Press, Waco 2007), where universalism is identified with four factors: a spectrum of sympathisers; converts; ethical monotheism; and participants in eschatological redemption. Donaldson is, however, clear that universalism does not necessarily entail proselytism.

⁸⁰ *NETS*, Sirach Prologue 5.

⁸¹ *Aristeas* 38 & 317.

elements to *Aristeas*⁸² and some elements of its narrative do not appear very credible.⁸³ The whole account is not without historical value, however, for it appears to preserve a tradition of early interest in the translation of the Jewish scriptures into Greek on the part of the Ptolemaic rulers of Egypt. Some scholars have treated the essence of the story as quite plausible, not least because they have found it difficult to conceive that such a large-scale literary enterprise could have been carried through by Alexandrian Jews without royal support.⁸⁴ With or without such assistance, however, the Septuagint has tended to be regarded by modern scholarship as an initiative of the Jewish community of Alexandria itself, carried out not to support proselytising activity, but for the benefit of Greek-speaking Jews themselves.⁸⁵

In addition to the Septuagint, fragments of Hellenistic-Jewish literature survive in the works of later Christian authors. These fragments are thought to date from between the 3C and the 1C BCE and to emanate from Alexandria.⁸⁶ They do not, however, constitute strong evidence that their authors were promoting the scriptures to non-Jews. Since the survivals are fragmentary, the original works cannot be judged as whole entities. Their contents do include material clearly

⁸² The author presents himself as a Greek royal emissary, although modern scholars are unanimous in the view that he was an Alexandrian Jew. The arguments are summarized in *Aristeas* Introduction 3-9.

⁸³ E.g. the lengthy account of the philosophical question and answer sessions involving Ptolemy and the Jewish scholars and the detailed description of the gifts Ptolemy sent to Jerusalem: *Aristeas* 182-300 & 51-82.

⁸⁴ S Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria: a Study in the Narrative of the Letter of Aristeas* (Routledge, London 2003) 136-139 & Rajak, *Translation* 64-91.

⁸⁵ Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean* 424-426 & Rajak, *Translation* 210-238.

⁸⁶ *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors 4 Volumes* ed C R Holladay (Scholars Press, Chico & Atlanta 1983-96): *Volume 1 Historians* (1983) & *Volume 2 Poets* (1989). Individual texts are discussed in Schürer, *History of the Jewish People* III/ I 513-566; P M Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria Volume 1* (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1972) 687-716; J J Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora* Second ed (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 2000) 29-63 & E S Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism: the Reinvention of Jewish Tradition* (University of California Press, Berkeley 1998) 110-188.

derived from the Jewish scriptures,⁸⁷ although there are sometimes additions to, and sometimes quite marked divergences from, the scriptural accounts. These works are couched in Hellenistic Greek literary forms.⁸⁸ Diaspora Jewish communities were, however, extensively Hellenised, writing in Greek and with a culture strongly influenced by Greek traditions,⁸⁹ so an intended audience which was non-Jewish as opposed to Hellenised Jewish cannot be assumed.⁹⁰ The surviving texts do not quote from the scriptures, or even refer to them as sources. They are probably best seen as akin to the 'Rewritten Bible' texts, largely composed in Hebrew, which were a prominent feature of the literature of Second Temple Judaism and written for internal Jewish consumption.⁹¹

The work of the 1C CE Alexandrian Jew Philo⁹² survives in impressive quantity, the bulk of which comprises commentaries on the Pentateuch in Greek.⁹³ It is not clear from the texts whether Philo wrote to bring the Jewish scriptures to the attention of non-Jews -- he does not say for whom he is writing -- and in the

⁸⁷ For example, Demetrius the Chronographer deals predominantly with events in Genesis and Exodus, Eupolemus largely with Solomon and the building of the Temple and Artapanus mainly with material from Exodus: Holladay, *Fragments 1* 51-243.

⁸⁸ Chiefly historical forms e.g. Eupolemus and Pseudo-Aristeas: Holladay, *Fragments 1* 93-156 & 261-275, but also poetic drama e.g. 'The Exodus' of Ezekiel the Tragedian: *The Exagoge of Ezekiel* ed H Jacobson (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1983) and Hellenistic-Oriental romance e.g. Artapanus: Holladay *Fragments 1* 189-243 & M Braun, *History and Romance in Graeco-Oriental Literature* (Blackwell, Oxford 1938) 26-31.

⁸⁹ Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean* 88-124.

⁹⁰ G E Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition: Josephos, Luke-Acts and Apologetic Historiography* (Brill, Leiden 1992) argues that Jewish historical literature is aimed at self-definition rather than external presentation.

⁹¹ G Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies* Second rev ed (Brill, Leiden 1973) 67-126; P S Alexander, 'Retelling the Old Testament' in D A Carson & H G M Williamson eds, *It is Written: Scripture citing Scripture: Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars, SSF* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1988) 99-121 & D A Machiela, 'Once more, with feeling: Rewritten Scripture in Ancient Judaism—A Review of Recent Developments' in *JJS* 61 (2010) 308-320.

⁹² For family and personal background: D R Schwartz, 'Philo, his family, and his times' in Kamesar ed, *Cambridge Companion to Philo* 9-31.

⁹³ Royse, 'Works of Philo' 32-64.

absence of external evidence judgements must be made from evidence within the texts themselves.⁹⁴ The same argument applies, however, as with the fragmentary text survivals: that there are no strong grounds for considering Philo's audience as other than Hellenised Greek-speaking Jews, who knew the scriptures, or wished to learn about them, and who could benefit from commentaries.⁹⁵ In one text, *De Vita Mosis*, Philo does express the wish that the Jewish scriptures should become better known among non-Jews,⁹⁶ and accepted by them, even suggesting that the rationale for the Septuagint translation was to bring the scriptures to the attention of Greeks.⁹⁷ Comments of this kind are, however, rare and occasional in Philo's extant works and they are best read as the wishes and hopes of a fervent Jew, rather than as evidence of a serious apologetic intention. Philo does not quote at all from the Jewish scriptures in *De Vita Mosis* and there are no clear indications

⁹⁴ These issues are discussed in E R Goodenough, 'Philo's Exposition of the Law and his *De Vita Mosis*' *HTR* 26 (1933) 109-125; P Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria, an Exegete for his Time* (Brill, Leiden 1997); E Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought: Israel, Jews and Proselytes* (Scholars Press, Atlanta 1996); D M Hay ed, *Both Literal and Allegorical: Studies in Philo of Alexandria's Questions and Answers on Genesis and Exodus* (Scholars Press, Atlanta 1991); D T Runia, *Exegesis and Philosophy: Studies on Philo of Alexandria* (Variorum, Aldershot 1990) & M Niehoff, *Philo on Jewish Identity and Culture* (Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2001).

⁹⁵ Some of the Philo's surviving texts, known as the *Quaestiones* (Philo, *Questions on Genesis & Exodus 2 Volumes* trans R Marcus *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1953) and couched in a question and answer format, appear to assume little prior knowledge of the Pentateuch and so could have been aimed at a non-Jewish audience. They could, however, also have been written for a catechical context, in which readers' knowledge would have been very limited, and thus still be internal to Judaism.

⁹⁶ 'But, if a fresh start should be made to brighter prospects, how great a change for the better might we expect to see! I believe that each nation would abandon its peculiar ways, and, throwing overboard their ancestral customs, turn to honouring our laws alone': Philo, *De Vita Mosis LCL* 2 44.

⁹⁷ 'Then it was that some people, thinking it a shame that the laws should be found in one half only of the human race, the barbarians, and denied altogether to the Greeks, took steps to have them translated': Philo, *De Vita Mosis LCL* 2 27.

of a wish to encourage non-Jews to become directly acquainted with the sacred texts.⁹⁸

The final Hellenistic-Jewish writer to consider is Josephus, whose work is the most relevant to the current study since, writing as a Jewish exile in Rome towards the end of the 1C CE,⁹⁹ he does appear to be addressing a non-Jewish audience. In his *Jewish Antiquities*¹⁰⁰ Josephus re-presents scriptural material as a historical narrative in the Graeco-Roman manner, in which the story of the Jewish people is told as a series of lives of great men whose deeds exhibit cardinal virtues.¹⁰¹ He appears to want to acquaint his audience with the *contents* of the Jewish scriptures while not exposing them to the actual texts. He acknowledges his debt to the scriptures as the prime source for his history of the Jewish people,¹⁰² but the actual wording of his account is not close to that of the scriptures. He paraphrases and elaborates rather than translating.¹⁰³ In *Contra Apionem*, his apologetic work on behalf of Judaism, Josephus writes to

⁹⁸ A recent contribution to Philonic studies, M Niehoff, *Philo of Alexandria: an intellectual biography* (Yale University Press, New Haven 2018), argues that Philo's later works were aimed at a non-Jewish audience. She presents an 'intellectual biography' of Philo suggesting that his visit to Rome in 38-41 CE led to a shift in the audience at which his works were directed from internal Jewish to external Graeco-Roman; she sees the sequence of texts known as the Exposition of the Law (which she argues were composed later in Philo's life) as externally-directed. The thesis is controversial and speculative. Even if it is proved to have some validity, however, it remains the case that the Exposition texts do not promote the scriptures to their audiences as texts they should read; rather the contents of the scriptures are paraphrased and re-presented in a Graeco-Roman guise; thus the interpretation of Philo advanced here would remain substantially unaffected.

⁹⁹ For Josephus generally: T Rajak, *Josephus, the Historian and his Society* (Duckworth, London 1983).

¹⁰⁰ Complete text in Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities LCL*, translations and commentaries in Flavius Josephus, *Judean Antiquities Books 1-4* trans L H Feldman (Brill, Leiden 2004), *Books 5-7* and *Books 8-10* trans C T Begg & P Spilsbury (Brill, Leiden 2005). See also L H Feldman, *Josephus's Interpretation of the Bible* (University of California Press, Berkeley 1998) & L H Feldman, *Studies in Josephus' Rewritten Bible* (Brill, Leiden 1998).

¹⁰¹ See Feldman, *Josephus's Interpretation* 74-131. This literary form has been termed 'apologetic historiography': Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition* 226-310.

¹⁰² Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities LCL* 1.17.

¹⁰³ Feldman, *Josephus' Interpretation* 14-73.

demonstrate the antiquity of the Jewish people to a Graeco-Roman audience,¹⁰⁴ deliberately drawing on evidence from non-Jewish historical sources rather than from the Jewish scriptures.¹⁰⁵ Josephus wants to tell his audience *about* the scriptures and praises them lavishly.¹⁰⁶ He does not quote from them, however, and refers to them only in general terms, so he is neither encouraging nor expecting his audience to read them directly.¹⁰⁷

As well as writings from Hellenistic Judaism, the surviving corpus of non-Jewish Graeco-Roman literature can be examined for evidence as to whether the Septuagint was known outside Jewish circles prior to the advent of Christianity. Some of these works certainly reveal a positive interest in the history and culture of the Jews. References to the Jewish scriptures are, however, isolated and fragmentary, and insufficient to demonstrate strong familiarity on the part of the Graeco-Roman authors. Indeed, it seems likely that exposure to the Jewish scriptures outside Jewish communities was only ever very partial. The volume of the scriptural texts is of course very large; the early chapters of Genesis feature significantly in the examples quoted below, so this material may have been better known than the rest. It is also possible that collections of extracts or summaries or paraphrases circulated rather than full texts and that, while the Jewish scriptures may have been the ultimate source for some Graeco-Roman writers, their contents could have been mediated through shorter or more simplified texts rather than being derived from the scriptures themselves.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ Barclay, *Against Apion* xlv–liii.

¹⁰⁵ Barclay, *Against Apion* I 73–218 discusses Egyptian, Phoenician, Chaldean and Greek evidence for the history of the Jews, rather than Jewish, arguing that these will be credible to a Graeco-Roman readership in a way that Jewish sources would not be (Barclay, *Against Apion* I 69–72).

¹⁰⁶ Barclay, *Against Apion* I 37–42.

¹⁰⁷ Josephus comments that the Greeks do not read the Jewish scriptures: Barclay, *Against Apion* I 217.

¹⁰⁸ Rajak, *Translation* 269 says as much of Pseudo-Longinus (discussed further below): ‘...Longinus will have read, if not the Greek Bible, at least a form of rewritten Bible which, for my argument, is worth almost as much.’

Surviving references to the Jews in Graeco-Roman literature have been conveniently collected by Stern.¹⁰⁹ Notable examples are Strabo's *Geographica* which devotes extensive space to the history, religion and political arrangements of the Jewish people,¹¹⁰ Alexander Polyhistor's *Peri Ioudaion*, which is known to have been a well-researched account of the Jewish people,¹¹¹ Plutarch's *Quaestiones Conviviales* which discusses Jewish religion¹¹² and Book V of Tacitus' *Historiae* which displays considerable curiosity about the history of the Jews, recounting no fewer than six different versions of their origins as a people.¹¹³ Graeco-Roman interest in the Jews coalesced around a number of themes: their antiquity and their foundation story in the Exodus from Egypt, the figure of Moses their founder and great leader,¹¹⁴ certain customs peculiar to the Jews (abstention from pork, circumcision and Sabbath observance) and their severely aniconic monotheism.

The material on which Graeco-Roman writers drew must in large part have come ultimately from Jewish traditions, but whether to any extent from the Jewish scriptures themselves is unclear. Reticence in Graeco-Roman texts about the sources being drawn on makes judgement difficult; the Jewish scriptures are not quoted or even cited as a source, but references to them have been detected in some works. Cook, who has made a study of the subject, argues that Nicolaus of Damascus '...undoubtedly had access to a LXX even if he did not know it

¹⁰⁹ *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism 3 Volumes* ed M Stern (Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jerusalem 1974-84).

¹¹⁰ Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* 1 261-315. Strabo is dated by Stern from the 60s of the 1C BCE to the 20s of the 1C CE.

¹¹¹ It only survives in fragments: Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* 1 157-164. Alexander Polyhistor dates from the 1C BCE.

¹¹² Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* 1 545-576. Plutarch dates from the 40s of the 1C CE to the 20s of the 2C CE.

¹¹³ Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* 2 1-93.

¹¹⁴ The subject of a study in its own right: J G Gager, *Moses in Greco-Roman Paganism* (Abingdon Press, Nashville 1972).

well...¹¹⁵ and somewhat more cautiously that Apollonius Mollon¹¹⁶ and Pompeius Trogus¹¹⁷ had access to scriptural traditions, if not actually to the Septuagint. Graeco-Roman writers sometimes mention the Jewish sacred books, showing at least that they were aware of their existence: Diodorus Siculus writes of the Jewish holy books ‘...containing the xenophobic laws...’ when relating the story of the profanation of the Temple by Antiochus IV,¹¹⁸ Alexander Polyhistor refers to Jewish sacred books¹¹⁹ and the poet Juvenal to ‘Moses’ secret volume’.¹²⁰ There are also a few allusions to the text of the Jewish scriptures in surviving Graeco-Roman works, in Ocellus Lucanus, Pseudo-Ecphantus and Pseudo-Longinus. The work of Ocellus Lucanus dates from the 2C BCE and contains an apparent reference to Gen 1:28;¹²¹ the quotation is not exact, but the verbal similarity signals the connection to be a very plausible one (to Stern a ‘probable allusion’).¹²² Two texts in Pseudo-Ecphantus, noted by Stern, also appear to exhibit semantic similarities -- again not exact -- with Gen 2:7 and 1:26 respectively.¹²³ An oft-quoted reference in the *De Sublimitate* of Pseudo-Longinus¹²⁴ to Gen 1: 3, 9 and

¹¹⁵ J G Cook, *The Interpretation of the Old Testament in Greco-Roman Paganism* (Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2004) 20.

¹¹⁶ Cook, *Interpretation* 11-13, Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* 1 148-156. Apollonius Mollon dates from the 1C BCE.

¹¹⁷ Cook, *Interpretation* 23-25, Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* 1 332-343. Pompeius Trogus dates from the end of the 1C BCE to the beginning of the 1C CE.

¹¹⁸ Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* 1 183; Cook, *Interpretation* 16-18.

¹¹⁹ Cook, *Interpretation*, 13-15; Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* 1 158.

¹²⁰ ‘*tradidit arcano quodcumque volumine Moyses*’: Juvenal, *Satires* ed S M Braund *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 2004) 14 102.

¹²¹ Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* 1 131-133.

¹²² Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* 1 131. Cook, *Interpretation* 8-9 argues that it could be an allusion to the Septuagint, but notes Dorival’s view that it might be verbal co-incidence.

¹²³ Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* 3 33-37. Dating of Pseudo-Ecphantus is uncertain, Stern suggesting ‘First to second centuries C.E.’ Cook, *Interpretation* 34-35 again acknowledges the possibility of verbal co-incidences.

¹²⁴ Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* 1 361-365; ‘Longinus’, *On the Sublime* ed D A Russell (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1964) 11-12 (text) & 92-94 (commentary) and Cook, *Interpretation* 32-34. The work is dated by Stern to the 1C CE, albeit tentatively. The quotation from Genesis is not exact -- it combines elements from three verses -- but the reference is unmistakable.

10, which is described as being from a work by ‘the lawgiver of the Jews,’¹²⁵ that is, Moses, is much clearer. The introduction of this reference, with minimal explanation, suggests that the Genesis passage was familiar, not just to the author, but also to his readers; it is noteworthy not only that the reference is made, but that Moses is described as ‘...no mean genius...’¹²⁶ and that his ideas are reported in positive terms.

In a somewhat different category is the work of the anti-Christian polemicist, Celsus, to which reference has already been made. Judging from the contents of Origen’s *Contra Celsum*, Celsus had some knowledge of the Jewish scriptures, notably of parts of Genesis and Exodus.¹²⁷ There is only one actual quotation, however, and Cook’s judgement that Celsus’ knowledge of the Jewish scriptures was ‘very spotty’¹²⁸ is a reasonable one. Like the Graeco-Roman authors already discussed, Celsus appears to have had some, albeit limited, knowledge of the contents of the Jewish scriptures, but this could easily have been acquired from intermediate sources and traditions, rather than directly from the texts themselves.

Scholars have varied in their overall assessments of the evidence from Graeco-Roman literature for non-Christian non-Jewish familiarity with the Jewish scriptures prior to the advent of Christianity. Reference has already been made to the work of Tcherikover who argued for a minimalist position:

‘The fact, however, is that the translation of the Holy Scriptures into Greek made no impression whatever in the Greek world, since

¹²⁵ ‘Longinus’, *On the Sublime* 93.

¹²⁶ ‘Longinus’, *On the Sublime* 93.

¹²⁷ Cook, *Interpretation* 55–149.

¹²⁸ Cook, *Interpretation* 57.

in the whole of Greek literature there is no indication that the Greeks read the Bible before the Christian period.’¹²⁹

Cook takes a much less negative view, however, and while acknowledging that the evidence is very limited, concludes with due caution that some pagan authors ‘...are aware of the LXX (or the Jewish books of laws) although extant quotations are sparse...’ and that others ‘...seem to be aware of the existence of the LXX...’¹³⁰ The most recent review of the evidence, by Rajak, is even more positive.¹³¹ Of the Graeco-Roman texts discussed here she refers only to those by Ocellus Lucanus and Pseudo-Longinus, but her conclusion is that cultural contact between Jews and non-Jews was in fact considerably more extensive than has been generally supposed:

‘It would be absurd to claim the books of the Bible, in whatever language, were literature in which pagans without a special interest would be able to immerse themselves...There were literate pagans, above all philosophers, who, quite simply, did have an interest sufficient to take them some distance into the Jewish writings...They were able to do so because the books of the Bible were part of their world and were not an unknown entity.’¹³²

The difference between Cook and Rajak here is perhaps one of emphasis rather than substance. Both acknowledge the limited and fragmentary nature of the evidence; however, both of them also consider that there are indications that *some*

¹²⁹ Tcherikover, ‘Jewish Apologetic Literature Reconsidered’ 177.

¹³⁰ Cook, *Interpretation* 52.

¹³¹ Rajak, *Translation* 267–270. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile* 311–314 takes an even more optimistic view, arguing that the Septuagint positively *was* known to the Graeco-Roman world, but his suggestion that all the Greek and Roman authors who wrote about the Jews must have had direct access to the Septuagint strains credibility.

¹³² Rajak, *Translation* 270.

Graeco-Roman authors had *some* familiarity with the Jewish scriptures, Cook being the more cautious in his overall assessment, Rajak the more expansionist.

Previous scholarship

While previous scholarship on each individual text is reviewed in the relevant chapter, work relating to more general themes is considered here. 2C apologetic writings have been the subject of much critical attention, although surprisingly little of it has been devoted to the concerns of the present study. This may be because analyses of apologetic arguments are here brought together with discussion of approaches to biblical interpretation and, while previous scholarship has addressed one or other of these issues, they have not been considered together.

Scholarship on arguments in apologetic texts has unsurprisingly been concerned with the analysis of ideas, and frequently with placing them in a wider context. Themes that recur in the literature therefore include efforts to identify material which can help either to explain the development of Christian theology¹³³ or to relate the contents of Christian writings to prevailing Greek philosophical ideas.¹³⁴ Other scholarly work drawing heavily on apologetic texts has been thematically focused, exploring for example Christian doctrines of creation¹³⁵ or relations between Christians and Jews.¹³⁶ Such works examine ideas in apologetic texts,

¹³³ E.g. J N D Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* Fourth ed (Adam & Charles Black, London 1968) & E F Osborn, *The Emergence of Christian Theology* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1993).

¹³⁴ E.g. H Chadwick, *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition: Studies in Justin, Clement and Origen* (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1966).

¹³⁵ G May, *Creatio Ex Nihilo: the Doctrine of 'Creation out of Nothing' in Early Christian Thought* trans A S Worrall (T & T Clark, London 1994).

¹³⁶ Lieu, *Image and Reality* 155-197.

but not to any significant extent the way the scriptures are employed in their arguments.¹³⁷

Scholarly literature has discussed 2C scriptural interpretation extensively, with general surveys of the field by Grant and Tracy,¹³⁸ Simonetti¹³⁹ and Carleton Paget.¹⁴⁰ More specific studies have looked at individual authors or schools, and what emerges strikingly is the variety in approaches, with different strands of 2C Christianity approaching the Jewish scriptures in very different ways.¹⁴¹ There is only space here to touch on the work of three 2C writers, Valentinus, Marcion and Irenaeus, to illustrate this. In the Valentinian *Gospel of Truth*,¹⁴² the narrative of Genesis is merged with Gnostic myth in a way that ‘...erases the line between text and commentary, as interpretation becomes new composition...’,¹⁴³ Marcion’s approach to the Jewish scriptures has been characterized as treating them as ‘...a primary evidential authority, although not a moral or spiritual one’,¹⁴⁴ while in the work of Irenaeus emphasis is placed on interpreting the

¹³⁷ As is evident from general works on ancient Christian apologetics: M Fiedrowicz, *Apologie im frühen Christentum: Die Kontroverse um den christlichen Wahrheitsanspruch in den ersten Jahrhunderten* (Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn 2000); B Pouderon & J Doré eds, *Les apologistes chrétiens et la culture grecque* (Beauchesne, Paris 1998) & M Pellegrino, *Studi su l’antica Apologetica* (Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, Rome 1947).

¹³⁸ R M Grant & D Tracy, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible* Second ed rev and enlarged (SCM Press, London 1984) 39-51.

¹³⁹ M Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church: an Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis* trans J A Hughes (T&T Clark, Edinburgh 1994) 1-33.

¹⁴⁰ Carleton Paget, ‘Interpretation of the Bible’.

¹⁴¹ Modern scholarship emphasizes the diversity to be found in the different Christian ‘schools’ in the 2C: W A Löhr, ‘Das antike Christentum in zweiten Jahrhundert – neue Perspektiven seiner Erforschung’ *TLZ* 127 (2002) 247-262.

¹⁴² ‘The Gospel of Truth’ ed E Thomassen & M Meyer in M Meyer ed, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures* (HarperOne, New York, 2007) 31-47: discussed in D Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (University of California Press, Berkeley 1992) 145-170.

¹⁴³ Dawson, *Allegorical Readers* 128.

¹⁴⁴ J M Lieu, *Marcion and the Making of a Heretic* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2015) 357.

scriptures in the light of the gospel proclaimed by the apostles.¹⁴⁵ These are clearly very different and the burden of this study is not to present a distinctively apologetic approach to scripture to set alongside them. The intention is rather to identify features of the apologetic writers' approaches and to relate them to their apologetic contexts.

Where previous scholarship *has* discussed the apologists' use of the scriptures, the focus has tended to be on specific textual issues, such as identifying the form of the scriptural texts to which the authors are referring, understanding how the individual texts cited are being interpreted, the nature of the sources for particular textual readings and the way in which *testimonia* traditions are drawn on.¹⁴⁶

What has tended to be ignored is the use made of the scriptures in apologetic *arguments*.¹⁴⁷ There are two brief exceptions to this, the first being Horbury's general article on 'Old Testament Interpretation in the Writings of the Church Fathers',¹⁴⁸ which includes a section on the apologists' use of scripture.¹⁴⁹ The discussion is necessarily very short, but Horbury does address the role of the scriptures in the arguments of apologetic texts directed towards the Graeco-Roman world and highlights some of the themes which will feature in this study: the perceived antiquity of the scriptures, their function as prophecy and the significance of the moral precepts they were seen to contain. The second work to note is a short article by Boccabello on the use Justin and Theophilus make of the

¹⁴⁵ J Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons: Identifying Christianity* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2013) 124-140.

¹⁴⁶ These issues are discussed further in relation to individual authors.

¹⁴⁷ E.g. Grant & Tracy, *Short History*, 39-51 discuss 2C biblical interpretation without reference to the apologists' use of scripture.

¹⁴⁸ W Horbury, 'Old Testament Interpretation in the Writings of the Church Fathers' in M J Mulder ed, *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (Van Gorcum, Assen 1988) 727-787.

¹⁴⁹ Horbury, 'Old Testament Interpretation' 740-744.

Book of Zechariah,¹⁵⁰ in which he links references to texts from Zechariah with the apologetic intentions of authors interacting with Graeco-Roman audiences (or at least purporting to do so).¹⁵¹ Boccabello suggests that Christian writers could find the Jewish scriptures useful in providing support for the arguments they put forward in debates with non-Christians.

Looking more broadly at scholarship in the field there are two significant and influential works, by Droge and Young, which in some measure bear on the subject matter of this study, even if the apologetic use of scripture is not precisely their concern. One merit of both these works is their emphasis on the Graeco-Roman context in which Christian apologists wrote and the way their work engages intensively with Graeco-Roman culture. Both present Christianity as being at once in dialogue and in competition with the mainstream culture.

Droge's theme¹⁵² is the development by 2C Christian apologists of a distinctive interpretation of the history of culture emphasizing the antiquity of traditions inherited from the Jews. This is an important theme in 2C apologetic writings, but while Droge necessarily draws on the apologists' use of the scriptures as an important source for their arguments, he does not overtly discuss how they read and understand the scriptures as texts, which is a central feature of the present study. Droge's contribution is, nevertheless, one of the essential building blocks for the current work.

¹⁵⁰ J S Boccabello, 'Why would a Pagan read Zechariah? Apologetics and Exegesis in the Second-Century Greek Apologists' in C Tuckett ed, *The Book of Zechariah and its Influence* (Ashgate, Aldershot 2003) 135-144.

¹⁵¹ On the apologists' audiences, Boccabello is cautious and takes a position quite close to the one advanced here: '...it is probably best to draw rather limited conclusions – the apologists saw Zechariah as useful in addressing issues which were clearly raised by the Christian interaction with paganism. This is true regardless of the extent to which these texts themselves represent just such an interaction. We can see perceived usefulness whether they are talking to pagans or merely talking to each other about pagans': Boccabello, 'Why would a Pagan read Zechariah?' 143.

¹⁵² Droge, *Homer or Moses?*

The overarching theme of Young's work,¹⁵³ which ranges across the whole patristic field, is the way in which over a period of centuries Christian literary culture came to supersede the Graeco-Roman, absorbing in the process many features of the culture it replaced. At the core of the new Christian culture were the scriptures, both OT and NT, the seminal texts around which Christian *paideia* coalesced. Much of Young's work is concerned with the later patristic centuries, but one section discusses the 2C;¹⁵⁴ her key theme there is the 'battle of the literatures'¹⁵⁵ or the way Christian writers promoted their scriptures as an alternative to challenge the dominance of the long-established Graeco-Roman literary tradition. This is, again, an important theme in 2C apologetic writings and highly relevant to the consideration here of the way the scriptures are used; Young's work therefore provides a second essential building block for the present study.

The approach of the current study: Christian apologists and the Graeco-Roman literary context

The current study explores the part played by the Jewish scriptures in the literary strategies of three chosen texts. More specifically, it is concerned with two issues: the place of the Jewish scriptures in apologetic arguments and the portrait of the Jewish scriptures to emerge from the presentation of those arguments. Each text presents itself as a dialogue between a Christian writer and a non-Christian Graeco-Roman audience, and the relationship between texts and their audiences is therefore a critical focus of attention. Ideally, the texts would be examined in the context of the intellectual milieu from which they emerged, with each of them viewed as one component in an exchange of ideas and arguments with other parties, rather in the way that a text from a later century would be examined

¹⁵³ F M Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1997).

¹⁵⁴ Young, *Biblical Exegesis* 49-57.

¹⁵⁵ Young, *Biblical Exegesis* 57.

in its 'argumentative context' when significantly more evidence is available.¹⁵⁶

The specific contexts in which each of these apologetic texts was written and the nature of the audiences to which they were first addressed remain unknown, however, or at least matters of speculation, and it is not now possible to access any of the other elements in the dialogues of which they may originally have formed a part, since any that did exist do not survive. The contents of the texts may or may not reflect discussions that actually took place and, while each text gives some account of arguments and criticisms levelled against the author, this material is only available in the form in which he himself presents it, and so cannot be treated as a source that is independent of the writer of the text.¹⁵⁷

In spite of these limitations, however, it is possible to examine these apologetic works against the background of the 2C Graeco-Roman literary environment more generally conceived, to establish how their textual strategies would have engaged with the concerns and interests of an audience educated in Graeco-Roman culture. Audiences are presented in the texts as having a measure of education, with references to literary works and to mythological and philosophical ideas from the Graeco-Roman tradition introduced without comment or explanation. Justin, Tatian and Theophilus were themselves converts to Christianity who had received a Graeco-Roman education prior to their conversions and they all share Graeco-Roman cultural backgrounds with their audiences.

¹⁵⁶ Q Skinner, *Visions of Politics I: Regarding method* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2002) 103-127, cited phrase on 116. The potential value of the work of the 'Cambridge School', and specifically that of Skinner, for early Christian studies is highlighted in C Marksches, *Christian Theology and its Institutions in the Early Roman Empire, Prolegomena to a History of Early Christian Theology* trans W Coppins (Baylor University Press, Waco 2015) xiii-xiv.

¹⁵⁷ This contrasts sharply with Origen's *Contra Celsum* in which the arguments of Celsus are presented verbatim.

The nature of Graeco-Roman literary culture is therefore all-important for this study since it provides the context in which the three chosen texts are examined and evaluated. Education in the Graeco-Roman world was highly structured and centred on the study of a corpus of classic texts,¹⁵⁸ with works written in Greek centuries before being very much read and studied in the 2C CE. From an early stage of its existence the Greek tradition categorised texts;¹⁵⁹ a basic distinction was drawn between poetry and prose,¹⁶⁰ with texts then being classified into a number of distinct forms including, most prominently, epic, comedy, tragedy, oratory, philosophy and history.¹⁶¹ There was also a well-established tradition of literary criticism, involving the self-conscious examination of literature and the application of critical techniques to the study of classic texts. This tradition included both theoretical works concerned with the classifying texts and with clarifying what made for good literature or good literary style -- notably in the field of rhetoric¹⁶² -- and also works of practical criticism, including commentaries and other works interpreting classic texts.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁸ H I Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* trans G Lamb (Sheed & Ward, London 1956); M L Clarke, *Higher Education in the Ancient World* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1971); T J Morgan, *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1998) & H G Snyder, *Teachers and Texts in the Ancient World: Philosophers, Jews and Christians* (Routledge, London 2000).

¹⁵⁹ E.g. the comparison drawn between tragedy and epic in Aristotle's *Poetics: Ancient Literary Criticism: The Principal Texts in New Translations* ed D A Russell & M Winterbottom (Oxford University Press, Oxford 1972) 123-125.

¹⁶⁰ See Aristotle's separate treatments of poetic and prose styles, the former in his *Poetics* and the latter in his *Rhetoric*: Russell & Winterbottom eds, *Ancient Literary Criticism* 85-132 & 134-170.

¹⁶¹ D A Russell, *Criticism in Antiquity* Second ed (Duckworth, London 1995) 148-158.

¹⁶² See generally G A Kennedy, *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World 300 BC-AD 300* (Princeton University Press, Princeton 1972) and more specifically R N Gaines, 'Roman Rhetorical Handbooks' in W Dominik & J Hall eds, *A Companion to Roman Rhetoric* (Blackwell Publishing, Oxford 2007) 163-180.

¹⁶³ Russell, *Criticism in Antiquity* and Russell & Winterbottom eds, *Ancient Literary Criticism*.

A pronounced bias in favour of the traditional and a high regard for what was ancient and long-established over what was novel and without precedent strongly influenced attitudes towards both ideas and works of literature.¹⁶⁴ A number of developments occurred in the late Hellenistic period which are relevant to this study, each of which was concerned in some way with looking back to the past. The first was a revival, and an intensification, of interest in the ancient founding texts of the Greek philosophical schools¹⁶⁵ and in their authors, most notably Plato and Aristotle,¹⁶⁶ together with a focus on the very earliest thinkers, those proponents of ancient wisdom who were believed to have predated the emergence of the various philosophical schools.¹⁶⁷ The second was a burgeoning interest in primeval history, in the origins and early history of humankind, with sometimes lengthy works written which charted the history of human affairs from very earliest times.¹⁶⁸ The third was the literary and cultural phenomenon known as the Second Sophistic, which fostered a conscious referencing back to the

¹⁶⁴ A H Armstrong, 'Pagan and Christian Traditionalism in the First Three Centuries A.D.' in ed E A Livingstone *SP 15/1* (Akademie-Verlag, Berlin 1984) 414-431 & G R Boys-Stones, *Post-Hellenistic Philosophy: a Study of its Development from the Stoics to Origen* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2001).

¹⁶⁵ The argument in M A Frede, 'Epilogue' in K Algra, J Barnes, J Mansfeld & M Schofield eds, *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1999) 771-797, 784-785 has been influential. See more recently: G Betegh, 'The Transmission of Ancient Wisdom: Texts, Doxographies, Libraries' in L P Gerson ed, *The Cambridge History of Philosophy in Late Antiquity 1* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2010) 25-38 & M Hatzimichali, 'The texts of Plato and Aristotle in the first century BC' in M Schofield ed, *Aristotle, Plato and Pythagoreanism in the First Century BC: New Directions for Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2013) 1-27.

¹⁶⁶ D Sedley, 'Philosophical Allegiance in the Greco-Roman world' in J Barnes & M Griffin eds, *Philosophia Togata: Essays on Philosophy and Roman Society* (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1989) 97-119, refers to '...a virtually religious commitment to the authority of a founder figure' (97).

¹⁶⁷ Boys-Stones, *Post-Hellenistic Philosophy*.

¹⁶⁸ R Mortley, *The Idea of Universal History from Hellenistic Philosophy to Early Christian Historiography* (Edwin Mellen Press, Lampeter 1996).

literature of ancient Greece and spawned texts imitating the language and style of highly-esteemed classical Athenian literature.¹⁶⁹

Into this literary environment stepped the apologists introducing discussions of texts which, although translated into Greek, had their origins in an alien, barbarian culture outside the Graeco-Roman literary tradition. The strategies the apologists adopted for presenting these texts in their engagement with audiences from a Graeco-Roman cultural background are a key feature of this thesis. As well as analysis of the arguments deployed, other issues to be addressed include the nature and provenance of the scriptures, the source of their authority and techniques used for their interpretation. The study therefore enters the territory of literary criticism where it engages with questions such as the way in which admired literary works are discussed and the critical approaches which are used to comment on and explain them.

To achieve their objectives the apologists created their own literary works. This study explores the forms and styles they used to frame their material and how these relate to the Graeco-Roman context in which their works were created. It also considers how the use of rhetorical and other strategies aided their engagement with audiences educated in the Graeco-Roman literary tradition. Other approaches to these texts are certainly possible. In particular they could be examined with reference to the influences upon which the authors drew, exploring prior texts and traditions that were significant for their ideas and

¹⁶⁹ G Anderson, *The Second Sophistic: a Cultural Phenomenon in the Roman Empire* (Routledge, London 1993); S Goldhill ed, *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2001) & T Whitmarsh, *The Second Sophistic* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2005). The relevance of the Second Sophistic for understanding early Christian literature is increasingly recognised, e.g. A P Johnson, 'Early Christianity and the Classical Tradition' in D S Richter & W A Johnson eds, *The Oxford Handbook of the Second Sophistic* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2017) 625-638.

arguments. This would likely lead to a concentration on the Jewish traditions from which Christianity emerged and on how the apologists' works relate to them. In the current study such concerns have a limited part to play, however, for attention is focused on the way the scriptures were presented to a non-Jewish Graeco-Roman audience and on the way that these apologetic works functioned in this generalised argumentative context.

The apologists' writings feature two obvious protagonists, the Christian and the non-Christian, but also a third, namely, the Jews, since it is the Jewish scriptures which are being promoted. The apologists present these texts as Christian, but they know, and their audiences know, that the texts derive from the Jews who originally produced them, to whom they are still sacred, and who are still very much present in the Graeco-Roman world. The strategies the apologists adopt to position Christianity relative to Judaism in their dialogues with Graeco-Roman audiences are therefore also a feature of this study.

Chapter 2: The Proof from Prophecy in Justin Martyr's *Apologia Maior*

Justin Martyr's *Apologia Maior* (1A)¹ is a long and involved work. It presents itself as a petition to the Emperor on behalf of persecuted Christians, but includes a considerable amount of material aimed at persuading readers of the truth of Christianity. To support his arguments, Justin makes extensive use of the Jewish scriptures,² particularly in Chapters 30 to 53,³ the section known as the Proof from Prophecy (*PfP*), the chief focus of attention here.

Background

Little is known about Justin Martyr's life, although there is general agreement among scholars on the basic facts.⁴ He originally came from Flavia Neapolis in Syria Palestina and was probably born around 100 CE; a gentile by birth and education, he at some stage converted to Christianity, claiming in his *Dialogus cum Tryphone* (*DT*) that it was exposure to the Jewish scriptures which triggered

¹ Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, *Apologies* eds D Minns & P Parvis (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2009). References to the text are to chapter and verse numbers in this edition. Translations are also from this edition, adapted where appropriate. Other modern editions consulted: Justin Martyr, *Apologiae pro Christianis* ed M Marcovich (De Gruyter, Berlin 1994) & Justin, *Apologie pour les Chrétiens* ed C Munier (Éditions du Cerf, Paris 2006).

² For lists of the scriptural references: Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 339-340; Marcovich, *Apologiae* 171-172 & Munier, *Apologie* 371-373.

³ Although Chapters 30-53 contain the main body of the *PfP*, there are references to prophecy in later chapters and these sometimes feature in the discussion here.

⁴ For biographical issues: Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 32-33; L W Barnard, *Justin Martyr, his Life and Thought* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1967) 1-13; Munier, *Apologie* 9-19 & P Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries* trans M Steinhauser (Continuum, London 2003) 257-260.

his conversion.⁵ He visited Rome, settled there in later life and was martyred in the 160s. *1A* is dated to the early 150s when Justin was established in Rome;⁶ the text survives in only one source of independent value, the 14C Byzantine manuscript, *Parisinus graecus* 450.⁷ External evidence is not available to locate *1A* in a context of contemporary debates and, although the writing of such a huge work is likely to have been prompted by some particular circumstance, what this might have been cannot now be recovered.⁸

1A presents itself at the outset as an address and petition (προσφώνησις καὶ ἔντευξις),⁹ directed at the Emperor Antoninus Pius and his two adopted sons Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, put forward on behalf of Christians and pleading for relief from persecution.¹⁰ Some argue that it should be accepted as such, those named being the actual addressees and the text a genuine petition.¹¹ Imperial rule had a strong personal element, in spite of the Empire's huge size; petitions to the Emperor from individuals and small communities were not

⁵ Justin Martyr, *Dialogus cum Tryphone* ed M Marcovich (De Gruyter, Berlin 1997) 7&8; for an English translation: Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* trans T B Falls rev T H Halton & ed M Slusser (Catholic University of America Press, Washington DC 2003). References to *DT* are to the Marcovich edition.

⁶ Justin Martyr, *The First and Second Apologies* trans L W Barnard (Paulist Press, Mahwah 1997) 11; Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 44 and Marcovich, *Apologiae* 11.

⁷ Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 3.

⁸ Grant, *Greek Apologists* 53–54 argues that *1A*'s composition was occasioned by the martyrdom of Polycarp in 155 or 156, but fails to adduce strong evidence for this.

⁹ *1A* 1.1. Justin also uses βιβλίδιον (petition) to refer to the text itself at 69.1 in the section which Minns & Parvis transfer from the *Apologia Minor* (Their arguments for doing this are set out in Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 27–30). Scholars often use the Latin term *libellus*.

¹⁰ The addressees (Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 34–41) are named at *1A* 1.1 and subsequently referred to in the second person plural at a number of points e.g. 2.2–2.4; 23.1; 32.6 & 68.3.

¹¹ E.g. P Keresztes, 'The Literary Genre of Justin's First Apology' *VC* 19 (1965) 99–110; F Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World (31 BC – AD 337)* (Duckworth, London 1977) 563; O Skarsaune, 'Justin and the Apologists' in D J Bingham ed, *The Routledge Companion to Early Christian Thought* (Routledge, Abingdon 2010) 121–136, especially 122–124 & P Parvis, 'Justin Martyr' in P Foster ed, *Early Christian Thinkers: the Lives and Legacies of twelve key figures* (SPCK, London 2010) 1–14.

uncommon¹² and a number survive.¹³ Other scholars doubt that *1A* was a genuine petition and it arguably stretches credulity to regard this long and involved work as falling into the same category as relatively short and straightforward requests for the alleviation of abuses.¹⁴ It has also been well argued that the tone of the work is insufficiently respectful for a genuine address to an Emperor.¹⁵

The contents of *1A* are also problematic in that much of the work is not concerned with alleviation of abuses. Some critics, emphasizing the work's rambling and digressive character, claim that it has little in the way of coherent structure.¹⁶ Such judgments are unduly harsh, however; it is possible to identify a general flow to the argument and divide the work into sections in a reasonably coherent way, as a number of commentators have done.¹⁷ It is possible to take a relatively straightforward view of the structure of the work, identifying two major themes: arguments for the relief of Christians from persecution and arguments for the promotion of Christianity, the first of them strongest in the

¹² W Eck, 'Provincial administration and finance' in *CAH9* 266-292, 268-272 & Millar, *Emperor in the Roman World* 240-252.

¹³ T Hauken, *Petition and Response: an Epigraphic Study of Petitions to Roman Emperors* 181-249 (Norwegian Institute at Athens, Bergen 1998) 1-256 prints relevant texts.

¹⁴ See Hauken, *Petition and Response* 74-139 & 284-285 for a 3C CE petition from Skaptopara in Asia Minor, regarded by its editor, at 477 words, as long, although completely dwarfed by the length of *1A*.

¹⁵ P L Buck, 'Justin Martyr's *Apologies*: their Number, Destination, and Form', *JTS NS* 54 (2003) 45-59 draws attention to five instances at 2.3-4; 5.1; 12.6-7; 45.6 & 68 (although this argument has been challenged: S Moll, 'Justin and the Pontic wolf' in Parvis & Foster eds, *Justin Martyr* 145-151).

¹⁶ E.g. the influential work of J Geffcken, *Zwei griechische Apologeten* (Teubner, Leipzig 1907) 101: 'Überhaupt ist die ganze Apologie nur eine Sammlung von zerstreuten apologetischen Gedanken und Motiven.' Marcovich, *Apologiae* VII comments that 'Justin's...train of thought is disorganized, repetitious and occasionally rambling...'

¹⁷ Barnard, *Apologies*, 6-9; Marcovich, *Apologiae*, 11-25 and Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 49-54.

early parts of the work (although recurring later on),¹⁸ while the second is particularly evident in the *PfP* section, although also found elsewhere in the text.¹⁹

1A begins with arguments for the relief of Christians from harsh and unfair treatment by Roman authorities and this theme continues up to the point where Justin says that he has made his case and could now conclude: ‘We could stop here and add no more, reckoning that what we ask is just and true...’²⁰ The work continues, but the argument shifts, in the words of Minns and Parvis, ‘from petition to persuasion’,²¹ and from here the focus is primarily on the promotion of Christianity.²² Some critics suggest that the *PfP*, which makes up the bulk of this section of the work, comprises pre-existing material which was incorporated into *1A*; this is quite plausible, although impossible to prove.²³ The issue of relief from persecution is not entirely lost, since Justin returns to this theme at points later on,²⁴ and it features strongly at the end when the text of a Rescript of the Emperor Hadrian concerning the treatment of Christians is included.²⁵

Various suggestions have been made regarding the intended audience and purpose of *1A*, although definitive conclusions on these issues remain elusive. If it was not a genuine petition to the Emperor, such a form could have been employed by Justin because, for whatever reason, he found it convenient to use, with the work still being directed at an audience external to Christianity.²⁶

¹⁸ *1A* 68.

¹⁹ E. g. *1A* 61–67. Analyses of the text’s contents recognize that much of it concerns a more general promotion of Christianity and not the subject-matter of the petition: Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 49–54; Marcovich, *Apologiae* 11–25 & Munier, *Apologie* 33–38.

²⁰ *1A* 12.11.

²¹ Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 50.

²² Parts II to V of the analysis in Marcovich, *Apologiae* 14–25.

²³ Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 47–48.

²⁴ E.g. *1A* 20.3 & 24.1.

²⁵ *1A* 68.3–68.10. The rescript may or may not be authentic: Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 44.

²⁶ Barnard, *Apologies*, 8–9 & Marcovich, *Dialogus* VII.

Alternatively, *1A* could have been aimed at an internal Christian audience, with the *PfP* in particular being useful in a catechizing context.²⁷ *1A* was certainly read and preserved by Christians, and there is no convincing evidence that it was known outside Christian communities.²⁸ What might be called a mid-way view -- that it was aimed at those on the margins of Christianity -- is taken by two recent scholars examining the work from different standpoints. Nyström argues that the audience is to be found among Christians, with an emphasis on those newly converted or on the verge of conversion,²⁹ while for Pretila *1A* was aimed at those within the Christian community who were considering a return to paganism.³⁰

As was noted in Chapter 1 with regard to apologetic works generally, drawing a sharp distinction between internal and external audiences may be unwarranted, since those within the Christian community would be familiar with non-Christian Graeco-Roman culture -- many of them converts like Justin -- while outsiders might already have some knowledge of, and interest in, Christianity.³¹ *1A* is concerned in part with comparison and contrast between Christianity on the one hand and Graeco-Roman philosophical and mythological traditions on the other, so its contents could be of interest to both internal and external audiences; indeed, it may be that both were in Justin's sights.

²⁷ Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 46.

²⁸ As noted in Chapter 1, Droge, *Homer or Moses?* follows Andresen, *Logos und Nomos* in arguing that the late 2C anti-Christian writer Celsus, was responding to Justin and must have known his work well. The case is based on similarities of argument rather than any close textual connection and remains unconvincing; the judgment in Osborn, *Justin Martyr* 169 that '...his [Celsus'] direct acquaintance with Justin is an attractive but unnecessary hypothesis' is a sound appraisal.

²⁹ Nyström, *Apology of Justin Martyr* 19-66.

³⁰ Pretila, 'Marvellous Fables' 32.

³¹ As noted in Chapter 1, Lieu, *Christian Identity* 98-146 cautions against too rigid a view of confessional identities and boundaries in this period.

Previous scholarship

There has been considerable previous scholarship on Justin,³² although only a limited amount relates to the theme of this study. Three concerns have predominated: first, scholars have examined theological issues in Justin's work, seeking to locate them in the development of early Christian ideas,³³ second, Justin's work has been fertile ground for the study of Christian-Jewish relations³⁴ and third, scholars have long been interested in the relationship between Justin's ideas and Greek philosophy.³⁵

Some studies have, however, been specifically concerned with Justin and the scriptures. Smit Sibinga and Prigent have separately made detailed examinations of the scriptural sources on which Justin drew.³⁶ Shotwell has described Justin's methods of scriptural exegesis, stressing influences from Palestinian Judaism.³⁷ Aune has examined Justin's use of the OT, noting how his readings sometimes

³² For a different analysis of recent Justin scholarship: M Slusser, 'Justin Scholarship: Trends and Trajectories' in Parvis & Foster eds, *Justin Martyr* 13-21.

³³ Examples are general works e.g. Osborn, *Justin Martyr* & Barnard, *Justin Martyr* and studies of specific themes e.g. R Holte, 'Logos Spermatikos: Christianity and Ancient Philosophy according to St. Justin's Apologies' in *ST* 12 (1958) 109-168 & D C Trakatellis, *The Pre-existence of Christ in Justin Martyr* (Scholars Press, Missoula 1976).

³⁴ E.g. Lieu, *Image and Reality* & D Rokéah, *Justin Martyr and the Jews* (Brill, Leiden 2002).

³⁵ E.g. C Andresen, 'Justin und der mittlere Platonismus' *ZNW* 44 (1952/53) 157-195; N Hyldahl, *Philosophie und Christentum: Eine Interpretation der Einleitung zum Dialog Justins* (Prostant apud Munksgaard, Kopenhagen 1966); Chadwick, *Early Christian Thought*; J C M Van Winden, *An Early Christian Philosopher: Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho Chapters One to Nine* (Brill, Leiden 1971); M J Edwards, 'On the Platonic Schooling of Justin Martyr' *JTSNS* 42 (1991) 17-34 & C Nahm, 'The Debate on the "Platonism" of Justin Martyr' *SecCent* 9 (1992) 129-151.

³⁶ J Smit Sibinga, *The Old Testament Text of Justin Martyr I The Pentateuch* (Brill, Leiden 1963) & P Prigent, *Justin et l'Ancient Testament: l'argumentation scriptuaire du traité de Justin contre toutes les hérésies comme source principale du Dialogue avec Tryphon et de la première Apologie* (Libraire Lecoffre, Paris 1964).

³⁷ W A Shotwell, *The Biblical Exegesis of Justin Martyr* (SPCK, London 1965). He is refuting an older view, championed in E R Goodenough, *The Theology of Justin Martyr* (Frommann, Jena 1923) 113-117, that Justin's approach to scripture was influenced by Philo.

follow those found in NT texts, sometimes non-canonical sources, and are sometimes original to him.³⁸ A dominating presence in the field has been the magisterial work of Skarsaune, who undertook an extensive analysis of Justin's use of the Jewish scriptures, although his concern was with the *testimonia* sources on which Justin drew rather than with the way he deployed scriptural material in his arguments.³⁹

One feature of the scholarship has been a tendency to analyse the contents of *IA* together with those of *DT*, the latter being a work concerned with dialogue, real or imagined, between Christians and Jews. Combining material from the two texts produces a composite account of Justin's approach to the Jewish scriptures.⁴⁰ *IA* and *DT* are, however, separate texts and it must be allowed that an author may take a different view of a subject at different times, depending on the context in which he is addressing it, the audience for which he is writing and the questions with which he is concerned. Thus the approach to the Jewish scriptures in *DT* may well differ from that in *IA* and when the two texts are examined together as if they were one, the account which emerges may not represent accurately the arguments in either.⁴¹ An example of how this can be avoided is a recent paper by Skarsaune which analyses Justin's ethnic discourse in both *IA* and *DT* in a way that is not misleading. He considers first the account in *DT* and then the treatment of the same issue in *IA*;⁴² comparing and contrasting the two,

³⁸ D E Aune, 'Justin Martyr's Use of the Old Testament' *BETS* 9 (1966) 179-197.

³⁹ Skarsaune, *Proof from Prophecy*.

⁴⁰ E.g. Aune, 'Justin Martyr's Use'; Shotwell, *Biblical Exegesis* & Skarsaune, *Proof from Prophecy*.

⁴¹ Indeed, references to *DT* have tended to dominate discussion in the literature, with *IA* receiving less attention, e.g. Shotwell, *Biblical Exegesis* & Aune, 'Justin Martyr's Use.'

⁴² O Skarsaune, 'Ethnic Discourse in Early Christianity' in J Carleton Paget & J Lieu eds, *Christianity in the Second Century* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2017) 250-264, 257-260.

and not seeking to merge them, means that neither text is misrepresented.⁴³ In the present study, mis-statement of Justin's arguments is also avoided, since attention is focused on Justin's engagement with Graeco-Roman, not with Jewish audiences, and only *1A* is examined to the exclusion of *DT*.

The main argument in Justin's discussion of the Jewish scriptures, the *PfP*, has attracted surprisingly little attention in secondary literature. Skarsaune's large-scale work, in spite of a title which suggests an interest in Justin's arguments, is, as already noted, actually concerned with the source material which underpins Justin's Proof rather than the Proof itself. Chadwick's article on Justin's defence of Christianity,⁴⁴ which again might be expected to focus on the *PfP*, is in large measure concerned with the way Justin handles criticisms of Christians and with discussion of Justin's theological ideas. It devotes little space to the *PfP* itself and really only addresses one feature of the argument: how Justin provides evidence to show that prophecies have been fulfilled.⁴⁵ Chadwick rightly recognizes the importance of this for the credibility of the *PfP*, but argues that Justin struggles to make his case because 'he has not yet got a book called 'The New Testament' which he can thrust into the hands of benevolent inquirers.'⁴⁶ Whether or not 'NT texts' were available to Justin, this argument is misleading. As will be shown, the authority of texts for the apologists is closely linked to their antiquity and recent Christian texts could therefore not provide compelling evidence for a Graeco-Roman audience. The approach which Justin actually adopts to demonstrate the fulfilment of prophecies will be explained below.

⁴³ A similarly careful approach to analyzing the thought of an author who wrote multiple works covering the same issues is found in Jacobsen's study of Origen's soteriology and Christology. Rather than looking at Origen's total corpus as an entity and producing a composite view of his position, he first examines each work individually and only after having done this does he seek (and find) commonality of ideas: A-C Jacobsen, *Christ, the Teacher of Salvation: a Study on Origen's Soteriology and Christology* (Aschendorff & Verlag, Münster 2015).

⁴⁴ H Chadwick, 'Justin Martyr's Defence of Christianity' *BJRL* 47 (1965) 275-297.

⁴⁵ Chadwick, 'Justin Martyr's Defence' 281-283.

⁴⁶ Chadwick, 'Justin Martyr's Defence' 283.

Nyström's recent contribution⁴⁷ is welcome for a number of reasons. He looks exclusively at *1A* (leaving aside *DT*), and his interest is in analyzing the strategies deployed to defend and promote Christianity, notably the 'logos doctrine' the 'theft theory' and the 'proof from prophecy'. Thus he focuses on Justin's use of arguments and recognizes the importance of the *PfP* for Justin's case in ways that previous scholars have not.⁴⁸ It will emerge in due course, however, that the present study takes a different view of the *PfP* from Nyström. His interest in examining arguments in *1A* is shared by other recent scholars; the theme of Haddad's study is Justin's arguments for 'religious liberty and judicial justice,'⁴⁹ while Pretila is concerned with the role of pagan mythology in Justin's case for Christianity.⁵⁰

The approach of the current study

The present study follows the work of these recent scholars in concerning itself with Justin's arguments, but charts a new direction in focusing on the role of the Jewish scriptures. It was noted earlier that definitive conclusions cannot be reached on the nature of *1A*'s audience, so to clarify the approach adopted here it will be helpful to return to Barclay's analysis of the nature of the apologetic audiences described in Chapter 1 and to map his categories on to *1A*. Thus the declared audience is the imperial addressees named at the outset, the implied audience is Graeco-Romans scoped more broadly -- since much of the material in the text is concerned with the promotion of Christianity and not simply with securing for Christians relief from harsh and unfair treatment -- while the intended audience could be either Graeco-Romans external to Christianity or members of Christian communities or those on the borderland between the two

⁴⁷ Nyström, *Apology of Justin Martyr*.

⁴⁸ Nyström, *Apology of Justin Martyr* 105-131.

⁴⁹ R M Haddad, *The Case for Christianity: St. Justin Martyr's Arguments for Religious Liberty and Judicial Justice* (Taylor Trade, Lanham 2010).

⁵⁰ Pretila, 'Marvellous Fables'.

(or a combination of these). The case made in Chapter 1 was that it was unnecessary to determine the precise nature of an intended audience for the purposes of this study, since an apologetic text can be treated as a repository of arguments in favour of Christianity and analysed with reference to its implied audience, irrespective of who the intended audience may have been. This is the approach that will be taken here. It was also suggested in Chapter 1 that to avoid unnecessarily convoluted phraseology, and in accordance with the way an apologetic text presents itself, the audience for the work should be described as if it is external to Christianity, and that approach is followed here.

Jesus Christ and the Proof from Prophecy

The starting point for the *PfP* is Justin's wish to demonstrate the status of Jesus Christ, from whom Christians take their name.⁵¹ The importance he attaches to the person of Jesus is shown by the range and nature of the terms he uses to refer to him. On a number of occasions he is described as Teacher,⁵² elsewhere as Saviour;⁵³ there are a series of references to Jesus as Son of God: he is the 'Son and apostle of the Father of all and Lord God,'⁵⁴ 'Son of God and apostle,'⁵⁵ 'Son of God,'⁵⁶ 'Son of the true God,'⁵⁷ 'first born of God,'⁵⁸ 'first begotten of the unbegotten God,'⁵⁹ and 'begotten in a special manner the Son of God, being his Logos and first-born and power.'⁶⁰ Jesus Christ is also referred to as the incarnate Logos: 'the Logos of God is his Son,'⁶¹ 'the Logos himself who acquired physical

⁵¹ *1A* 12.9.

⁵² *1A* 4.7; 12.9; 19.6; 21.1 & 32.2.

⁵³ *1A* 33.7; 61.3; 66.2 & 67.8.

⁵⁴ *1A* 12.9.

⁵⁵ *1A* 63.10.

⁵⁶ *1A* 22.1.

⁵⁷ *1A* 13.3.

⁵⁸ *1A* 46.2.

⁵⁹ *1A* 53.2.

⁶⁰ *1A* 23.2.

⁶¹ *1A* 63.4.

form and became a human being and was called Jesus Christ,⁶² ‘the Logos which is the first begotten of God,’⁶³ ‘the Logos in whom the whole human race shared,’⁶⁴ and ‘after the Father of all and Lord God, the first Power and Son is the Logos, who was made flesh and became a human being.’⁶⁵ Jesus is described as the one who will return and at his second coming judge the human race: ‘he will raise the bodies of all human beings who have lived, he will bestow incorruptibility on those of the worthy and he will send those of the unjust in everlasting pain to the eternal fire with the evil demons.’⁶⁶ He is also venerated: ‘We worship both this God and the Son who came from him and taught us these things’⁶⁷ and ‘the one who became the teacher for us of these things, and who was born for this, Jesus Christ ... we rationally worship.’⁶⁸

Listing points in this fashion shows the extraordinary extent of the claims Justin makes on behalf of someone who lived and died a human being. The position is, however, more surprising than this, for Jesus was born in lowly and obscure circumstances and died a humiliating death by crucifixion at the hands of the Roman authorities. A humble birth would not in itself have presented problems for a Graeco-Roman audience; Plutarch records how both Romulus and Theseus were born in circumstances of low social status and went on to become instrumental figures in the establishment of the two greatest cities, Athens and Rome.⁶⁹ Indeed, the miraculous birth of Jesus as a result of divine intervention marked him out as someone special. Justin draws attention to the Virgin Birth on

⁶² 1A 5.4.

⁶³ 1A 21.1.

⁶⁴ 1A 46.2.

⁶⁵ 1A 32.10.

⁶⁶ 1A 52.3.

⁶⁷ 1A 6.2.

⁶⁸ 1A 13.3.

⁶⁹ Plutarch, *Lives I: Life of Theseus* ed B Perrin *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1914) 2 1-2.

a number of occasions and accords it a particular prominence;⁷⁰ it is stated as a fact not a conjecture and there is no suggestion that it requires explanation.⁷¹

Miraculous circumstances surrounded the births of many famous figures in Graeco-Roman tradition, and to have one divine and one human parent was a mark of a significant individual.⁷²

Similarly, the resurrection and ascension of Jesus were miraculous occurrences, but are not presented by Justin as problematic. They are referred to in a relatively low key way as events which had been prophesied, but no explanations of them appear to be required.⁷³ The difficult issue is the manner of the death of Jesus. Justin acknowledges that he had died a humiliating death by crucifixion: 'For it is there they declare our madness to be manifest, saying that we give the second place after the unchangeable and eternal God and begetter of all to a crucified man...' ⁷⁴ and later makes the same point in the form of a question: 'For by what reason should we believe that a crucified man is the first-begotten of the

⁷⁰ *1A* 21.1; 22.2; 22.5; 32.14; 46.5; 54.8; 63.16 and the whole of Chapter 33.

⁷¹ Justin is keen to clarify that the virgin conceived, not through intercourse, but because the power of God overshadowed her (*1A* 33.4&6), unlike Greek mythology in which it was said that Zeus 'came to women for the sake of sexual pleasure' (*1A* 33.3). Birth by virginal conception has not conventionally been seen as featuring in the Graeco-Roman tradition, and the Christian tradition is normally regarded as unique in this respect: T Boslooper, *The Virgin Birth* (SCM Press, London 1962) 185-186; a recent study suggests, however, that priestess cults of virginal conception did exist in the Greek tradition, although normally unacknowledged: M Rigoglioso, *The Cult of Divine Birth in Ancient Greece* (Palgrave Macmillan, New York 2009).

⁷² Boslooper, *Virgin Birth* 167-186: for example, Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars Volume 1: Augustus* ed J C Rolfe *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1914) 94 4 reports the legend that Augustus had a divine father, Apollo.

⁷³ *1A* 38.5 for the Resurrection (prophecy from Ps 3:6) and *1A* 51.6-7 for the Ascension (prophecy from Ps 24:7-8). The idea that a person of great significance went up to heaven at the end of earthly life was a familiar one to Graeco-Roman audiences from accounts of the lives of famous historical figures (Plutarch, *Lives I: Life of Romulus* ed B Perrin *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1914) 28 1-3 & Cassius Dio, *Roman History 9 Volumes* eds H Cary & H B Foster *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1914-1927) 7 56 42.3 (in relation to Augustus)) and also from the belief that emperors became gods: I Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion* (Clarendon Press, Oxford 2002) 261-371.

⁷⁴ *1A* 13.4.

unbegotten God and that he himself will pass judgment on the whole human race...⁷⁵ Justin's response to this conundrum is his *PfP*. Before developing this argument, however, he refers to two other possible explanations for the status of Jesus: first, the value of his teachings, and second, his achievements as a miracle-worker, although neither proves able to provide an adequate account.

First, Justin recounts some of the teachings of Jesus: '...we thought it worthwhile...to make mention of some few of the teachings of Christ himself...'⁷⁶ He describes Jesus' teachings on temperance,⁷⁷ loving all, sharing with the needy and doing nothing for the sake of glory,⁷⁸ being long-suffering,⁷⁹ not swearing, always telling the truth and worshipping God alone⁸⁰ and paying taxes and serving the Emperor;⁸¹ he also describes how Jesus' teachings have transformed his adherents' lives:

'Formerly we delighted in fornication, now we embrace temperance alone; then we practiced magical arts, now we have dedicated ourselves to the good and unbegotten God; then we loved above all the means of acquiring money and property, now we put even what we have to common use, and share with all those in need...'⁸²

⁷⁵ *1A* 53.2.

⁷⁶ *1A* 14.4. The sayings of Jesus quoted in *1A* closely parallel the Synoptic Gospels, but are not presented as derived from scriptural texts: A J Bellinzoni, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Writings of Justin Martyr* (Brill, Leiden 1967).

⁷⁷ *1A* 15.1-15.8.

⁷⁸ *1A* 15.9-15.17.

⁷⁹ *1A* 16.1-16.4.

⁸⁰ *1A* 16.5-16.7.

⁸¹ *1A* 17.1-17.3.

⁸² *1A* 14.2.

Although the teachings of Jesus may be admirable, however, and may have had a strong and positive impact on his followers, Justin does not suggest that they are sufficient to demonstrate his special status.

Justin refers, second, to Jesus' miracle-working, how he heals the sick and raises the dead to life.⁸³ This is also insufficient to justify his status, however, for Jesus could have performed miracles through magic and still only *seem* to be the Son of God.⁸⁴ Justin cites cases of other miracle workers: Simon, a Samaritan from Gitthon '...performed magical deeds in your royal city of Rome...' ⁸⁵ and Menander, a disciple of Simon from Kapparetaia in Samaria, '...when he was in Antioch deceived many through magical arts.'⁸⁶ Justin notes how Simon acquired considerable status in Rome: '...he was considered a god, and was honoured with a statue as are the other gods among you.'⁸⁷ Thus Jesus' actions as a miracle-worker do not mark him out as unique. If teaching and miracle-working are inadequate to demonstrate the special status of Jesus, however, what does establish it for Justin is the *PfP*.

The texts providing the Proof from Prophecy

The crux of the *PfP* is that events surrounding the life and death of Jesus and the early growth of Christianity are found to have been foretold in ancient prophetic texts. The argument is spelt out at exceptional length in Chapters 30–53 of a text which in all only runs to 68 chapters.⁸⁸ It is clearly unfamiliar to his audience, since the material needs to be described and explained in detail. Justin says he is bringing the prophecies to his readers for their inspection, as if doing so for the

⁸³ *1A* 30.1 & 48.1–2.

⁸⁴ *1A* 30.1.

⁸⁵ *1A* 26.2.

⁸⁶ *1A* 26.4.

⁸⁷ *1A* 56.2.

⁸⁸ Marcovich, *Apologiae*. The text is 70 chapters long in Minns & Parvis, *Apologies*, because the editors transfer material from the *Apologia Minor* to the *Apologia Maior*.

first time.⁸⁹ This is in contrast to the way he refers to the myths of Greece and Rome. They are first mentioned without any explanation⁹⁰ and, when they reappear, the information provided is scarcely more detailed.⁹¹ As Justin says, mythological stories do not need to be rehearsed because they are already familiar to his readers: ‘And what sort of stories are told about the doings of those who are called the sons of Zeus it is not necessary to say to those who know...’⁹² He never speaks like this about the prophecies, always spelling them out in full and explaining their meanings.

Justin’s references to the Jewish scriptures are conveniently listed by Minns and Parvis,⁹³ the most numerous being to Isaiah, the Pentateuch and the Psalms.⁹⁴ Justin does not describe the texts as ‘scriptures’⁹⁵ in *1A*, although he does use this term in *DT*, where various cognates of γράφω are employed to refer to the Jewish scriptures:⁹⁶ αἱ γραφαί,⁹⁷ τὰς γραφάς,⁹⁸ τῶν γραφῶν,⁹⁹ ἡ γραφή¹⁰⁰ and γέγραπται.¹⁰¹ In *DT*, however, the context is debate between Christians and Jews, with the two parties sharing a common understanding of what such terms mean. In *1A*, where the context is dialogue between Christians and non-Jews, this is not the case, since the Jewish scriptures were not part of a common discourse.

⁸⁹ *1A* 44.13.

⁹⁰ *1A* 21.

⁹¹ *1A* 53.

⁹² *1A* 21.4.

⁹³ Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 339–340.

⁹⁴ 39 from Isaiah, 25 from the Pentateuch and 13 from the Psalms.

⁹⁵ The one exception is Justin’s use of the phrase ‘in the writings of Moses’ (*1A* 60.2) which occurs outside the *PfP* section when he is discussing Plato’s borrowings from Moses.

⁹⁶ O Skarsaune, ‘Justin and his Bible’ in Parvis & Foster eds, *Justin Martyr* 53–76, 55.

⁹⁷ *DT* 32.1; 39.6 & 86.1.

⁹⁸ *DT* 82.4 & 127.5.

⁹⁹ *DT* 32.2; 34.1; 39.7 & 61.1.

¹⁰⁰ *DT* 56.17.

¹⁰¹ *DT* 58.3.

Thus instead of scriptures, Justin refers to prophecies or the Books of the Prophecies (τὰς βίβλους τῶν προφητῶν);¹⁰² these terms reflect the use he makes of the texts in his arguments, where they are employed to show that the life and death of Jesus and the growth of Christianity have previously been foretold. No definition or list of prophetic texts is provided; ‘prophets’ are referred to in the plural, indicating that the prophecies have multiple authors, some of whom are named, although virtually nothing is said about them as individuals. As well as Isaiah, who is referred to on several occasions,¹⁰³ other prophets named are¹⁰⁴ Jeremiah,¹⁰⁵ Ezekiel,¹⁰⁶ Daniel,¹⁰⁷ Joel,¹⁰⁸ Micah,¹⁰⁹ Zephaniah¹¹⁰ and Zechariah.¹¹¹ There are texts from the Psalms and the Pentateuch, also described as prophetic with their authors named; David, author of the Psalms, is ‘king and prophet’¹¹² and Moses, author of the Pentateuch, is ‘the first of the prophets’.¹¹³

How Justin views the scope of the Books of the Prophecies remains uncertain. He may have in mind the whole corpus of Jewish scriptures as it existed at the

¹⁰² *1A* 31.2.

¹⁰³ *1A* 33.1; 35.3; 37.1; 44.2 etc. See Marcovich, *Apologiae* 175.

¹⁰⁴ Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 339–340. Sometimes Justin identifies a saying as prophetic without naming the author: e.g. ‘...listen to the prophecies spoken concerning this. They are these...’ *1A* 50.1–50.2.

¹⁰⁵ The two identifiable quotations from Jeremiah at 47.5 & 53.11 are actually attributed to Isaiah; the one quotation from Lamentations at 55.5 is only ascribed to ‘the prophet’.

¹⁰⁶ Ezekiel is named at 52.5.

¹⁰⁷ The single quotation from Daniel at 51.8–51.9 is attributed to Jeremiah.

¹⁰⁸ The one quotation from Joel at 52.11 is part of what Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 213n2 describe as a ‘complex assemblage of quotation and allusion’ which is attributed by Justin to Zechariah; it also includes words from Isaiah.

¹⁰⁹ Micah is named at 34.1.

¹¹⁰ Zephaniah is named in the Septuagintal Greek form, Sophonias, at 35.10, although only the first part of the text quoted is found in Zephaniah (at 3.14), with the full text quoted appearing in Zechariah 9.9: Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 179n2.

¹¹¹ *1A* 35.10.

¹¹² *1A* 35.6.

¹¹³ *1A* 32.1. Moses is referred to a number of times as the author of prophetic texts, e.g. 44.8 & 54.5. This places him in a new light as far as the non-Jewish Graeco-Roman world was concerned; Moses was a well-known figure, identified either as a law-giver, the leader of the Exodus or as a magician, but not hitherto as a prophet: Gager, *Moses*.

time and use the terms he does to emphasise its prophetic nature. It is, however, also possible that he regarded the Books of the Prophecies as a more limited range of texts, comprising, certainly, the books from which he quotes, and perhaps others -- including, for instance, books from the Jewish scriptures which modern scholars class as Prophets such as Hosea and Amos -- but not the whole Jewish scriptures. Justin's use of citations in *1A* differs from *DT*; in the former there are no quotations from Joshua, Samuel or Kings, for instance, whereas there are in the latter.¹¹⁴ This may be because Justin takes different views in *1A* and *DT* of the scope of the authoritative texts, mirroring the difference noted above in the terms he uses to refer to them; it may, however, simply be that the predominantly historical narrative material of, say, Joshua, Samuel and Kings is not useful for the prophetically-based arguments of *1A*.

It cannot be assumed that when quoting from, say, Isaiah or Ezekiel, Justin necessarily had access to complete versions of those texts. In Chapter 1 the importance of quotation collections was noted and, although Justin cites actual texts rather than paraphrases, it is possible that such collections were his sources. Skarsaune's painstaking analysis of Justin's sources strongly suggests that in *1A* he was drawing on existing clusters of quotations from the Jewish scriptures and not on full scriptural texts and, indeed, that such collections may have been all that he had available.¹¹⁵

The authority of the sacred texts

The Books of the Prophecies are presented by Justin as having an authority deriving from their antiquity and their authorship. He uses the Legend of the

¹¹⁴ Marcovich, *Dialogus* 321-322 lists the references.

¹¹⁵ Skarsaune, *Proof from Prophecy* 133-242. Skarsaune, 'Justin and his Bible' 55-56 maintains that when he wrote *DT* Justin, by contrast, had access to manuscripts of complete biblical books.

Septuagint,¹¹⁶ referred to in Chapter 1, to demonstrate this. There are a number of versions of the Legend,¹¹⁷ Justin's being the earliest known account by a Christian author.¹¹⁸ He describes¹¹⁹ how the prophecies were delivered a long time ago by people who were 'prophets of God (θεοῦ προφήται).'¹²⁰ They wrote the prophecies down themselves and books containing them were preserved by the kings of the Jews. Later, Ptolemy King of Egypt, when setting up his library in Alexandria, wished to collect writings of all peoples; he heard about the prophetic books and sought to acquire them. They were sent to him by Herod¹²¹ King of the Jews, but finding the texts to be in Hebrew, Ptolemy requested that translators be sent. This was done; the texts were rendered into Greek and preserved in Egypt (as well as being preserved in Jewish communities) down to Justin's own time.¹²²

There are significant differences between Justin's treatment of the Legend and those of his predecessors. He refers to the texts as the Books of the Prophecies, in contrast with descriptions of them as the Laws of the Jews in *Aristeas*¹²³ and as laws made by Moses in Philo's *De Vita Mosis*.¹²⁴ He describes the prophets as

¹¹⁶ This is the phrase commonly used to describe the tradition although it does not appear in *1A*.

¹¹⁷ Wasserstein & Wasserstein, *Legend of the Septuagint*.

¹¹⁸ Wasserstein & Wasserstein, *Legend of the Septuagint* 98-100.

¹¹⁹ *1A* 31.

¹²⁰ *1A* 31.1.

¹²¹ Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 165-167nn4-5 follow W Schmid, 'Ein rätselhafter Anachronismus bei Justinus Martyr' in W Schmid, *Ausgewählte philologische Schriften: Herausgegeben von Hartmut Erbse und Jochem Küppers* (De Gruyter, Berlin 1984), 333-337 in treating the inclusion of Herod as a scribal error in the manuscript, although they do not endorse the detail of Schmid's explanation. Other authorities do not follow Schmid: Munier, *Apologie* 210n2; Barnard, *Apologies* 146-147 & Marcovich, *Apologiae* 76n. It is not implausible that Justin's original text contained an anachronistic error, and the majority view is followed here in preference to Minns & Parvis.

¹²² *1A* 31.3-31.5.

¹²³ *Aristeas* 10: this refers to the Pentateuch alone.

¹²⁴ Philo, *De Vita Mosis* LCL 2 31 & 34. Philo says that Moses' Law or Laws consist of two parts, the first historical and the second concerned with commands and prohibitions: Philo, *De Vita Mosis* LCL 2 46.

having arisen among the Jews (ἐν Ἰουδαίοις), but says nothing further about the Jewish people or the Jewish religion, in contrast with *Aristeas* where the High Priest¹²⁵ and the Jerusalem Temple¹²⁶ feature prominently. Justin makes only passing reference to the translators, who were clearly Jews, although they are not identified as such;¹²⁷ in *Aristeas*, by contrast they are significant figures whose wisdom is emphasized,¹²⁸ while in *De Vita Mosis* their work is described in miraculous terms.¹²⁹ Justin plays down the Jewish connections in the Legend; the prophecies are presented as the work of ancient wise men who just happened to have emerged from among the Jews.¹³⁰

The Legend establishes the antiquity of the prophetic books and this is a source of their authority.¹³¹ The *accuracy* of the surviving texts is also emphasized; Justin provides a complete manuscript history, describing how the texts were written down by their authors, preserved over centuries and lodged in a Greek royal library, so that what can be read now are the very words the prophets spoke long ago.¹³² For Justin the Books of the Prophecies are a multi-authored collection; each prophet orally delivered and then wrote down his prophecies which were subsequently brought together in a collection. Individual authorship of prophecies was not lost, however, for, with some exceptions,¹³³ the quotations are

¹²⁵ The deputation from Alexandria is described as being ‘to Eleazar, the High Priest of the Jews’ (*Aristeas* 1) who later makes a long speech on the Jewish Law (*Aristeas* 130–166).

¹²⁶ *Aristeas* 84–99 describes the Temple and its ceremonies.

¹²⁷ *1A* 31.4 only says ‘...he [Herod] again sent and asked that people be sent who might translate them [the Books of the Prophecies] into the Greek language.’

¹²⁸ Particularly for the contributions they make to the debate at the banquet of the Egyptian king: *Aristeas* 187–261.

¹²⁹ Philo, *De Vita Mosis* LCL 2 37–40 describes how translators working independently produced identical translations.

¹³⁰ *1A* 31.1. Justin’s portrayal of the Jews in *1A* will be discussed further below.

¹³¹ For antiquity as a source of authority: Armstrong, ‘Pagan and Christian Traditionalism.’

¹³² *1A* 31.5.

¹³³ E.g. *1A* 38 where a series of quotations from Isaiah and the Psalms are not attributed to named prophets.

attributed to named authors. The tradition is therefore not an anonymous one. Each quotation is the work of an individual author, but the message of the prophecies is a single collective wisdom. Thus even when a prophecy is actually a composite of a number of different elements traceable to different scriptural books, the ‘quotation’ is attributed to one named prophet.¹³⁴ Individual prophets are referred to as authors of texts in order to identify them, but not to isolate individual messages or to distinguish the ideas of one from another. The original historical circumstances in which the prophecies were delivered are never referred to.

Indeed, the prophecies spoken by the ‘prophets of God’¹³⁵ were ultimately not their own words, but utterances inspired by the Prophetic Spirit which speaks with a single voice. The phrase Prophetic Spirit (προφητικὸν πνεῦμα)¹³⁶ is used many times in *1A*, e.g. 31.1, 32.2, 33.2&5, 35.3, 38.1 and 39.1;¹³⁷ it plays a key role in Justin’s account of the Legend of the Septuagint and in his discussion of the prophecies. The term is hardly known previously -- there are two occurrences in Philo and one in the *Shepherd of Hermas*¹³⁸ -- and Stanton’s suggestion that ‘... Justin may well have coined the phrase himself...’ is quite plausible.¹³⁹ Justin does not define Prophetic Spirit or discuss what the term means. Its role is to act as the mechanism through which what will occur in the future is revealed to the prophets and it is seen or experienced through evidence of its actions.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁴ E.g. *1A* 52.10–12 attributed to Zechariah.

¹³⁵ *1A* 31.1.

¹³⁶ G N Stanton, ‘The Spirit in the Writings of Justin Martyr’ in G N Stanton, B W Longnecker & S C Barton eds, *The Holy Spirit and Christian Origins: Essays in Honor of James D G Dunn* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 2004) 321–334.

¹³⁷ 37 times in all, 25 in *1A* and 12 in *DT*: Stanton, ‘Spirit in the Writings of Justin’ 326.

¹³⁸ Stanton, ‘Spirit in the Writings of Justin’, 327.

¹³⁹ Stanton, ‘Spirit in the Writings of Justin’, 327. The loss to posterity of so much 1C and 2C literature should, however, engender a degree of caution about accepting such a judgment too readily.

¹⁴⁰ Although it conveys other forms of wisdom as well: see below.

The Prophetic Spirit is portrayed as close to God and twice described as being venerated: on the first occasion: ‘We worship both this God and also the Son who came from him and taught us these things, and the host of the other good angels who follow him and are made like him, and also the prophetic Spirit...’¹⁴¹ and on the second, introducing an element of hierarchy: ‘Jesus Christ... we rationally worship... For we have learnt that he is the son of the true God, and we hold him in second place and the prophetic Spirit in the third rank.’¹⁴² Divinely inspired words are revealed to the prophets by the Prophetic Spirit which describe what God ordains should happen, that He will send his Son at the first coming as saviour and at the second as judge.

The account given here of the authority of the Books of the Prophecies differs from that of Nyström.¹⁴³ He argues that since Justin was writing for a non-Jewish audience the Jewish scriptures could not be cited as authority and Justin’s argument for Christianity is therefore based on reason and not scriptural authority: ‘...Christian tradition/teaching, as identical to logos/reason, is the fundamental authority and the function of the Hebrew prophets is to confirm this fact.’¹⁴⁴ For this to be the case, however, much greater emphasis would need to be given to arguments from ‘logos / reason’ (which are referred to in *1A* but not greatly developed) and much less to the *PIP*. Nyström pays little regard to two factors which are important for Justin’s argument: the trouble taken to establish the authority of the ancient prophecies through the Legend of the Septuagint and the role of the Prophetic Spirit in linking prophecies to a divine origin.

¹⁴¹ *1A* 6.2.

¹⁴² *1A* 13.3.

¹⁴³ Nyström, *Apology of Justin Martyr* 105–131.

¹⁴⁴ Nyström, *Apology of Justin Martyr* 112.

The contents of the prophecies

Having established the sources of the prophecies' authority, Justin then relates them to Jesus. He provides a summary of the contents of the prophecies:

‘In the books of the prophets, then, we found Jesus our Christ, proclaimed ahead of time as drawing near, being born of a virgin, and growing to manhood, and healing every disease and every illness, and raising the dead, and being resented and unacknowledged, and being crucified, and dying and rising again, and ascending into the heavens, and both being, and being called, the Son of God, and we found certain people sent by him to every race of people to proclaim these things, and that it was rather people from among the gentiles who believed in him.’¹⁴⁵

The main focus of this passage is on the principal events in the story of Jesus (his life, death, resurrection and ascension),¹⁴⁶ although two later developments, subsequent to the life of Jesus, are mentioned as foretold: proclamation of the gospel by his followers and acceptance of the gospel by the gentiles. Justin's summary is, however, not exhaustive, since prophesied events are referred to later on which are not included here: the second coming of Jesus to judge the World,¹⁴⁷ the rejection of Jesus by the Jews¹⁴⁸ and the defeat of the Jews by the Romans.¹⁴⁹ More will be said about these later.

¹⁴⁵ *1A* 31.7.

¹⁴⁶ One of the statements in the passage refers to a prophecy which does not describe an event in the life of Jesus, but touches on his unique status: ‘both being, and being called, the Son of God.’

¹⁴⁷ *1A* 52.3.

¹⁴⁸ *1A* 49. There is, however, implicit criticism of the Jews in the statement in 31.7 that ‘...it was rather people from among the gentiles who believed in him.’

¹⁴⁹ *1A* 47.

The nature of the events listed suggests that prophecies only foretell events of great importance and not just random future occurrences. If an event is found to have occurred as foretold, it must be highly significant since God through the Prophetic Spirit has prophesied it. Moreover, the events prophesied are often extraordinary in themselves, such as birth from a virgin, miraculous healing of the sick or resurrection and ascension into heaven, or, if not actually extraordinary, then momentous in some other way; the crucifixion and death of Jesus are in one sense mundane events in the life of a condemned criminal, but because they happen to the Son of God they have a special significance.

Justin does not describe a single occurrence only, but a series of events which have been prophesied and are now being fulfilled. Showing that one event was prophesied and has now occurred would be significant, but demonstrating this for a whole sequence is much more telling, since the weight of evidence accumulates with multiple cases of prophetic fulfillment. This is the more so when, as here, the sequence of individual occurrences constitutes a coherent narrative of events.

Skarsaune has tracked how in subsequent chapters specific prophetic texts support each statement in the summary account and there is no need to repeat that here.¹⁵⁰ To demonstrate that the prophecies are fulfilled, however, events must be identified matching each prophecy. Justin's prophecies can be grouped into three categories: first, those predicting events that predate the current generation (but

¹⁵⁰ Skarsaune, *Proof from Prophecy* 139-164.

are still comparatively recent),¹⁵¹ second, those whose fulfillment is apparent to the current generation and third, those which have not yet been fulfilled.

The birth of Jesus is described as having taken place 150 years earlier,¹⁵² placing the events of his life and death, those in the first category, well before the memory of anyone now living. For such events appeal cannot, by Justin's time, be made to eye-witness testimony. Christian gospels are not cited as sources for information about the life of Jesus; Justin relies instead on other sources, two of which are identified. First, the description of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem as fulfillment of a prophecy from Micah is accompanied by the comment that this is something '...you can learn from the census-lists made under Quirinius who was your first procurator in Judaea.'¹⁵³ A documentary source is clearly being referred to here. Second, Justin cites twice¹⁵⁴ the 'Acts Recorded under Pontius Pilate' as a source for the life of Jesus, commenting on the first occasion: 'And that these things happened you can learn from the 'Acts Recorded under Pontius Pilate (ἐκ τῶν ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου γενομένων ἄκτων).'¹⁵⁵ The precise meaning of this phrase remains elusive. Some commentators suppose that Justin is referring to a documentary source¹⁵⁶ (even if no such source survives), with Munier going so far

¹⁵¹ The fulfillment of ancient prophecies in the life of a great man in comparatively recent times -- the imperial age of Augustus -- would have been familiar to a Graeco-Roman audience from the very popular work of Virgil (Virgil, *Eclogues, Georgics and Aeneid 2 Volumes* ed H R Fairclough rev G P Goold *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1999)), notably in the prophecies in Books 1, 6 & 8 of *The Aeneid* and in the *Fourth Eclogue* (discussed in G Williams, *Technique and Ideas in the Aeneid* (Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1983) 138-156 & J J O'Hara, *Death and the Optimistic Prophecy in Virgil's Aeneid* (Princeton University Press, Princeton 1990) 128-175). For Virgil's widespread popularity: R J Tarrant, 'Aspects of Virgil's reception in antiquity' in C Martindale, *The Cambridge Companion to Virgil* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1997) 56-72.

¹⁵² *1A* 46.1.

¹⁵³ *1A* 34.2.

¹⁵⁴ *1A* 35.9 & 48.3.

¹⁵⁵ *1A* 35.9.

¹⁵⁶ Barnard, *Apologies* 151n242 and Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 177n9.

as to suggest that it refers to official documents from the prefecture of Pontius Pilate preserved in the imperial archives.¹⁵⁷

It can be argued that Justin would be unlikely to refer to a source in the way he does if his audience would know that it did not exist, since this would undermine his credibility; he clearly wants his readers to accept his statement as good evidence that events had occurred as he describes them. A letter from Pilate to the Emperor describing his actions is therefore a possibility. Correspondence certainly took place between Emperors and provincial governors in the early imperial period as the needs of official business required; it was, however, *ad hoc* in nature, so far as can be ascertained, with no evidence of regular reporting by provincial governors to the centre of the Empire in Rome.¹⁵⁸ No correspondence involving Pontius Pilate survives. There are, however, two events recorded by ancient historians which could have prompted Pilate to write to the Emperor. The first, described by Philo,¹⁵⁹ occurred when Pilate erected golden shields in Herod's palace in Jerusalem, causing consternation among the local Jewish population and prompting them to complain to Emperor Tiberius. The latter wrote to Pilate rebuking him for his actions, so it is possible that Pilate then wrote back defending himself.¹⁶⁰ The second occasion, recorded by Josephus,¹⁶¹ was when Vitellius *legatus* of Syria sent Pilate to Rome to be investigated by the Emperor Tiberius after complaints by the Samaritans of heavy-handed treatment and, again, it is conceivable that Pilate would have written to the Emperor to defend himself. These were specific instances and it would involve a further

¹⁵⁷ Munier, *Apologie* 223n5.

¹⁵⁸ Millar, *Emperor in the Roman World* 313–341.

¹⁵⁹ Philo, *De Legatione ad Gaium* ed F H Colson *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1962) 38 299–305.

¹⁶⁰ Particularly as Philo records that Pilate was fearful that a Jewish petition to the Emperor '...would also expose the rest of his conduct as governor by stating in full the briberies, the insults, the robberies, the outrages and wanton injuries, the executions without trial constantly repeated, the ceaseless and supremely grievous cruelty.' Philo, *De Legatione LCL* 38 302.

¹⁶¹ Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities LCL* 9 18.85–89.

stretch to claim that any self-justifying account by Pilate would have anything to say about Jesus. Conceivably it could have done so as part of a general defence by Pilate of his record as governor, but to speculate that this was actually the case presses the evidence further than it will reasonably go.¹⁶²

The second category of prophecies are those whose fulfillment has occurred in the lifetimes of those now living. Justin says: ‘...for we see even with our own eyes that things have happened and are happening as they were foretold...’¹⁶³ and later:

‘...the phrase ‘He shall be the expectation of the nations’ signified that people from all nations will expect him to come again. It is possible for you to see this with your own eyes and to be persuaded by the reality.’¹⁶⁴

At various points references are made to current or recent events, of which contemporaries would be aware from their own experience or knowledge, two in particular: defeat of the Jews by the Romans, and acceptance of Jesus by the gentiles. On the first, Justin refers to the ‘recent [bar Kochba] Jewish war’¹⁶⁵ and how in the same conflict the Romans ‘...came to rule over the Jews and gained mastery of all their land.’¹⁶⁶ He also refers to the Romans’ plundering of the land of the Jews¹⁶⁷ and to the ‘desolation of the land of the Jews’ by the Romans.¹⁶⁸ On the second, the gentiles are described as awaiting (present tense: προσδοκῶσι)

¹⁶² These events are discussed in H K Bond, *Pontius Pilate in History and Interpretation* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1998) 24-93.

¹⁶³ *1A* 30.1.

¹⁶⁴ *1A* 32.4.

¹⁶⁵ *1A* 31.6.

¹⁶⁶ *1A* 32.3.

¹⁶⁷ *1A* 47.1-47.6.

¹⁶⁸ *1A* 53.3.

the return of Jesus¹⁶⁹ and Justin explains how the preaching of the Apostles prompted their conversion:

‘For men twelve in number went out from Jerusalem into the world and they were unskilled in speaking. Through the power of God they declared to the whole human race how they were sent by Christ to teach the word of God to all; and we who formerly were slaying one another not only do not fight against enemies but confessing Christ die gladly...’¹⁷⁰

The fulfillment of this second category of prophecies is validated by eye-witness testimony. Justin appeals to the existing knowledge of his readers, and it must be presumed that he expects this to be sufficient grounds for them to accept his case, since he says nothing more in justification. In mid 2C Rome the defeat of the Jews by the Romans some fifteen to twenty years earlier would have been a well-known fact of recent history, and the growth of Christianity as the result of missionary activity would have been evident to his readers.¹⁷¹ Scholarship has shown the importance and status of eye-witness testimony for historical writing

¹⁶⁹ 1A 32.4.

¹⁷⁰ 1A 39.3.

¹⁷¹ For the Bar Kokhba revolt of 132-135 CE: W Horbury, *Jewish War under Trajan and Hadrian* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2014).

in the ancient world,¹⁷² so it is not surprising to find such an appeal being made by Justin.

The third category of prophecies comprises those that have not been fulfilled. Justin wants to show that these are not false prophecies, so instead of rejecting them he maintains that they will be fulfilled in the future at the second coming when Christ returns in triumph:

‘For the prophets proclaimed beforehand his two comings: one, which has indeed already happened, that of a dishonoured and suffering human being, and the second when it is proclaimed that he will come with glory from the heavens with his angelic army...’¹⁷³

The fact that some prophecies are as yet unfulfilled is, therefore, not a weakness in the *PfP*. Here then is a delayed answer to the question posed earlier: how can Christians believe in a crucified man? Descriptions of Jesus in the prophecies as a humiliated figure refer only to his first coming; at his second coming he will appear in glory as a triumphant figure, but it is only reading the prophecies that reveals this.

¹⁷² R Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: the Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 2006) 5–11. S Byrskog, *Story as History–History as Story: the Gospel Tradition in the Context of Ancient Oral History* (Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2000) 48–65 reviews material from ancient historians concerning the importance of eye-witness testimony not just for historians who were eye-witnesses themselves, e.g. Thucydides and Josephus, but also for others e.g. Polybius and Tacitus. Polybius comments that the historian’s interrogation of eye-witnesses to events ‘...is exceedingly valuable and is the most important part of history’: Polybius, *Histories 6 Volumes* ed W R Paton rev F W Walbank & C Habicht *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 2010–2012) 4 12 27.6.

¹⁷³ *1A* 52.3.

Justin's account of the prophecies has built up a narrative of events, some of which have taken place in recent history and some of which will occur in the future. It is a selective account, but the selection is not random or accidental. The Prophetic Spirit's narrative consists of a sequence of divinely-ordained events, comprising not just the life and death of Jesus and the growth of Christianity among the gentiles, but also the rejection of Jesus by the Jews, the Jews' defeat by the Romans, their exclusion from the land of Judaea and their future condemnation at the last judgment.¹⁷⁴ One event which is not part of this sequence of prophesied events, however, is the persecution of Christians by the Romans. Thus while Justin recognizes that such ill-treatment has occurred, it was not something that was previously prophesied and should therefore not be regarded as part of God's plan for the world. Thus persecution of Christians by the Romans can be brought to an end -- as Justin wishes that it should be -- without contravening the divine plan.

Justin uses the insights provided by the prophecies to set up pairs of opposites. First, there is the contrast between those who follow Jesus and those who follow Graeco-Roman mythological gods. Second, the Jews who reject Jesus Christ and persecute Christians are contrasted with the gentiles who accept the gospel preached by the Apostles. Third, the Jews are contrasted with the Romans with whom they have been in violent conflict and who have defeated them. Finally, the Christians, who at the last judgment will be saved, are contrasted with the Jews who will be condemned.

Justin's argument has turned full circle. He began *1A* by protesting against the unfair treatment of Christians by the Roman authorities and then moved to a more general defence of the Christianity. His *PP* showed that some recent

¹⁷⁴ Justin also refers to the Jews' persecution of Christians during the Bar Kokhba war: *1A* 31.6. For a summary of Justin's overall portrayal of the Jews in *1A*: S G Wilson, *Related Strangers: Jews and Christians 70-170 CE* (Fortress Press, Minneapolis 1995) 31.

occurrences have been divinely ordained, but the catalogue of these events does not include the persecution of Christians by the Roman authorities. The plea for good relations between Christians and the Roman authorities with which Justin began is therefore shown to be consistent with, and, moreover, supported by, his *PP*.

Indeed, not only need there not be enmity between the Christians and the Romans, but a shared opposition to the Jews would appear to unite them. The Romans have defeated the Jews in war and their laying waste of the land of the Jews can be described as a form of persecution. Justin never refers to these events in terms that are critical of the Romans, but he *does* criticize the Jews for their rejection of Jesus and their persecution of Christians, and his prophecies foretell the condemnation of the Jews at the second coming. Thus through the insights provided by the ancient prophecies, Christianity's position in the world is characterized by reference to its relationship with the other two parties, the Jews and the Romans.

The Proof from Prophecy and the Graeco-Roman prophetic tradition

Justin's account of the prophecies and their fulfillments is addressed to a Graeco-Roman audience previously unfamiliar with them. The prophecies emanate from among the Jews, however, even though their Jewish origin is played down. To those who were culturally Greek, the Jews were one of the barbarian (or non-Greek) peoples, so the prophecies are barbarian in origin. Justin does not characterize the prophecies as such, however; the term barbarian appears rarely in *1A* and never in connection with the *PP*.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁵ There are four occurrences of βάρβαρος /οἱ βάρβαροι, at 5.4; 7.3; 46.3 & 60.11: Marcovich, *Apologiae* 183.

Justin's presentation tends rather to emphasize connections with the separate Graeco-Roman prophetic tradition with which his audience would have been familiar. This tradition was of long-standing¹⁷⁶ and fostered widespread acceptance of the notion that the future could be foretold. Certain special individuals or groups were thought to have prophetic powers, which came to them from a divine source; indeed, they were often thought to be speaking the words of a god and sometimes to be uttering prophecies in a manic state of divine possession. Particular places -- temples or sanctuaries -- were often the location of oracles where prophecies were dispensed, Delphi being the most celebrated. Prophecies could be delivered orally and later written down; some were thought to have originated long ago, to have been preserved in writing and sometimes grouped together into collections. They could be composed in poetry or in more special poetic forms such as acrostic and they were frequently enigmatic or paradoxical. Thus a prophecy commonly needed interpretation if present day relevance was to be understood, which required skill and insight; interpretations could be correct or incorrect, and the true meaning of a prophecy a matter of dispute. Prophecies could foretell events which were positive or beneficial in nature or they could be prophecies of doom; in the latter case they could be interpreted as warnings, with actions required to propitiate the gods, such as offering sacrifices or building a new temple. It was a common practice to take the initiative to consult oracles for guidance, for instance by putting questions to, and soliciting answers from, an oracle when important decisions needed to be taken.

¹⁷⁶ Works dealing with this issue: J A North, 'Diviners and Divination at Rome' in M Beard & J A North, *Pagan Priests: Religion and Power in the Ancient World* (Duckworth, London 1990) 51-71; H-J Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: a Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions* trans B McNeil (T&T Clark, London 2000) 177-209; D Potter, *Prophets and Emperors, Human and Divine Authority from Augustus to Theodosius* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1994); F Santangelo, *Divination, Prediction and the End of the Roman Republic* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2013) & D E Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 1983) 23-79.

Looking at the prophecies presented by Justin against this background, a number of similarities are evident. Justin's prophecies were of ancient provenance; they were uttered by prophets who were more than ordinary human beings and who received their insights from a divine source, in his case the Prophetic Spirit. Like Graeco-Roman prophecies, Justin's could be enigmatic or paradoxical in form, sometimes bordering on the incomprehensible, and they require skilled interpretation to be deciphered and for their relevance to the present day to be understood.¹⁷⁷

Some features of the Graeco-Roman tradition were, however, not found in Justin's account. His prophets were not associated with specific shrines or temples and are not described as coming from particular locations. There was no suggestion that prophecies were uttered in states of mania, when a prophet was the object of divine possession.¹⁷⁸ The prophecies were not couched in verse or acrostic forms,¹⁷⁹ but expressed in plain language. Moreover they are not presented as being delivered in response to enquiries;¹⁸⁰ indeed, nothing is said about what prompted the prophets to utter them except that they were inspired by the Prophetic Spirit.

There are, however, particular parallels to be drawn between Justin's ancient prophecies and the tradition of Sibylline prophecy which was strong in Rome

¹⁷⁷ Issues of interpretation are considered further below.

¹⁷⁸ Justin twice (1A 33.9 & 35.3) refers to prophets as possessed by God (using θεοφορέομαι) but a state of mania is not suggested in either instance.

¹⁷⁹ As is the only extant Sibylline prophecy: A Giannini ed, *Paradoxographorum Graecorum Reliquiae* (Institutio Editorale Italiano, Milan 1966) 200–207; trans in W Hansen trans, *Phlegon of Tralles' Book of Marvels* (University of Exeter Press, Exeter 1996) 40–43.

¹⁸⁰ Again, most famously in the oracle at Delphi.

where Justin was writing.¹⁸¹ Prophecies were uttered by the Sibyl of Cumae in very ancient times and were brought together in book collections. They were acquired by the Romans in legendary circumstances,¹⁸² preserved by them and frequently consulted.¹⁸³ Just as royal figures – the kings of the Jews and the Greek kings of Egypt – were instrumental in the preservation of the texts in Justin’s version of the Septuagint Legend, so the Roman Emperors had an important role in relation to the Sibylline Books. They were responsible for their preservation, for arrangements for consulting and interpreting them and for weeding out false from true prophecies.¹⁸⁴ So it is not surprising to find that at one point Justin

¹⁸¹ H Diels, *Sibyllinische Blätter* (Georg Reimer, Berlin 1890); *The Sibylline Oracles Book III and its Social Setting, with an Introduction, Translation and Commentary* ed R Buitenwerf (Brill, Leiden 2003); *The Sibylline Oracles with Introduction, Translation and Commentary on the First and Second Books* ed J L Lightfoot (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2007); H W Parke, *Greek Oracles* (Hutchinson, London 1967); H W Parke ed B C McGing, *Sibyls and Sibylline Prophecy in Classical Antiquity* (Routledge, London 1988); J Scheid, ‘Les Livres Sibyllins at les archives des Quindécemvirs’ in C Moatti ed *La Mémoire perdue: recherches sur l’administration Romaine* (École Française de Rome, Rome 1998) 11–26; W Den Boer, *Private Morality in Greece and Rome: some Historical Aspects* (Brill, Leiden 1979) 93–128 & Santangelo, *Divination* 128–148.

¹⁸² The story of the acquisition of the Sibylline Books by the early Roman King Tarquinius is told in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities 7 Volumes* ed E Cary *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1937–1950) 4 62, emphasising the subsequent importance of the Books for the Roman people: ‘...there is no possession of the Romans, sacred or profane, which they guard so carefully as they do the Sibylline oracles’: Dionysius, *Roman Antiquities LCL* 4 62.5.

¹⁸³ B MacBain, *Prodigy and Expiation: a Study in Religion and Politics in Republican Rome* (Latomus, Brussels 1982). The 1C Roman poet Lucan describes how the Cumaean Sibyl put her inspiration at the service of Rome in particular (Lucan, *Pharsalia* ed J D Duff *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1928) 5 183–186.

¹⁸⁴ In 28 BCE Augustus had the Sibylline Books transferred from the Temple of Jupiter to the new Temple of Apollo he had had built on the Palatine close to his own residence. Later, in 12 BCE, he acted to put an end to the private ownership of oracles, ordering that all extant prophecies be surrendered and examined; the genuine (Sibylline) oracles (a minority), were admitted to the official collection and the remainder destroyed: Parke, *Sibyls and Sybilline Prophecy* 141–142 (See also Suetonius, *Augustus LCL* 31 & Tacitus, *Annals* ed J Jackson *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1937) 6 12). In 19 CE the Emperor Tiberius had all prophetic books examined to sort genuine prophecies from the bogus, retaining the former and rejecting the latter: Cassius Dio, *Roman History LCL* 7 57 18.3–4.

mentions the Books of the Sibyl in the same breath as his Books of the Prophecies.¹⁸⁵

The analogies between Justin's prophecies and the Sibylline tradition should not be pressed too far, however, since differences are also apparent, notably in the purpose of prophetic activity. Sibylline prophecies were consulted when events suggested that the *pax deorum* had been broken, to identify remedial steps necessary to propitiate the gods. For Justin the purpose of prophecies was to demonstrate the status of Jesus and attract new converts to Christianity¹⁸⁶ and, while he employed prophetic language and used concepts which would have had some familiarity for his readers, he was nevertheless drawing on a separate prophetic tradition and using his prophecies to achieve a radically different purpose.

Moreover, Justin's approach was novel in that it brought prophecy into the sphere of the literary. In Graeco-Roman culture prophecy was a subject which was discussed by literary writers who might treat the contents of prophetic utterances with respect, but prophetic insights were seen as the product of a different form of discourse, one external to literary culture. That culture placed a high premium on rational arguments, whereas prophetic insights were regarded as being of a different order, deriving from non-rational sources. The work of two Greek authors, Plato and Plutarch, will illuminate this, Plato as the originator of one of the major strands of Greek philosophy and still hugely influential in the 2C and

¹⁸⁵ 1A 44.12. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity* 37 comments that most Sibylline oracles were oracles of doom, mirroring those of Justin's prophecies which relate to the eschaton and the fate of the Jews; the bulk of the prophecies quoted by Justin are, however, read with positive messages relating to the life of Jesus and the growth of Christianity.

¹⁸⁶ There are extant cases of multiple Sibylline prophecies relating to the same set of circumstances, but not of a series of prophecies providing a narrative of events such as Justin portrays: MacBain, *Prodigy and Expiation* 82-106.

Plutarch a writer of much more recent date with a strong interest in both philosophy and prophecy.

Plato saw value in prophecy. He accepted that alongside reason, the source of knowledge, other forms of insight might be provided by prophecy and divination which were divinely inspired.¹⁸⁷ Prophecy is not a subject to which he ever gives extended treatment, but he makes a number of references to it. In the *Phaedrus*, when discussing the prophetic inspiration of the Sibyl, he refers to ‘...the noblest of arts, which foretells the future.’¹⁸⁸ In *Ion* he likens poets to prophets and emphasises the divine origin of their inspiration:

‘...God takes away the mind of these men [the poets] and uses them as his ministers, just as he does soothsayers and godly seers, in order that we who hear them may know that it is not they who utter these words of great price, when they are out of their wits, but that it is God himself who speaks and addresses us through them.’¹⁸⁹

In *Meno* Plato compares prophets and statesmen and comments that when in the throes of divine inspiration neither of them understands what they are saying: ‘...statesmen...have nothing more to do with wisdom than soothsayers and diviners; for these people utter many a true thing when inspired, but have no knowledge of anything they say.’¹⁹⁰ Finally, in the *Timaeus* Plato describes the liver as the organ of divination in the human body and a part of the divinely-

¹⁸⁷ E R Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (University of California Press, Berkeley 1951) 207-235.

¹⁸⁸ Plato, *Phaedrus* ed H N Fowler *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1914) 244B.

¹⁸⁹ Plato, *Ion* trans H N Fowler & W R M Lamb *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1925) 534C-D.

¹⁹⁰ Plato, *Meno* ed & trans W R M Lamb *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1924) 99C.

created order ‘...that it might in some degree lay hold on truth...’¹⁹¹ and says that, while divination can yield insights, these are distinct from the conclusions reached by reflections of the rational mind.¹⁹²

Closer to Justin’s own time, Plutarch,¹⁹³ who had a strong interest in philosophy,¹⁹⁴ also engaged extensively with religious issues.¹⁹⁵ He was a priest in the temple at Delphi and wrote several works relating to oracles,¹⁹⁶ which he discussed in rational terms,¹⁹⁷ as well as a treatise on the Egyptian myth of Osiris and Isis, in which he approached myth from a philosophical standpoint.¹⁹⁸ Plutarch had a sympathy towards prophecy¹⁹⁹ which sat alongside his enthusiasm for philosophy and rational argument. His view, in Van Nuffelen’s words, was that ‘...philosophy and religious tradition lead to knowledge of the same truth...’²⁰⁰ In extant texts Plutarch never discusses the relationship between the non-rational insights that could be gained from prophecy and the knowledge which comes from the rational methods of philosophy, so his views on this issue

¹⁹¹ Plato, *Timaeus* ed & trans R G Bury *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1929) 71E.

¹⁹² Plato: *Timaeus LCL* 71E-72B.

¹⁹³ On Plutarch generally: R Lamberton, *Plutarch* (Yale University Press, New Haven 2001). His dates are c45 BCE – 120 CE.

¹⁹⁴ E.g. Plutarch, *Platonicae Quaestiones & De Animae Procreatione in Timaeo* in *Moralia* 13/1 and *De Stoicorum Repugnantiis & De Communibus Notitiis adversus Stoicos* in *Moralia* 13/2 ed H Cherniss *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1976).

¹⁹⁵ For Plutarch’s religion: J Oakesmith, *The Religion of Plutarch: a Pagan Creed of Apostolic Times* (Longmans, Green & Co, London 1902) & F E Brenk, *In Mist Appeared: Religious Themes in Plutarch’s Moralia and Lives* (Brill, Leiden 1980).

¹⁹⁶ Plutarch, *De E Apud Delphos, De Pythiae Oraculis & De Defectu Oraculorum* ed F C Babbitt *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1936).

¹⁹⁷ Lamberton, *Plutarch* 155-172.

¹⁹⁸ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* ed J G Griffiths (University of Wales Press, Cardiff 1970).

¹⁹⁹ Brenk, *In Mist Appeared* 184-255.

²⁰⁰ P Van Nuffelen, *Rethinking the gods: philosophical readings of religion in the post-Hellenistic period* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2011) 48-71 (quotation on 50); see also H D Betz, *Plutarch’s Theological Writings and Early Christian Literature* (Brill, Leiden 1975) 36-37.

are unknown.²⁰¹ Insights from prophecy are not, however, brought into his rational arguments; he treats the two as distinct, prophetic insight at Delphi, rational inquiry in the Academy.

Plato and Plutarch, both writers sympathetic to prophecy, do not use prophetic statements as part of their rational arguments, and their writings were emblematic of Greek culture in this respect. Written prophecies were known and consulted, but the literary and the prophetic were separate cultural stands. By contrast, prophecy *was* part of the literary culture of Hellenistic Judaism and prophetic material occupied a significant portion of the contents of its core text, the Septuagint. Justin was drawing on this culture when he accessed the Books of the Prophecies, but in bringing prophecies from that tradition into his apologetic arguments he was doing something unfamiliar to Greek literary culture.

Justin's novelty in this respect is reflected in the vocabulary he employs to describe prophecy, which differs from that of the classical literary tradition. In the latter there was no single term for prophecy and the prophetic, with three terms employed: μάντις, προφήτης and χρησμός (with their cognates),²⁰² of which προφήτης was the least common.²⁰³ Προφήτης is, however, Justin's term for his prophets, to the exclusion of the others,²⁰⁴ and he also uses cognates of προφήτης, which were either uncommon in classical Greek, such as the verb προφητεύω,²⁰⁵ or were unknown before the 2C CE, such as the noun προφητεία.²⁰⁶ Justin therefore uses a distinctive vocabulary to describe prophecy that reflects his

²⁰¹ Lamberton, *Plutarch* 52-59.

²⁰² Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity* 23-48 & *LSJ* entries for μάντις, προφήτης and χρησμός.

²⁰³ TLG searches for μάντις, προφήτης and χρησμός.

²⁰⁴ μάντις and χρησμός do not appear in *1A: Marcovich, Apologiae* 197 & 211.

²⁰⁵ *LSJ* entries for προφητεύω & προφητεία, TLG searches for cognates of προφήτης & Marcovich, *Apologiae* 205.

²⁰⁶ G Kittel & G Friedrich eds, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* 10 *Volumes* ed & trans G W Bromiley (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 1964-1976) 6 781-861, 784 & Marcovich, *Apologiae* 205.

particular perspective. Indeed, he follows the semantic usage which entered Greek from Hellenistic Judaism; the Hebrew term *nabi* was rendered into Greek as προφήτης by the Septuagint translators.²⁰⁷ Προφήτης was the term which Hellenistic-Jewish writers such as Philo and Josephus regularly used for prophets and is the term which appears in *1A*.²⁰⁸

The Proof from Prophecy and Ancient Wisdom

Justin's argument in the *PfP* connects with another strand of Graeco-Roman culture, in addition to the prophetic, that of ancient wisdom. Boys-Stones has traced the development during the later Hellenistic period of the idea of a golden age of philosophical wisdom in very ancient times, first among Stoics and later among Platonists.²⁰⁹ Such ideas are associated particularly with Posidonius in the 1C BCE and Cornutus in the 1C CE.²¹⁰ According to this tradition, the earliest era of humankind was dominated by sages whose thinking exhibited a unity of ideas that disappeared later when different, and competing, philosophical schools developed.

Justin's account of his prophets is consonant with this ancient wisdom tradition.²¹¹ He emphasizes their great antiquity: 'And this was prophesied before he [Jesus] appeared, sometimes five thousand years before, sometimes three thousand, sometimes two thousand, and again a thousand and elsewhere eight hundred...'²¹² and stresses how their writings, dating from a distant age, exhibit the kind of unanimity of ideas found in the ancient wisdom tradition. The prophecies may have been delivered by different individuals, but they convey a common message.

²⁰⁷ E Fascher, *ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ: Eine sprach- und religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Alfred Töpelmann, Giessen 1927) 102-108 & TLG search for προφήτης.

²⁰⁸ TLG searches for μάντις, προφήτης and χρησμός in Philo and Josephus.

²⁰⁹ Boys-Stones, *Post-Hellenistic Philosophy*.

²¹⁰ Boys-Stones, *Post-Hellenistic Philosophy* 44-59.

²¹¹ Boys-Stones, *Post-Hellenistic Philosophy* 184-188 briefly discusses Justin but makes no reference to his use of ancient prophecies.

²¹² *1A* 31.8.

Justin contrasts this with the Greek philosophical schools, several times highlighting that different philosophers do not agree and, indeed, that they contradict one another. He says, for example, that ‘...those among the Greeks who taught whatever pleased them are called in every case by the single title ‘philosopher’ even though they contradicted one another in their opinions...’²¹³

Justin considers his prophets not only to be ancient, but to predate the development of Greek philosophy: ‘Moses is older even than all the writers in Greek.’²¹⁴ This chronological priority is demonstrated by the fact that Greek philosophers actually learnt some of their ideas from Justin’s ancient prophets: ‘And everything which both the philosophers and the poets said concerning the immortality of the soul or punishments after death or contemplation of heavenly things or similar doctrines they were enabled to understand and they explained because they took their starting-points from the prophets.’²¹⁵ Justin provides a specific example of such borrowing when he cites the reference in the *Timaeus* to God having made the world by changing formless matter, claiming that Plato took this idea from Genesis. He quotes from Genesis 1 and says: ‘In this way both Plato and those who say the same things and we ourselves learnt that the whole world came into being by the Word of God out of previously existing things spoken of by Moses. And you can also be persuaded of this.’²¹⁶ That Moses predated Greek culture and that later Greek philosophers borrowed from the writings of Moses was not original to Justin; it was an idea -- sometimes called

²¹³ *1A* 7.3: see also 4.8 & 26.6.

²¹⁴ *1A* 44.8.

²¹⁵ *1A* 44.9.

²¹⁶ *1A* 59.5. The translation here follows Minns & Parvis’ emendation of the manuscript text (Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 233n4), *pace* Marcovich and Munier, and follows Marcovich’s use of a capital Λ in Λόγω *pace* Minns & Parvis and Munier.

the ‘theft theory’ -- that had become well-established in Hellenistic-Jewish historiography before it took root among Christian writers.²¹⁷

The Proof from Prophecy and Greek Philosophy

Justin’s comments on Greek philosophy referred to above appear critical and at times even disparaging. The overall picture in *1A* is, however, a mixed one, for Justin is sometimes more positive. At the outset, the addressees of *1A* are described, flatteringly, as philosophers²¹⁸ and such references are repeated later.²¹⁹ Justin sometimes couples philosophy with piety,²²⁰ and then speaks of it sympathetically, saying, for example: ‘...you [the addressees] hear on all sides that you are called pious and philosophers and guardians of justice and lovers of learning.’²²¹ When philosophy is referred to on its own, however, Justin’s tone can be more critical, emphasizing the divisions among philosophers.²²²

Overall, however, philosophy features comparatively little in *1A*.²²³ Two chapters are devoted to discussion of Plato’s ideas, but they are mainly concerned with showing that the tradition of thought derived from Moses is superior.²²⁴ There

²¹⁷ Droge, *Homer or Moses?* 12–48; W Löhr, ‘The Theft of the Greeks: Christian Self-Definition in the Age of the Schools’ *RHE* 95 (2000) 403–426 & Nyström, *Apology of Justin Martyr* 82–86.

²¹⁸ *1A* 2.2.

²¹⁹ E.g. *1A* 12.5.

²²⁰ E.g. *1A* 3.2, 12.5 & 70.4. See A-M Malingrey, ‘*Philosophia*’ *Études d’un groupe de mots dans la littérature grecque, des Présocratiques au IVe siècle après J-C* (C Klincksieck, Paris 1961) 124–126 & H H Holfeder, ‘Εὐσέβεια καὶ φιλοσοφία: Literarische Einheit und politischer Kontext von Justins Apologie (Teil I)’ *ZNW* 68 (1977) 48–66.

²²¹ E.g. *1A* 2.2.

²²² E.g. *1A* 4.8; 7.3 & 26.6.

²²³ R Joly, *Christianisme et philosophie: études sur Justin et les apologistes grecs du deuxième siècle* (University of Brussels, Brussels 1973) 9–83 argues for the importance in Justin’s work of the confrontation between Christianity and philosophy, but he does this mainly on the basis of *DT* 1–7: ‘Le texte de Justin qui illustre le plus directement la confrontation entre la philosophie et la christianisme est sans conteste le prologue du *Dialogue avec Tryphon*’ (9).

²²⁴ *1A* 59–60.

are explicit references to similarities between Christian doctrines and ideas from the Greek philosophical schools of Platonism and Stoicism: ‘For when we say that all things were fashioned and came into being through God we will seem to speak the doctrine of Plato, and in saying that there will be a conflagration, we will seem to speak that of the Stoics.’²²⁵ This point is not developed, however, and Justin limits himself to noting the commonalities in ideas.²²⁶ The one occasion on which he does address a philosophical issue is when he considers if his argument based on prophecy implies ‘...that we say that the things which happen happen through the necessity of fate.’²²⁷ This refers to a philosophical objection which can reasonably be made to the argument in the *PfP*, as Justin is clearly aware, and his response is to set out a case for free-will and against determinism:

‘But that by free choice they [human beings] both act rightly and stumble we demonstrate as follows. We see the same human being in pursuit of opposite things. But if he were fated to be either wicked or virtuous, he would never be capable of opposite things and would not have changed many times. But neither would some human beings be virtuous and some wicked, since we would then be maintaining that fate is the cause of the wicked and acts in opposition to itself; or else the opinion mentioned earlier would seem to be true, that neither virtue nor vice exists, but that good and evil are only matters of opinion.’²²⁸

²²⁵ *1A* 20.4.

²²⁶ M Bonazzi & C Helmig eds, *Platonic Stoicism–Stoic Platonism: the dialogue between Platonism and Stoicism in Antiquity* (Leuven University Press, Leuven 2007): in the ‘Introduction’ vii–xv they characterise Greek philosophical discourse of the time as a debate between Platonism and Stoicism, with influences in both directions. Justin appears to be deliberately avoiding a preference for either School to the detriment of the other.

²²⁷ *1A* 43.1.

²²⁸ *1A* 43.4–43.6.

This argument is presented in a form which would be at home in a philosophical treatise.²²⁹ Justin seeks to show that taking a position different from his own leads either to illogicality ('we would then be asserting that fate is the cause of the wicked and does things contrary to itself') or falsity ('that neither virtue nor vice exists, but that good and evil are matters of opinion only'). It is noteworthy that Justin makes no references here to evidence or argument from the Jewish scriptures; he engages with a philosophical question, using arguments appropriate to a philosophical debate, and the passage stands out as the only place in *1A* where he does this.

Thus Greek philosophy plays only an incidental rather than a central role in *1A*. Justin has been seen by some commentators as very sympathetic to Greek philosophy and as a writer who seeks positively to identify common ground between Christianity and Greek philosophy.²³⁰ The evidence from *1A* does not support this, however. Indeed, one striking feature of the work is that, especially in the *PfP* section, references to philosophy are so few; Justin does not use his *PfP* either to present Christianity as the alternative to Greek philosophy or to show resemblances between them.

This contrasts with Chapters 1-9 of *DT* where Justin exposes deficiencies in various schools of Greek philosophy, particularly Platonism,²³¹ and then presents the ideas of the ancient prophets, revealed to him by a mysterious old man, as the

²²⁹ Fate was an established issue of debate in Graeco-Roman philosophical discourse, not least because of its importance for the Stoics: *BNP* article on Fate by D Frede & M A Frede, *A Free Will: Origins of the Notion in Ancient Thought* ed A A Long (University of California Press, Berkeley 2011). For a treatise on the subject written a few decades after Justin's *1A*: Alexander of Aphrodisias: *On Fate: Text, Translation and Commentary* ed R W Sharples (Duckworth, London 1983) discussed further below.

²³⁰ E.g. Chadwick, *Early Christian thought* 9-22. This has, of course, been disputed: see e.g. Hyldahl, *Philosophie und Christentum*, although that is a study of *DT* and not *1A*.

²³¹ The discussion between Justin and the old man in *DT* 3-7 is presented in the form of a philosophical dialogue.

alternative to be embraced instead.²³² The ideas of these prophets are the origin of Christian thinking and Christianity is referred to as a philosophy. Thus Justin describes the words of Christ as ‘...the only sure and useful philosophy’²³³ and says that as a consequence he himself is now a philosopher.²³⁴ In *1A*, however, Justin does not describe the prophetic texts as philosophy or refer to the prophets as philosophers; instead, he uses the terms prophecy and prophets throughout. Nor does he call himself a philosopher anywhere in *1A*; so while the Greek philosophical schools are Justin’s main target in *DT* 1–9, this is not the case with the *PP*.

Rationality and Proof in *1A*

It is noteworthy that Justin never refers to prophecy, which is at the core of his argument, as magical, miraculous or irrational. Indeed, he is at pains to present his case as rational.²³⁵ It may be that Justin is here responding to contemporary criticisms of Christians for ignoring proofs and arguments, criticisms found, for instance, in the work of Galen and Lucian.²³⁶ Before even reaching the *PP*, he gives prominence to the concept of rationality by referring to it a number of times; thus when pleading for relief from persecution, Justin appeals to reason and rejects irrationality:

‘For it was not to flatter you with this document nor to gain your favour by our speech that we approached you, but rather to demand that you give judgement in accordance with careful and

²³² *DT* 7.

²³³ *DT* 8.1.

²³⁴ *DT* 8.2.

²³⁵ A point emphasized in relation to the apologists generally by Joly, *Christianisme et philosophie* who devotes a whole chapter to *Le Christianisme rationnel des apologistes* 85–154.

²³⁶ J Barnes, ‘Galen, Christians, logic’ in J Barnes, *Logical Matters: Essays in Ancient Philosophy II* ed M Bonelli (Clarendon Press, Oxford 2012) 1–21, 4–5.

exacting reason (λόγον), not being gripped by prejudice or the wish to please the superstitious nor driven by irrational impulse or long prevalent rumours...²³⁷

Later he refers to the ‘rational powers (λογικῶν δυνάμεων)²³⁸ which God has bestowed on humankind, and to human beings as ‘rational (λογικοὶ)²³⁹ creations.

Similar sentiments are found in the *PfP* section. Justin asks: ‘For by what reason (λόγω) would we believe in a crucified man that he is the first-begotten of the unbegotten God...’²⁴⁰ a question which in effect he has already answered much earlier when he said that ‘...we will prove (ἀποδείξομεν) that the one who became the teacher for us of these things, and who was born for this, Jesus Christ... we rationally worship (μετὰ λόγου τιμῶμεν).’²⁴¹ The demonstration Justin refers to here is the kernel of the *PfP* and he seeks to portray it as a rational argument. He begins his *PfP* with the words ‘...we shall now make proof, not trusting those who make assertions... (τὴν ἀπόδειξιν ἤδη ποιησόμεθα, οὐ τοῖς λέγουσι πιστεύοντες...),’²⁴² and goes on to say that he will provide ‘...the greatest and truest proof (μεγίστη καὶ ἀληθεστάτη ἀπόδειξις).’²⁴³ Thus Justin goes beyond describing his argument as rational, using forms of λόγος and its cognates, and refers to his argument prominently as a proof, ἀπόδειξις.²⁴⁴ He does not, however, present his argument as a *philosophical* proof, with the aim of combatting the claims of the Greek philosophical schools and replacing them with a Christian alternative. Instead, Justin uses ἀπόδειξις in an everyday, not a

²³⁷ *IA* 2.3.

²³⁸ *IA* 10.4.

²³⁹ *IA* 28.3.

²⁴⁰ *IA* 53.2.

²⁴¹ *IA* 13.3.

²⁴² *IA* 30.1.

²⁴³ *IA* 30.1.

²⁴⁴ It appears ten times in *IA*: 14.4; 20.3; 23.3; 30.1 (twice); 46.6 (twice); 54.1; 58.2 & 63.10, in all cases either with reference to Justin’s own argument or to the lack of proof in those of his opponents.

philosophical, sense, with the objective of challenging the claims of the mythologically-based religion of Greece and Rome rather than their philosophical traditions.

Ἀπόδειξις is the term in Greek philosophy for a logical proof, used by Aristotle in the *Posterior Analytics*²⁴⁵ and also in Stoic logic, which emerged to rival (or complement) the Aristotelian tradition.²⁴⁶ In later Hellenistic centuries both these philosophical traditions were still live, with Peripatetic writers debating issues of Aristotelian logic,²⁴⁷ while the Stoic position on what constituted a proof was actively discussed,²⁴⁸ and the work of Sextus Empiricus is testimony to sceptically-generated attacks on the possibility that proofs could exist at all.²⁴⁹ Justin's younger contemporary, Galen, also based in Rome, displayed a particular interest in logic,²⁵⁰ writing a fifteen Book treatise on the subject, of which only small

²⁴⁵ Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* ed H Tredennick *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1960): examples of use of ἀπόδειξις at 1 71b.17 & 1 72a.8; see also Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* trans J Barnes Second ed (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1993).

²⁴⁶ For texts on Stoic logic: *The Hellenistic Philosophers Volume 1 Translations of the Principal Sources with Philosophical Commentary* eds A A Long & D Sedley (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1987) 208–220 and *The Hellenistic Philosophers Volume 2 Greek and Latin Texts with Notes and Bibliography* eds A A Long & D Sedley (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1989) 209–221.

²⁴⁷ J Barnes, 'Peripatetic Logic: 100 BC- AD 200' in R W Sharples & R Sorabji eds, *Greek & Roman Philosophy 100BC-200AD 2 Volumes* (Institute of Classical Studies University of London, London 2007) 2 531–546.

²⁴⁸ J Brunschwig, 'Proof defined' and J Barnes, 'Proof destroyed' in M Schofield, M Burnyeat and J Barnes eds, *Doubt and Dogmatism: Studies in Hellenistic Epistemology* (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1980) 125–160 & 161–181.

²⁴⁹ Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* ed R G Bury *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1933) & Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Scepticism* trans J Annas & J Barnes (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1994) 2 134–203.

²⁵⁰ T Tieleman, 'Methodology' in R J Hankinson ed, *The Cambridge Companion to Galen* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2008) 49–65 & B Morison, 'Logic' in Hankinson, *Cambridge Companion to Galen* 66–115.

fragments survive,²⁵¹ as well as a short introductory text which survives complete.²⁵²

Justin's argument does not satisfy the form of a Greek philosophical proof, however, for although he uses a term which has a specific meaning in logic, he does not employ it in that technical sense. Proofs in Aristotelian and Stoic logic each have a particular structure, but the *PfP* does not conform to either. The classic Aristotelian argument,²⁵³ the syllogism, two premises and a conclusion, takes the form: i if *a* is the case; *and* ii *b* is the case; *then* iii it necessarily follows that *c* is the case. A classic Stoic argument²⁵⁴ of propositional logic also has three (different) stages, taking the form: i if *a* then *b*; ii *a* is the case; iii therefore *b* is the case. Justin's argument also has three stages: i the ancient prophets, inspired by the Prophetic Spirit, foretold events that would happen; ii those events have now occurred; iii therefore both the prophecy and the fulfillment should be accepted as divinely ordained. This may look like an argument consisting of two premises and a conclusion, possibly either Aristotelian or Stoic in form, but it cannot really

²⁵¹ Tieleman, 'Methodology' 49.

²⁵² Text in Galen, *Institutio Logica* ed C Kalbfleisch (Teubner, Leipzig 1896), translation in Galen, *Institutio Logica English Translation, Introduction and Commentary* by J S Kieffer (John Hopkins Press, Baltimore 1964). Galen presents the Peripatetic and Stoic approaches to logic and then also a third which he terms relational syllogism. In Chapter 1 of *Institutio Logica* Galen establishes ἀπόδειξις as the key term for discussion.

²⁵³ J L Ackrill, *Aristotle the Philosopher* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 1981) 79–93; W K C Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy Volume VI: Aristotle an Encounter* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1981) 156–178; J Barnes, *Aristotle* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 1982) 27–36; P Crivelli, 'Aristotle's Logic' in C Shields ed, *The Oxford Handbook of Aristotle* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2012) 113–149; C Shields, *Aristotle* (Routledge, Abingdon 2007) 106–125; R Smith, 'Aristotle's Theory of Demonstration' in G Anagnostopoulos ed, *A Companion to Aristotle* (Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester 2009) 51–65 & R Smith, 'Logic' in J Barnes ed, *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1995) 27–65.

²⁵⁴ See: I Mueller, 'An Introduction to Stoic Logic' in J M Rist, *The Stoics* (University of California Press, Berkeley 1978) 1–26; F H Sandbach, *The Stoics* (Chatto & Windus, London 1975) 95–100; J Sellars, *Stoicism* (Acuman, Chesham 2006) 55–79 & S Bobzien, 'Logic' in B Inwood ed, *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2003) 85–123.

be regarded as such. For even if it is accepted (implicitly) that the future can be foretold and i is therefore a valid premise (which is problematic in itself) point iii is not a conclusion which follows necessarily from i and ii. Justin's argument depends both on the way he reads the original prophecy and on his contention that a particular event fulfills that prophecy. If a prophecy were interpreted differently, however, it would have a different meaning; it could be fulfilled by a different event, or it could have not been fulfilled at all; these are matters of judgement and a variety of different conclusions could be reached. Thus Justin's argument is not one of logical necessity.

Justin is not explicit about the meaning of ἀπόδειξις, but it is a term that need not be philosophical and can be used in a non-technical sense. Its everyday meaning is that an argument should be accepted because there are good reasons for it.²⁵⁵ An example is found in Plutarch's treatise on *The Study of Poetry*²⁵⁶ where he quotes lines from Euripides extolling the superiority of virtue over wealth and comments: 'Is not this a proof (ἀπόδειξις) of what philosophers say regarding wealth and external advantages, that without virtue they are useless and unprofitable for their owners?'²⁵⁷ There is no question that Euripides has provided a logical proof, but rather that he has persuasively asserted a point which Plutarch regards as a good one and wishes to endorse.

When Justin criticizes Marcionites in *IA*, he equates the absence of proof with irrationality,²⁵⁸ suggesting that the term proof should mean making a convincing rational argument. He clearly regards his demonstration that prophecies made long ago have been fulfilled in Jesus as a rational argument for the truth of Christianity and he contrasts this proof with the mere assertions of others. Thus

²⁵⁵ *LSJ* entry for ἀπόδειξις.

²⁵⁶ Plutarch, *Quomodo adolescens poetas audire debeat* ed F C Babbitt *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1927).

²⁵⁷ Plutarch, *Quomodo adolescens LCL* 36D 1-2.

²⁵⁸ *IA* 58.2.

in referring to ἀπόδειξις he employs a term which has philosophical overtones, but uses it in an everyday sense and not as a term of philosophical logic.²⁵⁹

The Proof from Prophecy and Graeco-Roman mythological religion

Justin's argument is best seen not as the expression of a philosophical school putting itself forward to rival -- and, indeed, replace -- those of the Greek tradition, but rather as a justification for Justin's preferred alternative to the mythological religion of Greece and Rome.²⁶⁰ For the comparisons drawn in *1A* are between Jesus Christ and figures from the Greek mythological tradition. Pretila has shown how in Chapters 21 and 22 Justin highlights similarities between stories about Jesus and the stories in Greek myths as a way of making the story of Jesus comprehensible (he describes this as 'Incorporation of Myth')²⁶¹ and then how, from Chapter 53 onwards, Justin draws attention to dissimilarities between the Greek myths and the story of Jesus in order to place distance between the two (he describes this as 'Separation from Myth').²⁶²

In the first group of references, in Chapters 21 and 22, Justin describes how Jesus was crucified, died, rose again and was taken up into heaven, but comments that '...we introduce nothing stranger than those you call the sons of Zeus.'²⁶³ Individual gods are referred to -- Hermes, Asclepius, Dionysus, Heracles, the

²⁵⁹ These issues are touched on in H G Snyder, 'The Classroom in the Text: Exegetical Practices in Justin and Galen' in S E Porter & A W Pitts eds, *Christian Origins and Greco-Roman Culture: Social and Literary Contexts for the New Testament* (Brill, Leiden 2013) 663-685, 676-685.

²⁶⁰ For criticism of Graeco-Roman religion as a theme in early Christian apologetic literature: G Dorival, 'L'apologétique chrétienne et la culture grecque' in B Pouderon & J Doré, *Les apologistes chrétiens et la culture grecque* (Beauchesne, Paris 1998) 423-465, 424-425 & 441-447.

²⁶¹ Pretila, 'Marvellous Fables' 52-78.

²⁶² Pretila, 'Marvellous Fables' 79-123.

²⁶³ *1A* 21.1.

Dioscuri and Ariadne — who also, like Jesus, ascended to heaven.²⁶⁴ Justin refers to the crucifixion of Jesus, but points out that the sons of Zeus also suffered: ‘But if someone should object that he was crucified, this is the same as your sons of Zeus who suffered and whom we have enumerated.’²⁶⁵ Justin also cites parallels between Jesus and Perseus (the virgin birth) and between Jesus and Asclepius (healing the sick and raising the dead).²⁶⁶

Comparisons of this kind are inadequate for Justin, however, and he signals that, in due course, he will demonstrate the superiority of Jesus over the gods of the Greek myths: ‘But as we promised, as the discourse proceeds, we will prove that he [Jesus] is in fact superior.’²⁶⁷ He returns to this theme in Chapter 53 after he has laid out his *PIP* and compares stories about Jesus with stories about Graeco-Roman mythological figures in ways that are critical of the latter. He says that prophecies he has shown to be about Jesus have been interpreted as relating to Greek mythological figures such as Dionysus, Bellepheron, Perseus, Heracles and Asclepius.²⁶⁸ He rejects any such connections as false and criticizes the myths themselves which, he says, ‘...have been told at the instigation of evil demons to deceive and lead astray the human race.’²⁶⁹

²⁶⁴ *1A* 21.2–21.3. Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 133n1 exclude Hermes as a later addition to the text, although other editors leave him in: Marcovich, *Apologiae*, Munier, *Apologie & Barnard*, *Apologies*.

²⁶⁵ *1A* 22.3.

²⁶⁶ *1A* 22.5–22.6.

²⁶⁷ *1A* 22.4. Justin goes on to say ‘Or rather it has been proved, for superiority is shown by deeds.’ Commentators, no doubt rightly, have taken this to be a reference back to Justin’s comments about the teachings of Jesus in *1A* 15–17 (Munier, *Apologie* 191n9; Marcovich, *Apologiae* 65n13 & Barnard, *Apologies* 130n162). But in spite of having shown the superiority of Jesus ‘through deeds’, Justin looks forward to the further (at this point unspecified) demonstration of superiority that he will in due course provide.

²⁶⁸ *1A* 54.6–54.10.

²⁶⁹ *1A* 54.1. Criticisms of Greek gods and their mythological stories were a feature of Greek culture itself (J Pépin, *Mythe et allégorie: les origines grecques et les contestations judéo-chrétiennes* (Aubier-Montaigne, Paris 1958) & D C Feeney, *The Gods in Epic: Poets and Critics of the Classical Tradition* (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1991) 5–56) and not the creation of Christian polemic.

There is thus a very clear contrast between Justin's earlier and the later references to Graeco-Roman mythology. What has led to the change is that the *PfP* has intervened and provided proof of the true status of Jesus, giving Justin the basis for critical comparisons with the divine figures of Greek mythology. Thus Justin is able to say '...it is not true of us, as it is of those who make myths about the supposed sons of Zeus, that we only make assertions and do not show proofs'²⁷⁰ and he contrasts his arguments for Christianity, the subject of proof deriving from prophecy, with mere assertions put forward in support of mythological stories about the Graeco-Roman gods. He has demonstrated that the ancient prophecies are fulfilled in Jesus Christ and can now refute counter-arguments that they should be interpreted as referring to Graeco-Roman myths.

Justin does not claim that there are opponents of Christianity who *have* argued that the prophecies were fulfilled in mythological stories; his contention is that evil demons created myths paralleling the life of Jesus that *could* be interpreted as fulfilling Justin's prophecies. It is possible that such a case was being made and that this is why Justin seeks to refute it, although there are reasons for regarding this as improbable. First, it was noted in Chapter 1 that the Jewish scriptures were not well-known outside Jewish and Christian circles and if the prophecies were unfamiliar, debate in Graeco-Roman circles over their interpretation was scarcely likely. Second, no other texts of the time suggest that this case was being put (although the low rate of textual survival means that such an argument should be treated with caution). Third, Justin never specifically refers to anyone advocating the fulfillment of prophecies through Greek myths, even though he does name other intellectual opponents, such as Simon and Menander²⁷¹ and Marcion.²⁷²

²⁷⁰ *1A* 53.1.

²⁷¹ *1A* 26 & 56.

²⁷² *1A* 26 & 58.

The more probable interpretation is that Justin posits an alternative reading to his own in order to demonstrate its shortcomings and to show that his reading should be preferred. Interpreting the prophecies as fulfilled in Greek mythological stories lacks the kind of proof which Justin has been able to deploy to demonstrate their fulfillment in the life of Jesus and the early history of Christianity. The contrast between the two therefore highlights the value of the evidential proof which Justin has brought to bear in support of his own interpretations of the prophecies.

Justin's approach to the interpretation of prophecy

This discussion of whether prophecies should be read as referring to Jesus or to figures from Greek mythology shows both the importance of interpreting prophecies correctly and the dangers of mis-interpretation. Justin wants to do more than bring prophecies to his audience's attention; he wants to explain how they should be understood. Text and interpretation are inseparable and correct links need to be made between what was foretold long ago and what has now occurred, or will occur, if the prophecies are to be interpreted rightly.

Interpretation is problematic, however, because prophecies can be ambiguous or enigmatic; Justin refers to the way in which a prophecy may be 'unintelligible'²⁷³ until its fulfillment has revealed its meaning.

For Justin there is only ever one correct reading for each prophecy -- the one he provides -- and he does not recognise at any point that a text could have two different readings, both of which could be valid. Prophecies can be -- and have been -- interpreted *incorrectly*, however, and their fulfillments have not always been recognized when they have occurred. One case of incorrect interpretation of prophecies has already been discussed, that of relating them to mythological deities rather than to Jesus. Justin gives a more literary example of misinterpretation when he refers to Plato's *Timaeus*, saying: 'He arranged him as

²⁷³ 1A 32.2.

an X in the whole'.²⁷⁴ Plato's error was that, while he recognized that the passage in Numbers²⁷⁵ should be read symbolically, he did so in terms of an incorrect symbol, the X, rather than the correct symbol, the cross. This was due to ignorance, because Plato lived well before the coming of Christ. It was only after the crucifixion that the importance of the cross as a symbol was apparent and references to it in earlier prophetic sayings could be correctly understood. Justin provides other examples of the significance of the cross as a symbol, such as 'Diggers do not do their work, nor craftsmen likewise, unless by means of tools having this pattern'²⁷⁶ and comments more generally that 'This [the cross], as the prophet said beforehand, is the greatest symbol of his [God's] power and rule.'²⁷⁷

If Plato's flaw was, through ignorance, not to understand the symbolic significance of the cross, the Jews' failure, collectively, was not to recognize the prophecies' fulfillment in Jesus Christ. They knew the prophecies and saw the coming of Jesus, so their failure could not be put down to ignorance; rather it was due to a hermeneutical deficiency, an inability, or refusal, to read prophecies correctly, even when the necessary information was to hand. Justin refers several times to the Jews' rejection of Jesus, saying for example: '...the Jews, who have the prophecies and who were always expecting the Christ to come, did not recognize him when he came...'²⁷⁸ In Justin's view, this was because the Jews did not appreciate that the prophets sometime spoke 'as though from a character.'²⁷⁹ Addressing his Graeco-Roman audience in the second person he observes:

²⁷⁴ *IA* 60.1. The reference is to *Timaeus* 36B, although some commentators think that this should be read in conjunction with 34A-B: Marcovich, *Apologiae* 116n; Barnard, *Apologies* 169n357 & Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 235n2.

²⁷⁵ Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 235n3 point out that the passage from Num 21:6-9 referred to here does not actually mention a cross or an X.

²⁷⁶ *IA* 55.3.

²⁷⁷ *IA* 55.2.

²⁷⁸ *IA* 49.5: see also 31.5; 36.3 & 53.6. Justin acknowledges that 'a few' Jews accepted Jesus as the Christ (53.6).

²⁷⁹ The phrase is from *IA* 36.1.

‘This kind of thing [speaking through characters] is also to be seen amongst your own writers; there is one author of the whole and he sets out the speaking characters. Since they did not understand this, the Jews who have the books of the prophets did not recognize the Christ even when he came.’²⁸⁰

Plato and the Jews are criticised because, in different ways, they have misread the prophecies. Justin argues that his own interpretations should be accepted instead because they have an authority stemming from their *source*. He lays down a clear trail of authority for his interpretations going back to the Apostles who preached the gospel to the gentiles, and who received their understanding from Christ himself.²⁸¹

In *DT* the old man who reveals the prophecies to Justin says that they should be read with ‘proper faith’²⁸² and goes on: ‘Above all, beseech God to open to you the gates of light, for no one can perceive or understand these truths unless he has been enlightened by God and his Christ.’²⁸³ Thus it is faith in Christ that enables readers to interpret prophecies correctly.

There is no old man figure in *1A*. Justin says it was the Apostles who took Christ’s message to the gentiles,²⁸⁴ who preached Christianity and ‘handed over the prophecies.’²⁸⁵ He is no doubt referring here not just to the physical transfer of scrolls, but to transfer of the *understanding* of the prophecies, since for him text and interpretation are inseparable. The Apostles were taught directly by Jesus

²⁸⁰ *1A* 36.2-36.3. Speaking through characters is discussed further below.

²⁸¹ Skarsaune, *Proof from Prophecy* 11-13.

²⁸² *DT* 7.2.

²⁸³ *DT* 7.3.

²⁸⁴ *1A* 45.5 & 49.5.

²⁸⁵ *1A* 49.5.

and, as part of the teaching given to them after the resurrection, Christ revealed how the prophecies should be read:

‘...when he had risen from the dead and had appeared to them and had taught them to read the prophecies in which all these things were foretold as going to happen, and when they had seen him ascending into heaven and had believed and had received the power he had sent from there to them and had gone to every race of human beings, they taught these things and were called apostles.’²⁸⁶

Justin refers to Jesus Christ as ‘our teacher and interpreter of unintelligible prophecies...’²⁸⁷ Jesus is therefore not only the figure through whom the prophecies are fulfilled; he also provides the correct interpretations of them. The understanding and interpretation of the prophecies is part of Christ’s teaching to the Apostles, which the latter passed on to their gentile converts when they ‘handed over the prophecies.’ Indeed, the Apostles have an important role and a high status, since the prophecies foretold not just the events in the life of Christ but the missionary work of the Apostles too.²⁸⁸

There is a certain circularity to Justin’s argument. It began with claims for Christianity that depended on the person of Jesus Christ but this begged the question: why should the status and authority of Jesus be accepted? The answer was found in the Books of the Prophecies, but these ancient, enigmatic texts required interpretation to be properly understood. Justin’s understanding of the texts’ meaning came from the Apostles who derived their understanding from

²⁸⁶ *1A* 50.12.

²⁸⁷ *1A* 32.2.

²⁸⁸ J Behr, *The Formation of Christian Theology Volume 1: The Way to Nicaea* (St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, New York 2001) 98.

Jesus. So the claims made for the status and authority of Jesus, and therefore of Christianity, are shown not to be independent at all; they come from the teaching of Christ himself.²⁸⁹

Placing Christ's teaching on the interpretation of prophecies after the resurrection is an interesting move, because by that stage some prophecies have been fulfilled in the first coming of Jesus, while others still remain unfulfilled. This is not because they are false prophecies; Justin presents the unfulfilled prophecies as relating to the second coming of Christ which will occur in the future. An example of a prophecy he reads in this way is: 'And how he was going to come from heaven with glory, hear also the things said in this regard through Jeremiah the prophet. They are these: 'Behold one like the Son of Man comes upon the clouds of heaven, and his angels with him.'²⁹⁰

Justin describes how after the resurrection Christ explained the meaning of the prophecies *collectively* to the Apostles and he himself adopts a similar approach. Prophecies are interpreted one at a time, but it is only when they are brought together and read as a group that their full meaning emerges. A prophecy may, for instance, foretell the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, but it is only when it is linked to other prophecies foretelling other events in Jesus' life that its significance becomes clear. An individual prophecy is therefore not viewed in isolation; each can only properly be understood as part of a sequence foretelling a coherent narrative of events, and the meaning of each prophecy therefore depends on the meaning of them all. Justin's method is to extract individual prophecies from different books written by different authors at different times, to interpret each of them and then to amalgamate them together to create an account of events that has a coherent overall meaning. This then reflects back and enhances the

²⁸⁹ Behr, *Formation* 196 also refers to the circularity of Justin's Proof.

²⁹⁰ *1A* 51.8-51.9.

meaning of the individual prophecies, since each of them is seen to be a component of the larger sequence.

Matching individual prophecies with their fulfillments

The interpretation of prophetic texts requires the matching of individual prophecies with their fulfillments and the way Justin does this will now be examined. His basic method is to quote a prophecy verbatim and, either before or after, to specify how it should be interpreted, typically by identifying the event which the prophecy foretold. This can be a simple process. Micah's prophecy that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem and its fulfillment in the birth of Jesus are described quite straightforwardly, with just enough information to link prophecy and fulfillment:

‘And he [Micah] spoke thus: ‘And you Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for from you will come forth a leader who will shepherd my people.’ And this is a village in the country of the Jews which is thirty-five stadia from Jerusalem in which Jesus Christ was born...’²⁹¹

Similarly, prophecies foretelling specific elements of the crucifixion narrative, such as the nailing of the hands and feet of Jesus to the cross and the casting of lots for his clothing, are matched with their fulfillments:

‘And the phrase, ‘They pierced my hands and feet,’ was a description of the nails fixed to the cross in his hands and his feet.

²⁹¹ 1A 34.1-34.2.

And after crucifying him those who crucified him cast lots for his clothing and divided it among themselves.²⁹²

A prophecy may require a fuller explanation, however, such as Isa 2: 3-4:

‘For a law will go forth from Sion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, and it will judge between nations and will correct a great people, and they will beat their swords into ploughs and their spears into pruning-hooks and nation shall not take up sword against nation and they will no longer learn to make war.’²⁹³

This prophecy is fulfilled in the Apostles’ preaching of the gospel to the gentiles in words already quoted.²⁹⁴ Justin identifies three moves in the Isaiah text: i the going out from Jerusalem, ii the ‘correcting a great people’ and iii the vision of a state of peace, and he equates these steps with a sequence of events: i the Apostles’ going out from Jerusalem, ii their preaching of the gospel to the gentile world and iii the absence of conflict among Christian converts, who are now prepared to be martyred. Justin’s reading of the prophecy and its fulfilment may appear unexpected and may not be obvious from the wording of the text, but this example shows Justin understanding an ancient prophecy in terms of recent historical events.

Interpreting a prophecy can be much more complex, however. The relatively short passage, Gen 49:11: ‘Tethering his colt at the vine and washing his robe in the blood of the grape...’²⁹⁵ is not at all explicit. Justin’s first move is to identify the text as a prophecy foretelling the life and death of Jesus: ‘...a symbol making

²⁹² *1A* 35.7-35.8.

²⁹³ *1A* 39.1.

²⁹⁴ *1A* 39.2-39.3.

²⁹⁵ *1A* 32.5.

plain the things that would happen to Christ and would be done by him.²⁹⁶ He then splits the text into two, with each part interpreted separately and linked to different events in Christ's life. Of 'Tethering his colt at the vine...' Justin says: 'For an ass's colt, tethered to a vine, stood at the entrance to a village. This he [Jesus] then commanded his associates to bring to him, and when it had been brought he mounted it, and sitting on it he made his entry into Jerusalem...'²⁹⁷ The prophecy is related to a precise event in Christ's life, with the description expanded to provide a fuller picture linking the small event of tethering the colt to the larger and more significant one of Christ's entry into Jerusalem.

The second part of the text is interpreted as follows: 'For 'washing his robe in the blood of the grape' heralded beforehand the suffering he was going to endure cleansing through his blood those who believed in him.'²⁹⁸ This is enigmatic, and indeed, paradoxical. Why does the 'washing' herald the 'suffering'? Justin explains that the 'robe' represents: '...the human beings who believe in him, in whom dwells the seed from God, which is the Logos...'²⁹⁹ while the 'blood of the grape':

'...indicates that the one who was going to appear would indeed have blood, but not from human seed, but from divine power...For just as a human being has not made the blood of the vine, but God has, just so this blood was revealed as not going to come from human seed, but from the power of God...'³⁰⁰

²⁹⁶ *1A* 32.5.

²⁹⁷ *1A* 32.6.

²⁹⁸ *1A* 32.7.

²⁹⁹ *1A* 32.8.

³⁰⁰ *1A* 32.9 & 32.11.

Thus it is the suffering of Christ's passion which cleanses believers. Using symbolic readings of blood and grape, the text foretells, not a small detail in the narrative of Christ's life, as was the case with the first part of the prophecy, but the whole of Christ's passion and its significance.

As well as interpreting each part of the prophecy separately, the two are brought together. Thus after explaining the first part and before dealing with the second Justin, adds: 'And afterwards he was crucified, in order that the rest of the prophecy might be accomplished.'³⁰¹ This narrative link explains how the entry into Jerusalem connects with the subsequent passion of Christ, for after entering Jerusalem Jesus was crucified and this event resulted in salvation for Christian believers. The crucifixion -- not actually mentioned in the prophecy -- is, therefore, the link uniting the two parts of the prophecy.³⁰²

Most of the quotations in the *PfP* are relatively short³⁰³ and explained quite briefly. A longer instance is, however, the citation of the whole of Psalms 1 and 2.³⁰⁴ Before quoting the text Justin describes what the reader should expect to find there:

'...it is possible for you to learn how the prophetic Spirit encourages human beings to live; and how he signifies that there was a banding together against Christ of Herod, the king of the Jews and the Jews themselves, and Pilate who was your procurator among them, together with the soldiers; and that he would be

³⁰¹ *1A* 32.6.

³⁰² This text was extensively discussed by patristic authors: C G Bellido, 'Simbolismo del Vestido. Interpretación Patrística de Gen 49,11' *EstEcl* 59 230 (1984) 313-357.

³⁰³ A clear contrast with *DT* where many of the quotations are much longer.

³⁰⁴ *1A* 40.5-40.19. Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 189n1 note that the two psalms are often treated as one: see also S Gillingham, *A Journey of Two Psalms: the Reception of Psalms 1 and 2 in Jewish and Christian Tradition* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2013).

believed in by human beings from every race; and that God calls him Son and has promised to make all his enemies subject to him; and how the demons, as far as they are able, attempt to escape from the authority of the Lord God and Father of all and that of his Christ; and that God calls everyone to repentance before the coming of the day of judgment.³⁰⁵

No fewer than six different messages are identified here, and Justin's method is to link each of them with a portion of the psalmic text. First, the statement that the Prophetic Spirit encourages human beings to live is matched with the descriptions of the blessed and the ungodly:

‘Blessed is the man who did not walk in the counsel of the ungodly and did not stand in the path of sinners...but his will is in the law of the Lord and on his law he will meditate day and night...and all that he does shall prosper. Not so are the ungodly, not so, but they are like dust which the wind blows from the face of the earth...and the way of the ungodly will perish...’³⁰⁶

Next, the prophecy foretelling the conspiracy against Jesus involving Herod, the Jews, Pilate and the soldiers is matched with the description of kings and the rulers banding together: ‘The kings of the earth were at hand and the rulers gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ...’³⁰⁷ The following statement foretells that Jesus would be believed in by people of all races, although there is nothing in the text of Psalms 1 and 2 which obviously matches this. The statement prophesying that God calls Jesus his Son and promises to make his enemies subject to him is matched with the pronouncements attributed to God

³⁰⁵ *1A* 40.5–40.7.

³⁰⁶ *1A* 40.8–40.10.

³⁰⁷ *1A* 40.11.

the Father: 'You are my Son. Today I have begotten you. Ask of me and I will give you nations as your inheritance and the ends of the earth as your possession...' ³⁰⁸ Next, the statement which describes how the demons attempt to escape from the authority of God and Christ is matched to the saying attributed to kings and rulers: 'Let us burst their bonds and throw off their yoke from us.' ³⁰⁹ Finally, the statement that God calls all to repent before the last judgment is matched to the exhortations addressed to the kings: 'And now O kings, understand, be instructed all judges of the earth. Serve the Lord in fear and exalt in him with trembling. Seize instruction, lest the Lord become angry, and you perish from the right way, when his anger suddenly blazes.' ³¹⁰

Justin's general strategy is clear; he breaks down the text of Psalms 1 and 2 and matches each component with one of a number of disparate messages. No attempt is made to attribute an overall meaning to the text; it is split into small sections whose separate meanings are then explained. This example shows Justin presenting a prophetic text as particularly complex, one that contains a series of none too obvious messages on distinct themes. Explanations may precede texts, as here, or they may follow them but, either way, the quotation and the explanation are inseparable and both are necessary to Justin's argument. Texts do not simply stand by themselves; they need to be interpreted, because their meanings are not straightforward. Thus interpretation is critical to the reading of texts and Justin's audience can only understand the Books of the Prophecies when he explains them.

Justin's approach to textual interpretation fits best with short passages and it is noteworthy that, faced with a longer text, his response is to break it down into small sections and interpret each separately. He, therefore, does not provide a

³⁰⁸ *1A* 40.14-15.

³⁰⁹ *1A* 40.11.

³¹⁰ *1A* 40.16-18.

reading of any of the individual Books of the Prophecies as a whole. The body of texts from which Justin quotes is a quarry from which he extracts nuggets that he then explains piece by piece. Whether this is because he is accessing *testimonia* in which the texts are presented as discrete individual prophecies, or simply because this is the interpretative approach which he prefers, is difficult to know for sure, but his treatment of Psalms 1 and 2 suggests that the latter is very likely.

Justin's interpretation of texts and the Graeco-Roman literary tradition

Interpreting the scriptures correctly is thus critical for Justin. His use of short quotations from authoritative texts to support an argument has parallels in the approach sometimes taken in works in the Greek tradition; in his treatise on *The Study of Poetry*, for instance, Plutarch advances his argument by drawing on brief extracts from literary classics.³¹¹ In a number of more specific respects, however, Justin's interpretation of prophecy reflects the Graeco-Roman literary environment with which he and his audience were familiar. There are three particular senses in which this is the case: first, in the way Justin's applies rationality to his reading of prophecies,³¹² second, in the way that prophecies are sometimes concerned with issues other than foretelling the future and third, in the application of symbolic readings to the interpretation of difficult texts.

An emphasis on rationality has already been noted in Justin's discussion of proof. It is also found in his analysis of the phenomenon of prophecy in the section of the *PIP* that Minns and Parvis describe as a 'Treatise on different kinds of prophecy.'³¹³ Justin says here that prophecies uttered as if by someone other than the prophet can be spoken by one of three characters he identifies: God the Father, Christ or the people answering God:

³¹¹ Plutarch, *Quomodo adolescens LCL*.

³¹² Plutarch argued that prophecies were basically rational, even though their mode of presentation involved ambiguity, and interpretation was required to discern their meanings: Plutarch, *De E Apud Delphos LCL* 386E.

³¹³ *IA* 36-44: Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 52.

‘For at one time as heralding beforehand it [the divine Logos] says the things that are going to happen, at another time it speaks out as from the character of the Lord of all and Father God, and at another time as from the character of Christ, and at another time as from the character of the peoples answering the Lord or his Father.’³¹⁴

Justin himself highlights connections between this and the Graeco-Roman literary tradition when he says: ‘This kind of thing is also to be seen amongst your own writers...’,³¹⁵ a reference perhaps to the practices of Greek drama, as suggested by Osborn,³¹⁶ or to the form of the philosophical dialogue popularized by Plato with its multiple characters. Moreover, the division of prophecy into different types reflects the fondness for classification frequently found in the Greek literary tradition, for example in analysis of literary styles³¹⁷ or types of oratory.³¹⁸

Justin provides examples of the different characters. He describes sayings as from the character of God the Father such as: ‘What sort of house will you build for me?’ says the Lord. The heaven is my throne and the earth the footstool of my feet,³¹⁹ sayings from the character of Christ, such as: ‘I stretched out my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people, to those walking in a way that is not good’³²⁰ and prophecies from the character of the people answering God, one of

³¹⁴ 1A 36.2.

³¹⁵ 1A 36.2.

³¹⁶ Osborn, *Justin Martyr* 89.

³¹⁷ E.g. the four styles in Demetrius, *On Style* 36 trans D C Innes in Russell & Winterbottom eds, *Ancient Literary Criticism* 181.

³¹⁸ E.g. Quintilian, *Institutio Oratorica* 12.10 trans M Winterbottom in Russell & Winterbottom eds, *Ancient Literary Criticism* 404–417.

³¹⁹ 1A 37.3–37.4.

³²⁰ 1A 38.1. Such prophecies provide opportunities for Justin to show the pre-existent Christ present and active in prophetic texts.

which, foretelling the plundering of the land of the Jews, concludes: ‘And with all these things, O Lord, you were content, and you were silent, and you humbled us exceedingly.’³²¹

Emphasis on rationality in the interpretation of prophecy is also evident in the discussion of fate already referred to in which Justin seeks to refute the idea that ‘...the things which happen happen through the necessity of fate.’³²² A similar interest is found when he explains paradoxical elements in prophetic texts and shows how they can be read rationally. Thus while in straightforward cases prophecies uttered centuries ago have been fulfilled in events which have now occurred, such as the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem³²³ or the healing of the sick and raising of the dead by Jesus,³²⁴ other ancient prophecies describe as *past* events occurrences which will take place in the *future*, which at first sight appears nonsensical. Justin seeks to explain the paradox, making his general point as follows: ‘he [the prophet David] foretells as having already happened things which are assuredly known as going to happen’³²⁵ and providing as an example a prophecy attributed to David, which concludes by referring to the crucifixion in the past tense: ‘let them rejoice among the nations: the Lord has reigned from the tree.’³²⁶

Rationally explaining the paradoxical is also found when a prophecy appears to change over time; what appears to be incredible or impossible when first uttered appears coherent when the fulfilling event occurs and is then shown to be explicable and true. Thus referring to the virgin birth, Justin says:

³²¹ *1A* 47.3.

³²² *1A* 43.1.

³²³ *1A* 34.1–34.2.

³²⁴ *1A* 48.1–48.2.

³²⁵ *1A* 42.2.

³²⁶ *1A* 41.4. Minns & Parvis, *Apologies* 189n2 note Skarsaune’s argument that the text is actually a composite of Ps 96 and 1Chron 16.

‘For God disclosed beforehand through the Prophetic Spirit that things were going to happen which were thought by people to be incredible and impossible, so that when they did happen they should not be disbelieved but should rather be believed because they had been foretold.’³²⁷

Prophecy in the *PfP* is not, however, confined to foretelling the future. Barton’s study of what constituted prophecy in Jewish and early Christian thought in the period from the 3C BCE to the mid 2C CE is helpful for understanding this. He identified four modes for reading prophecy: giving ethical instruction, providing foreknowledge of the present day, prognostication of future events, and revelation of mystical or theological truth.³²⁸ Thus prophecy covers a broad spectrum and in practice is seen rather loosely to include anything uttered by someone identified as a prophet; as Barton puts it: ‘Once a book is classified as a ‘Prophet’, then anything it contains can easily come to be thought characteristic of ‘prophecy.’’³²⁹ The second and third of Barton’s modes of reading concern foretelling the future and Justin’s use of these has already been discussed. The first and fourth, ethical instruction and revelation of mystical or theological truth, are, however, also in evidence in *1A*.

Thus prophecies are used by Justin to provide ethical instruction. This is not surprising, since issues of morality were of live concern in the debates of the Greek philosophical schools in the early Empire,³³⁰ although Justin’s prophetic

³²⁷ *1A* 33.2.

³²⁸ J Barton, *Oracles of God: Perceptions of Ancient Prophecy in Israel after the Exile* (Darton, Longman & Todd, London 1986) 154–265.

³²⁹ Barton, *Oracles of God* 7.

³³⁰ M Trapp, *Philosophy in the Roman Empire: Ethics, Politics and Society* (Ashgate, Aldershot 2007) 1–62 & J Dillon, *The Middle Platonists: a Study of Platonism 80 BC to AD 220* (Duckworth, London 1977).

mode of expression is very different from that of the Greek philosophical tradition. In the preamble to the text of Psalms 1 and 2, already discussed, Justin's comment explicitly shows that for him prophecies have a moral dimension; he says that the text is one: '...from which it is possible for you to learn how the Prophetic Spirit encourages human beings to live...' ³³¹ Later a saying of Moses is described as dealing with the choice of good over evil, ³³² and a saying of Isaiah as containing an exhortation to behave rightly: 'Wash! Make yourselves clean! Take away iniquities from your souls. Learn to do good. Judge for the orphan, and give judgment for the widow...' ³³³ Another text from Isaiah, which rejects the cult of animal sacrifice and advocates right moral behaviour, reads: 'Even if you offer fine flour, incense, it is abomination to me. I do not want the fat of lambs and the blood of bulls. For who demanded this of your hands? But undo every bond of wickedness; break the knots of violent dealings, cover the homeless and the naked and share your bread with the hungry.' ³³⁴

Using prophecies to reveal, in Barton's phrase, mystical or theological truth is also evident in *1A*. In the first instance, ancient prophecies can be significant because they comment in a deep sense on the *meaning* of divinely-ordained events and explain their *significance* to an audience from outside Judaism and Christianity. While some prophecies concerning the death of Jesus forecast detailed points in the passion narrative, such as Christ being nailed to the cross or the casting of lots for his clothing, ³³⁵ others explain its overall soteriological significance. ³³⁶ The

³³¹ *1A* 40.5.

³³² *1A* 44.1. This is preceded by: 'And the holy Prophetic Spirit taught us these things through Moses...'

³³³ *1A* 44.3.

³³⁴ *1A* 37.7-37.8. This is followed by the comment: 'So you are able to know of what kinds are the things that are being taught through the prophets as though from God' (37.9).

³³⁵ *1A* 35.5.

³³⁶ E.g. *1A* 50.2; 50.8-50.10 & 51.5.

audience knows that Jesus was crucified, but Justin invokes a text from Isaiah to explain the meaning of his death, part of which reads:

‘This one bears our sins and suffers for us, and we reckoned him to be in suffering and in calamity and in distress. But he was wounded on account of our crimes and he was made weak on account of our sins. The discipline of peace is upon him, by his bruises we were healed. We were all led away like sheep, a human being was led astray in his way, and he gave him for our sins.’³³⁷

A second instance of the use of prophecy to reveal mystical or theological truth is found in Justin’s discussion of primal creation, a subject much debated in the Graeco-Roman philosophical tradition.³³⁸ Thus, Justin describes how the prophet Moses gives an account of events in the distant past beginning with the creation of the world and prefaces a quotation from Genesis 1 with the words: ‘...listen to what was said in so many words by Moses ...through whom the prophetic Spirit revealed how God created the world in the beginning and out of what.’³³⁹ It is only because Moses is a prophet who has a direct connection to the Prophetic Spirit that he possesses such knowledge and is able to prophecy in this way.

Finally, in this review of links between Justin’s approach to the interpretation of prophecies and the Graeco-Roman literary context, mention should be made of symbolic readings.³⁴⁰ These had become established as one of the tools for interpreting literary texts in the Graeco-Roman tradition, by the Stoics in particular, and they were especially important for reading passages in Homer

³³⁷ *1A* 50.8-50.10.

³³⁸ For Graeco-Roman interest in creation: D Sedley, *Creationism and its Critics in Antiquity* (University of California Press, Berkeley 2007).

³³⁹ *1A* 59.1.

³⁴⁰ The term symbolism is preferred to allegory here on the grounds that allegorical interpretations requires a narrative dimension: Dawson, *Allegorical Readers* 3-4.

regarded as problematic.³⁴¹ In the Greek tradition of literary criticism the symbolic reading of a text, which was hidden, was always intended by the author,³⁴² and this is the approach Justin takes in the *PfP*; prophecies ultimately came from God who had determined their meanings, whether these were immediately apparent or were initially concealed and had to be subsequently revealed. In *1A* symbolic readings have already been encountered in the discussion of blood and grape in Gen 49:11; a further example is Justin's reading of Isa 1:16–20: 'And if you will it and if you heed me, you shall eat the good things of the earth, but if you do not heed me, a sword will devour you: for the mouth of the Lord spoke these things.'³⁴³ This text is paradoxical since a sword cannot literally devour, so a non-literal interpretation is needed to explain it. Justin rejects the obvious reading that 'devour' is a figurative way of saying 'slain' and contends that it is the 'sword,' not the 'devour,' which should be treated symbolically; thus he describes how the sword represents the fire which consumes evildoers: 'But the aforesaid phrase, 'a sword will devour you', does not say that those who do not listen will be slain by the sword, but the sword of God is fire, of which those who choose to do evil things become food.'³⁴⁴

The Proof from Prophecy as dependent literature

Justin has shown how the Jewish scriptures support the *PfP* and explained how the ancient texts should be read, often using methods of interpretation that will resonate with a Graeco-Roman audience. In the process he has created within *1A* his own literary work, which is more than a collection of quotations from the

³⁴¹ F Buffière, *Les mythes d'Homère et la pensée grecque* (University of Paris, Paris 1956); G W Most, 'Hellenistic Allegory and Early Imperial Rhetoric' in R Copeland & P T Struck eds, *The Cambridge Companion to Allegory* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2010) 26–38. See also Heraclitus, *Homeric Problems* ed & trans D A Russell & D Konstan (SBL, Atlanta 2005) discussed further below.

³⁴² Russell, *Criticism in Antiquity* 97.

³⁴³ *1A* 44.4.

³⁴⁴ *1A* 44.5. For Christian inheritance of the Graeco-Roman practice of reading difficult texts symbolically (and allegorically): E Hatch, *The Influence of Greek ideas on Christianity* (Harper & Row, New York 1957) 50–85.

writings of others; it is a text in its own right, with interpretations of quoted texts underpinning his own arguments. Justin's work will now be examined against the background of contemporary literary practice. It will be shown that it does not follow closely any single form of literature current at the time, but that it is possible to identify similarities with a number of the types of writing then prevalent in literary culture.

In Chapter 1 it was noted that there was increased interest in the late Hellenistic period in the original founders of Greek philosophical schools and that renewed attention was given to studying the actual works of these revered ancient authors. One consequence was the production of dependent literature related to those ancient works: that is, literature that depends for its existence on the text or texts to which it relates. The *PfP* can be described as a dependent text since it depends on the prophecies it cites and interprets, and its arguments could not stand on their own without those prophetic texts. Dependent literature could take several forms at the time -- handbooks, commentaries and treatises -- and Justin's work has characteristics in common with each of these.

A handbook summarises the ideas attaching to a philosophical position. It may simplify, or attempt to systematize, ideas to make them more comprehensible, but its intention is essentially to enable its audience, typically in an educational context, to understand the doctrines concerned. A surviving example, broadly

contemporary with Justin, is the *Handbook of Platonism* by Alcinous,³⁴⁵ which summarises Platonic philosophy, quite briefly but systematically, under a series of standard headings: logic, physics and ethics. Like Justin's *PP* it seeks to explain to its audience the ideas of an ancient and revered tradition, but the similarity largely ends there. The *Handbook* does not quote extensively from Plato's original works -- although some short extracts are included³⁴⁶ -- but rather summarises Platonic arguments. It is thus some distance from Plato's actual words,³⁴⁷ by contrast with Justin's work which makes extensive use of verbatim quotations from the Books of the Prophecies. The *Handbook* expounds ideas, but unlike Justin the author does not use quotations from Plato as a basis for mounting his own arguments.

A commentary supports the work to which it relates and will typically progress through the original text, quoting from it and clarifying what it means.

Hellenistic philosophy spawned many commentaries, especially on the works of Plato and Aristotle;³⁴⁸ indeed, the commentary form underwent a revival from the

³⁴⁵ Editions of the text with, respectively, German and French translations: O F Summerell and T Zimmer eds, *Alkinoos, Didaskalikos Lehrbuch der Grundsätze Platons: Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung und Anmerkungen* (De Gruyter, Berlin 2007) & Alcinous, *Enseignement des doctrines de Platon, Introduction, texte établi et commenté* by J Whittaker, trans P Louis (Les Belles Lettres, Paris 1990). An English translation is Alcinous, *The Handbook of Platonism* trans with Introduction & Commentary by J Dillon (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1993). Authorship of the text is uncertain: attribution to Albinus, a 2C CE Middle Platonist, which used to be current among scholars (following Freudenthal), is now largely rejected. The work is still thought to date from the 2C CE (Whittaker in his edition places it at around 150 CE), although this remains uncertain.

³⁴⁶ E.g. Alcinous, *Handbook of Platonism* Chapter 28 includes brief quotations from the *Theaetetus*, the *Republic*, the *Phaedo*, the *Laws* and the *Phaedrus*.

³⁴⁷ Dillon in his Introduction suggests that Alcinous is actually seeking 'to avoid direct quotation' [original italics] Alcinous, *Handbook of Platonism* xxx.

³⁴⁸ M Tuominen, *The Ancient Commentators on Plato and Aristotle* (Acumen, Stocksfield 2009). Platonic texts are discussed in Dillon, *Middle Platonists*. Stoic and Epicurean texts did not attract commentaries in the same way: H G Snyder, *Teachers and texts* 14-121.

late 1C BCE.³⁴⁹ Few examples survive from before Late Antiquity,³⁵⁰ however; one which does is the *Anonymous Commentary (AC)* on Plato's *In Theaetetus*,³⁵¹ thought to date from the late 1C CE.³⁵² There are similarities between the *PfP* and *AC*, although it would be misleading to press the parallels too far; the *PfP* is not simply a commentary on the Books of the Prophecies. The structure of *AC* consists typically of a lemma from Plato's text -- sometimes quite long -- followed by paraphrase and then exegesis, although the transition from paraphrase to exegesis may not be clearly marked.³⁵³ Exegesis can cover a number of issues: first, clarifying obscure points, particularly linguistic ones, second, highlighting points which support the commentator's interpretation of the text or refute the interpretations of others, third, pointing up a difficulty in understanding Plato's text and offering a solution, fourth, introducing qualifications and finally, doxographic material.³⁵⁴ Critical views of the quality of *AC* vary considerably. Dillon's verdict is that it '...in general maintains a level of stupefying banality';³⁵⁵ its modern editors, Bastianini and Sedley, while recognising an uneven quality, nevertheless comment that '...al suo meglio può essere straordinariamente sottile.'³⁵⁶

Like the author of *AC*, Justin pays close attention to the precise wording of the ancient text, although without considering the sort of detailed linguistic points which sometimes preoccupy *AC*. He shares *AC*'s view that ancient texts require

³⁴⁹ D Sedley, 'Plato's *Auctoritas* and the rebirth of the commentary tradition' in J Barnes & M Griffin eds, *Philosophia Togata II: Plato and Aristotle at Rome* (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1997) 110-129.

³⁵⁰ Tuominen, *Ancient commentators* 18-27.

³⁵¹ *In Theaetetus* eds G Bastianini & D Sedley in F Adorno et al eds, *Corpus dei Papiri Filosofici Greci e Latini (CPF): Testi e Lessico nei Papiri di Cultura Greci e Latina, Parte III: Comentari* (Olschki, Florence 1995) 227-562. For the provenance of the text: 235-236.

³⁵² *AC* 254-256.

³⁵³ *AC* 257.

³⁵⁴ *AC* 257-259.

³⁵⁵ Dillon, *Middle Platonists* 270.

³⁵⁶ *AC* 260.

interpretation to be properly understood, that text and interpretation go together, and that although different readings may be canvassed, one is to be preferred. The *PfP* differs significantly from *AC*, however, in that the latter is concerned almost exclusively with clarifying the text and expounding its meaning. The *Theaetetus* is not used in *AC* as a basis for mounting an argument separate from Plato's text, as Justin seeks to do in the *PfP*.

It was also possible for a commentary to have its own theme. Such a text could exhibit similarities with the *PfP*, although these are likely to be outweighed by the differences. An example is the *Allegoriae Homericae* (*AH*) of Heraclitus,³⁵⁷ dated (speculatively) to the end of the 1C or the beginning of the 2C CE;³⁵⁸ this work has the definite apologetic objective of showing how apparent difficulties in Homer's text can be satisfactorily explained, their meaning properly understood and the reputation of the texts thereby preserved. Rather than progressing through the text and commenting on points requiring interpretation, however, *AH* adopts a different methodology better suited to its aims. First, passages are selected for comment, on the grounds that they are problematic because Homer appears to be speaking of the gods in an impious or blasphemous way and second, a single method of interpretation, the allegorical, is used to show how they can be satisfactorily explained.³⁵⁹ Making selective use of extracts from chosen texts and interpreting them in ways which support its own argument gives *AH* affinities with Justin, but in another sense its approach is the reverse of his. For while Justin starts with the case he wants to make and then draws on ancient texts for support, *AH* starts with ancient texts and makes an argument that is essentially one of justification: that apparent problems in the texts can be resolved by finding the right way of reading them. *AH* is therefore unlike the *PfP* in that it does not

³⁵⁷ Heraclitus, *Homeric Problems*.

³⁵⁸ *AH* xi-xiii.

³⁵⁹ Buffière distinguishes three types of allegorical exegesis in the text, physical, moral and historical: Héraclite, *Allégories d'Homère* ed & trans F Buffière (Les Belles Lettres, Paris 1962) xxi-xxvi.

advance an argument of its own separate from the arguments in the texts being discussed.

The final form to consider is the philosophical treatise, although again similarities with the *PfP* tend to be outweighed by differences. Typically a treatise addresses an issue or an area of philosophy, presenting an argument which is the author's own; when, however, it draws heavily on an earlier philosophical source -- commonly a work by the founder of a philosophical school -- then it can be described as a dependent text. Survival of such texts from before Late Antiquity is rare, but one example, *De Fato* by Alexander of Aphrodisias, dates from about half a century after Justin.³⁶⁰ In simple terms, Alexander's account of Fate argues for a non-deterministic Aristotelian view and against the determinism characteristic of Stoicism. Chapters 2 to 6 explain Aristotle's position; Chapters 7 to 38 then refute the Stoic position. Alexander draws heavily on Aristotle, although he uses his own words rather than quotations, and since there is no Aristotelian text dealing specifically with Fate, evidence is drawn from a number of Aristotle's works.³⁶¹ At the outset and again in the conclusion, Alexander describes his *De Fato* as an account of the opinions of Aristotle on the subject, showing that he considers he is expounding the ideas of one thinker.³⁶²

Justin's work has some affinities with such a treatise, since he is making an argument on a theme of his choice and drawing heavily on earlier authors.

³⁶⁰ It is dedicated to the Emperors Septimius Severus and Caracalla: Sharples, *Alexander on Fate* Introduction 15. The Introduction (3-32) provides useful background and discussion of the issues dealt with in the text. References to the text are to page and line numbers in Sharples' edition.

³⁶¹ Sharples, *Alexander on Fate* Introduction 23 describes the text as 'an attempt to formulate, on the basis of Aristotle's writings, an opinion on a question which he had not himself considered.' According to a recent modern commentator, Frede, *Free Will* 19-30, Aristotle did not actually have a doctrine of free will.

³⁶² Alexander says that his book 'contains the opinion concerning fate and responsibility held by Aristotle, of whose philosophical teaching I am the principal exponent': Sharples, *Alexander on Fate*, 41 15-17.

Moreover, he expounds and explains the thought of those ancient writers whose works he believes reveal divine truths. He builds his argument out of quotations from the prophetic texts, however, which Alexander does not, although he clearly has access to Aristotle's works. The interplay between text and interpretation and the integration of quotations into argument that are hallmarks of Justin's method, and which lead him into close discussion of particular words and phrases, is completely absent from Alexander's treatise.³⁶³

A closer fit can be found between Justin's work and the treatises of Galen.³⁶⁴ The latter was Justin's younger contemporary who originated from Asia Minor and came to Rome towards the end of Justin's life.³⁶⁵ He became a celebrated author of treatises in both medicine and philosophy,³⁶⁶ which he regarded as closely-related fields.³⁶⁷ There is no suggestion that Galen and Justin knew each other or directly influenced each other's work. Like Justin, Galen engaged in debates in which he advanced his own views and attacked the positions of others;³⁶⁸ he also drew heavily on the work of ancient thinkers, the title of one of his own works, *On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato*,³⁶⁹ identifying his two strongest influences. An examination of Galen's *On the Elements according to*

³⁶³ Alexander also wrote commentaries on Aristotle's works, such as the *Prior Analytics* and the *Metaphysics*, which adhere closely to the text, so he was familiar with that literary form: *BNP* article on Alexander of Aphrodisias by R Sharples.

³⁶⁴ The starting point for this section is the recent article by Snyder (already cited) comparing the methods of Justin and Galen: Snyder, 'Classroom in the Text.'

³⁶⁵ Galen was born in Pergamum in 129 CE and lived probably into the 3C. He first came to Rome in the early 160s: Hankinson, 'The man and his work.'

³⁶⁶ Hankinson, 'The man and his work.'

³⁶⁷ One of his works was entitled *The Best Doctor is also a Philosopher*. G E R Lloyd, 'Galen and his Contemporaries' in Hankinson, *Cambridge Companion to Galen* 34-48, 42-43.

³⁶⁸ Notably in his discussion of the different medical sects known as Dogmatists, Empiricists and Methodists: Lloyd, 'Galen and his Contemporaries' 41-42.

³⁶⁹ Galen, *On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato* ed & trans P de Lacy 3 parts (Akademie-Verlag, Berlin 1978-1984).

Hippocrates,³⁷⁰ will reveal parallels with the work of Justin in a number of respects: in the use of quotations from authoritative texts and in concern for their correct interpretation, in the location of authority in antiquity and in the significance of proof. Significant differences between the two writers are, however, also apparent.

On the Elements argues for the existence of four elements, earth, air, fire and water (and also four qualities and four humours) and puts forward doctrines which originated with Hippocrates.³⁷¹ Galen makes his own arguments but draws support from Hippocrates, with some thirty quotations from the latter's *De Natura Hominis*³⁷² being identified by the modern editor of *On the Elements* in what is a relatively short Greek text.³⁷³ The passages from Hippocrates are short and are woven into Galen's arguments.

As was the case with Justin's prophecies, it is not sufficient for Galen simply to quote from Hippocrates, since the texts cited do not speak for themselves. He needs to interpret what Hippocrates says so that his words will be understood correctly. *On the Elements* is polemical and much of it is devoted to refuting the ideas of thinkers with whom Galen disagrees.³⁷⁴ One significant area of disagreement concerns the way in which Hippocrates should be interpreted, with

³⁷⁰ Galen, *On the Elements according to Hippocrates* ed & trans P de Lacy (Akademie-Verlag, Berlin 1996).

³⁷¹ The author regards the addition of the phrase 'according to Hippocrates' to the title as important: Galen, *Elements* 9.30.

³⁷² Galen, *Elements* Introduction 50.

³⁷³ In de Lacy's edition the Greek text covers just over fifty pages, with each page typically between half and two-thirds occupied by text.

³⁷⁴ Galen, *Elements* Introduction 45 lists the thinkers with whom Galen takes issue; in Chapters 6-9, for instance, which discusses the four qualities, Galen's main protagonist was Athenaeus, who held that the four qualities were in fact elements.

Galen criticizing his opponents for incorrectly understanding Hippocrates.³⁷⁵ In Chapter 3, for instance, he contends, at a very detailed level, that the term ENEON should not be read as one word with a smooth breathing (meaning ‘being in’) ‘as most followers of Hippocrates have done’, but as two words EN EON with a rough breathing (meaning ‘being one’).³⁷⁶ In Chapter 7 he attacks the position of ‘...those who do not understand Hippocrates correctly...’³⁷⁷ and in Chapter 8, arguing that Hippocrates uses the terms hot, cold, wet and dry to refer to elements and not to qualities, says that: ‘...the majority of those who call themselves Hippocrateans overlook this, and in addition they think that by wet, dry, hot, and cold he refers to something else, not to the common elements of all things.’³⁷⁸

Questions must arise as to why Galen cites Hippocrates and the nature of the authority he considers Hippocrates to have. There are no equivalents of the Septuagint Legend or of Justin’s Prophetic Spirit to explain the special status of *De Natura Hominis* or its author. Indeed, very little is said about Hippocrates at all; Galen refers to him without explanation, no doubt because he expects his audience to know who he was. In two respects, however, Galen’s references to Hippocrates suggest something about his perception of his authority, both of which betray affinities with Justin.

The first is that Galen refers to Hippocrates’ antiquity, and more specifically to the fact that he was the *first* to advance the doctrine of the four elements. In Chapter

³⁷⁵ Some modern scholars criticize Galen for his misrepresentation of Hippocrates’ ideas, e.g. G E R Lloyd, ‘Scholarship, Authority and Argument in Galen’s *Quod Animi Mores*’ in P Manuli and M Vegetti eds, *Le opera psicologiche di Galeno* (Bibliopolis, Naples 1988) 11–42, 30–31.

³⁷⁶ Galen, *Elements* 3.50.

³⁷⁷ Galen, *Elements* 7.12; again, at 5.14 he says: ‘It appears, then, that Aristotle and Hippocrates have ordered their arguments in the same way but that the commentators do not understand them.’

³⁷⁸ Galen, *Elements* 8.8.

5 of *On the Elements* Galen says that not only did Hippocrates 'lead the way by affirming in his book 'On the Nature of Man' that they [earth, fire, air and water] are the elements of all things in the cosmos, but he was also the first to define the qualities that they [the elements] have by virtue of which they can mutually act and be acted upon.'³⁷⁹ In Chapter 9 he refers to '...Hippocrates as one who employed the *ancient* brevity of expression...' [italics added]³⁸⁰ and a little later speaks of him as: '...the very first to have discovered the elements of the nature of existing things and the first to have given an adequate proof.'³⁸¹ Being ancient and being the first are important attributes.

The second point which is striking in Galen's references to Hippocrates is that he uses the term proof, as has already been seen in the last quotation. In Chapter 2, having quoted Hippocrates, Galen comments that: 'He seems to me to give most excellently and at the same time in the fewest possible words the essential point of his proof that the element cannot be one in form and power'³⁸² and in Chapter 3 he says that: 'The speed with which the men of former times expressed their thoughts is admirable. Hippocrates in the fewest possible words indicated all these things and provided a valid proof [using ἀπόδειξις] that the element is not one.'³⁸³ That Galen attached importance to logical proof generally has already been noted, so it not surprising that for him it is one of the significant features of the arguments in Hippocrates' *De Natura Hominis*.³⁸⁴

As well as these similarities, however, comparison between Justin and Galen also reveals some significant differences of approach. There is no sense in Galen that

³⁷⁹ Galen, *Elements* 5.32.

³⁸⁰ Galen, *Elements* 9.11.

³⁸¹ Galen, *Elements* 9.25.

³⁸² Galen, *Elements* 2.4.

³⁸³ Galen, *Elements* 3.30.

³⁸⁴ A comparison between Galen and Justin's uses of the term 'proof' would be valuable, but cannot be pursued here.

the authoritative texts are prophetic, or that they are enigmatic or ambiguous, even though he contends that other commentators have misinterpreted them. Galen draws on a text which is clearly part of the received literary heritage,³⁸⁵ but for him its value is primarily that Hippocrates advances arguments which are *correct* and that he can demonstrate their accuracy and logicity.³⁸⁶ For Justin the prophecies were authoritative because they were the accurate words of ancient prophets inspired by the Prophetic Spirit. Logical proof was not a quality Justin found in the authoritative texts themselves; it was, however, a quality he prized and that he considered he himself had brought to bear in the way that he explained the prophecies, and particularly in the way he had shown the ancient prophecies to have been fulfilled. Galen writes as a philosopher seeking out correct arguments through the use of logical reasoning and finds that very often the arguments of Hippocrates are persuasive.³⁸⁷ Justin's writings, by contrast, ultimately depend on divine revelation, firstly through the prophecies revealed by the Prophetic Spirit and subsequently through demonstration that those prophecies have now been fulfilled through God's revelation in Jesus Christ.

Justin's text therefore does not fit very closely with any of the models of dependent literature current in the early Imperial period, although it has some features in common with each of those examined here. It has greater affinity with Galen's treatise, *On the Elements*, than with any of the others, since both Galen and Justin keep closely to the words of their authoritative texts, quote them frequently and exactly, and use them as a basis for their own arguments. Perhaps the most critical difference between the *PIP* and the other types of dependent literature is that all the others deal with texts which were already established classics of revered authors. The audience would either have had prior

³⁸⁵ For the high regard in which Hippocrates was held: O Temkin, *Hippocrates in a World of Pagans and Christians* (Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 1991) 49-75.

³⁸⁶ Snyder, 'Classroom in the Text' 678-680.

³⁸⁷ Snyder, 'Classroom in the Text' 680.

acquaintance with the texts, or at least would have known them by reputation and recognized their authority. Justin by contrast quotes from and interprets texts with which his audience will be unfamiliar, and with which he knows they will be unfamiliar. So he has the significant additional tasks of acquainting his audience with the texts and of demonstrating why they should regard them as authoritative.

Conclusion

Justin shows that it is possible to use the Jewish scriptures as evidence in apologetic arguments directed towards a non-Jewish Graeco-Roman audience. He does so even though the texts are unfamiliar to the audience and he has to explain their provenance, the basis of their authority and how they should be interpreted. The requirements of his argument lead Justin to select particular texts and to interpret them in particular ways, and his presentation of the Jewish scriptures as essentially prophetic in nature links his argument to strains of prophetic thought already familiar to a Graeco-Roman audience from their own traditions.

Perhaps Justin could have based his argument for the status of Jesus on recent works of Christian literature rather than ancient prophetic texts. In *1A* 15–17 he draws on teachings of Jesus which modern scholars recognize as from the Synoptic tradition, but does not describe them as derived from textual sources. The same applies when a reference is made -- recognizably from the Synoptic tradition -- to the birth of Jesus as the fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah 7:14; the textual source is not specified.³⁸⁸ In *1A* authoritative texts are ancient and are inspired by the Prophetic Spirit; recent Christian writings lack those characteristics.

³⁸⁸ *1A* 33.5: references to Luke 1:31–32 & Matthew 1:20–21.

Justin positions himself partly within and partly outside the prevailing culture of his time. He employs a number of literary strategies that the Graeco-Roman tradition applied to ancient texts of high status and his own work betrays similarities to some of the forms of writing prevalent at the time. There are, however, limits to his use of these strategies since they are adapted to meet his apologetic interest in advancing his case for Christianity. Although asked to accept the texts he is promoting as authoritative, Justin's audience is not invited to treat them as part of the Graeco-Roman literary tradition; Justin always maintains clear water between the Books of the Prophecies and the mainstream Graeco-Roman literary corpus. Moreover, he does not compromise on his presentation of these sacred texts of Christianity in order that they should be seen as compatible with the traditions of Graeco-Roman culture; indeed, if his audience accepts what he says, they must necessarily reject their own tradition of mythological religion.

One of the most significant features of the way Justin's argument draws on Graeco-Roman traditions, is the emphasis he places on rationality, for he asserts that his argument from prophecy is rational and, indeed, that it is a proof. His claims could, however, also be described as the result of revelation, first on the part of the Prophetic Spirit in giving out the prophecies and second through the divinely-ordained events of the life of Jesus and the growth of Christianity which fulfill them. If Justin's audience is to accept his arguments it will need to recognize that matching ancient prophecies with their recent fulfillments demonstrates both that the original prophecies are ultimately from God and that the fulfilling events are part of divine purpose. Further, it must acknowledge that this is a rational stance to take. The audience would also have to assent to something that was not part of the tradition of Graeco-Roman literary culture: that ancient prophecies can be drawn on as evidence in support of a rational argument.

In the circumstances of a dialogue with a Graeco-Roman audience Justin takes a distinctive stance towards the Jews. Although they are important because the Books of the Prophecies originated with them, the Jews have now been defeated and humiliated by the Romans, and Justin does not express either criticism or regret at this. The key point for him is that the Jews (or most of them) misinterpreted the ancient prophecies they preserved and consequently rejected Jesus Christ; this will lead to their condemnation at the last judgment, as was also foretold in those same prophecies.

Justin's arguments lead him to adopt a particular approach to reading the scriptures. They are treated as a collection of texts with a single overall message, but it is not an obvious one and the texts must be broken down to locate the individual messages concealed in particular passages. These messages are then amalgamated together to create a coherent argument out of the pieces, and it is this argument which is presented by Justin as the truth to be discerned from the Books of the Prophecies.

Chapter 3: Tatian's *Oratio* and the Barbarian Writings

The *Oratio ad Graecos* is Tatian's only surviving work.¹ It is a problematic text, couched in the form of a classical oration, and in style and presentation very much a product of the Graeco-Roman milieu; at the same time, it is an apologetic work rooted in the Jewish traditions from which Christianity emerged and fiercely critical of Graeco-Roman culture.

On first examination the *Oratio* appears to make very little use of the Jewish scriptures. For Tatian, as for Justin, the scriptures are, however, critically important, although in somewhat different ways; to Justin the scriptures are essentially prophetic texts, while for Tatian they are a source of philosophical ideas; Justin quotes extensively from the scriptures, Tatian hardly at all.

Background

Very limited information is available about the Tatian's life -- much of it deriving from the *Oratio* itself -- and his biography can only be sketched in

¹ Referred to hereafter as *Oratio*. References to the text are to chapter and paragraph numbers in *Tatiani Oratio ad Graecos* ed M Marcovich (De Gruyter, Berlin 1995). Translations are from Tatian, *Oratio ad Graecos and fragments* ed M Whittaker (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1982), adapted where appropriate. Other modern editions consulted: *Tatianos Oratio ad Graecos Rede an die Griechen* ed J Trelenberg (Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2012) & *Gegen falsche Götter und falsche Bildung: Tatian, Rede an die Griechen* ed H-G Nesselrath (Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2016). There is no *Sources Chrétiennes* edition.

outline.² His birth is dated by scholars to around the 120s CE. He says in the *Oratio* that he was ‘born in the land of the Assyrians’³ -- thought by scholars to be a reference to Syria⁴ -- and that he received a Greek education. At some stage he moved to Rome. He was converted to Christianity and became acquainted with certain texts,⁵ encountering, and being influenced by, Justin.⁶ Tatian represents his conversion to Christianity as the desertion of Greek culture in favour of barbarian, saying (to Greeks) that ‘...we abandoned your wisdom even though I myself was very distinguished in it’⁷ and also that ‘... having said farewell to Roman arrogance, Athenian cold cleverness and the unintelligible dogmas of the Greeks, I sought out the philosophy which according to you is barbarous.’⁸

He became a Christian teacher and subsequently moved from Rome back to the eastern Mediterranean, where he disappears from view. He compiled a harmonization of the gospels, the *Diatessaron*, which exerted considerable influence over several centuries, although only fragments survive in its original form.⁹ He acquired a reputation for heretical views from an early stage, as

² For Tatian’s biography: Whittaker, *Oratio* ix-x; Trelenberg, *Oratio* 1-8; M Elze, *Tatian und seine Theologie* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1960) 16-19 & W L Petersen, ‘Tatian the Assyrian’ in A Marjanen & P Luomanen eds, *A Companion to Second-century “Heretics”* (Brill, Leiden 2005) 125-158, 129-134. As Nesselrath, *Gegen falsche Götter* 5 aptly puts it: ‘Über Tatians Leben ist nur wenig bekannt und dieses Wenige auch nicht sicher.’

³ *Oratio* 42.1.

⁴ F Millar, *The Roman Near East 31 BC – AD 337* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1993) 227 & Grant, *Greek Apologists* 115.

⁵ *Oratio* 29.2.

⁶ He is twice named in the *Oratio* at 18.6 & 19.2.

⁷ *Oratio* 1.5.

⁸ *Oratio* 35.2. The translation here follows Marcovich’s emendation of the text to add καὶ τοῖς Ἑλλήνων before δόγμασιν and Whittaker’s καθ’ ὑμᾶς (which follows the most reliable manuscripts and is supported by Trelenberg and Nesselrath) over the conjectural emendation to καθ’ ἡμᾶς (favoured by Marcovich).

⁹ W L Petersen, *Tatian’s ‘Diatessaron’: Its Creation, Dissemination, Significance, and History in Scholarship* (Brill, Leiden 1994).

Irenaeus records,¹⁰ but his *Oratio* at least was copied and preserved by Christians and in the early 4C Eusebius refers to it with approval.¹¹ The oldest surviving manuscripts (apographs of a lost 10C CE original) date from the early 11C CE so, while somewhat older than the earliest manuscript of Justin's *Apologia Maior*, they were still only produced many centuries after its original composition.¹²

Issues concerning the *Oratio*'s structure and contents have prompted considerable discussion among commentators. Of the recent editors, Whittaker comments that '...it is difficult to trace an ordered scheme'¹³ and Marcovich that the structure of the *Oratio* '...is rather loose and ill-organised.'¹⁴ The analyses of the contents of the text which these two editors provide list the topics covered, without identifying any very clear progression, although they each group the chapters in very similar ways.¹⁵ Trelenberg by contrast presents the text as having a clear and coherent structure; he identifies an Introduction (Chapters 1-4), and a Conclusion (Chapter 42), framing the two main sections whose themes are 'Die Grundlehren des christlichen Glaubens' (Chapters 5-20) and 'Der Vergleich von Christen- und Heidentum' (Chapters 21-41), each of them neatly divided into four sub-sections.¹⁶ Nesselrath adopts a position somewhere between Whittaker and Marcovich on the one hand and Trelenberg on the other;¹⁷ his description of the structure has the Introduction (Chapters 1-4) and Epilogue (Chapter 42), in between which are two main sections (although in his case the split is between

¹⁰ Irénée, *Contre les hérésies Livre 1 2 Volumes* ed A Rousseau & L Doutreleau (Éditions du Cerf, Paris 1979) 1 28.1.

¹¹ Eusebius, *HE* 4.29.

¹² Marcovich, *Oratio* 3-4.

¹³ Whittaker, *Oratio* xx.

¹⁴ Marcovich, *Oratio* 5.

¹⁵ Whittaker, *Oratio* xviii-xx & Marcovich, *Oratio* 5-6.

¹⁶ Trelenberg, *Oratio* 28-29. The sub-divisions of the first section are: Schöpfung und Eschatologie, Dämonologie, Psychologie and Anthropologie, those of the second are: Die Minderwertigkeit der heidnischen Kultur, Die Fragwürdigkeit des heidnischen Schulbetriebs, Die heidnische und die christliche Ethik and Der Altersbeweis.

¹⁷ Nesselrath, *Gegen falsche Götter* 11-14.

Chapters 5–30 and 31–41). In Nesselrath's view Tatian presents the contents of the *Oratio* more arbitrarily, the arrangement lacking the neatness of what he describes as Trelenberg's 'schöne Struktur.'¹⁸

For the present study it is not critical which of these approaches has the most validity since it is the contents of the text which are the primary focus rather than its structure. The *Oratio* contains two types of material: sections criticizing Greek culture -- such as Chapters 1–3, 8–11, 16–19 and 21–28 -- where a hostile and vituperative tone is frequently adopted, and passages in which Christian ideas are presented -- such as Chapters 4–7, 12–15, 20, 29–30 and 36–41-- that are more measured in tone. It is these latter passages, addressing a range of issues Tatian clearly regards as significant in debates between Christians and non-Christians, which will necessarily be the main concern here.

Considerable uncertainties surround the date and location of composition of the *Oratio* -- greater than in the case of *1A* -- and they remain essentially unresolved. It is not therefore possible to establish the particular circumstances which prompted Tatian to write it. Various proposals regarding the original location and date of the text have been put forward, but none has come to command general assent.¹⁹ For location, Rome, Greece and Antioch have all been suggested.²⁰ Proposals for dating range from the early 150s by Harnack²¹ to the

¹⁸ Nesselrath, *Gegen falsche Götter* 11.

¹⁹ For a recent summary of the main contributions to this debate: Trelenberg, *Oratio* 8–15.

²⁰ 'Probably' Rome by Whittaker and Greece by Harnack (Whittaker, *Oratio* x), prepared for delivery in Athens by Grant, *Greek Apologists* 117–118, and Antioch by J Lössl, 'Date and Location of Tatian's Ad Graecos: Some Old and New Thoughts' in eds M Vinzent & A Brent *SP74* (Peeters, Leuven 2016) 43–55.

²¹ Trelenberg, *Oratio* 9.

late 170s by Grant.²² Some scholars, such as Barnard and Hunt,²³ date the *Oratio* before Justin's death in about 165 CE, while Marcovich argues that it was written *after* that date, on the basis that Tatian's references to Justin indicate that he was already dead.²⁴ Dating issues are complicated by suggestions that the text may not all have been written at the same time; Karadimas argues that three pre-existing speeches were incorporated into the *Oratio*,²⁵ while Osborne divides the text into two parts, one prepared for oral delivery and the other not.²⁶ Such complications render datings dependent on a single reference in the text, such as those of Harnack and Hunt,²⁷ problematic. Two of the most recent contributors to the debate, Trelenberg and Lössl, favour a date after 172 for the finalization of the work, with Trelenberg referring to what he calls the unmistakable 'Portfolio-Charakter' of the text,²⁸ and Lössl (who favours Antioch for location) suggesting that certain sections, 'pre-Antiochene' in character, had been written earlier.²⁹ The text presents itself as a dialogue between the author and his audience, with first and second persons used extensively.³⁰ The arguments in the text are clearly

²² R M Grant, 'The Date of Tatian's Oration' *HTR* 46 (1953) 99-101. G W Clarke, 'The Date of the Oration of Tatian' *HTR* 60 (1967) 123-126 successfully demolishes Grant's arguments.

²³ L W Barnard, 'The Heresy of Tatian—once again' *JEH* 19 (1968) 1-10 & E J Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century: the Case of Tatian* (Routledge, London 2003) 3.

²⁴ Marcovich, *Oratio* 1-3. Edwards' suggestion that the composition of the *Oratio* was actually prompted by the death of Justin lacks convincing support: Edwards, 'Apologetics' 553.

²⁵ D Karadimas, *Tatian's Oratio ad Graecos: Rhetoric and Philosophy / Theology* (Almqvist & Wiksell International, Stockholm 2003): the speeches occupy Chapters 8-11, 32-35 and 22-30.

²⁶ A E Osborne, 'Tatian's Discourse to the Greeks: a Literary Analysis and Essay in Interpretation' (University of Cincinnati PhD 1969) 4-28; Chapters 1-30 & 42 comprise the first part and Chapters 31-41 the second.

²⁷ A Harnack, *Die Überlieferung der griechischen Apologeten des zweiten Jahrhunderts in der alten Kirche und im Mittelalter 2 volumes* (Hinrichs, Leipzig 1882) 1 196-198 relies on the reference to Peregrinus Proteus in 25.1 & Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century* 3 on the reference to Justin in 19.2.

²⁸ Trelenberg, *Oratio* 15 & 230-240.

²⁹ Lössl, 'Date and Location' 52.

³⁰ E.g. Chapter 1 is written largely in the second person plural and Chapter 11 largely in the first person singular.

relevant to interactions between Christians and non-Christians and appear to be part of an on-going debate in which the audience, which has some prior acquaintance with Christianity, is hostile to the author. There are allusions to earlier exchanges between Tatian and his audience, real or imagined;³¹ the text imputes views to them,³² attributes to them opinions about the author³³ and reports (or puts into their mouths) criticisms of Christian beliefs and practices.³⁴ The debate is a binary one in which Christianity is presented favourably, while Greek ideas and Greek culture are heavily criticized and, indeed, ridiculed.

Tatian, like Justin, was a Greek-educated convert to Christianity and the contents of the *Oratio* are concerned with debates between Christians and Greek-educated non-Christians, of which he himself had previously been one. The audience is described as ‘men of Greece’³⁵ and the number of allusions to Greek literature³⁶ suggests that Tatian is targeting, and seeking to impress, an audience from the educational elite, the πεπαιδευμένοι.³⁷ Author and audience are presented as sharing a common Greek educational background³⁸ and Tatian includes

³¹ E.g. 21.1: ‘You who abuse us should compare your myths with our narratives.’

³² E.g. 26.1: ‘Stop leading foreign words in triumph...’; 26.2: ‘You ask who God is’ & 26.3: ‘...Tell me, why do you divide up time...?’

³³ E.g. 35.3: ‘Tatian ... is innovating with his barbarian doctrines...’

³⁴ For views e.g. 6.3 & 33.1 (talking nonsense) and for practices e.g. 25.5 (cannibalism).

³⁵ *Oratio* 1.1: the phrase is repeated later e.g. 12.6; 13.1 & 21.1.

³⁶ Whittaker, *Oratio* 87 lists classical quotations from twenty-six authors (excluding Justin), five of whom she says are not named by Tatian. Marcovich, *Oratio* 84 lists twenty-five authors (excluding Justin); there are, however, only seventeen names common to the two lists. Other references to classical authors do not involve quotations: e.g. in Chapters 2 & 3 where Tatian attacks philosophers he mentions Diogenes, Aristippus, Plato, Aristotle, Heraclitus, Zeno, Empedocles, Pherecydes, Pythagoras and Crates, albeit only briefly in each case. See N Zeegers-Vander Vorst, *Les Citations des poètes grecs chez les apologistes Chrétiens du IIe siècle* (Université de Louvain, Louvain 1972) 302–303 for Tatian’s Homeric quotations.

³⁷ The word appears at 25.5: see J E Fojtik, ‘Tatian the Barbarian: Language, Education and Identity in the *Oratio ad Graecos*’ in J Ulrich, A-C Jacobsen & M Kahlos eds, *Continuity and Discontinuity in Early Christian Apologetics* (Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main 2009) 23–34.

³⁸ M Whittaker, ‘Tatian’s Educational Background’ in ed E A Livingstone *SP 13/2* (Akademie-Verlag, Berlin 1975) 57–59.

references to the Greek literary tradition without explanation, on the basis that his audience will recognize them.

The style of presentation is that of a text composed for oral delivery. Some commentators have taken this at face value, treating it as a real speech actually delivered,³⁹ while others are sceptical about this.⁴⁰ Some of the same issues arise with Tatian's *Oratio* as with Justin's *Apologia Maior*. The audience at which the text was directed could be located in a number of places, one possibility being that the external audience suggested by the text's presentation was the actual audience,⁴¹ and another that the audience was wholly internal to Christianity.⁴² As with Justin, however, it may be too simple to treat the *Oratio* as focused on *either* an internal *or* an external audience, since audiences for the text could also have been located on the margins of Christianity, comprising new or prospective converts, or could have been both internal *and* external. The text could record the terms of a debate or debates that actually took place, or it could be an imaginative presentation by a Christian writer of issues and arguments he considers likely to arise in debates with non-Christians, but still in reality aimed at an internal audience.

One suggestion canvassed in the scholarly literature, which has much to commend it, is that the *Oratio* should be regarded as a *protrepticus*, part of a

³⁹ E.g. R C Kukulka, *Tatians sogenannte Apologie: Exegetisch-Chronologische Studie* (Teubner, Leipzig 1900) 15–16 & A Puech, *Recherches sur le Discours aux Grecs de Tatien* (F Alcan, Paris 1903) 5.

⁴⁰ E.g. Young, 'Greek Apologists' 85: '...the artificiality of such a generalised address is evident—this can never have been literally an oration to a specific audience.'

⁴¹ The suggestion of Droge, *Homer or Moses?* 97–101 that Tatian may have written in response to Celsus' *Alethes Logos* is, like the argument referred to in Chapter 2 that Celsus wrote in response to Justin, based on similarities of argument rather than close textual connections and remains speculative at best.

⁴² E.g. Nesselrath, *Gegen falsche Götter* 19.

textual tradition going back to the early Greeks,⁴³ and associated particularly with Aristotle.⁴⁴ Such a text aimed to encourage students to undertake philosophical instruction with a particular teacher, but without spelling out his teachings in detail. Reading the text as a *logos protrepticus* -- recently described as amounting to a scholarly consensus⁴⁵ -- was proposed by Puech,⁴⁶ and supported by Grant, who describes the sections expounding Christian ideas as ‘...properly a “protreptic” inviting the reader to follow Tatian and become a convert.’⁴⁷ A recent and powerful advocate of such an interpretation is McGehee.⁴⁸ He points out that a protreptic reading helps to explain some notable features of the text: its vituperative style, its ridicule of other philosophies, random references to unexplored ideas -- to be followed up in later instruction -- and the offer to answer questions.⁴⁹ Tatian’s aim is therefore to capture readers’ interest in his ideas and to offer them the prospect of further instruction at a later stage: ‘...if you wish to examine our teachings I will give you an easily understood and full

⁴³ For the origins of protreptic: J H Collins II, *Exhortations to Philosophy, the Protreptics of Plato, Isocrates and Aristotle* (Oxford University Press, New York 2015).

⁴⁴ Aristotle’s *Protrepticus* survives only in fragments: Aristotle, *Protrepticus: An Attempt at Reconstruction* by I Düring (Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, Göteborg 1961). For its influence in antiquity: W Jaeger, *Aristotle: Fundamentals of the History of his Development* Second ed trans R Robinson (Oxford University Press, Oxford 1948) 60-79 & for influence on Christian writers: G Lazzati, *L’Aristotele perduto e gli scrittori cristiani* (Società Editrice, Milano 1938). For protreptic texts in epistolary form (Christian and non-Christian): S K Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Westminster Press, Philadelphia 1986) 112-125.

⁴⁵ ‘...ein gewisser Konsensus hat sich entwickelt, nach dem sie ein *Logos Protreptikos* ist...’: J Lössl, ‘Zwischen Christologie und Rhetorik: zum Ausdruck ‘Kraft des Wortes’ (λόγου δύναμις) in Tatians ‘Rede an die Griechen’ ’ in F R Prostmeier & H E Lona eds, *Logos der Vernunft—Logos des Glaubens* (De Gruyter, Berlin 2010) 129-147, 130.

⁴⁶ A Puech, *Les apologistes grecs du IIe siècle de notre ère* (Librairie Hachette, Paris 1912) 153-154 & 169-170 (which links the protreptic quality of the text with the absence of scriptural quotations) & Puech, *Recherches* 41-42 & 97-102: ‘Un ouvrage comme le *Discours aux Grecs* n’est pas une *Exposition de la Foi*, c’est une *Préparation à la Foi*’ (99).

⁴⁷ Grant, ‘Forms and Occasions’ 222. For the *Oratio* as a protreptic text: Pellegrino, *Studi su l’antica Apologetica* 43-45.

⁴⁸ M McGehee, ‘Why Tatian never ‘apologized’ to the Greeks’: *J ECS* 1 (1993) 143-158.

⁴⁹ McGehee, ‘Why Tatian never ‘apologized’ ’ 152.

account⁵⁰ and ‘...I offer myself to you, ready for an examination of my teachings...’⁵¹ His intention is thus to whet his audience’s appetites for his teachings, which he does by outlining certain ideas but holding back on detailed exposition.⁵²

Tatian’s use of the proteptic form tips the balance towards the audience being a real external one; it seems much less likely that a Christian author would present the text as he does if addressing a purely internal Christian audience, since he would have no good reason not to expose the scriptural texts to them openly. An internal audience must, however, remain a possibility and, indeed, as was the case with Justin’s *Apologia Maior*, Tatian’s actual audience could have lain somewhere on the borderland between Christians and non-Christians.

As with Justin’s *Apologia Maior*, Barclay’s analysis of the different categories of apologetic audience provides helpful clarification. The declared audience for the *Oratio* is the very generalized ‘men of Greece’ invoked in the text. The implied audience can be defined similarly, as those from a Graeco-Roman cultural background. The intended audience could either be external to Christianity *or* internal *or* somewhere on the borderland between the two; however, the proteptic reading of the text makes a genuine external audience a strong possibility.

Previous scholarship

Previous scholarship has devoted limited attention to Tatian’s use of the Jewish scriptures. Monographs by Elze and Hunt examined his theology in some depth,⁵³ advancing different views, but sharing a common concern to position

⁵⁰ *Oratio* 30.4.

⁵¹ *Oratio* 42.2.

⁵² A point made by Puech, *Les apologistes grecs* 169-170.

⁵³ Elze, *Tatian und seine Theologie* & Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century*.

him in the philosophical debates of his contemporaries. Elze locates Tatian within Middle Platonism, identifying connections with particular 2C thinkers, notably Alcinous and Atticus. Hunt is concerned to rebut the contention of Grant that Tatian had significant links with Valentinianism⁵⁴ and presents him as a Christian philosopher in a tradition derived from Justin; thus, in her view, influences from Hellenistic philosophy, including Middle Platonism, were mediated through Justin. Tatian's approach to and use of the Jewish scriptures is, however, not a prime focus of either scholar's interest. This is also the case with the summary account of Tatian's theology in Trelenberg's recent edition of the text⁵⁵ and in the essays accompanying Nesselrath's even more recent edition.⁵⁶

Two scholars who, in their different ways, have discussed Tatian and the Jewish scriptures are Harnack and Grant, although neither comments at length. In a discussion of the OT's importance for early Christianity⁵⁷ Harnack stresses the significance of the Jewish scriptures for Tatian and provides some analysis of Chapter 29 of the *Oratio* where Tatian discusses the texts he calls the Barbarian Writings. Harnack highlights features of the contents of these texts as Tatian characterizes them -- the creation narrative, prophecies, the moral code and rigid monotheism -- and emphasises Tatian's positive view of the style of the scriptures as marked by 'vigour coupled with simplicity'.⁵⁸ The present study will return to this passage of Tatian's and to these issues; suffice it to say now that Harnack's comments, briefly sketched rather than fully-developed, provide one starting-point for the current study.

⁵⁴ R M Grant, 'The Heresy of Tatian' *JTS* 5 (1954) 62-68.

⁵⁵ Trelenberg, *Oratio* 29-54. There are only three entries against Altes Testament in Trelenberg's Index, none of them referring to this section.

⁵⁶ Nesselrath, *Gegen falsche Götter* 193-303.

⁵⁷ Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity* 1 279-289; for Tatian 281-282.

⁵⁸ Harnack, *Expansion* 1 282.

Grant's short article⁵⁹ is very specifically concerned with Tatian's use of the Jewish scriptures, although without considering how scriptural references impact on Tatian's arguments. Grant writes of a Bible which consists of an OT and a NT and he concludes that 'Tatian found the New Testament much more congenial than the Old.'⁶⁰ The terms OT and NT are arguably anachronistic in this context -- they do not appear in the *Oratio* or in other apologetic texts of the time -- and one consequence is that Grant ignores the role of extra-canonical Jewish texts; as will be shown below, this leads him to misrepresent Tatian in some respects.

Grant's article is valuable for his classification of scriptural references. Some of his conclusions are questionable, such as the identification of three allusions to Genesis 2-3, where the references are much more likely to be to the Enoch tradition;⁶¹ he also suggests that there are references to Pauline texts, such as Galatians and Philippians, which may not survive close scrutiny.⁶² Grant does, however, make some pertinent comments in the course of the article, pointing, for instance, to Tatian's use of allusions rather than quotations,⁶³ although some of his other observations, such as the identification of strong gnostic influences, may

⁵⁹ R M Grant, 'Tatian and the Bible' eds K Aland & F L Cross *SP* 1/1 (Akademie-Verlag, Berlin 1957) 297-306.

⁶⁰ Grant, 'Tatian and the Bible' 303.

⁶¹ Grant, 'Tatian and the Bible' 304-305. He takes the phrase '...one who was cleverer than the rest...' in 7.4 to allude to the description of the serpent in Gen 3:1, the words '...and men and angels followed him and proclaimed as god this rebel against God's law...' again in 7.4 to refer to Adam's disobedience in Gen 2-3 and the sentence '...and those created first were banished, the former were cast down from heaven, the later from not this earth, but one better ordered than here...' in 20.3 to refer to Adam's expulsion from the Garden in Gen 3:23-24. The influence of 1Enoch is discussed below.

⁶² They are not included in the list of 'Biblical Quotations and Allusions' in Whittaker, *Oratio* xvii or in the corresponding list in Marcovich, *Oratio* 83. Even Grant himself, 'Tatian and the Bible' 303, comments that not all his Pauline references are equally convincing.

⁶³ Grant, 'Tatian and the Bible' 297.

be questioned.⁶⁴ Most importantly for this study, however, Grant does not consider the role that scriptural references play in Tatian's *arguments*.

The approach of the current study

Previous Tatian scholarship therefore leaves room for a more extended study of Tatian's use of the Jewish scriptures in his arguments and the present work seeks to provide this. Given the uncertainties already highlighted concerning the circumstances in which the *Oratio* was produced, however, it is not possible to examine the text against its own particular background; it can only be read and interpreted as a work which originated somewhere in the Roman Empire in the mid to late 2C.

Thus the approach adopted here will in essence be the same as that adopted with Justin's *Apologia Maior*: that the arguments put forward in favour of Christianity are considered and analysed without reference to precisely when and where the text was written, or what the nature of the intended audience might have been, but rather with reference to Graeco-Roman culture in a more general sense. Like Justin's *Apologia Maior*, Tatian's *Oratio* will be treated as a repository of arguments which a Christian writer in a Graeco-Roman literary environment of the mid to late 2C portrays as significant in potential or actual debates with non-Christians. As was the case with Justin, however, in order to avoid unnecessarily convoluted phraseology, and in accordance with the way the text presents itself, the audience for the *Oratio* will be referred to in what follows as if it is external to Christianity.

⁶⁴ Grant, 'Tatian and the Bible' 297. Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century* 20-51 has effectively undermined Grant's argument here.

The authority of the Barbarian Writings

Tatian engages with his audience on a number of issues and uses the Barbarian Writings to support his arguments. The issues concerned will be reviewed in turn, but before doing this the character of the Barbarian Writings as Tatian presents them will be considered, beginning with a discussion of their authority.

For Tatian the Barbarian Writings' authority centres around three foci: their antiquity -- which is linked with their authorship -- their status as divine texts and their content and style. The starting point for examining these issues further is 29.2, which appears surprisingly late in the *Oratio*; this important passage contains Tatian's overall appraisal of the Barbarian Writings in terms of their contents, their value and significance, and their authority:

‘While I was engaged in serious thought I happened to read some Barbarian Writings, older by comparison with the doctrines of the Greeks and more divine by comparison with their errors. The outcome was that I was persuaded by them because of the lack of arrogance in the wording, the artlessness of the speakers, the easily intelligible account of the creation of the world, the foreknowledge of the future, the remarkable quality of the precepts and the idea of a single ruler of the universe.’

Tatian does not say here how he came to read the texts, except to say that he was ‘by myself’⁶⁵ and ‘engaged in serious thought,’⁶⁶ but he claims that his encounter with them was crucial for his conversion to Christianity. Tatian's comments are presented as personal experience, although it is impossible to know how literally

⁶⁵ *Oratio* 29.1.

⁶⁶ *Oratio* 29.2.

to take them as autobiography;⁶⁷ he may simply be using this form to present his material. In Chapter 2 it was noted that in the *Dialogus cum Tryphone* Justin claims to have learned about the Jewish scriptures from an old man whom he met and that this led to his conversion to Christianity.⁶⁸ Early Christian apologetic texts commonly include an account of the author's conversion, which may or may not be historically accurate, such texts being written with apologetic intent.⁶⁹

The antiquity of the Barbarian Writings is essential to Tatian's concept of their authority and he follows Justin's account of the Books of the Prophecies in describing the texts as ancient and, more particularly, as '...older by comparison with the doctrines of the Greeks.'⁷⁰ He later acknowledges that describing his ideas as innovative could attract criticism, attributing to his adversaries the comment that 'Tatian is innovating with his barbarian doctrines, beyond the Greeks and the countless hoards of philosophers.'⁷¹ The argument from antiquity is presented by Tatian as his defence against such criticism and, although mentioned only briefly in 29.2, it is developed later at considerable length. There is no reference to the Septuagint Legend, but in Chapters 31 and 35–41 Tatian puts forward his chronological argument to demonstrate that the Barbarian Writings are older than Greek literature. The argument depends on identifying authors of texts and establishing their relative antiquity. Tatian describes how historical sources show that the most ancient author of the Barbarian Writings is Moses, 'the originator (ἀρχηγός) of all barbarian wisdom,' and that he predates

⁶⁷ Whittaker, *Oratio* xv reads Tatian's words at face value: 'His own conversion was an intellectual one; he was won over by reading Scriptures...'

⁶⁸ *DT* 7–8.

⁶⁹ J Engberg, 'From among You are We. Made, not born are Christians': Apologists' Accounts of Conversion before 310 AD' in Ulrich, Jacobsen & Kahlos eds, *Continuity and Discontinuity* 49–77: '...the apologists used their accounts of conversion to construct their own identities as converts and Christians and they used them in a deliberate way to make new Christians' (77).

⁷⁰ *Oratio* 29.2.

⁷¹ *Oratio* 35.3.

the most ancient author in the Greek tradition, Homer, ‘...the oldest of poets and historians.’⁷²

Moses is significant for Tatian’s argument because he can be dated from reliable Egyptian sources: ‘Egyptian chronological registers are accurate and their records were translated by Ptolemy – not the king but a priest of Mendes. In his account of the acts of the kings he says that in the time of Amosis king of Egypt there occurred the journey of the Jews from Egypt to the lands which they entered under the leadership of Moses.’⁷³ The Exodus therefore took place during the reign of Amosis king of Egypt. Tatian quotes Ptolemy of Mendes as saying that ‘Amosis lived at the time of king Inachus.’⁷⁴ He says that this Inachus was King of Argos and provides an Argive king list to show that Inachus considerably predated Agamemnon, in whose reign Troy was taken.⁷⁵ He concludes from this evidence that ‘...if Moses lived in the time of Inachus he is four hundred years older than the Trojan War.’⁷⁶ The earliest possible date for Homer is that he is contemporary with the Trojan War (the subject of the *Iliad*),⁷⁷ so Moses must therefore have predated Homer by a sizeable margin.⁷⁸

Support for Tatian’s chronological argument does not come from the Barbarian Writings. He uses Greek, Chaldean, Phoenician and Egyptian sources,⁷⁹ commenting that such evidence will be the more compelling for his audience: ‘As witnesses I will not cite our own people, but will rather make use of Greek

⁷² *Oratio* 31.1.

⁷³ *Oratio* 38.1.

⁷⁴ *Oratio* 38.1.

⁷⁵ *Oratio* 39.1.

⁷⁶ *Oratio* 39.2.

⁷⁷ *Oratio* 36.1.

⁷⁸ Tatian draws on the well-established scholarly tradition of synchronising chronologies of different peoples, notably the Jewish, Egyptian and Greek: B Z Wacholder, ‘Biblical chronology in the Hellenistic World Chronicles’ *HTR* 61 (1968) 451–81.

⁷⁹ *Oratio* 31 & 36–38.

supporters...I shall resist you with your own weapons and take from you proofs that are above suspicion.⁸⁰

Tatian cites a large number of authors, not only as support for his case, but also to press a more general argument for the superiority of the barbarian over the Greek.⁸¹ No fewer than sixteen Greek writers are named in connection with the dating of Homer,⁸² all but one of whom⁸³ are familiar to modern scholarship from other sources⁸⁴ and, although for the most part their writings have not survived in anything more than fragments,⁸⁵ a number of them are known to have written works relevant to the points at issue, concerned either with Homer⁸⁶ or with history.⁸⁷ Scholars such as Grant and Droge may well be right in arguing that Tatian did not consult these writers' works directly, but rather took his information from handbooks available to him.⁸⁸ He says nothing about the named writers individually, but reference to multiple authorities is no doubt designed to strengthen support for his conclusion. He is, however, highly critical

⁸⁰ *Oratio* 31.2.

⁸¹ Tatian follows the grammarians' practice of quoting lists, in this case of of authors, and in Chapter 1 of inventions (discussed below): R M Grant, 'Studies in the Apologists' *HTR* 51 (1958) 123-134, 124.

⁸² *Oratio* 31.3-4. A first group of five are Theagenes of Rhegium, Stesimbrotus of Thasos, Antimachus of Colophon, Herodotus of Halicarnassus and Dionysius of Olynthus; a second group of four are Ephorus of Cumae, Philochorus of Athens and the Peripatetics, Megaclides and Chameleon; and a the final group of seven are Zenodotus, Aristophanes [of Byzantium], Callistratus, Crates [of Mallus], Eratosthenes [of Cyrene], Aristarchus [of Samothrace] and Apollodorus [of Athens].

⁸³ The exception is Dionysius of Olynthus.

⁸⁴ *BNP* articles on Theagenes by S Matthaïos, Stesimbrotus by M Baumbach, Antimachus by M Fantuzzi, Herodotus by K Meister, Ephorus by K Meister, Philochorus by K Meister, Megaclides by G Damaschen, Chameleon by H Gottschalk, Zenodotus by M Baumbach, Aristophanes by F Montanari, Callistratus by F Montanari, Crates by M Broggiato & Eratosthenes by F Zaminer & R Tosi.

⁸⁵ The historian Herodotus is the notable exception.

⁸⁶ E.g. *BNP* for Theagenes & Megaclides.

⁸⁷ E.g. *BNP* for Eratosthenes & Herodotus.

⁸⁸ 'Naturally he took his authorities on the subject from schoolbooks...' (Grant, *Greek Apologists* 125) & 'In all probability he put together his list of writers on the date of Homer on the basis of some handbook which dealt with this question' (Droge, *Homer or Moses?* 92).

of the Greek writers collectively and the large number of the sources becomes a problematic issue when Tatian asserts that their widely divergent views show that they are both inconsistent and inaccurate.⁸⁹ Such criticism of Greek literature notwithstanding, he is still able to use the sources he cites to establish his argument, for, even though they may disagree with one another, they all concur in the view that Homer considerably postdates the Trojan War, and this is the essential first stage of his argument for the chronological priority of Moses over Homer.

Among barbarian sources Tatian cites Berossus (Chaldean), Theodotus, Hypsicrates and Mochus (Phoenician) and Ptolemy of Mendes (Egyptian). He says Berossus is drawn on as a source by Juba, that Menander of Pergamum wrote on the same subject as the three Phoenicians (and so perhaps used them as sources) and that the Ptolemy is used by Apion. It is therefore likely that Tatian only knew the original writers named through the intermediate sources, Juba, Menander and Apion.⁹⁰ The barbarian authors are praised by Tatian in a way that those from the Greek tradition are not; Berossus is described as ‘...a very able man...’,⁹¹ the Egyptian chronological records translated by Ptolemy of Mendes are ‘accurate’⁹² and Apion is ‘...a man of high repute..’⁹³ Thus Tatian’s account of historical sources enables him to reinforce one of his main themes -- the superiority of the barbarian over the Greek -- and to do so with reference to written sources.

Tatian’s argument for the chronological priority of Moses has inevitably entailed the identification of Moses as an individual; otherwise, unlike Justin, he refers to none of the authors of the Barbarian Writings by name. Moses is, however,

⁸⁹ *Oratio* 31.6.

⁹⁰ Grant, *Greek Apologists* 127.

⁹¹ *Oratio* 36.4.

⁹² *Oratio* 38.1.

⁹³ *Oratio* 38.2.

clearly not the only barbarian author; he is described as the leader of a group of ‘...those who philosophized like him [Moses]...’,⁹⁴ even though the other members of the group are not named. In the way he describes the antiquity and authorship of the Barbarian Writings, Tatian follows Justin in echoing the tradition of ancient wisdom, according to which the very earliest thinkers, who flourished before the advent of the Greek philosophical schools, possessed the highest level of wisdom.

As well as arguing for the antiquity of the Barbarian Writings, Tatian maintains that these texts are, in some sense, divine, although there is nothing in the *Oratio* to parallel Justin’s Prophetic Spirit. Tatian does not give the same emphasis as Justin to the divine nature of the texts, but there are echoes of the same sentiment in his -- admittedly occasional -- use of forms of the term θεῖος. In the important passage in 29.2 already referred to he describes the Barbarian Writings as ‘more divine’ (θειοτέραις) than the errors of Greek thought. This theme is not specifically developed in the *Oratio* and what is meant by labelling texts as divine is not discussed, but allusions to it are found in two other places.

First, Tatian says at one point that ‘It is possible to understand the details if one does not conceitedly reject the most divinely inspired (θειοτάτας) interpretations, which from time to time have been expressed in writing and have made those who study them real lovers of God.’⁹⁵ The Barbarian Writings are not specifically mentioned here, but the passage clearly refers to written *texts* as divinely inspired and it is most probably the Barbarian Writings that Tatian has in mind. Second, he refers a little later to ‘... using words of more divine (θειοτέρας) significance...’⁹⁶ just before he criticises those who decline to take instruction from followers of a ‘Barbarian Code of Law’. This last phrase should be taken as a

⁹⁴ *Oratio* 40.2.

⁹⁵ *Oratio* 12.4.

⁹⁶ *Oratio* 12.9.

reference to the Barbarian Writings (as will be discussed later), so the term ‘divine’ used in relation to ‘words’ in this context most probably refers again to the Barbarian Writings.

The third source of the authority of the Barbarian Writings, in addition to their antiquity and their divine nature, lies in their general *qualities*: in the contents of the texts and the style of their presentation. Tatian describes what he has learned from his experience as a reader; it is not only the ideas and doctrines in the texts which are significant, but also the way they are written: their simplicity, readability and lack of pretension.

In 29.2 Tatian says that he was persuaded by ‘... the lack of arrogance in the wording, the artlessness of the speakers, the easily intelligible account of the creation of the world, the foreknowledge of the future, the remarkable quality of the precepts and the idea of a single ruler of the universe.’ The qualities Tatian here attributes to the Barbarian Writings are not purely descriptive, but also normative: he says he is *persuaded* by them (μοι πεισθῆναι ταύταις συνέβη). This passage performs several functions: it conveys something about the content of the texts, it provides some evaluation of those contents through the terms of approbation used, and it comments, approvingly, on the style of the texts. Tatian describes how the Barbarian Writings deal with ‘the creation of the world,’ they contain prophecies, ‘foreknowledge of the future’ and moral ‘precepts’, and they promote the concept of monotheism, ‘the idea of a single ruler of the universe.’ He uses evaluative terms to express his approbation: the precepts are of ‘remarkable quality’ and the account of creation is ‘easily intelligible’. He also draws attention to the *style* of the Barbarian Writings, and does so positively, referring to ‘the lack of arrogance in the wording’ and ‘the artlessness of the speakers.’ By contrast, Justin did not discuss the style of his authoritative texts, although the fact that his Septuagint Legend has them lodged in a prestigious

Greek royal library suggests that he regarded them as possessing literary as well as prophetic value.

In his discussion of the Barbarian Writings Tatian echoes some aspects of the way texts are considered in the Greek tradition of literary criticism which was briefly referred to in Chapter 1. Some classical literary theorists, notably Demetrius, Cicero and Quintilian, analysed the types of style appropriate to different kinds of literary work.⁹⁷ Somewhat in contrast to the Second Sophistic emphasis on sophistication and complexity in literary style, these writers all speak approvingly of the Plain Style, when it is used in appropriate circumstances. Demetrius, for instance, describes ordinary diction and clarity of expression as commendable features of the Plain Style; he also highlights these qualities as characteristics of persuasiveness,⁹⁸ which suggests that the Plain Style might be particularly apt for apologetic discourse. Tatian's approbation of the simplicity of the Barbarian Writings' style therefore fits well with this strand of literary criticism.

Tatian's comments on the *style* of the Barbarian Writings reflect in other respects what is found in works of Greek literary criticism. The surviving *oeuvre* of ancient Greek texts is richer in works of theory than in discussion of specific texts,⁹⁹ but there are some extant instances of the latter. One is the 52nd *Oration* of the 1C CE Greek sophist Dio Chrysostom¹⁰⁰ which compares the three

⁹⁷ Demetrius, *On Style* trans D C Innes in *Ancient Literary Criticism* eds Russell & Winterbottom 171-215, with the Plain Style discussed at 206-208; extracts from Cicero's works, notably *Brutus* and *De Oratore* trans M Winterbottom 216-64, with the Plain Style considered at 240-243 & extracts from Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* trans M Winterbottom 372-423, with the Plain Style featuring at 413-415.

⁹⁸ *Ancient Literary Criticism* eds Russell & Winterbottom 210-211.

⁹⁹ Translations of texts in *Ancient Literary Criticism* eds Russell & Winterbottom.

¹⁰⁰ Text in Dio Chrysostom, *Discourses 37-60* trans H L Crosby *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1946) 338-352; translation in *Ancient Literary Criticism* eds Russell & Winterbottom 504-507. For Dio: G M A Grube, *The Greek and Roman Critics* (Methuen, London 1965) 327-332. Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus* 287-288 & 429 argues for influences from Dio on the *Oratio*.

tragedians of ancient Athens, Aeschylus, Euripides and Sophocles. Dio provides a succinct summary of each tragedian's style, contrasting it with the other two; his verdicts on Aeschylus and Euripides are as follows:

‘Aeschylus’ grandeur and archaic splendour, and the originality of his thought and expression, seemed appropriate to tragedy and the antique manner of heroes; it had nothing subtle, nothing facile, nothing undignified.’

‘Euripides’ intelligence and care for every detail – nothing unconvincing or negligent is allowed to pass, and instead of bare facts he gives us the whole force of his eloquence – is the opposite of Aeschylus’ simplicity. This is the style of the man of affairs and the orator; the reader can learn many valuable lessons from it.’¹⁰¹

Another example of such criticism is the essay on Thucydides by Dionysius of Halicarnassus¹⁰² which examines at length the style of a single writer.¹⁰³ Although largely devoted to detailed comments on particular passages, Dionysius also makes more general appraisals of Thucydides, for instance in describing his diction:

‘Its qualities are solidity and compactness, pungency and harshness, gravity, tendency to inspire awe and fear, and above all these the power of stirring the emotions.’¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ *Ancient Literary Criticism* eds Russell & Winterbottom 505–506.

¹⁰² Dating from the 1C BCE: *BNP* article on Dionysius of Halicarnassus by S Fornaro.

¹⁰³ Text in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Critical Essays I* ed S Usher *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1974) 462–632: translation in *Dionysius of Halicarnassus: On Thucydides* trans W K Pritchett (University of California, Berkeley, 1975).

¹⁰⁴ Pritchett, *Dionysius* 18 (Chapter 24) (transliterations of Greek words omitted).

Tatian's description of the style of the Barbarian Writings echoes the kind of succinct account of the qualities of a literary text found in such works. He is discussing the Barbarian Writings as if they were classic texts in the Greek tradition, even though, as will be shown later, he seeks to position them outside, rather than within, that tradition.

The nature of the Barbarian Writings

Having considered where Tatian locates the authority of the Barbarian Writings, his view of the nature of the texts themselves will now be examined. The focus will be on three issues: which texts comprise the Barbarian Writings; the kind of texts they are; and how the literary tradition of the Barbarian Writings contrasts with that of the Greeks.

Tatian does not present the Barbarian Writings as a clearly defined set of texts. The phrase 'certain Barbarian Writings' (γραφαῖς τισιν βαρβαρικαῖς) in 29.2 is imprecise, particularly with the adjective 'certain' (τισιν) attached. No further definition is given and Tatian does not discuss there or elsewhere which texts the term includes. Scholars have tended to treat the term Barbarian Writings as synonymous with the Jewish scriptures -- as that phrase is understood today¹⁰⁵ -- but it is too simple to assume that the two are coterminous. The phrase is perhaps best regarded, not so much as a precise description of a bounded set of texts, but rather as a reference to a tradition of writing consisting of a number of texts, but lacking clear boundaries.

Even when a reference to a specific scriptural text can be identified, the form in which Tatian accessed it remains unclear. In previous chapters the prevalence of

¹⁰⁵ Grant, 'Tatian and the Bible' 303-305 (using the phrase 'Old Testament'); Droge, *Homer or Moses?* 82 (using the phrase 'Jewish scriptures') & Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century* 181 (using the phrase 'Hebrew scriptures').

collections of extracts from texts was highlighted and if Tatian was drawing on sources of this kind then they could have contained a mix of material culled from different texts. He may not have been aware himself of the ultimate origin of the material he was using and, indeed, issues of this kind may not have concerned him. What was important may have been that texts emanated from a tradition whose doctrines he had come to accept, and the fact that he does not identify the specific sources of particular ideas may be because it was much more significantly the *tradition* and not the *individual text* that mattered to him.

As noted above, the literary tradition of the Barbarian Writings, according to Tatian, originated with Moses, although other, later writers also contributed to it. The origins of the tradition were ancient, but its components were not necessarily all ancient; other writers followed Moses and contributed texts over time. It remained a single tradition, however, and essentially an anonymous one, in which, apart from Moses, authors are not individually identified. Thus Tatian's presentation differs from Justin's in which a number of the prophetic authors are named. Indeed, Tatian's identification of Moses may only have been necessary because it was required by the argument from chronological comparison with Homer to demonstrate the Barbarian Writings' antiquity.

Tatian's very general description in 29.2 of the *themes* he encountered in the Barbarian Writings provides limited clues to the identity of the texts. He refers to the creation of the world, the foretelling of the future, some precepts of high quality and the doctrine of monotheism. Tatian's description is much broader than Justin's, which focussed on the authoritative texts as a source of prophecies. Creation indicates the early chapters of Genesis, and foretelling the future suggests prophetic texts, although it is not apparent which ones. High quality precepts and monotheism are both strong themes in the Jewish scriptures, but characteristic of a wide range of texts. They could refer, for example, to texts

from the Pentateuch, such as the Decalogue, to the Psalms or to those texts which modern scholars classify as Prophetic Books.

Tatian's use of references to the Barbarian Writings will be considered below and that discussion will provide pointers to the scope of the term. The particular texts which feature in the *Oratio* are determined by the arguments that Tatian presents, so it is apologetic intentions which shape his portrayal of the Barbarian Writings. To anticipate, Tatian will be shown to make clear references to the early chapters of Genesis and to one of the Psalms, to refer to historical texts, prophets and Jewish law codes, and also to make allusions to 1 Enoch and to traditions which include works such as Jubilees and 4 Ezra. None of the texts Tatian quotes from or alludes to is, however, considered in detail in the *Oratio* and he does not identify any of the references he makes to specific books.

Tatian's use of the term, barbarian, in the phrase Barbarian Writings is novel. It was noted in Chapter 2 that 'barbarian' appears only a few times in Justin's *Apologia Maior* and never in relation to the Books of the Prophecies. While Justin's phrase emphasises the prophetic *contents* of the texts, Tatian's phrase, Barbarian Writings, draws attention to their *provenance*. The writings are not identified as Jewish; indeed, the terms Jew or Jewish are nowhere used in connection with them;¹⁰⁶ they are attributed simply to barbarians, and then not to any particular barbarian people.¹⁰⁷

There are a number of indications in the *Oratio* which suggest the kind of texts that Tatian considers the Barbarian Writings to be. It is the philosophical that predominates, in contrast to Justin's account of his authoritative texts as prophetic in nature. There are, however, indications that other vocabularies can be applied

¹⁰⁶ The only references to the Jews are when Tatian refers to historical events (Nebuchadnezzar's campaigns (36.3), Solomon's marriage (37.2) and the Exodus (38.1)).

¹⁰⁷ As happens with the inventions attributed to particular barbarian peoples in Chapter 1.

to the texts -- the prophetic, the historical and the legal -- and these will be considered first.

Prophecy has a generally very low profile in the *Oratio*, even though in 29.2 Tatian referred to the Barbarian Writings as providing 'foreknowledge of the future.' There are only two other references to texts as prophetic, or at least as having been written by prophets, both very general and difficult to link with particular texts. One is Tatian's description of events as recounted by 'our prophets';¹⁰⁸ the other is when prophets are referred to as providing teaching on the future prospects of humankind.¹⁰⁹

Tatian also suggests on occasion that the Barbarian Writings are historical texts. His chronological argument depends on Chaldean, Phoenician and Egyptian rather than Jewish historical sources, but he does recognise that the latter exist, even though he does not use them, when he says: 'As witnesses I will not cite our own people...'¹¹⁰ There is also a brief reference to Jewish historical writings when Tatian mentions the campaigns of Nebuchadnezzar: 'Berossus, a Babylonian ... set out the details of their kings, starting with one of them called Nebuchadnezzar, who campaigned against the Phoenicians and the Jews. We know that these events have been recounted by our prophets and that they occurred much later than the time of Moses, seventy years before the rule of the Persians.'¹¹¹ The reference is not specific -- Tatian says only that texts exist which were written by 'our prophets' -- but it probably alludes to the Book of Jeremiah

¹⁰⁸ *Oratio* 36.3. This probably alludes to Jeremiah (see below).

¹⁰⁹ *Oratio* 20.6.

¹¹⁰ *Oratio* 31.2.

¹¹¹ *Oratio* 36.3. The final phrase here no doubt refers to the exile of the Jews to Babylon which according to the Jewish scriptures lasted seventy years: 2Chron 36:21 & Jer 25:11-12.

which, while largely comprising prophetic material, also contains some narrative, including an account of the campaign of Nebuchadnezzar against the Jews.¹¹²

There is a single -- extremely unspecific -- reference to the Barbarian Writings as legal in character: ‘You who do not reject the Scythian Anacharsis even now must not think it beneath you to take instruction from those who adhere to the Barbarian Law (νομοθεσία).’¹¹³ Tatian does not specify the writings he is alluding to here, but the reference is probably to texts from the Pentateuch which contain the Jewish Law.¹¹⁴

The dominant impression to emerge from the *Oratio* is, however, that the Barbarian Writings are philosophical works. In Tatian’s eyes they are a set of texts which rival, and should supplant, the writings of the Greek philosophical tradition. This is evidenced in two ways. Firstly, the terms Tatian uses to describe both the authors and the contents of the Writings indicate that he regards them as philosophical in nature. Thus the description of Moses as ‘the originator of all barbarian wisdom’ (using σοφία),¹¹⁵ identifies him as a philosopher, and other authors of the Barbarian Writings who followed Moses are described as ‘those who philosophized like him.’¹¹⁶ Philosophical terms are also used to describe ideas: Tatian refers to ‘the philosophy which you consider barbarous,’¹¹⁷ to ‘barbarian doctrines’¹¹⁸ and at one point says that ‘All who wish to philosophize with us are welcome...’¹¹⁹

¹¹² Jeremiah 52.

¹¹³ *Oratio* 12.10.

¹¹⁴ The term νομοθεσία appears in the Septuagint at 2Macc 6:23 where it refers to Jewish dietary laws.

¹¹⁵ *Oratio* 31.1.

¹¹⁶ *Oratio* 40.2.

¹¹⁷ *Oratio* 35.2.

¹¹⁸ *Oratio* 35.3.

¹¹⁹ *Oratio* 32.7. Translation follows the addition of φίλοι included by Marcovich and accepted by Trelenberg (although not by Nesselrath).

Second, it will be shown below that the Barbarian Writings are used to support Tatian's philosophical arguments concerning, for instance, the creation of the world and the nature of humankind. Tatian uses the Barbarian Writings to advance his own preferred philosophy as an alternative to those of the Greek schools. This contrasts with Justin's *Apologia Maior* which, although it sometimes criticised Greek philosophy, did not use the ancient prophecies as a tool in philosophical debates, but rather to confront the Graeco-Roman myth-based religion. Tatian does not bring evidence or arguments from the Barbarian Writings to bear when he is criticising the Greeks; they are not referred to in the passages where he is attacking Greek philosophy, such as Chapters 2 and 3 where he denigrates philosophers as individuals and ridicules both their behaviour¹²⁰ and their ideas.¹²¹ Indeed, the only point at which the Barbarian Writings intersect with Greek philosophy is when Tatian alludes to the theft theory discussed in the previous chapter. Following Justin, he describes how the Greeks imitated, but distorted, what they read in the Barbarian Writings, leading their philosophical schools into erroneous doctrines:

‘For with great care their sophists tried to counterfeit all they learned from the teaching of Moses and those who philosophized like him, first in order to be thought to speak with originality, and second in order that, in concealing through rhetorical artifice the things they did not understand, they might distort the truth as mythology.’¹²²

¹²⁰ E.g. Plato ‘...was sold by Dionysius because of his gluttony...’ (2.1) & Aristotle ‘...used to fawn in a very uncultured way on that wild young man Alexander...’ (2.2).

¹²¹ E.g. how by Zeno ‘... God is portrayed as the creator of evil, who lives in sewers and worms and in those who do unmentionable things.’ (3.3) and ‘...I laugh at the old wives’ tales of Pherecydes, Pythagoras’ takeover of his doctrines...and Plato’s copying of them’ (3.5).

¹²² *Oratio* 40.2.

Quotations from the Barbarian Writings

It is quickly apparent from a reading of the *Oratio* that Tatian makes very limited use of quotations from the Barbarian Writings, a clear contrast with Justin's citations of prophetic texts. The one clear quotation -- '...since they were made for a little while lower than the angels...' ¹²³ -- from Ps 8:5 ¹²⁴ is introduced in a discussion of the nature of humankind. It is described as a 'saying' (κατὰ τὸν εἰπόντα λόγον), ¹²⁵ so it is a conscious quotation, although the source is not disclosed. This is the only instance in which Tatian refers to a text from the Jewish scriptures in this way. (On one other occasion a text is described as a 'saying' (τό εἰρημένον) when a Christian text, John 1:5, is cited: 'the darkness does not comprehend the light,' although again, the source of the quotation is not specified). ¹²⁶

The paucity of quotations from the Barbarian Writings is at first sight surprising, since Tatian might be expected, given his general comments about the nature and qualities of the texts, to quote from them extensively. ¹²⁷ He is known to have been the author of the *Diatessaron*, a harmonisation of the four canonical gospels, and to have written a work of that kind he must have had a strong interest in the close reading of texts. Moreover, according to Eusebius, Rhodon, a disciple of

¹²³ *Oratio* 15.10.

¹²⁴ The quotation from Psalm 8 appears in Hebrews 2 so this could be Tatian's source. Hunt's contention (*Christianity in the Second Century* 43 & 193) that Tatian must have been quoting from the latter since he uses the term 'angels' rather than the 'God' of the original is, however, fallacious because the Septuagint translation of Ps 8:5 uses the term 'angels'; the Hebrew original (*elohim*) is ambiguous and has been translated both by 'God'/gods' and by 'angels', but Tatian quotes the Greek text (For the debate on this: A A Anderson, *The Book of Psalms I Introduction and Psalms 1-72* (Olivants, London 1972) 103 & P C Craigie, *Psalms 1-50 Second ed with 2004 supplement by M E Tate* (Thomas Nelson, Nashville 2004) 108).

¹²⁵ *Oratio* 15.9.

¹²⁶ *Oratio* 13.2.

¹²⁷ Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century* 54 comments '...despite the reverence Tatian expresses for the Hebrew Scriptures in his conversion account, his allusions to the Old Testament are very sparse.' She does not explore why this is the case.

Tatian, recorded that his teacher produced a book on *Problems* in which ‘...he had promised to set out what was obscure and puzzling in Holy Writ...’¹²⁸ and this also suggests an interest in expounding scriptural texts at a detailed level.

There are, however, two specific factors which explain the absence of quotations, both of which concern issues touched on already; one is the protreptic character of Tatian’s *Oratio* and the other is the Second Sophistic context in which he was writing.

A protreptic work introduces a new philosophy without giving a full account of it. While such a text may contain short references and brief allusions to the foundational texts of the philosophy in question, there are unlikely to be extensive quotations, since detailed consideration of authoritative texts is left for a later occasion. This absence of quotations accords with what is found in Tatian’s *Oratio*.

In Chapter 1 reference was made to the cultural phenomenon known as the Second Sophistic. This did not feature as a significant issue in discussion of Justin’s Proof from Prophecy, but it is relevant to Tatian’s *Oratio*, not least with regard to the use of quotations. Second Sophistic authors are fond of including quotations from and allusions to well-established classic texts, especially the works of Homer, and of treating them in a distinctive way.¹²⁹ References are employed for display purposes, to show the author’s knowledge and erudition and to give his audience the satisfaction of recognition. They are not included primarily to

¹²⁸ Eusebius, *HE* 5.13.

¹²⁹ For the pervasive influence of Homer: F Buffière, *Les mythes d’Homère*; for the importance of Homer in elite Roman literary culture: J Farrell, ‘Roman Homer’ in R Fowler ed, *The Cambridge Companion to Homer* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2004) 263–269.

advance the author's argument;¹³⁰ rather the subject under discussion is used as a prompt to refer to a classic text. Examples of this can be found in the work of Philostratus and Lucian. In his *Lives of the Sophists* the 3C author Philostratus on a number of occasions cites lines from the classical canon of Greek poetry; he writes, for instance, about Isaeus, the Assyrian sophist, saying:

‘He had to represent the Lacedaemonians debating whether they should fortify themselves by building a wall, and he condensed his argument into a few words from Homer:

‘And thus shield pressed on shield, helm on helm, man on man.
Thus stand fast, Lacedaemonians, these are our fortifications!’

a quotation from *Iliad* 16.215.¹³¹

Something similar is found in the work of Tatian's Second Sophistic contemporary, Lucian. Bompaire¹³² describes his use of ‘la citation *ornans*’ to confer authority and provide enrichment: ‘Leur caractère commun est de n’avoir aucune utilité dans la développement narratif – et à plus forte raison logique; ils étoffent simplement le discours.’¹³³ This general observation is supported by

¹³⁰ This was not completely new with the Second Sophistic; Quintilian (end of the 1C CE) describes how orators introduce quotations from established classics, both to demonstrate their own erudition and to delight their audiences: Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* ed D A Russell LCL (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 2001) 1.8:11–12.

¹³¹ Philostratus, *Lives of the Sophists* ed W C Wright LCL (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1921) 1 514. Other examples are at 1 521 (*Iliad* 16.40), 1 539 (*Iliad* 10.535), 1 542 (*Iliad* 9.312), 1 544 (Hesiod, *Works and Days* 25), 2 558 (*Odyssey* 4.498) & 2 580 (*Odyssey* 3.1).

¹³² J Bompaire, *Lucien Écrivain: Imitation et Création* (De Bocard, Paris 1958) 382–404.

¹³³ Bompaire, *Lucien* 389.

Householder's detailed work on Lucian's use of quotations¹³⁴ and by Bouquiaux-Simon's analysis of Lucian's references to Homer¹³⁵ which are often used merely '...pour parer et enricher la prose d'auteur.'¹³⁶

The dearth of citations from the Barbarian Writings notwithstanding, Tatian follows Second Sophistic practice in quoting from or alluding to Greek literature on a number of occasions, with references to Homer being the commonest; indeed, there are more quotations in the *Oratio* from Homer than from Jewish and Christian writings.¹³⁷ Tatian's Homeric references are typically very brief, often only allusions,¹³⁸ and they operate as verbal embellishments or rhetorical flourishes which, because of their source, would be recognisable to Tatian's classically-educated audience.

An example is Tatian's quotation of a line from Homer which appears both in the *Iliad* (1.599) and the *Odyssey* (8.326) and describes the laughter of the gods.¹³⁹ In both cases the laughter is prompted by the actions of Hephaestus the god of fire, but these Homeric circumstances bear no relation to the subject-matter of the *Oratio* at the point the reference is made, where Tatian is describing the delight taken by demons in the destructive impact of fate on humankind. Homer's reference is not concerned with fate; it is not relevant to Tatian's argument and is only included for reasons of rhetorical display. The same can be said of one clear

¹³⁴ F W Householder, *Literary Quotation and Allusion in Lucian* (Columbia University Press, New York 1941) 41-55 for summary tables.

¹³⁵ O Bouquiaux-Simon, *Les lectures Homériques de Lucien* (Palais des Académies, Bruxelles 1968) especially 352-374.

¹³⁶ Bouquiaux-Simon, *Lectures Homériques* 358.

¹³⁷ Whittaker, *Oratio* 87 lists fourteen quotations from the *Iliad* and two from the *Odyssey*, one line appearing identically in both.

¹³⁸ S Freund, 'Und wunderbar sind auch eure Dichter, die da lügen...' (Tat., orat. 22,7). Beobachtungen zu Gestalt, Auswahl und Funktion von Dichterzitaten in der griechischen Apologetik am Beispiel Tatians' in C Schubert & A von Stockhausen eds, *Ad veram religionem reformare. Frühchristliche Apologetik zwischen Anspruch und Wirklichkeit* (Erlangen Forschungen, Erlangen 2006) 97-121.

¹³⁹ *Oratio* 8.1.

allusion to Plato in the *Oratio*: ‘The soul’s wings are the perfect spirit, but the soul cast it away because of sin, fluttered like a nestling and fell to the ground...’¹⁴⁰ which uses a metaphor from a passage in the *Phaedrus*,¹⁴¹ where Plato is discussing the nature of the soul. This colourful image is introduced for the same rhetorical reasons as the Homeric quotations; there is no connection between Tatian’s argument and the argument in the *Phaedrus* at this point, and, indeed, there cannot be, since Plato is arguing for the immortality of the soul, which is not a doctrine Tatian shares.

Tatian’s quotations from classical authors depend, like those of Second Sophistic writers, on the audience’s prior familiarity with the texts from which the quotations are drawn. He does not, however, quote similarly from the Barbarian Writings; indeed, there would be no point in doing so since these texts were unfamiliar to his audience; they were not part of the common culture of educated Greeks, so any references would fall on deaf ears.

Tatian’s use of the Barbarian Writings

The Barbarian Writings are, however, far from irrelevant to Tatian’s arguments and in sections such as Chapters 4–7 and 12–15 where he is putting forward his own philosophical ideas, they are an important source for him to draw on. He uses the Barbarian Writings in a number of ways: by including brief phrases from the texts, too short to be termed quotations, by alluding to ideas that can be traced to specific sources and by using less precise references which can only be related more generally to a textual tradition. Tatian’s use of these techniques will be examined with reference to the main issues addressed in the *Oratio*: the nature of creation, the nature of humankind, the fall of angels and humankind and the eschaton (unlike Justin, he is not concerned with demonstrating the status of Jesus

¹⁴⁰ *Oratio* 20.2. Identified in Marcovich, *Oratio* 41n & Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century* 214.

¹⁴¹ Plato, *Phaedrus* LCL 246C.

Christ). Tatian's references may be brief and their sources may never be identified or acknowledged, but they play an important part in the *Oratio*.

Two brief phrases from Genesis 1 are especially important for Tatian: 'in the beginning' (ἐν ἀρχῇ) (Gen 1:1) and 'the image and likeness of God' (εἰκὼν καὶ ὁμοίωσις τοῦ θεοῦ) (Gen 1:26-27).¹⁴²

The nature of creation

'In the beginning', and Genesis 1 more generally, are central to Tatian's account of creation. The nature of primal creation was a much-discussed topic in the Greek philosophical tradition with differing accounts put forward by the various schools, such as the Platonists, the Peripatetics and the Stoics. The debates on this issue cannot be considered in detail here,¹⁴³ but one perspective which the Greek schools all shared was that the process of creation entailed the ordering of pre-existing matter.¹⁴⁴ Tatian's doctrine, which was at variance with this, can be characterized as *Creatio ex nihilo*:¹⁴⁵ in other words, before creation matter did not exist at all. His use of the phrase 'in the beginning' therefore serves to stress

¹⁴² Tatian uses slightly different formulations at different points; the quotation here is from 15.3. The standard Septuagint text has 'καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Θεὸς, ποιήσωμεν ἄνθρωπον κατ' εἰκόνα ἡμετέραν καὶ καθ' ὁμοίωσιν' (J W Wevers ed, *Septuaginta Testamentum Graecum I Genesis* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1974).

¹⁴³ Sedley, *Creationism* surveys the field. In Tatian's own time the issue of creation was actively debated by philosophers, with contributions from prominent figures such as Calvernus Taurus and Atticus, who both wrote commentaries on Plato's *Timaeus*. Dillon, *Middle Platonists* 242-246 & 252-257.

¹⁴⁴ Sedley, *Creationism* xvii: 'That even a divine creator would, like any craftsman, have to use pre-existing materials is an assumption that the ancient Greeks apparently never questioned.'

¹⁴⁵ Tatian is credited with being the first Christian writer explicitly to adopt the *Creatio ex nihilo* position: May, *Creatio Ex Nihilo* 148-154. May acknowledges that Basilides had previously advanced a *Creatio ex nihilo* argument, but regards him as a Gnostic and so not (in his terms) a Christian theologian (May, *Creatio Ex Nihilo*, 62-84). It was not inevitable that Christian writers would interpret Genesis 1 along *Creatio ex nihilo* lines; others e.g. Justin took a different view: May, *Creatio Ex Nihilo* 120-133.

that divine creation of the cosmos was the *beginning* and that matter did not have any existence prior to it.

Tatian describes in 4.3 how the monotheistic God is the sole existing being prior to creation and that he creates the universe out of nothing, saying: ‘Our God has no origin in time; he alone is without beginning and is himself the beginning of all things.’¹⁴⁶ The phrase ‘in the beginning’ is then quoted explicitly and prominently at the commencement of 5.1 where Tatian states that ‘God was in the beginning’ and this is soon followed by ‘The Lord of all things, himself the foundation of the whole, was alone in relation to the creation which had not yet come into being.’¹⁴⁷ Shortly afterwards, at 5.6, the Word is described as begotten ‘in the beginning.’ Thus the phrase from Gen 1:1 is used to support Tatian’s argument that the act of creation was the beginning of the existence of the cosmos, that matter did not have any form of existence beforehand and is critical for distinguishing his view from those of the Greek philosophical schools.¹⁴⁸

Tatian’s creation account is not in the form of a narrative and is therefore unlike Genesis 1 in which the process of creation takes place over six days. His ideas are expressed through abstract argument, so it is less obvious that Genesis is a source than if he had referred to actual events in the creation narrative. Two factors pointing to the importance of Genesis for Tatian are first, references to the concept of separation and second, a close semantic connection between *Oratio* 4 and Genesis 1. First, he describes how God originally created matter as raw and formless, and then, by a process of separation, formed it into heavens, stars and earth; he says that ‘...it [matter] should be thought of partly as raw and formless before its separation (using διόκρισις) and partly as organised and orderly after its

¹⁴⁶ *Oratio* 4.3.

¹⁴⁷ *Oratio* 5.1.

¹⁴⁸ The phrase ἐν ἀρχῇ appears only once in the *Timaeus* (28B 5) the key Platonic text on the creation of the cosmos, and then not with reference to primal creation (TLG search).

division. So by this process of division (using διαίρεσις) the heavens are created from matter, and also the stars in the heavens...¹⁴⁹ The concept of separation also appears in Tatian's description of the creation of the Word by God: 'He [the Word] came into being by separation (using μερισμός), not by section...'¹⁵⁰ These references reflect the way Genesis 1 describes the creation of the cosmos as a series of acts of separation, of light from darkness, of waters below from waters above, and of earth from seas; Tatian does not, however, use the Septuagint verb for 'to separate,' διαχωρίζειν,¹⁵¹ so the connection between his *Oratio* and Genesis 1 is one of ideas and not semantics.

The second link which can be detected between the *Oratio* and Genesis 1 is a semantic one, however and this is the similarity between Tatian's adjacent use of two terms, the comparatively rare 'κατασκευαστής' (constructor) and ἀόρατος' (invisible),¹⁵² and the Septuagint wording of Gen 1:2: 'ἀόρατος καὶ ἀκατασκεύαστος'.¹⁵³ In both cases these terms occur together at a point where creation is being discussed; in *Oratio* 4.3 the sentence which follows begins 'We know him [God] through his creation...,' while in Genesis the phrase occurs in the description of the state of the earth at the outset of primal creation. This similarity of theme of the two passages strengthens the suggestion that in 4.3 Tatian was echoing -- consciously or not -- the wording of Gen 1:2.

In view of the points made here, Hunt's contention that 'The cosmology that Tatian presents in his *Oration* displays no direct dependence upon the Biblical account...'¹⁵⁴ cannot be upheld. She further maintains that allusions which have

¹⁴⁹ *Oratio* 12.2.

¹⁵⁰ *Oratio* 5.3.

¹⁵¹ Gen 1:4; 1:7; 1:14 & 1:18.

¹⁵² *Oratio* 4.3. There are only 24 other occurrences of κατασκευαστής in the whole TLG Corpus (TLG search).

¹⁵³ Translated as 'invisible and unformed' in *NETS*.

¹⁵⁴ Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century* 71.

been read here as references to Genesis 1 refer instead to John 1, which also commences with the phrase ‘in the beginning.’¹⁵⁵ It would probably be wrong to treat this as a binary issue -- either Genesis or John -- since Tatian may be referring simultaneously to both texts. He is discussing primal creation -- highlighted as a key theme of the barbarian writings in 29.2 -- and then moves on to consider the creation and fall of humankind -- also themes in the early chapters of Genesis -- but the incarnation of the Word which is a prime concern of John 1 is not discussed or alluded to by Tatian. All of this strongly suggests that it is much more Genesis than John that he has in mind.

The nature of humankind

The phrase ‘image and likeness of God’ from Gen 1:26-27 is central to Tatian’s account of humankind. The nature of the human soul and psyche was a long-established issue of debate in Greek philosophy, with different traditions — such as the Platonic, the Stoic and the Epicurean – advancing diverse views.¹⁵⁶ In the 2C these issues were still the subject of lively discussion and disagreement, which cannot be considered in detail here,¹⁵⁷ and Tatian presents his view of the human soul against this contemporary philosophical background.

Tatian argues that humankind was originally created with two kinds of spirit, a soul and a higher spirit and that the higher spirit accorded human beings

¹⁵⁵ Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century* 126-7.

¹⁵⁶ The classic Platonist account of the tri-partite soul is found in Plato’s *Republic*: Plato, *Republic 2 Volumes* eds C Emlyn-Jones & W Preddy *LCL* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 2013); a 2C CE textbook view of Platonism is Alcinous, *Handbook of Platonism*, especially Chapters 23-25. For brief summaries of the Stoic position: Sellars, *Stoicism* 81-106 and the Epicurean: C Gill, ‘Psychology’ in J Warren ed, *The Cambridge Companion to Epicureanism* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2009) 125-141.

¹⁵⁷ Trapp, *Philosophy in the Roman Empire* 98-133. At the risk of over-simplification, the Platonist tradition held to a tri-partite soul and the Stoic tradition to a unitary soul, so in advancing a doctrine of a bi-partite soul, Tatian was at variance with both. An example of a 2C philosopher discussing the nature of the soul is Albinus: Dillon, *Middle Platonists* 290-298.

immortality; after the primal creation this was lost, however, and they became merely mortal. 'Image and likeness of God' is Tatian's description of the original higher spirit and is critical to his account;¹⁵⁸ he refers to it no fewer than four times. In the first instance, humankind is described as a spiritual being originally endowed with '...two different kinds of spirits, one of which is called the soul, and the other is greater than the soul; it is the image and likeness of God. The first men were endowed with both.'¹⁵⁹ In the second case, Tatian employs a compressed form of the phrase, 'image and likeness of God' to make the point that when the more powerful, or higher, spirit departed from humankind it became mortal: 'The creature who was made in the image of God, when the more powerful spirit left him, became mortal...'¹⁶⁰ In the third instance, when Tatian is again describing the nature of humankind he says that '...humankind alone is 'the image and likeness of God' ', adding that the human being is '...not one who behaves like the animals, but who has advanced far beyond his humanity towards God himself.'¹⁶¹ In the fourth reference Tatian poses the question, what does the phrase 'divine image and likeness' mean? This is his explanation:

'What is not capable of comparison is Being itself, but what is capable of comparison is nothing other than what is similar. The perfect God is fleshless, but humankind is flesh. The bond of the flesh is the soul, but it is the flesh which contains the soul. If such a structure is like a temple, God is willing to dwell in it through his representative, the spirit ...'¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century* 136 acknowledges that 'Tatian's understanding of the creation of man is clearly influenced by *Genesis*, since he states that the Word made man 'in the likeness of the Father' ' but does not discuss the issue further.

¹⁵⁹ *Oratio* 12.1.

¹⁶⁰ *Oratio* 7.5.

¹⁶¹ *Oratio* 15.3.

¹⁶² *Oratio* 15.4-5.

The fall of humankind and the fall of the rebel angels

Other than when discussing creation and the nature of humankind, Tatian's references to the Barbarian Writings are less direct and better described as allusions. In two instances, the allusions are sufficiently explicit to be traceable to specific texts: the fall of humankind and the fall of the rebel angels; in two other cases, however, the allusions are more generally to literary traditions rather than specific texts: the creation of angels and the eschaton. Greek philosophical schools did not address issues such as these and the sources for Tatian's ideas must therefore be sought within the Jewish literary tradition.

The two traceable allusions are found in *Oratio* 7 where the fall of humankind and the fall of angels are discussed. Genesis 2-3 is a source for the fall of humankind, although not an explicit one; Tatian does not refer to the Genesis narrative and there is no mention of Adam and Eve. The fall of angels is not mentioned in Genesis and Tatian's source for this is most likely 1Enoch.¹⁶³

In discussing the fall of humankind, Tatian includes two key ideas which can be traced back to Genesis 2-3. The first is his assertion that, as originally created, humankind possessed free will,¹⁶⁴ and that this was an essential contributory factor leading to the fall: 'Now the Word before he made humankind created angels, and each of the two forms of creation has free will... This was in order that the one who was bad might be justly punished, since he had become wicked through his own fault...'¹⁶⁵ A connection can be detected here with the narrative in Genesis 3, which describes how acts of disobedience, first by Eve and then by Adam, in both cases freely undertaken, lead to expulsion by God from the Garden

¹⁶³ As noted above, Grant's contention that there are three explicit references to Genesis 2-3 is hard to credit, particularly as the allusions can be read more plausibly as referring to 1Enoch (see below).

¹⁶⁴ Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century* 137 identifies free will as an essential component of Tatian's account of 'Man', but does not point to any link with Genesis 2-3.

¹⁶⁵ *Oratio* 7.2.

of Eden. Genesis does not use the language of free will, but Tatian's comment can be read as a 2C Christian interpretation of the underlying meaning of the narrative in Genesis 3, echoing the notion found in Philo that the exercise of human free will was responsible for the fall.¹⁶⁶

The second key idea traceable to Genesis 2–3 is Tatian's contention that the fall led to the loss of the higher spirit which was originally present in humankind and so to the loss of primal human immortality; he says that 'The creature who was made in the image of God, when the more powerful spirit left him, became mortal...'¹⁶⁷ This echoes Gen 3:3 where, although the concept of the loss of the higher spirit is not present, the loss of immortality is described as the consequence of disobedience in the Garden of Eden: '...but of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the orchard, God said, 'You shall not eat of it nor shall you even touch it, lest you die.'¹⁶⁸

The fall of the rebel angels is briefly described by Tatian in the passage translated by Whittaker as: 'The demons had to move house, and those created first were banished, the former were cast down from heaven, the latter from not this earth, but one better ordered than here.'¹⁶⁹ The meaning of this passage has generated controversy; Hunt argued against Whittaker that οἱ μὲν and οἱ δέ should be rendered by 'some' and 'others' rather than 'the former' and 'the latter',¹⁷⁰ a reading supported by the two most recent translators of the text, Trelenberg and Nesselrath.¹⁷¹ Hunt's rendering is therefore: 'The demons had to move house, for those who were created first have been banished; some have been cast down from

¹⁶⁶ Philo, *Quaestiones 1 LCL* 1.55, commentary on Gen 3:22 (Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century* 214 n177). This is not to suggest that Tatian knew Philo's work.

¹⁶⁷ *Oratio* 7.5.

¹⁶⁸ *NETS*.

¹⁶⁹ *Oratio* 20.3.

¹⁷⁰ Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century*, 134.

¹⁷¹ Trelenberg, *Oratio*, 139 & Nesselrath, *Gegen falsche Götter* 77 (both using the phrases 'die einen' and 'die anderen').

heaven, whilst others [have been cast down] not from this earth, but from [one] better ordered than here.¹⁷² Although the meaning of the text remains ambiguous, Hunt's translation is, on balance, to be preferred. VanderKam's comment that '...all is not pellucid' here is therefore well-judged, but he is also right when he goes on to maintain that the first part of the sentence is a clear reference to the contents of 1 Enoch: '...the parallelism -- the demons driven to another abode which is then equated with being cast from heaven -- shows that the beings whom Tatian called demons are the angels of 1 Enoch 6-16.'¹⁷³

The fall of the rebel angels is not part of the Genesis narrative, but an account of it is found in 1 Enoch 6-11,¹⁷⁴ a text related to Genesis 6-9, and more specifically to Gen 6:1-4,¹⁷⁵ although containing much additional material. In brief, 1 Enoch 6-11 describes two myths: first, how fallen angels led by Shemihazah came down from heaven to earth and married human women, and how their offspring then brought sin and evil to the world: and second, how Asael brought knowledge from heaven down to earth and again how this brought evil into the world. Both Shemihazah and Asael are banished and imprisoned until, at God's command, archangels intervene. Tatian does not follow the 1 Enoch narrative and his reference is brief and allusive. The importance of Enoch for early Christianity has, however, long been appreciated,¹⁷⁶ although its significance for Tatian has

¹⁷² Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century*, 134.

¹⁷³ J C VanderKam, '1 Enoch, Enochic Motifs, and Enoch in Early Christian Literature' in J C VanderKam & W Adler, *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity* (Van Gorcum, Assen 1996) 33-101, 65.

¹⁷⁴ *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch Chapters 1-36; 81-108* by G W Nickelsburg ed K Baltzer (Fortress Press, Minneapolis 2001) 165-228.

¹⁷⁵ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1* 166.

¹⁷⁶ H J Lawlor, 'Early Citations from the Book of Enoch' *Journal of Philology* 25 (1897) 164-225, J C VanderKam, *Enoch: a man for all generations* (University of South Carolina Press, Columbia 1995) & A Y Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: the Reception of Enochic Literature* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2005). The NT Letter of Jude 14-15 explicitly cites (and names) Enoch.

not generally been recognised,¹⁷⁷ but VanderKam's contention that the reference in the *Oratio* is to 1 Enoch makes for a powerful case.

Tatian alludes here to a source outside Genesis, but from elsewhere in the Jewish literary tradition.¹⁷⁸ Modern scholarship regards Chapters 1–36 of 1 Enoch as a Hellenistic work completed by the 3C BCE,¹⁷⁹ but the text presents itself as the work of an ancient figure, Enoch, the same who appears in Genesis 5.¹⁸⁰ The named author is prominent in the narrative of 1 Enoch, with Chapters 12–36 a first person account of his exploits. In the 2C CE it is most likely that the text bearing Enoch's name would have been regarded as of ancient provenance and so it is unsurprising to find a Christian author such as Tatian treating it as both ancient and authoritative.

The creation of angels and the eschaton

In addition to these two traceable allusions, the *Oratio* contains two allusions that relate more generally to Jewish literary tradition, rather than to specific texts. The first is the brief mention of the creation of angels: 'Now the Word before he made humankind created angels...'¹⁸¹ The creation of angels does not appear in Genesis 1, although it features in later Jewish works. Reference was made in Chapter 1 to the Rewritten Bible tradition which was a feature of Hellenistic Jewish literature. It is not possible to know which texts Tatian knew, but the Book of Jubilees, which retells the Genesis 1 creation narrative, and is an example of this tradition, adds the creation of angels on the first day to the Genesis account.¹⁸² Tatian

¹⁷⁷ Lawlor, 'Early Citations from the Book of Enoch' & Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1 82–108 (review of its influence on early Christian writings) do not mention Tatian.

¹⁷⁸ Reed, *Fallen Angels* 175 suggests that Tatian's knowledge of Enoch came via Justin rather than directly.

¹⁷⁹ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1 7.

¹⁸⁰ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1 71.

¹⁸¹ *Oratio* 7.2.

¹⁸² *The Book of Jubilees, Critical Text & Translation 2 Volumes* ed J C VanderKam (Peeters, Leuven 1989) 2 2.2.

therefore probably refers here either to Jubilees or to some other Jewish development of the Genesis tradition.¹⁸³ Jubilees is regarded by modern scholarship as a Hellenistic Jewish work, dated to the 2C BCE,¹⁸⁴ but it presents itself as the work of Moses, to whom the account of creation is dictated by an angel at the behest of God on Mount Sinai.¹⁸⁵ The text emphasises Moses' authorship and, as with 1 Enoch, it seems most likely that in the 2C CE it would have been regarded as of ancient provenance; so, again, it is unsurprising that a Christian author such as Tatian would treat it as ancient and authoritative.

Discussion of the fate of humankind at the end of the world is the other instance where Tatian appears to owe a debt to Jewish literary tradition, even if his sources cannot be precisely identified. His ideas are not expressed in sufficient detail to link them with specific Jewish texts, but Tatian's use of 1 Enoch as a source has already been noted and since it is primarily an eschatological text,¹⁸⁶ Tatian may well be drawing on it or more generally on texts from Jewish eschatological tradition.¹⁸⁷

Tatian affirms his belief in a bodily resurrection and a last judgement: '...our examiner is God, the creator himself'¹⁸⁸ and he links the eschaton to original creation in two respects. First, he contends that bodily death will take human beings back to their state prior to birth, saying that '...it was through my birth that I, previously non-existent, came to believe that I did exist. In the same way, when I who was born cease to exist through death and am seen no more, I shall

¹⁸³ The practice of retelling the Genesis 1 account, but with changes, is found e.g. in 4 Ezra: *Fourth Ezra: a Commentary on the Book of Fourth Ezra* ed M E Stone (Fortress Press, Minneapolis 1990) 178–189.

¹⁸⁴ VanderKam, *Jubilees* 2 V–VI.

¹⁸⁵ VanderKam, *Jubilees* 2 1.27 & 2.1.

¹⁸⁶ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1 37.

¹⁸⁷ C Rowland, *The Open Heaven: a Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (SPCK, London 1982) & J C VanderKam & W Adler, *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity* (Van Gorcum, Assen 1996).

¹⁸⁸ *Oratio* 6.2.

again be as in my previous state of non-existence before birth.¹⁸⁹ Second, he describes the immortal life which humankind can attain *after* death as a restoration of the union of soul and spirit which existed in humankind at the primordial stage prior to the fall, arguing that ‘...we have learned things we did not know through prophets who convinced that the spirit together with the soul would obtain the heavenly garment of mortality -- immortality -- used to foretell the things that the other souls did not know.’¹⁹⁰

Linking creation to the eschaton in this way is a feature of 1Enoch and of other Jewish texts which influenced early Christianity.¹⁹¹ The main theme of 1Enoch is the coming judgement of God and it connects the initiation of evil soon after creation with its eradication at the end of the world.¹⁹² Tatian’s statements cannot be specifically linked with that text, but another work, 4Ezra 6, which connects creation with the last judgement, also links the concept of God as creator with that of God as judge.¹⁹³ Like 1Enoch, the influence of 4Ezra on early Christian writings is well-attested, and it could have been among Tatian’s sources.¹⁹⁴ As with 1Enoch and Jubilees, 4Ezra is regarded by modern scholarship as a late Hellenistic Jewish work, probably as late as the 1C CE,¹⁹⁵ but its putative author, Ezra, who features prominently in the text, presents himself as an ancient figure

¹⁸⁹ *Oratio* 6.3.

¹⁹⁰ *Oratio* 20.6.

¹⁹¹ Rowland, *Open Heaven* 146-155.

¹⁹² Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 137: ‘The mythic materials conflated in chaps. 6-11 constitute a narrative that begins with an explanation of the origins of certain types of evil in the world and ends by anticipating its eradication on a purified earth among a righteous humanity.’

¹⁹³ J A Moo, *Creation, Nature and Hope in 4 Ezra* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 2011) 45.

¹⁹⁴ Stone, *Fourth Ezra* 1-2 & 43.

¹⁹⁵ Dated between the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE and a reference in Clement of Alexandria c190 CE, the most likely date being the reign of Domitian 81-96 CE: Stone, *Fourth Ezra* 9-10.

located in Babylon during the Exile in the 6C BCE¹⁹⁶ where he has a series of visions.¹⁹⁷ It thus seems likely that in the 2C CE 4Ezra would have been regarded as an ancient text. Tatian's direct dependence on particular works cannot be demonstrated, but his discussion of the eschaton appears to owe a debt to traditions that include texts such as 1Enoch and 4Ezra.

Christian texts

Tatian occasionally alludes to texts which have since become part of the Christian NT. As a general rule, such allusions are outside the scope of this study.

However, they do have some relevance since Tatian uses NT citations and allusions to support his Jewish scriptural references rather than to make separate and independent arguments. Thus when describing God the creator he adds in explanation the phrase 'God is spirit' from John 4:24 to support his contention that God existed before there was matter, and that God was in fact the cause of the existence of matter: 'God is spirit, not pervading matter, but the maker of material spirits and of the forms that are in matter.'¹⁹⁸ Then a little later, when making his argument that the invisible and impalpable God is known through his creation he adds in support an allusion to Rom 1:20: 'what is invisible in his power we understand through what he has made.'¹⁹⁹ Later still, in his account of the nature of humankind in the divine image and likeness, Tatian claims that, while God is fleshless and humankind is flesh: '...the bond of the flesh is the soul, but it is the flesh which contains the soul.'²⁰⁰ Here he draws support from allusions to 1 and 2 Corinthians and Ephesians which refer to the human being as

¹⁹⁶ Chapter 3.1: 'In the thirtieth year after the destruction of our city, I Salathiel, who am also called Ezra, was in Babylon' (Stone, *Fourth Ezra* 53).

¹⁹⁷ Stone, *Fourth Ezra* 50-51.

¹⁹⁸ *Oratio* 4.3.

¹⁹⁹ *Oratio* 4.3.

²⁰⁰ *Oratio* 15.4.

the temple of God:²⁰¹ ‘If such a structure is like a temple (ναός), God is willing to dwell in it through his representative, the spirit.’²⁰²

Given the way that the Christian texts are used here in support of Jewish scriptural references, it is not impossible that they could, in Tatian’s eyes, also fall within the scope of the term Barbarian Writings. It was noted earlier that Tatian sets up a dichotomy between two competing cultures, the Greek and the barbarian, and if the Christian writings are not part of Greek culture -- which they are not in the way Tatian uses the term -- then they would have to be part of the barbarian alternative. Arguments have also been made earlier for the prevalence of collections of extracts from authoritative texts in the 2C and, if Tatian was accessing such sources, they could have contained not only material from a variety of Jewish texts, but also extracts from Christian writings which amplify or comment on the more ancient material. This contention is somewhat speculative, but the fluid nature of Tatian’s presentation of the Barbarian Writings as lacking strict boundaries and the way in which he cites allusions from Christian texts to support points being made on the basis of the Jewish scriptures lends the argument some credence.

Tatian’s method for using the scriptures

Tatian’s use of references to the Barbarian Writings leads him to adopt a particular method for presenting his arguments which is very different from Justin’s. Whereas in the Proof from Prophecy each text was set beside its explanatory interpretation, in the *Oratio* quotations and allusions are incorporated seamlessly into the text. An example of this is Chapter 15, where Tatian is giving an account of aspects of the nature of the human soul. At three points in the chapter he injects a reference to substantiate his argument (italicised in the

²⁰¹ 1Cor 3:16 & 6:19; 2Cor 6:16 and Eph 2: 21-22: see Whittaker, *Oratio* 30 & Marcovich, *Oratio* 33.

²⁰² *Oratio* 15.5.

extracts below). First, when discussing the nature of humankind in general he claims: ‘Humankind is not, as the croakers teach, a rational being capable of intelligence and understanding...but humankind alone is *the image and likeness of God*.’²⁰³ Second, when explaining how the divine spirit can inhabit the human soul, he says: ‘The perfect God is fleshless, but humankind is flesh. The bond of the flesh is the soul, but it is the flesh which contains the soul. If such a structure is like a *temple*, *God* is willing to *dwell* in it through his representative, the *spirit*...’²⁰⁴ Third, when discussing the position of humankind following the fall, Tatian says that: ‘...after their loss of immortality human beings have overcome death by death in faith, and through repentance they have been given a calling, according to the saying, *since they were made for a little while lower than the angels*. It is possible for everyone defeated to win another time, if he rejects the constitution making for death.’²⁰⁵

In each case, the reference is incorporated into the text, although differently in each instance. In the first, a brief quotation from Genesis 1 is included to register the point Tatian wishes to make; in the second, words are added which allude to 1 Corinthians 3; while in the third, a lengthier quotation, from Psalm 8, is melded into the text. In all three cases, however, the reference is used to bolster the argument and, indeed, is made part of it, and the text moves seamlessly from Tatian’s words into the scriptural reference and back out again into Tatian’s words. There is an obvious contrast to be made with the Second Sophistic use of quotations described above.

Barbarian Writings and Barbarian Culture

The word barbarian, which appears as part of the phrase Barbarian Writings, is a central idea for Tatian and deserves further discussion. In Greek culture there was

²⁰³ *Oratio* 15.3.

²⁰⁴ *Oratio* 15.4–5.

²⁰⁵ *Oratio* 15.9–10.

a dichotomy between Greek and barbarian, with the presumption that what was Greek was superior to what was barbarian.²⁰⁶ The reality is, however, more complex, for in Greek literature attitudes towards barbarians were not necessarily characterised by simple opposition and antagonism.²⁰⁷ Strong criticism of aspects of Greek culture is found in its own literary tradition, in the work of Lucian, for instance, who satirised particular individuals and cultural practices²⁰⁸ --including philosophy²⁰⁹ -- while there could also be considerable admiration for aspects of barbarian culture, the so-called *laudatio barbarorum*.²¹⁰ Careful analysis of some key texts by Gruen has shown that Greek attitudes towards the 'other' -- which includes barbarians -- were far more nuanced than simple stereo-typing of the concepts Greek and barbarian would suggest.²¹¹

In the *Oratio* references to barbarian culture are wholly praise-worthy. As has been shown, Tatian presents his authoritative writings as the texts of a barbarian philosophy which challenges, and in his view should supplant, those of the Greek

²⁰⁶ A classic account of Graeco-Roman attitudes to barbarians is Y A Dauge, *Le Barbare: recherche sur la conception romaine de la barbarie at de la civilisation* (Latomus, Brussels 1981).

²⁰⁷ An example of such complexity is found in Lucian's 'True History' (Lucian, *Selected Dialogues* trans D Costa (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2005) 203-233) where the narrator meets Homer who reveals himself to be from Babylon and therefore a barbarian, which is ironical since he is the seminal figure in Greek literary culture; Lucian comments that barbarians may more perfectly acquire Greek *paedeia* than Greeks: H-G Nesselrath, 'Two Syrians and Greek Paedeai: Lucian and Tatian' in G A Xenis ed, *Literature, Scholarship, Philosophy and History, Classical Studies in Memory of Ioannis Taifacos* (Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 2015) 129-142, 131-133.

²⁰⁸ C P Jones, *Culture and Society in Lucian* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass 1986).

²⁰⁹ Such as 'Hermetimus or On the Philosophical Schools', Lucian's longest text, in which Lycinus persuades Hermetimus of the folly of following any philosophy (Lucian, *Selected Dialogues* 88-128); see also C Robinson, *Lucian and his Influence in Europe* (Duckworth, London 1979).

²¹⁰ J H Waszink, 'Some Observations on the Appreciation of 'The Philosophy of the Barbarians' in Early Christian Literature' in L J Engels et al eds, *Mélanges offerts à Mademoiselle Christine Mohrmann* (Spectrum, Utrecht 1963) 41-56 & Droge, *Homer or Moses?* 88-91.

²¹¹ E S Gruen, *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity* (Princeton University Press, Princeton 2010).

Schools, but this is only one element in a broader case for the superiority of the barbarian over the Greek. Tatian writes admiringly of barbarian culture and disparagingly of Greek.²¹² In his *Apologia Maior* Justin expressed some criticisms of Greek philosophy and his citations of prophecies were used as a basis for attacking Graeco-Roman mythological religion; in the *Oratio* Tatian launches a much broader assault on Graeco-Roman culture as a whole, including its myth-based religion and its philosophical traditions, but extending far beyond them.

Tatian argues that many important inventions and discoveries are actually barbarian rather than Greek innovations and these cover a wide range, including geometry, history, the alphabet, sculpture, music, astronomy and magic, divination and the cult of sacrifice.²¹³ Later in the *Oratio* considerable space is devoted to hostile accounts of other aspects of Greek culture, including sorcery and medicine,²¹⁴ acting and mime,²¹⁵ drama and music²¹⁶ and gladiatorial shows.²¹⁷ In the early chapters, aspects of Greek culture original to them, such as their language²¹⁸ and their philosophy,²¹⁹ are singled out for particular criticism. The language of the Greeks is their own and not derived from barbarians, but it is a cause of dissension because the different Greek peoples -- Dorians, Attics, Aeolians and Ionians -- speak different forms of the language and the result is that

²¹² Fojtik, 'Tatian the barbarian' considers Tatian's arguments for the superiority of barbarian over Greek cultural identity, but does not give the central place to the Jewish scriptures advocated here.

²¹³ *Oratio* 1: the various inventions and discoveries are attributable to different barbarian peoples: e.g. geometry and history to the Egyptians, the alphabet to the Phoenicians, sculpture to the Etruscans, music to the Phrygians and Tyrrhenians, astronomy to the Babylonians, magic to the Persians, divination to the Telmessians and the cult of sacrifice to the Cyprians.

²¹⁴ *Oratio* 16-18.

²¹⁵ *Oratio* 22.

²¹⁶ *Oratio* 24.

²¹⁷ *Oratio* 23.

²¹⁸ *Oratio* 1.4.

²¹⁹ *Oratio* 2&3.

‘I do not know whom to call Greek.’²²⁰ The philosophies of the Greeks are attacked through the wholesale denigration of philosophers and their characters, with Diogenes, Aristippus, Plato, Aristotle, Heraclitus, Zeno, Pherecydes, Pythagoras and Crates singled out for particular criticism.²²¹ Moreover, the quarrels among philosophers who advance different, and indeed contradictory, doctrines are criticised by Tatian²²² using the terms σύμφωνος and ἀσύμφωνος,²²³ which are employed in a similar way (but more extensively) by Theophilus of Antioch.²²⁴

Tatian argues -- in line with the theft theory referred to above -- that the Greeks derived some of their philosophy from the Barbarian Writings, and that while they took over many inventions from barbarian peoples as they were, their inheritance from barbarian philosophy was subject to misunderstanding and distortion. Tatian therefore claims that Greek philosophy, as it is, should be rejected along with the rest of Greek culture. His wish is to return to the uncorrupted original barbarian philosophy. Thus he presents his Barbarian Writings as the core texts of barbarian culture, and Christianity as the philosophy built upon those texts.²²⁵

This is a provocative stance to take. Wholesale attacks on the Greek philosophical tradition were not unfamiliar in Graeco-Roman culture, as is evident from the prevalence of sceptical traditions of thought.²²⁶ Tatian’s rejection of Greek culture is, however, accompanied by positive promotion of the barbarian alternative. Reference was made earlier to the way in which the basically

²²⁰ *Oratio* 1.4.

²²¹ *Oratio* 2&3.

²²² *Oratio* 25.

²²³ *Oratio* 25.4.

²²⁴ See Chapter 4.

²²⁵ For Tatian’s presentation of Christianity as a barbarian philosophy: Malingrey, *Philosophia* 120–121.

²²⁶ R J Hankinson, *The Sceptics* (Routledge, London 1995).

negative connotations surrounding the idea of the barbarian in Graeco-Roman culture could be ameliorated by some more positive aspects; Droge argues that Tatian takes such a view and that he follows in the footsteps of *laudatio barbarorum*.²²⁷ This, however, is to underplay Tatian's originality, since he breaks new ground in claiming that barbarian culture should actually be *preferred* to the Greek,²²⁸ and in this respect he is exceptional: indeed, unique.

Tatian's argument for the cultural positioning of the Barbarian Writings leads to the emergence of characters in the text. In Justin's *Apologia Maior* three characters were identified, Romans, Jews and Christians, with Romans prominent as the addressees of the petition. In the *Oratio*, however, the delineation of character is more ambiguous; the Romans are absent and the two characters to emerge clearly are the addressees, the Greeks, and the barbarians. Tatian sets up an opposition between them, condemning the Greeks and lauding the barbarians. Christians (and Jews) are not explicitly mentioned in the *Oratio*, although the first person plural is used by Tatian to refer to Christians,²²⁹ so they have a presence in the text, if an unacknowledged one. The first person plural adjective 'our' is also used on a number of occasions to refer to barbarians²³⁰ and this indicates at the minimum a very close affinity between the barbarians of ancient times and the Christians of Tatian's own day. It is possible that Tatian would actually include Christians within the scope of the term barbarian, although, if not, they are at least the current heirs and successors of the ancient barbarian culture. The ancient texts of the barbarians are authoritative texts for Christians; indeed, they are the

²²⁷ Droge, *Homer or Moses?* 88-91.

²²⁸ Gruen, *Rethinking the Other* does not suggest that any writers of the time expressed the wholesale preference for barbarian over Greek found in the *Oratio*.

²²⁹ There are numerous examples: e.g. 'We are convinced that there will be a bodily resurrection...' (6.1), 'we, for whom dying now turns out easily...' (14.5) & 'We are not foolish...' (21.1).

²³⁰ E.g. 'our own people' (31.2), 'our prophets' (36.3) & 'our way of life and history according to our laws' (40.3).

critical link between Tatian's new religion and the barbarian culture to which he aspires to attach himself and Christians generally.

The Jews are absent as a character from the *Oratio*. It was found in Justin's *Apologia Maior* that the role of the Jews was played down and that they were barely acknowledged as the source for the Books of the Prophecies. Tatian, however, plays down the role of the Jews much further, to the point where, at least in relation to the Barbarian Writings, they are not referred to at all. It may be that in view of the Jews' defeat by the Romans and their humiliating expulsion from Jerusalem, referred to explicitly by Justin, Tatian does not wish to associate himself and his ideas directly with the Jews. Indeed, it is possible that Tatian describes his authoritative writings as barbarian precisely because he wishes to avoid referring to them as Jewish; it is noteworthy that he does not attribute the Barbarian Writings to any one barbarian people, as he does with all the inventions he describes in Chapter 1; and since the Jews are not mentioned in the *Oratio*, it is also the case that there are no references to antagonism or conflict between Christians and Jews.

The *Oratio* and the Graeco-Roman literary context

The relationship between Tatian's *Oratio* and the Graeco-Roman literary context is an ambiguous one, since the text exhibits features which locate it firmly within its surroundings even though in many respects it is at odds with Greek culture. In Chapter 2 it was noted that Justin's Proof from Prophecy had affinities with a number of forms of writing from Greek literary traditions, but that it did not fit precisely with any single model. In Tatian's case, the position is different, in one

sense, in that the *Oratio*²³¹ follows one of the commonest and longest-established forms in Graeco-Roman literature, the oration, a form which flourished in the era of the Second Sophistic.²³² There is, however, no obviously close parallel with Tatian's work in the extant classical writings of the time, although there are similarities to be noted with three different authors who were his contemporaries. Thus Tatian's text has affinities with the *Orationes* of the prominent orator, Aelius Aristides;²³³ in *Oratio 33*, for instance, Aelius engages directly with his audience, citing attacks they have made, responding to them and expressing criticism of his own in ways reminiscent of Tatian.²³⁴ In terms of subject matter, however, Tatian's work is closer to that of Maximus of Tyre.²³⁵ Forty-one of his *Dissertationes*, which focus on philosophical and religious issues, survive; *Dissertatio 11* entitled 'Plato on God', for instance, discusses themes which are also important for Tatian: the nature of the human soul (11.7) and the nature of God (11.8-11.12). The strongly vituperative tone adopted by Tatian is not a feature of either Aelius' or Maximus' work; there was, however, a strand of writing in the Graeco-Roman tradition which involved the use of diatribe and public

²³¹ The manuscript title is simply ΤΑΤΙΑΝΟΥ ΠΡΟΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΑΣ (Marcovich, *Oratio 7*) with no term such as ΛΟΓΟΣ to indicate specifically the form of the work. It has all the characteristics of an oration, however; 'Oratio ad Graecos' is the title commonly applied to the work by modern scholars and is used by all four modern editors, Whittaker, Marcovich, Trelenberg and Nesselrath.

²³² For which see: Kennedy, *Art of Rhetoric*.

²³³ He came originally from Smyrna in Asia Minor, travelled extensively and spent time in Rome: *BNP* article on Aelius by E Bowie. Forty-four of his orations survive: *Aelii Aristidis Smyrnaei quae supersunt Omnia 2 Volumes* ed B Keil (Weidmann, Berlin 1893-1898) & *Aelius Aristides The Complete Works 2 Volumes* trans C A Behr (Brill, Leiden 1981-1986). He is cited as a parallel with Tatian by E Norelli, 'La critique du pluralisme Grec dans le *Discours aux grecs* de Tatian' in Pouderon & Doré, *Les Apologues Chrétiens* 81-120, 109-113.

²³⁴ *Aelius Aristides* ed Behr 2 166-172: discussed in C A Behr, *Aelius Aristides and the Sacred Tales* (Adolf M Hakkert, Amsterdam 1968) 102-103.

²³⁵ Text: Maximus of Tyre, *Dissertationes* ed M B Trapp (Teubner, Stuttgart 1994). Translation: Maximus of Tyre, *The Philosophical Orations* trans with an Introduction and Notes by M B Trapp (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1997). Trapp ed, *Philosophical Orations* xlix-li notes points of comparison between Maximus and Christian apologists.

denigration as modes of literary expression²³⁶ and Tatian's *Oratio* can be viewed in that context;²³⁷ there are close parallels, in terms of tone, with works by his contemporary, Lucian, such as *The Death of Peregrinus*.²³⁸

Stylistically, scholars have noted Tatian's use of linguistic and rhetorical devices characteristic of Greek literature of the time. One feature, the use of quotations from and allusions to classic Greek literary works has already been discussed. Puech has identified other features of style characteristic of Second Sophistic writers in the *Oratio*, drawing attention in particular to Tatian's use of asianisms.²³⁹ The significant usage which Tatian makes of rhetorical devices has also been highlighted by scholars of ancient literary style, notably Kennedy and Karadimas.²⁴⁰

The influence on Tatian of Second Sophistic culture more broadly can be detected in two particular themes present in the *Oratio*, those of Greekness and of exile. Modern scholars have identified a preoccupation in Second Sophistic literature with the theme of Greek identity within the Roman Empire, as concerns about the preservation of 'Greekness' in the context of an Empire, which had expanded to encompass the culturally Greek eastern Mediterranean, were worked through. The theme of exile is also explicitly considered in a number of Second Sophistic texts which explore not least how experience of exile relates to

²³⁶ V Arena, 'Roman Oratorical Invective' in Dominik & Hall eds, *Companion to Roman Rhetoric* 149-160. The *BNP* article on Invective by W-L Liebermann refers to a literary tradition going back to Plato of ψόγος (vituperation), a descriptive term cited in Grant, *Greek Apologists* 116 with reference to the *Oratio*.

²³⁷ The description of a diatribe as '...an ethical lecture of a popular nature, often rather loosely put together out of commonplace arguments or examples' in Kennedy, *Art of Rhetoric* 469 fits Tatian's *Oratio* quite well.

²³⁸ Lucian, *Selected Dialogues* 74-87.

²³⁹ A Puech, *Recherches* 14-36 refers to 'l'éloquence asiatique' (21).

²⁴⁰ Karadimas, *Tatian's Oratio ad Graecos* & G A Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* Second ed rev & enlarged (University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill 1999) 153-155.

the articulation of identity; Whitmarsh²⁴¹ has shown how Greek writers such as Musonius Rufus,²⁴² Dio Chrysostom²⁴³ and Favorinus²⁴⁴ used such accounts as a mechanism for reflecting on what it meant to be Greek.

The articulation of these ideas in the *Oratio* has unexpected consequences, however, since Second Sophistic writers discuss the nature of their Greek identity, while Tatian turns matters on their head by rejecting altogether the Greek culture to which he originally belonged and advocating instead a barbarian identity which was wholly new to him. Similarly, while the Second Sophistic writers considered the experience of exile and how it related to their Greek cultural identity, Tatian advocates voluntary self-exile, not as part of a process of articulating his Greekness, but as a route to the abandonment of his Greek heritage in favour of a new barbarian identity. He thus echoes, but at the same time contradicts, the concerns with exile and with Greek identity which were common themes in the literature of the time.

At the heart of the barbarian culture which Tatian promotes in preference to the Greek he places the Barbarian Writings. There is no suggestion in the *Oratio* that these texts were written in anything other than the Greek language -- a Hebrew original is never mentioned -- but, in spite of this, Tatian does not seek to position them within Greek literary culture and they are never referred to as if they belong to any of the conventional classifications of Greek literature; they are described only as barbarian. Thus in some ways Tatian's promotion of the Barbarian Writings sets him at odds with the prevailing Greek culture, while in other ways it serves to connect him to it. How Tatian came to occupy the position he did must be a matter of speculation. He refers to criticisms made of

²⁴¹ T Whitmarsh, 'Greece is the World': Exile and Identity in the Second Sophistic' in Goldhill ed, *Being Greek under Rome* 269-305.

²⁴² Musonius Rufus, 'That exile is not an evil': Whitmarsh, 'Greece is the World' 276-285.

²⁴³ Dio Chrysostom, '13th Oration: On Exile': Whitmarsh, 'Greece is the World' 285-294.

²⁴⁴ Favorinus, 'On Exile': Whitmarsh, 'Greece is the World' 294-303.

him for embracing barbarian doctrines²⁴⁵ and if, following his conversion to Christianity, he really was faced with reactions of this kind from non-Christians, then one possible response would have been to turn criticisms into virtues and argue that his newly-acquired barbarian heritage was actually a mark of superiority rather than inferiority when contrasted with his previous Greek cultural identity. He carries this point to an extreme, however, in arguing that barbarian culture should actually supplant the Greek and this leads him to a paradoxical position in which he is condemning Greek culture wholesale, while in many respects writing from inside the Greek tradition.

Such a response on Tatian's part may, however, contain an element of irony and perhaps should not be taken entirely at face value. Nasrallah,²⁴⁶ in highlighting similarities of tone between Tatian and Second Sophistic writers, describes how Tatian '...draws upon satirical conventions of the second sophistic...' ²⁴⁷ and characterizes the *Oratio* as '...a piece of humor, a satire, a joke of sorts.' ²⁴⁸ The *Oratio* can be read as a text which promotes a philosophy called Christianity in place of other philosophical Schools, a philosophy which is to be preferred to them because its antiquity and its doctrines, as exemplified in its writings, render it superior, but one which still operates within the confines of the Greek cultural world. Faced with accusations that he has adopted barbarian ways, however, Tatian chooses to present his argument as one which provokes a clash between two cultures and two philosophies and to argue that Christianity is not Greek at all but barbarian, and that what makes it distinctively and unavoidably barbarian is that its authoritative texts derive, not from the Greek philosophical Schools, but

²⁴⁵ *Oratio*, 35.3. For the *Oratio* as a response to accusations that Christianity was barbarian: S Antonova, 'Barbarians and the Empire-wide spread of Christianity' in W V Harris ed, *The Spread of Christianity in the First Four Centuries: Essays in Explanation* (Brill, Leiden 2005) 69-85, 72-74.

²⁴⁶ L Nasrallah, 'Mapping the World: Justin, Tatian, Lucian, and the Second Sophistic' *HTR* 98 (2005) 283-314.

²⁴⁷ Nasrallah, 'Mapping the World' 299.

²⁴⁸ Nasrallah, 'Mapping the World' 300.

from an alien tradition which originated in the writings of one of the barbarian peoples.

Conclusion

Setting Tatian's *Oratio* alongside Justin's *Apologia Maior* shows two Christian apologists making use of the Jewish scriptures, but doing so in very different ways. The ancient texts can be viewed prophetically or philosophically, and the apologist may cite exact quotations or invoke the scriptures in more general ways through the use of allusions. The scriptures can provide evidence to support an argument like the Proof from Prophecy and can also support a protreptic case promising further enlightenment on a later occasion. It is noteworthy that neither Justin nor Tatian uses the scriptures as a source of historical material, however.

The *Oratio* form which Tatian used, together with modes of style and presentation culled from Greek literary culture, would have given the text a familiarity of appearance for a Graeco-Roman audience. Much of the work is, however, devoted to assaults on the Graeco-Roman way of life, not least its literary culture. Members of the audience might well have been accustomed to satire, but the uncompromising character of Tatian's attack on Greek culture could have made his message a disconcerting one; for, although, like Justin, he presents the choice between Graeco-Roman culture and the Christian (barbarian) alternative, he does so much more starkly, and the contrast -- indeed the conflict -- between the two cultures emerges particularly strongly when he is discussing their literary texts and traditions.

The Jewish scriptures play no part in Tatian's assaults on Graeco-Roman culture, however; their role is to support arguments presented in the more measured sections of the work promoting Christian ideas. Tatian in effect presents himself as the model of someone who has become dissatisfied with Greek culture,

including its literary heritage, and for whom exposure to the Jewish scriptures opens up a new way forward. It may, however, be the case that only someone who is already sympathetic to Tatian's wholesale criticism of Greek culture would be prepared to consider the alternative which he offers. The Jewish scriptures do not have a high visibility in the *Oratio*, although the concrete evidence of antiquity they provide is important in bestowing on arguments for Christianity a credibility which in a Graeco-Roman context would otherwise be lacking. It is not clear, however, that in other respects reference to the scriptures makes the argument for Christianity any more convincing to Tatian's audience than would otherwise be the case; for it asks a great deal of that audience not only to reject their own cultural heritage completely, but to accept an alien literary culture as their alternative focus of allegiance, especially one whose name, barbarian, had such negative connotations.

Since Tatian makes very little use of scriptural quotations there are limits to what can be said about his approach to scriptural interpretation, and especially to the way that the reading of individual passages of text should be approached. It is, however, clear that he not only values the scriptures for their antiquity, their contents and their divine inspiration, but also regards them as works whose literary style should be admired. The scriptures are not used by Tatian to demonstrate the status of Jesus Christ as they are by Justin; they are, however, presented not only as fundamental for his own conversion to Christianity, but also, critically, as an important source of philosophical ideas, and he discusses them with positive enthusiasm.

Chapter 4: The *Ad Autolyicum* of Theophilus of Antioch: history and commentary

Of the three texts considered in this study, the *Ad Autolyicum* of Theophilus of Antioch (*AA*)¹ has received least attention from modern scholarship. It has been suggested that this may partly be because Theophilus' interests do not align well with those of later scholars.² It remains one of only a small number of substantial Christian texts from the 2C CE to have survived in their entirety, however, and for this reason alone merits serious consideration.

For this study *AA* is a core text, since the importance of the Jewish scriptures in it is obvious. There are similarities with Justin's *Apologia Maior* and Tatian's *Oratio* in its treatment of the scriptures, with prophecy and philosophy as significant themes. Theophilus extends the uses to which the Jewish scriptures are put into new areas however; they are viewed as coherent and connected narratives, they are a source for accurate history and they become the subject of a

¹ References to *AA* are to book, chapter and paragraph numbers in *Theophili Antiocheni Ad Autolyicum* ed M Marcovich (De Gruyter, Berlin 1995). Translations are from *Theophilus of Antioch, Ad Autolyicum* ed R M Grant (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1970), adapted where appropriate. The other modern edition consulted: *Théophile d'Antioche, Trois Livres à Autolycus* ed G Bardy & trans J Sender (Éditions du Cerf, Paris 1948).

² J Engberg, 'Conversion, Apologetic Argumentation and Polemic (amongst friends) in Second-Century Syria: Theophilus' *Ad Autolyicum*' in M Blömer, A Lichtenberger & R Raja eds, *Religious Identities in the Levant from Alexander to Muhammed: Continuity and Change* (Brepols, Turnhout 2015) 83-94, 84: 'The otherwise comparative lack of interest in Theophilus can perhaps partly be explained by the fact that he was silent on matters that have tended to interest later scholars the most: Christ, the incarnation and atonement.'

line-by-line commentary, the earliest example of such a form in extant Christian literature.

Background

AA presents itself as a work in three books addressed by Theophilus to Autolytus. Based primarily on references in later Christian writers, scholars are agreed that the author of the work was in all probability Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch in the 170s and 180s CE.³ Its provenance is accepted as being Antioch,⁴ although the city is not mentioned and the only geographical reference is to the rivers Tigris and Euphrates being ‘on the edge of our regions.’⁵ This is remarkably inexact, and it is only identification of the author as Bishop of Antioch in later Christian literature that links the work to that city.⁶ Theophilus is recorded as having written other works, none of which survives.⁷ The one extant manuscript of *AA* regarded as having independent value, *Venetus Marcianus graecus* 496, is dated to the 11C,⁸ roughly contemporary with the oldest surviving manuscripts of Tatian’s *Oratio*.

AA’s three books have a degree of independence of theme and structure; they were probably written separately and later brought together.⁹ Book 3 can be dated after 180 CE because it refers to the death of Marcus Aurelius in that year.¹⁰ Books 1 and 2 are likely to have been written earlier.¹¹ References to earlier

³ Grant, *AA* ix-x & R Rogers, *Theophilus of Antioch: the Life and Thought of a Second-century Bishop* (Lexington Books, Lanham 2000) 4-6.

⁴ Grant, *AA* ix & Rogers, *Theophilus* 4-6.

⁵ *AA* 2.24.4.

⁶ E.g. Eusebius, *HE* 4.24.

⁷ Rogers, *Theophilus* 4-6.

⁸ Marcovich, *AA* 1. The section of the manuscript containing the text of this work is headed θεοφίλου πρὸς αὐτόλυκον (Marcovich, *AA* 15n).

⁹ Rogers, *Theophilus* 7.

¹⁰ *1A* 3.28.6: Grant, *AA* ix & Rogers, *Theophilus* 7.

¹¹ Grant, *Greek Apologists* 143; Marcovich, *AA* 3 & Rogers, *Theophilus* 7.

books in later books suggest that the author saw them as a single work.¹²

Theophilus applies a different descriptive term to each book,¹³ with Book 1 a ὁμιλία,¹⁴ Book 2 a σύγγραμμα¹⁵ and Book 3 a ὑπόμνημα,¹⁶ although it is doubtful whether sharp distinctions should be drawn on the basis of these terms; Grant translates them ‘discourse’, ‘treatise’ and ‘memorandum’, none of them a precise term.

The main themes addressed in *AA* are the nature of God, the creation of the cosmos, the origin and nature of humankind, the salvation of humankind and human history from the earliest times down to the present day.¹⁷ The first of these emerges in response to a question from Autolycus, who asks Theophilus who his God is,¹⁸ and Book 1 is largely devoted to answering this question. Theophilus’ response makes little reference to the Jewish scriptures; some allusions can be identified, for instance to Job and the Psalms,¹⁹ although sources are not specified, but the argument in Book I does not depend on the Jewish scriptures. The remaining four themes listed above are addressed in Books 2 and 3, where explicit references *are* made to the Jewish scriptures, so it is necessarily those two books which are the focus here.

Some of the same issues arise with the interpretation of *AA* as were encountered with Justin’s *Apologia Maior* and Tatian’s *Oratio*. *AA* presents itself as part of an

¹² Marcovich, *AA* 3: ‘...that the author meant all three books to belong to the same work is witnessed by his references; e.g., at 3.3.5 to 1.9.5; at 3.19.4 to 2.31.3...’

¹³ R Rogers, *Theophilus* 15–16.

¹⁴ *AA* 2.1.1.

¹⁵ *AA* 2.1.2.

¹⁶ *AA* 3.1.1.

¹⁷ For a detailed list of the contents of *AA*: Marcovich, *AA* 4–14.

¹⁸ *AA* 2.1.1.

¹⁹ E.g. *AA* 1.1.2 (Psalms) & 1.6.4 (Job). Lists of Jewish scriptural quotations and allusions are at Grant, *AA* 148–149 & Marcovich, *AA* 141–144. For discussion of allusions to Job: S E Parsons, *Ancient Apologetic Exegesis: Introducing and Recovering Theophilus’s World* (James Clarke, Cambridge 2015) 58–64.

ongoing debate, dealing with particular questions about, and objections to, Christianity, although none of the other components of the debate (real or implied) that may once have existed now survive. The author presented himself as a convert to Christianity²⁰ and his addressee, Autolycus, as a non-Christian with whom he has friendly relations.²¹ It is clear from literary references in *AA* that Theophilus had a measure of Greek education, as did his (real or imaginary) addressee.²² Nothing is known of Autolycus from sources external to the work; whether he actually existed, and if so, whether he had the characteristics ascribed to him, cannot be established.²³ Engberg suggests that *AA* does represent a real debate between two real historical figures, but that Theophilus also had a wider audience in view, among both Christians and non-Christians.²⁴ This could well be the case, although, as with Justin and Tatian, it is not possible to be sure whether there was a genuine external audience; the form of the work could merely be a frame for material which was directed internally. *AA* was read and preserved by Christians, but there is no surviving evidence to suggest that it was known to non-Christians.²⁵ Thus the audience could have been external, or it could have been among Christians alone, or it could have straddled the borderlines between Christians and non-Christians. These are familiar issues from discussion of Justin and Tatian, and with Theophilus they are no easier to resolve. *AA* is concerned with matters of controversy between Christians and non-Christians, however, and in all probability does address debating topics that were live issues in the circumstances in which Theophilus was writing.

²⁰ *AA* 1.14.1.

²¹ This is shown by the polite manner in which Autolycus is addressed by Theophilus at the beginning of each book, in spite of the disagreements between them on the issues discussed ('friend' *AA* 1.1.2, 'O excellent Autolycus' *AA* 2.1.1 & 'greetings' *AA* 3.1.1).

²² Lists of non-scriptural references: Grant, *AA* 151-153 & Marcovich, *AA* 146-147.

²³ The author of the most extensive work on Theophilus considers that Autolycus probably was a real person, while still recognizing the possibility that he could be fictional (Rogers, *Theophilus* 6-7).

²⁴ J Engberg, 'Conversion' 86-87.

²⁵ Caution should, however, be exercised in drawing conclusions from this given the low rate of survival of texts.

As with Justin and Tatian, it is fruitful to consider Theophilus' audience against the categories identified by Barclay. The declared audience is the single individual, Autolycus, named in the text. The implied audience, given the broad range and generalized nature of the arguments, is an educated Graeco-Roman audience, widely scoped. The intended audience is difficult to determine; it could be internal or external to the Christian community (or both) or it could be located somewhere on the borderlands between the two.

Previous scholarship

The role of the Jewish scriptures in *AA* has not been the focus of much scholarship, the one study specifically considering it being Grant's article 'The Bible of Theophilus',²⁶ the counterpart to his article on 'Tatian and the Bible' discussed in Chapter 3. Grant rightly recognizes the importance of the Jewish scriptures for Theophilus; he identifies the scriptural texts drawn on and the nature of their Septuagintal sources²⁷ and for this the work is exceptionally useful. He does not, however, consider how Theophilus uses the scriptures in his arguments and thus does not address issues of prime importance to this study. A more recent article by Simonetti highlights themes relating to Theophilus' use of the scriptures, such as the concept of inspiration, but is too brief to develop them extensively.²⁸ Other works, such as those by Bolgiani²⁹ and Zeegers-Vander

²⁶ R M Grant, 'The Bible of Theophilus of Antioch' *JBL* 66 (1947) 173-196. Theophilus was the subject of Grant's Harvard doctoral dissertation which spawned a series of articles over a number of years e.g. R M Grant, 'The Problem of Theophilus' *HTR* 43 (1950) 179-196.

²⁷ Grant, 'Bible of Theophilus' 174-177 argues that the texts which Theophilus quotes often agree with the 'Lucianic' version of the Septuagint, but he concludes that 'the attempt to establish a single type of text for Theophilus' Septuagint is a failure' (177).

²⁸ M Simonetti, 'La Sacra Scrittura in Teofilo D'Antiochia' in J Fontaine & C Kannengiesser eds, *Epektasis: mélanges patristiques offerts au Cardinal Jean Daniélou* (Beauchesne, Paris 1972) 197-207.

²⁹ F Bolgiani, 'L'asceti di Noé: a proposito di Theoph., *ad Autol.*, III, 19' in F Paulo & M Barrera eds, *Forma futuri, studi in onore del Cardinale Michele Pellegrino* (Bottega d'Erasmus, Torino 1975) 295-333.

Vorst,³⁰ address very specific issues related to the interpretation of scriptural texts in *AA* but do not engage with the broader themes considered here.

The title of Parsons' recent work, *Ancient Apologetic Exegesis* (already cited), suggests a focus on Theophilus' use of scripture for apologetic purposes. Parsons certainly *is* interested in the relationship between Theophilus and scripture and also in his presentation of arguments, but his work is concerned with four specific issues. The first, which has worried a number of scholars,³¹ is why Theophilus, writing as a Christian apologist, says so little about Christ, and particularly his role in salvation; Parson's answer is that, since *AA* should be viewed as a protreptic work designed only 'to draw outsiders towards Christianity',³² detailed treatment of soteriological issues is out of place. His second issue concerns the prevalence of orality in the ancient world; he argues that, as a consequence of this, scholarly interest in a text like *AA* should extend beyond actual quotations to allusions and echoes of scripture. His third point is that the structure of *AA* should be seen as an example of 'judicial rhetoric' in which writers of scripture function as witnesses presenting evidence; and his fourth issue is the way that scriptural anthologies and *testimonia* are used in *AA*.

A complication arises from Parsons' use of the term scripture to include NT texts, which are outside the remit of the present study, but his work nevertheless provides new insights across a range of topics. It is welcome, for instance, following the trail-blazing work of Skarsaune in relation to Justin, to find a scholar attempting to identify the use of *testimonia* by another writer, although

³⁰ N Zeegers-Vander Vorst, 'La création de l'Homme (Gn 1,26) chez Théophile D'Antioche' *VC* 30 (1976) 258-267 & 'Satan, Ève et le serpent chez Théophile D'Antioche' *VC* 35 (1981) 152-169.

³¹ E.g. J Bentivegna, 'A Christianity without Christ by Theophilus of Antioch' in ed E A Livingstone, *SP* 13/2 (Akademie-Verlag, Berlin 1975) 107-130 & Rogers, *Theophilus* 158-159.

³² Parsons, *Ancient Apologetic Exegesis* 156. Rogers, *Theophilus* 153-172 also characterises Theophilus' theology as 'protreptic.'

Parson's conclusion is that in *AA* such usage '...is relatively sparse compared with their rich use in early and mid second century writers such as Pseudo-Barnabas and Justin.'³³ For the present study Parsons' discussion of allusions and echoes is less relevant than might be expected since so many of the instances he identifies relate to NT texts.³⁴ His contention that allusions to Job play a part in Theophilus' account of the nature of God in Book 1 is, however, well made.³⁵ Overall, Parsons provides a useful addition to the literature on Theophilus, but he focuses on a limited range of issues that overlap only to a small extent with the concerns of the present study. Exploring the way Christian authors present the Jewish scriptures to a non-Christian world -- central to this thesis -- is not within Parsons' remit, and he barely concerns himself with two areas that are particularly important for the present study: the Jewish scriptures as a source of accurate history and the inclusion of a commentary on Genesis.³⁶

Other, more numerous, works dealing with theological issues in *AA* touch on Theophilus' use of the scriptures, although without making it a subject of major interest.³⁷ None of them considers how Theophilus regarded or used the scriptures. In the one book-length study of Theophilus, Rogers examines his subject on an issue by issue basis, but Theophilus' approach to scripture is not one of his themes or chapter topics.³⁸ A recent doctoral thesis by Boccabello on Theophilus' treatment of Greek myth bears to some extent on his treatment of scripture in *AA*, since the way Theophilus interprets myth is seen as a foil for his

³³ Parsons, *Ancient Apologetic Exegesis* 155.

³⁴ Parsons, *Ancient Apologetic Exegesis* 38-44.

³⁵ Parsons, *Ancient Apologetic Exegesis* 58-64.

³⁶ Parsons, *Ancient Apologetic Exegesis* 40-41 has only a brief discussion.

³⁷ E.g. W R Schoedel, 'Theophilus of Antioch: Jewish Christian?' *Illinois Classical Studies* 18 (1993) 279-297; K E McVey, 'The Use of Stoic Cosmogony in Theophilus of Antioch's Hexamaeron' in M S Burrows & P Rorem eds, *Biblical Hermeneutics in Historical Perspective: Studies in Honor of Karlfried Froehlich on his Sixtieth Birthday* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 1991) 32-58; Bentivegna, 'Christianity without Christ' & C Curry, 'The Theogony of Theophilus' *VC* 42 (1988) 318-326.

³⁸ Rogers, *Theophilus*.

interpretation of ideas from scripture. Thus there is some discussion of comparisons and contrasts to be drawn between scripture and Greek myth, although Boccabello's interest is very much in Theophilus' treatment of myth and not scripture.³⁹

The current study

This review of previous scholarship shows that, as with Justin's *Apologia Maior* and Tatian's *Oratio*, the way is open for a study of Theophilus' use of the Jewish scriptures in *AA*. The approach will be similar to that adopted in Chapters 2 and 3, in that *AA* will be treated as a repository of arguments which may be studied for what they reveal about the use of the Jewish scriptures by a 2C Christian convert occupied in debates (real or implied) with non-Christians. As with the *Apologia Maior* and the *Oratio*, however, the issue of audience cannot be resolved definitively and a number of possibilities remain open; in order to avoid the convoluted phraseology which would be necessary to recognize this, however, *AA*'s audience, like those for the *Apologia Maior* and the *Oratio*, will be referred to throughout as if it is external to Christianity, in line with the way the text presents itself.

It will be shown in what follows that for Theophilus, as for Justin, the Jewish scriptures are prophetic texts and their authors are prophets. The Jewish scriptures also feature in Theophilus' work in ways not found in Justin (or Tatian). First, they are a source of factual material to support chronological arguments. This theme occupies the second half of Book 3. Second, Theophilus uses commentaries on two extended passages from the scriptures to demonstrate the value of these ancient texts and employ them in support of his arguments, especially concerning the nature of humankind. This takes up a significant

³⁹ J S Boccabello, 'Cosmological Allegoresis of Greek Myth in Theophilus of Antioch's *Ad Autolyicum*' (University of Oxford D Phil 2011).

portion of Book 2. Before exploring these issues further, however, Theophilus' view of the nature of the scriptures and of their prophetic authorship will be considered. In a number of respects his approach is similar to Justin's (and to a lesser extent Tatian's), although there are also points of difference.

The nature of the Sacred Writings

Theophilus asserts the *importance* of the Jewish scriptures for him, claiming that reading the scriptures was instrumental for his conversion:

‘I too did not believe that it [resurrection] would take place, but, having now considered these matters, I believe. At that time I encountered (ἐπιτυχών) the Sacred Writings of the holy prophets, who through the Spirit of God foretold past events in the way that they happened, present events in the way that they are happening, and future events in the order in which they will be accomplished.’⁴⁰

It has already been noted that reference to an encounter with the Jewish scriptures as a trigger for conversion is a recurring theme in early Christian apologetic works,⁴¹ including those of Justin and Tatian, and that it is difficult to judge how literally such comments should be taken. Whether or not Theophilus' comments are to any extent autobiographical, however, he is unquestionably claiming that the scriptures were critical for his conversion. He describes the scriptural texts as prophetic, dividing prophecies into those relating to past events, those relating to the present and those relating to the future in a way that echoes Justin, and also recommends the scriptures as a source of guidance for salvation: ‘If you wish, you too should reverently read (ἐντυχε) the prophetic writings; they will guide you

⁴⁰ AA 1.14.1.

⁴¹ Engberg, ‘From among You are We’ 49-77.

most clearly how to escape eternal punishments and obtain the eternal benefits of God.⁴² Such explanatory comments are introduced because the audience does not have prior familiarity with the Sacred Writings. By contrast, Theophilus does not at any stage describe or explain Graeco-Roman literature; this would be unnecessary since his Greek-educated audience would already be familiar with it.

In referring to the scriptures Theophilus does not use a standard term; he employs a number of different formulations, although for the most part he follows the reference in the conversion account quoted above in emphasizing that the scriptures are both written and sacred. Thus his terms tend to involve a combination of either *ἱερός*, *ἅγιος*, or *θεῖος* with some form of *γράφω* or *βίβλος* and the following phrases are found: *ἡ ἅγια γραφή*,⁴³ *ἡ θεία γραφή*,⁴⁴ *διὰ τῶν ἁγίων γραφῶν*,⁴⁵ *ἐν ταῖς ἁγίαις γραφαῖς*,⁴⁶ *τὰς ἱερὰς βίβλους*⁴⁷ and *τα ἱερὰ γράμματα*.⁴⁸ In what follows the phrase ‘Sacred Writings’ will be used as the collective term for Theophilus’ description of the texts.

Like the two authors already discussed, Theophilus presents the Jewish scriptures as sacred texts of very ancient origin, the most recent prophetic author dating from the reign of King Darius.⁴⁹ He makes no use of the Septuagint Legend, however, which featured so significantly in Justin’s account, to explain the historical origin of the Sacred Writings. As in Justin’s *Apologia Maior* and Tatian’s *Oratio*, scriptures are always quoted in Greek in *AA*; there are, however,

⁴² *AA* 1.14.3.

⁴³ *AA* 2.13.7.

⁴⁴ *AA* 2.18.1.

⁴⁵ *AA* 2.30.7.

⁴⁶ *AA* 3.11.7.

⁴⁷ *AA* 3.20.6.

⁴⁸ *AA* 3.26.1.

⁴⁹ *AA* 3.23.2: ‘The last of the prophets, Zacharias by name, flourished in the reign of Darius.’

three references suggesting that they were originally written in Hebrew -- and that Theophilus knows it -- although this point is not emphasised.⁵⁰

Like Justin and Tatian, Theophilus never accompanies the phrase Sacred Writings with a definition or list of contents, so his view of their scope remains unclear. He may have regarded them as a settled collection of books, but, as was suggested in the case of Tatian, he could have looked on them more in the nature of a tradition of writings, consisting of a number of texts, whose make-up was not necessarily fixed. Which texts comprise the Sacred Writings will be considered below when Theophilus' use of the scriptures is discussed.

On occasion, Theophilus refers to a written source using a different description, the *Genesis of the World* (*Γένεσις κόσμου*). He tells the story of Cain and Abel partly through quotations from Genesis 4 and partly in his own words. His account cannot be described as a paraphrase, since he introduces elements of his own not in the Genesis narrative -- saying, for example, that it is Satan who incites Cain to kill Abel⁵¹ -- and he leaves out some elements -- such as the sacrifices to God by the two brothers -- that are in Genesis.⁵² Theophilus says that further information is to be found in a book (*βίβλος*) called *Γένεσις κόσμου*,⁵³ but what is meant by this phrase is problematic. There are three later references which may be to the same source, all of them relating back to an (unspecified) earlier place in the text. The first occurs when Theophilus describes the descendants of Cain and Seth and refers to the existence of a 'partial account elsewhere' -- additional to the Sacred Writings -- with the parenthetical comment

⁵⁰ The three references are at 2.12.5, when Theophilus is discussing the Hexaemeron and says 'what the Hebrews call Sabbath is rendered 'hebdomad (*ἑβδομάς*) in Greek', at 2.24.3 where he says 'The Hebrew word Eden means delight' and at 3.19.2 where he refers to '...Noah, whose Hebrew name is translated in Greek as rest'.

⁵¹ *AA* 2.29.3.

⁵² Gen 4:3-5.

⁵³ *AA* 2.29.2.

‘as we have said above.’⁵⁴ The other two occur when the story of Noah is being discussed; he describes how ‘an account of the story of Noah... is available for us in the book (βίβλος again) which we mentioned before...’⁵⁵ and later comments: ‘As for the three sons of Noah and their relationships and their genealogies, we have a brief catalogue in the book (βίβλος again) we mentioned previously.’⁵⁶

If these three references are all to the same text -- as seems most likely -- then the book entitled *Γένεσις κόσμου* contains at a minimum the stories of Cain and Abel, of Noah and of the sons of Noah and also genealogical material. Use of the term βίβλος implies a discrete text rather than a collection of quotations and to judge from the contents referred to this could well be Genesis, or at least a portion of it. Commenting on *Γένεσις κόσμου*, Bardy says firmly that ‘Ce titre désigne évidemment la *Genèse*...’⁵⁷ Grant, less surely, comments that it is ‘possibly, but not certainly,’ a reference to Genesis.⁵⁸ Theophilus could, however, be referring to some text other than Genesis and there are two reasons for thinking that this may be so: first, as already noted, the Cain and Abel narrative in *AA* is not the same as Genesis, and second, there is an apparent distinction between two texts, one referred to as the ‘Sacred Writings’ and other simply as a ‘βίβλος’. If Theophilus is accessing some other source called *Γένεσις κόσμου* separate from Genesis, it is unlikely to be wholly independent, and is most likely a text that is partly, and probably mainly, dependent on Genesis. It could be a source belonging to the Hellenistic Jewish Rewritten Bible tradition referred to previously, or alternatively another work by Theophilus himself; later on, indeed,

⁵⁴ *AA* 2.30.7.

⁵⁵ *AA* 2.30.10.

⁵⁶ *AA* 2.31.3.

⁵⁷ Bardy, *AA*, 171n5.

⁵⁸ Grant, *AA* 73n.

when discussing the story of the deluge Theophilus says that he provides explanations in another work, and this could be the same *Γένεσις κόσμου*.⁵⁹

The prophets as authors of the Sacred Writings

Theophilus describes the authors of the Sacred Writings as prophets, referring to them in the plural, since there were a number of them: ‘There were not just one or two of them but more at various times and seasons...’⁶⁰ Like Justin, Theophilus says little about the prophets, but does say that they came from among the Hebrews, using the phrases *παρὰ Ἑβραίοις*⁶¹ and *ἐν Ἑβραίοις*⁶² and comments that the term *Ἑβραίοις* is synonymous with *Ἰουδαίοις*, the Jews.⁶³

Individual prophets are sometimes named when they are quoted: Moses,⁶⁴ David,⁶⁵ Solomon,⁶⁶ Isaiah,⁶⁷ Jeremiah,⁶⁸ Hosea,⁶⁹ Habbukuk,⁷⁰ Ezekiel,⁷¹ Joel,⁷² Zechariah⁷³ and Malachi.⁷⁴ Snippets of information about individual prophets are provided only rarely and briefly; for instance, Theophilus says that ‘Moses...lived many years before Solomon’⁷⁵ and that Solomon ‘was a king and

⁵⁹ AA 3.19.3: ‘...ἐν ἑτέρῳ λόγῳ ἐδηλώσαμεν...’: this assumes that in using the first person plural Theophilus is referring here to himself.

⁶⁰ AA 2.9.2.

⁶¹ AA 2.9.2.

⁶² AA 2.35.15.

⁶³ AA 3.9.6. Usage of ‘Hebrew’ and ‘Jew’ in ancient texts is often more complex than the simple identity of the two terms described here by Theophilus: Lieu, *Christian Identity* 240–249.

⁶⁴ AA 3.18.5.

⁶⁵ AA 2.35.12.

⁶⁶ AA 3.13.5.

⁶⁷ AA 2.35.5.

⁶⁸ AA 2.35.8.

⁶⁹ AA 2.35.4.

⁷⁰ AA 2.35.13.

⁷¹ AA 3.11.4.

⁷² AA 3.12.6.

⁷³ AA 3.12.7.

⁷⁴ AA 2.38.1.

⁷⁵ AA 2.10.7.

prophet'.⁷⁶ Essentially, however, the prophets are presented, as in Justin's *Apologia Maior*, as little more than names.

Collectively the prophets are described as 'illiterate men (ἀγράμματοι) and shepherds and uneducated (ἰδιῶται),'⁷⁷ suggesting that their prophetic insights do not derive from learning and education. Whether, like Justin, Theophilus thought that the prophetic sayings were originally delivered orally and only later written down, is unclear, but the works of the prophets clearly exist as texts which can be read⁷⁸ and therefore must have been committed to writing at some stage. Moreover, he refers to 'the antiquity of our writings'⁷⁹ and describes the Sacred Writings as 'older than all other writers',⁸⁰ suggesting that he thought the commitment of the prophecies to writing took place at a very early stage; he may have thought, as Justin did, that the prophets did it themselves. Like Justin, he says that the preservation of the ancient texts is attributable to the Jews, since it is 'from them we possess the Sacred Writings (οἱ Ἑβραῖοι...ἀφ' ὧν...τὰς ἱερὰς βίβλους ἔχομεν)';⁸¹ the Greek library at Alexandria is never mentioned.

For Theophilus the prophets' status derives from the fact that they were inspired by God -- a sentiment again familiar from Justin and Tatian -- and this is how they acquired their knowledge and insights: hence the use of the terms ἱερός and ἅγιος (holy and sacred). Theophilus does not use Justin's phrase Prophetic Spirit, but his terminology conveys a similar sense that it is a spirit, which ultimately comes from God, that inspires the prophets. Thus he says that the prophets

⁷⁶ AA 3.13.2.

⁷⁷ AA 2.35.15. An echo of the description of the Apostles Peter and John in Acts 4.13 as ἀγράμματοι and ἰδιῶται: Marcovich, AA 88n.

⁷⁸ AA 1.14.1.

⁷⁹ AA 3.1.1.

⁸⁰ AA 3.20.6.

⁸¹ AA 3.20.6.

foretold ‘through the spirit of God (διὰ πνεύματος θεοῦ)’⁸² and that they ‘were possessed by a holy spirit (πνεύματος ἁγίου) and became prophets and were inspired and instructed by God himself, were taught by God and became holy and righteous.’⁸³ Theophilus does, however, use other terms to denote the intermediary between God and the prophets, saying: ‘It was the Spirit of God and Beginning and Sophia and Power of the Most High who came down into the prophets and spoke through them about the creation of the world and all the rest.’⁸⁴ He also uses Logos with a similar sense: ‘Moses... -- or rather, the Logos of God speaking through him as an instrument -- says: ‘In the Beginning God made heaven and earth.’’⁸⁵ Why Theophilus uses a number of different terms in this way is unclear; perhaps he did not regard the particular words he uses -- which in any case he does not define -- as having precise meanings or indeed as being especially significant. The important point he wishes to convey is that the prophets’ words were divinely inspired, and spirit (πνεῦμα) is the term he most commonly uses to denote this.⁸⁶

If the Sacred Writings are the product of divine inspiration, then it follows that they must be true. Theophilus says that: ‘...those who wish to can read what was said through them and acquire accurate knowledge of the truth and not be misled by speculation and pointless labour.’⁸⁷ (The factual accuracy of the Sacred Writings is an issue that will recur when their role as historical sources is discussed.) One aspect of the truthfulness of the scriptures is that they are σύμφωνος or consistent.⁸⁸ This theme occurs in both Justin and Tatian, but

⁸² AA 1.14.1.

⁸³ AA 2.9.1.

⁸⁴ AA 2.10.5.

⁸⁵ AA 2.10.7.

⁸⁶ Marcovich, AA 183 lists the 25 occurrences of the word πνεῦμα in the text.

⁸⁷ AA 2.35.14.

⁸⁸ This is probably the least bad translation. Grant sometimes renders σύμφωνος as ‘consistent’ (e.g. AA 2.9.2) and sometimes as ‘harmonious’ (AA 2.35.9). Boccabello, ‘Cosmological allegoresis’ 232–236 uses ‘harmony’ throughout.

Theophilus gives it greater emphasis. The term ‘consistent’ sounds somewhat bland in English translation, but to Theophilus it is a significant virtue and he refers to the prophets’ consistency on a number of occasions.⁸⁹ Since there are a number of prophets, it is important, if the truthfulness of what they say is to be credible, that they are consistent with one another and that their messages do not conflict. He paints a positive picture of the concept of consistency by combining the term σύμφωνα with φίλα (agreeably) several times,⁹⁰ and contrasts σύμφωνος with ἀσύμφωνος or inconsistent,⁹¹ the quality -- or rather the defect -- found in Greek poets and philosophers.⁹²

Although prophets are central to Theophilus’ understanding of the scriptures, since collectively they are its authors, he does not define a prophet. It is, however, possible to glean from *AA* what prophets do and the kind of texts they produce. There are similarities with Justin in this respect, in that Theophilus sees prophets as authors who produce texts with a wide range of types of content, including not just prophecy, in the sense of foretelling the future, but also ethical and legal material, accounts of the origin of the cosmos and of the very early history of humankind.

Foretelling the future is a critical part of the prophets’ role, which Theophilus refers to more than once. As noted above, he says in his conversion account that they foretold past events as they happened, present events as they are happening, and future events as they will happen⁹³ and later repeats this sentiment saying that prophets described ‘...events which had previously occurred, events in their own

⁸⁹ *AA* 2.9.2; 2.10.1; 2.35.9 & 3.17.4.

⁹⁰ *AA* 2.9.2; 2.35.9 & 3.17.4.

⁹¹ Again, ‘inconsistency’ is probably the least bad translation: Boccabello, ‘Cosmological Allegoresis’ 232–236 uses ‘discordant’.

⁹² *AA* 2.5.1; 2.8.2; 2.8.5 & 3.3.1.

⁹³ *AA* 1.14.1.

time and events which are now being fulfilled in our times.⁹⁴ Since former events occurred as predicted by the prophets, so other events predicted, but not yet fulfilled, will occur in the future, an argument familiar from Justin.

Theophilus limits himself to generalized statements about prophecy, however: he does not cite individual prophecies and seek to match them with their fulfillments, as Justin does.

The prophets do more than foretell the future, for they describe events in the distant past which they had not themselves experienced, a point, again, familiar from Justin. Thus the prophet Moses⁹⁵ gives accounts of creation and of events in the Garden of Eden which took place long before he was born and this can happen because prophets receive knowledge from God: ‘... they were judged worthy of receiving the reward of becoming instruments of God and of containing Wisdom from him. Through this Wisdom they spoke about the creation of the world...’⁹⁶

The prophets also recount ethical precepts -- again, as in Justin -- and proclaim God’s law, two categories which in practice overlap: ‘God...gave a law and sent the holy prophets to proclaim and to teach the human race so that each one of us might become sober...They also taught us to refrain from unlawful idolatry and adultery and murder, fornication, theft, covetousness, perjury, anger, and all licentiousness and uncleanness...’⁹⁷ Theophilus gives a version of the Decalogue, which he calls a ‘holy law’ (νόμον ἅγιον),⁹⁸ although it diverges from the Septuagint text of Exodus 20. It was not unusual in Jewish and early Christian texts for both the order and the contents of the Decalogue to be presented in

⁹⁴ AA 2.9.2.

⁹⁵ For Moses as a prophet: AA 2.30.8 & 3.18.5.

⁹⁶ AA 2.9.1.

⁹⁷ AA 2.34.4-5.

⁹⁸ AA 3.9.1.

different ways.⁹⁹ In *AA* the commandments not to take the Lord's name in vain and to observe the Sabbath are omitted and three injunctions from Exodus 23 are added: not to pervert the judgment of the poor human being in judging him, not to kill the innocent and righteous human being and not to vindicate the ungodly human being.¹⁰⁰ Moses is described as the minister (διάκονος) 'of this divine law'¹⁰¹ and several chapters follow containing further ethical precepts enunciated by prophets, grouped around the themes of repentance,¹⁰² justice¹⁰³ and chastity.¹⁰⁴

Theophilus also gives a high profile to Sibylline prophecy. A number of early Christian texts treated the Sybilline Oracles as non-Christian witnesses to the truth,¹⁰⁵ although Theophilus is the first extant Christian writer to quote extensively from them.¹⁰⁶ The role these texts play in his argument is not wholly clear, although the strongly monotheistic sentiments expressed by the Sibyl in the passages Theophilus quotes are certainly consistent with his thought. The Sibylline Oracles are first introduced after Theophilus has been discussing the Hebrew prophets in positive terms, and reference to them demonstrates that prophecy is not a feature of the Hebrew tradition alone but can also arise among the Greeks. The Sibyl is introduced with minimal explanation, so it can be assumed that she is already familiar to Theophilus' audience. He includes a

⁹⁹ R A Freund, 'The Decalogue in Early Judaism and Christianity' in C A Evans & J A Sanders eds, *The Function of Scripture in Early Jewish and Christian Tradition* (Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield 1998) 124-141 & J C de Vos, *Rezeption und Wirkung des Dekalogs in jüdischen und christlichen Schriften bis 200 n. Chr.* (Brill, Leiden 2016) 270-363, especially 290-296.

¹⁰⁰ *AA* 3.9.2-5. See Grant, 'Bible of Theophilus' 175-176 & R M Grant, 'The Decalogue in Early Christianity' *HTR* 40 (1947) 1-17.

¹⁰¹ *AA* 3.9.6.

¹⁰² *AA* 3.11.

¹⁰³ *AA* 3.12.

¹⁰⁴ *AA* 3.13.3. This section also contains two citations from the Gospel of Matthew, described as being from 'the gospel voice' (ἡ εὐαγγέλιος φωνή).

¹⁰⁵ G J M Bartelink, 'Die *Oracula Sibyllina* in den frühchristlichen griechischen Schriften von Justin bis Origenes (150-250 nach Chr.)' in J den Boeft & A Hilhorst eds, *Early Christian Poetry, a Collection of Essays* (Brill, Leiden 1993) 23-33.

¹⁰⁶ Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles* 82.

lengthy extract of 84 lines from the Third Sibylline Oracle and afterwards comments approvingly: ‘...that these statements are true and useful and just and lovely is obvious to all people.’¹⁰⁷ Modern scholars regard the Third Sibylline Oracle as a Hellenistic Jewish text of uncertain date, whose origins are obscure;¹⁰⁸ to Theophilus, however, it has a Greek provenance and he describes its author as ‘the Sibyl who was a prophetess among the Greeks and the other nations.’¹⁰⁹ In general, he draws a sharp distinction between the Hebrew prophets, whom he admires, on the one hand, and poets and philosophers from among the Greeks whom he heavily criticizes, on the other;¹¹⁰ the Sibyl does not fit neatly into this framework, however, for while she is described as being from ‘among the Greeks,’¹¹¹ she appears to have more in common with the Hebrew prophets: she herself is a prophetess. When Theophilus refers to the consistency to be found among the divinely-inspired prophets he includes the Sibyl along with the Hebrew prophets¹¹² and when he later distinguishes between prophets on the one hand and ‘poets and philosophers’ (who are Greek) on the other, he brackets the Sibyl with the prophets.¹¹³

Theophilus includes the lengthy extract from the Third Sibylline Oracle and then, curiously, makes very little comment about it. Before the quotation begins he says, briefly, that the Sibyl ‘...at the beginning of her prophecy rebukes the human race ...’¹¹⁴ and at the end of the quotation -- in addition to the statement

¹⁰⁷ *AA* 2.36.16.

¹⁰⁸ For Sibylline traditions see the works cited in Chapter 2. In spite of its title, Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles* 3–253 contains useful material on the Third Oracle.

¹⁰⁹ *AA* 2.36.1.

¹¹⁰ Immediately after the main Sibylline extract, in *AA* 2.37, Theophilus cites some Greek writers who expressed sentiments of which he approves, but criticizes them by invoking the theft theory referred to in previous chapters of this study, saying that ‘they stole these things from the law and the prophets.’ (*AA* 2.37.16).

¹¹¹ *AA* 2.9.2.

¹¹² *AA* 2.9.2.

¹¹³ *AA* 2.38.3. Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles* 82.

¹¹⁴ *AA* 2.36.1.

of general approval already noted -- comments merely that ‘...those who behave in an evil way must necessarily be punished according to the worth of their actions.’¹¹⁵ There are two other, much briefer, references to Sibylline prophecies in *AA*, and the prophetess is named in both instances: the first is a three-line extract quoted to support the argument that gods are not generated¹¹⁶ and the second a nine-line extract from the Eighth Sibylline Book cited in connection with the story of the Tower of Babel.¹¹⁷ For Theophilus the Sibylline Oracles are a much less important source of prophetic insight than the Hebrew prophets, but their inclusion shows at least that, for him, divinely-inspired prophecy is not purely the preserve of Jewish tradition.

The use of the Sacred Writings in *Ad Autolyicum*

It was noted above that Theophilus uses the phrase Sacred Writings without specifying which texts the term covers. It is, however, possible to build up a picture of what they comprise from the references he makes and these suggest that he has a wider range of texts in view than either Justin or Tatian.

The texts which are unambiguously referred to in *AA* are: first, the early chapters of Genesis, quoted at length and described in the following terms: ‘these things the Sacred Writings teach first’,¹¹⁸ a phraseology suggesting that reference is being made to a collection of which the early chapters of Genesis are the beginning; second, the later chapters of Genesis which feature in summary narrative (with some quotations):¹¹⁹ third, texts containing the Jewish law (at least in extracts):¹²⁰

¹¹⁵ *AA* 2.36.16.

¹¹⁶ *AA* 2.3.2.

¹¹⁷ *AA* 2.31.6.

¹¹⁸ *AA* 2.10.10.

¹¹⁹ E.g. *AA* 2.29 which summarises the story of Cain and Abel and contains three quotations from Genesis 4.

¹²⁰ As already noted, Theophilus’ version of the Decalogue is at *AA* 3.9.1-5.

fourth, prophetic texts, again at least in extracts:¹²¹ and fifth, the outline chronology of human history from the Garden of Eden to the return from the Babylonian Exile as recounted in the Jewish scriptures.¹²²

The only complete texts to which Theophilus unequivocally has access are the early chapters of Genesis which he quotes in full.¹²³ His references to later chapters of Genesis, to the Jewish law and to prophetic texts could come directly from the Septuagint, but they could be from other texts, or from collections of extracts; if the latter, then their ultimate source is, however, likely to be the full text of the Jewish scriptures. Chronological material could similarly still be derived from historical summaries of the contents of the scriptures or directly from the Sacred Writings.

Whether or not Theophilus is engaging with the texts themselves or dependent summaries, his use of material from the Jewish scriptures to construct a continuous chronology shows an awareness of these texts as a series, providing a connected narrative of historical events from Creation down to the Babylonian Exile or, expressed textually, from Genesis to 2 Kings / 2 Chronicles. At least some of the texts of the Jewish scriptures -- at least by implication -- appear therefore to form a collection with a coherent organizing principle, that is a chronological one; they are not a grouping of otherwise unconnected writings. In this respect Theophilus presents the Jewish scriptures in a very different light from Justin and Tatian.

Theophilus uses the scriptures, as Tatian does, to support his arguments for Christianity and these focus, as noted above, on creation, on the origin, nature and salvation of humankind and on human history from the earliest times to the

¹²¹ Quotations from prophetic books are found in *AA* 3.11-14.

¹²² *AA* 3.24-25.

¹²³ *AA* 2.10-21.

present day. He does so more directly, however, because he uses quotations extensively, which Tatian did not. When wishing to highlight moral points, Theophilus follows Justin's technique of providing brief selective quotations; an example is Theophilus' account of repentance,¹²⁴ which is developed through a series of quotations from Deuteronomy, Baruch, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Jeremiah, in some cases accompanying them with explanatory comments in the manner of Justin. This is (methodologically) familiar ground. Theophilus charts a new direction, however, when he introduces two extensive passages from the Jewish scriptures and employs a commentary format as the mechanism for presenting his own teaching; how he does this will be considered further below.

Justin, Tatian and Theophilus share a wish that readers should become more familiar with the scriptures through direct exposure, although they adopt different strategies to achieve this. Justin quotes relatively short extracts, Tatian barely quotes at all (leaving engagement with texts to a later occasion), while Theophilus adopts the novel approach of quoting lengthy extracts, no doubt recognizing that his readers are previously unfamiliar with them. He explicitly urges them to tackle the texts for themselves, saying: 'For those who wish to can read what was said through them [the prophets] and acquire accurate knowledge of the truth...'¹²⁵ Perhaps more important than what he says, however, is what he does, in laying before them extensive extracts from Genesis quoted verbatim.

Thus, while Theophilus' approach to the scriptures overlaps to a considerable degree with those of Justin and Tatian, there are also novel features in *AA* in both content and form. In terms of *content*, Theophilus uses the Jewish scriptures as the source for an accurate history of the world from the beginning of time down to the return of the Jews from the Babylonian Exile. In terms of *form*,

¹²⁴ *AA* 3.11.3-6.

¹²⁵ *AA* 2.35.14.

Theophilus not only sets out two extended extracts from the Jewish scriptures that are complete and coherent narratives, but he accompanies each with a commentary, a technique paralleling the treatment of high status texts in Graeco-Roman culture.

The Sacred Writings as a source for accurate history

After asserting that the Sacred Writings are true, Theophilus claims that they can be useful, and indeed important, in providing an accurate source of information about past events in human history. The second half of Book 3 is devoted to demonstrating this, after the first half has subjected Greek literature and Greek ideas to a range of criticisms¹²⁶ and after some Christian ethical teachings have been discussed.¹²⁷ Neither Justin nor Tatian treated the Jewish scriptures as history in the way Theophilus does, so *AA* contains something novel in extant Christian apologetic writing in this respect.¹²⁸

Justin has been shown to use prophetic material to tell the story of the life of Jesus Christ and the mission of the apostles and to explain their significance. He also referred to prophecies about public events, such as the defeat of the Jews by the Romans, thus demonstrating how prophecy functions in practice: showing that some prophecies had been fulfilled while others remained to be fulfilled.

However, Justin was not seeking to construct a general history. Tatian is interested in historical events, but his attention is focused very specifically on demonstrating that Moses was more ancient than Homer, indeed, more ancient than the whole of Greek culture. Moreover, to achieve his objective he cites evidence from Greek, Chaldean, Phoenician and Egyptian sources and makes barely any use of the Jewish scriptures.

¹²⁶ *AA* 3.1-8.

¹²⁷ *AA* 3.9-15.

¹²⁸ For the broader historical perspective: M Wallraff, 'The Beginning of Christian Universal History from Tatian to Julius Africanus' *ZAC* 14 (2011) 540-555.

Theophilus adopts a different strategy, preferring to use the Sacred Writings as evidence in support of historical arguments: ‘Hence it is obvious how our Sacred Writings are proved to be more ancient and more true than the writings of the Greeks and the Egyptians or any other historiographers.’¹²⁹ For Theophilus, the value of the Sacred Writings as a source for history is due to two factors already noted: ‘the antiquity of the prophetic writings and the divine nature of our message.’¹³⁰

By contrast with the Sacred Writings, Greek historians only go back in time a certain distance and cannot deal with more ancient history: ‘For most writers, such as Herodotus and Thucydides and Xenophon and the other historiographers, begin their accounts at about the reign of Cyrus and Darius, since they are unable to make accurate statements about the ancient times prior to them.’¹³¹ Moreover, the divine nature of the message of the Sacred Writings gives them a factual accuracy denied to other sources. Thus Theophilus highlights inaccuracies in the work of the Egyptian historian Manetho, who claimed -- contrary to the testimony in the Sacred Writings -- that the Hebrews were expelled from Egypt because of leprosy, and who was unable to establish a correct chronology of the events surrounding the Exodus.¹³² Consequently his history does not have the factual reliability of the Sacred Writings.

Theophilus’ chronology begins with Adam, follows the narrative of the Jewish scriptures through the period of the Flood and the Patriarchs, the migration to and return from Egypt, the period of the Judges and the Monarchy up to the Babylonian Exile and ends with the return from the Exile under Cyrus the

¹²⁹ *AA* 3.26.1.

¹³⁰ *AA* 3.29.1.

¹³¹ *AA* 3.26.1.

¹³² *AA* 3.21.1.

Persian.¹³³ He does not say in so many words that this chronology derives from the Sacred Writings, but various comments strongly imply this. Thus he begins by ‘...going back to the first beginning of the creation of the world, which Moses the minister of God described...’¹³⁴, a comment which reads very like a description of the early chapters of Genesis. He also refers to being able to provide the information only ‘with God’s help’,¹³⁵ and says: ‘I ask favour from the one God that I may speak the whole truth accurately according to his will...’¹³⁶ These remarks indicate that he considers his source to be divinely inspired, which is a characteristic of the Sacred Writings. Moreover, at two points Theophilus refers to the *accuracy* of the Sacred Writings as a historical source, the first before he sets out his chronology and the second afterwards. On the first occasion he says: ‘Hence it is obvious how our Sacred Writings are proved to be more ancient and more true than the writings of the Greeks and the Egyptians or any other historiographers’¹³⁷ and on the second: ‘From the compilation of the periods of time and from all that has been said, the antiquity of the prophetic writings and the divine nature of our message are obvious. This message is not recent in origin, nor are our writings, as some suppose, mythical and false, but actually more ancient and more trustworthy.’¹³⁸

Theophilus’ chronological narrative is bald, containing little more than names and lengths of time: for instance: ‘Isaac...lived 60 years until he had issue and begot Jacob: Jacob lived 130 years before the migration to Egypt...The sojourning of the Hebrews in Egypt lasted 430 years, and after their exodus from the land of Egypt they lived in what is called the desert for 40 years. The total, then, is 3,938

¹³³ AA 3.24–3.25.

¹³⁴ AA 3.23.5–6.

¹³⁵ AA 3.23.5.

¹³⁶ AA 3.23.7.

¹³⁷ AA 3.26.1.

¹³⁸ AA 3.29.1.

years to the time when Moses died...¹³⁹ The computation of lengths of time is clearly important and a number of sub-totals are included in the course of the narrative, so that from Adam to the Deluge is 2,242 years,¹⁴⁰ to Abraham is 3,278 years,¹⁴¹ to the death of Moses is 3,938 years¹⁴² and to 'the sojourning in the land of Babylon is 4,954 years, 6 months and 10 days.'¹⁴³

Theophilus does not make any further use of the numbers emerging from his computations and no arguments are built upon them, so it must be asked why he accords them the importance he evidently does. Two points can be made in this connection. First, the large size of the numbers produced by computing totals shows the great length of time which has elapsed from Adam to the present day and attests to the antiquity of the events being recounted. Second, the precision of the computations, to the year, and ultimately to the day, demonstrates the great accuracy of the Sacred Writings as a historical record.

There are only two brief references to Theophilus' historical account being anything more than a chronology of events. The first is his comment that the Babylonian captivity was a consequence of the sins of the Jewish people: '...since the people remained in their sins and did not repent, in accordance with the prophecy of Jeremiah, a king of Babylon named Nebouchodonosor went up to Judaea. He transferred the people of the Jews to Babylon and destroyed the temple which Solomon had built.'¹⁴⁴ The second is his observation that the beginning and the end of the Babylonian captivity were prophesied by God speaking through Jeremiah: 'Just as God foretold through the prophet Jeremiah that the people would be led captive to Babylon, so he indicated in advance that

¹³⁹ AA 3.24.3.

¹⁴⁰ AA 3.24.1.

¹⁴¹ AA 3.24.2.

¹⁴² AA 3.24.3.

¹⁴³ AA 3.25.3.

¹⁴⁴ AA 3.25.3.

they would come back again to their own land after 70 years.’¹⁴⁵ For the most part, however, Theophilus’ interest in the Sacred Writings as a historical record is purely in the chronology which they contain; the historical events referred to are not accorded any intrinsic interest beyond enabling numbers of years to be counted and Theophilus says as much: ‘Our concern is not with material for loquacity but with making clear the length of time from the beginning of the world...’¹⁴⁶ The historical narrative is told entirely through the story of the Jewish people, at least up to the time of Cyrus, which is, of course, a consequence of using a Jewish source; so the other peoples who inhabited the region at the same time and were the Jews’ neighbours are only mentioned when they are part of the Jews’ narrative history.¹⁴⁷ Moreover, although the focus is on the Jews there is virtually no sense that the narrative is an account of the relationship of God with the Jewish people; thus, in spite of Theophilus’ interest in theological issues elsewhere, he does not read his historical narrative as yielding theological or ethical insights.

From the return from the Babylonian Exile onwards, Theophilus chooses to utilize a historical source from outside the Sacred Writings. He does not refer to later texts from the Jewish scriptures which contain historical material such as Ezra /Nehemiah or 1 and 2 Maccabees. He does not state why; perhaps he did not know these texts or perhaps the task of establishing a chronology from them was too difficult (which in the case of Maccabees, for instance, would be readily understandable). It may be that he simply regarded his Roman source as more reliable. He does not question its accuracy, or that it was a credible tool for his purpose; he was engaging with a Graeco-Roman audience, who may well have been familiar with the source he quotes (or at least the material he describes). In

¹⁴⁵ *AA* 3.25.4.

¹⁴⁶ *AA* 3.26.3. B Pouderon, *Les apologistes grecs du IIe siècle* (Cerf, Paris 2005) 249 comments on Theophilus’ lack of interest in the significance of historical events.

¹⁴⁷ E.g. the reference to the Midianites in *AA* 3.24.4.

any event he switches at the death of Cyrus to the source described as ‘Chryseros the Nomenclator, a freedman of M. Aurelius Verus’¹⁴⁸ -- and thus a contemporary of Theophilus -- and the chronology then becomes that of the history of Rome rather than the Jews. This enables Theophilus to bring his account down to the death of Emperor Marcus Aurelius in 180 CE, an event computed to be 5,695 years from the creation of the world.¹⁴⁹

One consequence of using Chryseros the Nomenclator as the authoritative source for his later chronology is that Theophilus makes no mention of Jesus Christ as a historical figure, a point noted by both Bardy and Pouderon.¹⁵⁰ Thus the account of the chronology of the Jewish scriptures includes a series of names of significant historical figures ending with Cyrus and the earlier history of the Jews is not presented as leading up to, or culminating in, the figure who might be expected to be of prime importance to a Christian apologist. Theophilus’ interest is historical and not soteriological. Bardy’s suggestion that reference to Christ is omitted because the argument from antiquity would lose all its force if the beginnings of Christianity were dated to the time of Jesus is a compelling one;¹⁵¹ moreover, since *AA* is an apologetic work, use of a Graeco-Roman source for chronological information is an appropriate strategy since the external audience would be more likely to accept its reliability.

The chronology of Theophilus is the first extant example of a form that would become significant for Christian literature, as later authors from the 3C CE

¹⁴⁸ *AA* 3.27.3. Chryseros is not otherwise known: ‘Our sole source on Chryseros is the Christian apologist Theophilus of Antioch’ *BNJ* article on Chryseros by V Costa. M. Aurelius Verus is normally styled Marcus Aurelius, Emperor from 161 to 180 CE.

¹⁴⁹ *AA* 3.28.7.

¹⁵⁰ ‘On ne peut s’empêcher de remarquer que, dans tous ces calculs, le Saviour ne tient aucune place. Théophile ne cherche à dater ni sa naissance ni sa mort.’ Bardy, *AA* 53: also Pouderon, *Les apologistes grecs* 248.

¹⁵¹ Bardy, *AA* 53.

onwards developed chronologies.¹⁵² Caution should be exercised in crediting Theophilus with too much originality, however, for his work has parallels, and indeed roots, in existing traditions of non-Christian historical literature.

From the 3C BCE onwards, interest in writing works of general history with a wide chronological sweep developed in Hellenistic culture¹⁵³ and although many of these have not survived they are known to have been written: histories by Nicolaus of Damascus¹⁵⁴ and Timagenes of Alexandria¹⁵⁵ are cases in point. Some historians wrote accounts, like Theophilus, stretching back to the earliest times, indeed to creation. Examples of this are the works of Diodorus Siculus¹⁵⁶ and Philo of Biblos,¹⁵⁷ each of whose histories commenced with an account of the creation of the world. The Jews had a long tradition of historical writing of their own, but they came to be influenced by Hellenistic practice.¹⁵⁸ Theophilus' history is told largely through an account of the Jews, and this has counterparts in the works of Berossus,¹⁵⁹ who wrote a history of the Babylonians, and Manetho,¹⁶⁰ the historian of the Egyptians; in both these cases, as with Theophilus, part of the purpose was to demonstrate, and indeed celebrate, the antiquity of the people

¹⁵² W Adler, *Time Immemorial: Archaic History and its Sources in Christian Chronography from Julius Africanus to George Syncellus* (Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC, 1989).

¹⁵³ Mortley, *Idea of Universal History*.

¹⁵⁴ *BNP* article on Nicolaus by K Meister.

¹⁵⁵ *BNP* article on Timagenes by K Meister.

¹⁵⁶ Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History LCL* 1 4.6 gives an outline of the chronological scope of the work from before the Trojan War to the campaigns of Julius Caesar.

¹⁵⁷ Philo of Biblos, *The Phoenician History: Introduction, Critical Text, Translation and Notes* eds H W Attridge & R A Oden Jr (Catholic Biblical Association of America, Washington DC 1981).

¹⁵⁸ G E Sterling, 'The Jewish Appropriation of Hellenistic Historiography' in J Marincola ed, *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography Volume 1* (Blackwell Publishing, Oxford 2007) 231-243.

¹⁵⁹ *BNP* article on Berossus by B Pongratz-Leisten.

¹⁶⁰ *BNP* article on Manetho by R Krauss.

whose history was being described.¹⁶¹ Theophilus had some familiarity with the contents of the works of both Berossus and Manetho -- whether or not he actually knew their texts directly -- as will be discussed below.

Thus Theophilus' chronology fulfils a number of objectives. First, it demonstrates the antiquity of the Jewish people and their traditions from which Christianity was derived. Second, it shows the authority and status of the Sacred Writings that provided the source for his accurate historical account. Third, in drawing material from a Roman source as well as from the Jewish scriptures, Theophilus made his chronology universal so it became, not an account of the Jewish people only, but, in its later stages, a chronology of the whole world. Jewish chronology thus acquires a central historical position as the precursor to the chronology of the Roman Empire.

Grant¹⁶² and Hardwick¹⁶³ have described how Theophilus drew a significant amount of his material from the *Contra Apionem* of Josephus.¹⁶⁴ The Jewish apologist's aims were similar to those of Theophilus in that he sought to demonstrate to a non-Jewish audience the great antiquity of the Jewish people, particularly compared with the relatively recent origins of Greek culture. Like Tatian, however, he cites non-Jewish sources in support of his argument, rather than the Jewish texts Theophilus uses. Theophilus only names Josephus once, and then not with reference to *Contra Apionem*, but as the author of a history of the

¹⁶¹ For the apologetic historiography of these authors: Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition* 103-136.

¹⁶² Grant, 'Bible of Theophilus' 191-196.

¹⁶³ M E Hardwick, *Josephus as an Historical Source in Patristic Literature through Eusebius* (Scholars Press, Atlanta 1989) 11-14 & M Hardwick, 'Contra Apionem and Christian Apologetics' in L H Feldman & J R Levison eds, *Josephus' Contra Apionem: Studies in its Character and Context with a Latin Concordance to the Portion missing in Greek* (Brill, Leiden 1996) 369-402, 371-378.

¹⁶⁴ The references are listed in Marcovich, *AA* 147.

Jewish War against the Romans.¹⁶⁵ *Contra Apionem* is an important source for AA, but it is the material in the text of Josephus -- references to the writings of Manetho¹⁶⁶ and Menander of Ephesus,¹⁶⁷ to evidence from Tyrian sources¹⁶⁸ and from Berossus¹⁶⁹ -- rather than the views or arguments of Josephus himself, on which Theophilus draws. Thus for Theophilus, Josephus' text is merely a conduit to reach the writings of Berossus, Manetho and Menander and in building his own chronology he adopts a different strategy from Josephus, relying principally on the Jewish sacred writings as the source of his evidence and not -- as Josephus does -- on non-Jewish historians.

Ad Autolyicum as a commentary on the Sacred Writings

As well as presenting the Sacred Writings as a source for accurate history, Theophilus also provides his readers with textual commentary. A considerable portion of Book 2 is devoted to this. Having criticized Greek literature and the ideas they contain at length,¹⁷⁰ he then presents his own alternative literary tradition, the Sacred Writings. He quotes in full the creation narrative from Gen 1:1-2:3,¹⁷¹ and the narrative of the Garden of Eden from Gen 2:8-3:19.¹⁷² Unlike Justin or Tatian he presents these extracts from the Sacred Writings as *narratives*. He provides two complete and coherent sections of Genesis, giving each an overall description or title, the creation narrative labelled the 'Hexaemeros'¹⁷³ and the Garden of Eden narrative 'the history of man and paradise.'¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁵ AA 3.23.1.

¹⁶⁶ AA 3.20.1 & 3.21.1-6.

¹⁶⁷ AA 3.22.3-7.

¹⁶⁸ AA 3.22.1.

¹⁶⁹ AA 3.29.7.

¹⁷⁰ AA 2.1-8.

¹⁷¹ AA 2.10-11.

¹⁷² AA 2.20-21.

¹⁷³ AA 2.12.1.

¹⁷⁴ AA 2.21.5.

Theophilus supplies a commentary to explain the texts to his audience. The term commentary does not appear in *AA*, but describes well the process in which Theophilus is engaged. In employing a form which would be familiar to his Graeco-Roman audience, Theophilus follows Tatian in drawing on the resources of literary criticism, although he does so very differently. Moreover, there is a similarity with Justin in formal terms, for just as the Proof from Prophecy is included within Justin's *Apologia Maior*, a work with the overall form of a petition, so Theophilus' commentary is part of a larger communication addressed to Autolytus.

The commentary accompanying each Genesis extract goes sequentially through the text, providing a succession of comments designed to aid readers' understanding and appreciation. Theophilus does only a little to explain what he is doing. At the commencement of the creation narrative he says that 'these things the Sacred Writings teach first'¹⁷⁵ and when the text ends goes straight into his commentary. He begins the Garden of Eden narrative with: 'The writings thus contain the words of the sacred history (Τὰ δὲ ῥητὰ τῆς ἱστορίας τῆς ἱερᾶς)¹⁷⁶ and when the quoted extract finishes he again moves into his commentary. Theophilus says nothing about the process of commenting on texts, but an understanding of his approach can be gained from examining what he does.

A commentary on the Jewish scriptures is something new in surviving Christian texts of the time.¹⁷⁷ Scholars have been particularly interested in exploring its

¹⁷⁵ *AA* 2.10.10.

¹⁷⁶ *AA* 2.20.1.

¹⁷⁷ Fragments survive from a commentary by Herakleon on a New Testament text, the Gospel of John, from earlier in the 2C: A E Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1891) & W Löhr, 'Gnostic and Manichaean interpretation' in *NCHB1* 584-604, 586-587.

possible Jewish roots¹⁷⁸ but, given the apologetic focus of this study, Theophilus' work will be examined in the context of the Graeco-Roman commentary tradition. In Chapter 2 it was noted that the practice of writing commentaries on highly-regarded texts was well-established by the late Hellenistic period; reference was made there to the Anonymous Commentary on Plato's *In Theaetetus* (cited as *AC*) and this can act as a useful comparator for *AA*. There is no suggestion that Theophilus knew *AC*; commentaries like this would, however, have been familiar to those, like Theophilus and his audience, who had received a Graeco-Roman literary education. Chapter 2 included a summary (not repeated here) of the useful analysis in the Introduction to Bastianini and Sedley's edition of *AC*¹⁷⁹ which describes the approach taken by its anonymous author.

AC is predicated on a number of implicit assumptions which are relevant to the comparison with *AA*. The Platonic text being commented on must be accepted as having a high status if it is to merit such close and extended attention; the issues which arise in commenting on it are both textual and interpretative; and the *Theaetetus* is a text which can, and by the time *AC* was written had been, interpreted in a number of different ways. It is not always a straightforward text, so the reader needs guidance to understand it properly; indeed, the author of *AC* observes that Plato never sets out his ideas plainly, leaving the reader (or perhaps he means the commentator) to expand on what he says and explain what he means.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ E.g. R M Grant, 'Theophilus of Antioch to Autolytus' *HTR* 40 (1947) 227-256, especially 237-241.

¹⁷⁹ *AC* 257-259.

¹⁸⁰ *AC* 258: 'Questo modo di procedure è giustificato dall'osservazione dell'A [the anonymous author] (LIX 12-21) che Platone non espone mai apertamente la propria teoria, lasciando al lettore il compito di elaborarla.' In the Aristotelian tradition obscurity of expression was almost expected and, indeed, taken as a sign of authenticity: hence the need for commentaries to explain texts: Tuominen, *Ancient commentators* 3.

Rather than comparing point by point the two commentators' methods, the approach here will be to examine what Theophilus does and judge this, where relevant, against the background provided by *AC*. There are points of similarity, but also points of divergence, with the latter often arising from the difference in the circumstances in which the commentaries were written. The author of *AC* was writing about a text that was familiar to his audience and accepted as being of high status, so his task was to explain it and on occasions to argue for his interpretation over those of other commentators. Theophilus in *AA* was writing a commentary on a text which was *unfamiliar* to his audience and his task was less to distinguish between rival interpretations of the Sacred Writings (although he occasionally does this) so much as to argue for the superiority of these texts over the rival non-Christian non-Jewish alternatives which might be familiar to his readers. Providing a commentary on the Sacred Writings was therefore part of Theophilus' apologetic strategy.

Clearly, by devoting so much space to the early chapters of Genesis, Theophilus presents his Sacred Writings as a high status text that is a source for ideas about creation and the nature of humankind. Like the author of *AC*, Theophilus goes sequentially through the text. A clear example of this is 2.15-2.19, where he discusses each day of the week in the creation narrative in turn from the fourth to the seventh.¹⁸¹ Theophilus differs from the author of *AC* in quoting the whole text of the section under consideration at the outset and then providing a commentary.¹⁸² *AC* by contrast quotes *lemmata* one at a time and comments immediately on each of them; the anonymous commentator only quotes selectively, and although his *lemmata* comprise in all more than half of Plato's

¹⁸¹ 2.15 discusses the fourth day, 2.16 the fifth day, 2.17-2.18 the sixth day and 2.19 the seventh day.

¹⁸² This comment is subject to the proviso that in 2.10 at the start of the creation account, some comments are interspersed with the Genesis text, although this is not Theophilus' practice thereafter. Gen 1:1-2:3 is set out in 2.10-2.11 and Gen 2:8-3:19 in 2.20-2.21.

text, this is still some way short of the complete text Theophilus provides.¹⁸³

Theophilus is not explicit, but this difference of approach most likely results from the fact that Theophilus' audience was unfamiliar with the text, so he wanted to bring their attention to the whole section of text to be discussed before commenting. The audience of *AC* would have known Plato's *Theaetetus* already -- or at least had ready access to it -- so the whole text did not need to be given by the commentator at the outset, and he is able to move straight into quoting and commenting on specific passages.

Like *AC* Theophilus' commentary focuses at times on detailed points in the text. He picks on a number of individual words and phrases and either explains in simple terms what they mean -- 'What he [the prophet Moses] calls earth is equivalent to a base and foundation. Abyss is the multitude of the waters'¹⁸⁴ -- or explains their significance -- 'Darkness' is mentioned because the heaven created by God was like a lid covering the waters with the earth.'¹⁸⁵ Later, he lights on use of the first person plural in Gen 1:26 describing the creation of humankind:

'When God said: 'Let us make man after our image and likeness' he first reveals the dignity of man. For after creating everything else through the Logos,¹⁸⁶ God considered all this as secondary; the creation of man he regarded as the only work worthy of his own hands. Furthermore, God is found saying 'Let us make man after the image and likeness' as if he needed assistance; but he said 'Let us make' to none other than his own Logos and his own Sophia.'¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ *AC* 256-257.

¹⁸⁴ *AA* 2.13.3.

¹⁸⁵ *AA* 2.13.3.

¹⁸⁶ Grant renders λόγῳ as 'by a word'. Marcovich gives it a capital lambda, indicating that the text is referring to the Logos, rather than simply 'a word' and it is this latter textual reading which underpins the interpretation here.

¹⁸⁷ *AA* 2.18.1-2.

Gen 1:26 is a text which attracted varying interpretations from other ancient commentators.¹⁸⁸ Theophilus explains that it should be read not to mean that God needed help from others when he created man,¹⁸⁹ but that, while in the previous stages of creation God had acted through the Logos, the creation of man was uniquely worthy of action on the part of God himself because of the special status humankind was to enjoy. The first person plural is therefore used by God when addressing the Logos and the Sophia¹⁹⁰ in order to show that God is involving himself together with them in the act of creation.

A final example of detailed textual comment is found when Theophilus picks apart the order in which words appear in the Sacred Writings to identify a point of particular significance. Discussing Gen 1.1, ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν (In the beginning God made heaven and earth), Theophilus draws attention to the fact that the terms ἀρχῇ and ἐποίησεν appear *before* θεός, commenting as follows: ‘First he mentioned beginning and creation, and only then introduced God, for it is not fitting to refer to God idly and in vain.’¹⁹¹ His point is presumably that the subject ὁ θεός might be expected to appear at or closer to the beginning of the sentence and before the verb ἐποίησεν. When Theophilus refers elsewhere to God’s act of creation using his own words, he places θεός before ἐποίησεν, so this would appear to be what he regards as the normal word order.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁸ E.g. *DT* 62 1–5 & for Philo: D T Runia, *On the Creation of the Cosmos according to Moses: Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (SBL, Atlanta 2001) 65–66.

¹⁸⁹ This could refer to an alternative reading of Gen 1:26–27 Theophilus was aware was then current.

¹⁹⁰ Theophilus refers elsewhere to ‘the triad of God and his Logos and his Sophia’ (*AA* 2.15.4) and to the involvement of both the Logos and the Sophia in primal creation: ‘God made everything through his Logos and the Sophia’ (*AA* 1.7.3).

¹⁹¹ *AA* 2.10.7.

¹⁹² *AA* 1.7.3. The same is true of *AA* 1.4.5, although in that case Theophilus is quoting 2Macc: 7.28 (Marcovich, *AA* 19n).

These references show Theophilus focusing as a commentator well might, and as *AC* does, on specific words in the text and providing explanatory comments. *AC* also includes paraphrase and exegesis -- with the proviso previously noted that the distinction between these two is not always clear-cut -- and considers issues and problems raised by the text. Theophilus is likewise interested in going beyond detailed textual questions in order to explain what the text says and how it should be understood; indeed, he bears out the comment in *AC* referred to earlier to the effect that Plato never sets out his ideas plainly and leaves the reader to expand on what he says and explain what he means. Differences do arise, however, between *AA* and *AC* and these can (broadly speaking) be attributed to the fact that *AA* is an apologetic text unlike *AC*; commentary on the Sacred Writings is an apologetic strategy and Theophilus uses approaches and techniques which serve this purpose.

An example of paraphrase and exegesis is Theophilus' commentary on the passage in Genesis 2 describing how God created paradise and placed Adam in it. Theophilus provides some paraphrasing of the Genesis text when he describes God's creation of the Garden, with its two trees of life and knowledge, and later describes how God placed man in paradise 'to work it and to guard it.'¹⁹³ He also adds two interpretative points. First, he clarifies where the location of paradise is: not somewhere far distant but located under the same heaven as the earth: 'By the expressions 'also from the earth' and 'to the east' the Sacred Writings clearly teach us that paradise is under this very heaven under which are the east and the earth.'¹⁹⁴ Second, he explains that, at least in terms of its beauty, paradise is an intermediate state between earth and heaven, just as humankind is in an intermediate state between the mortal and the immortal. This is a hook on which

¹⁹³ *AA* 2.24.5.

¹⁹⁴ *AA* 2.24.3.

he hangs an account of the essential nature of humankind having potential for mortality or immortality:

‘God transferred humankind out of the earth from which it was made into paradise, providing the opportunity for progress, so that by growing and becoming perfect, and furthermore having been declared a god, it might also ascend into heaven and possess immortality. For humankind was created in an intermediate state, neither wholly mortal nor entirely immortal, but capable of either state; similarly the place paradise -- as regards beauty -- was created intermediate between the world and heaven.’¹⁹⁵

A slightly different example of paraphrase and exegesis is provided when Theophilus discusses the tree of knowledge and the fall of humankind described in Genesis 2-3. The balance here tilts away from paraphrase and more towards exegesis. There is still an element of paraphrase, for instance in Theophilus’ description of the tree of knowledge, although it is brief, and most of his commentary is concerned with two exegetical points. Theophilus writes as the author of *AC* does when he expounds the meaning of Plato’s text. First, to explain the relationship between God and Adam, Theophilus compares the latter to a child who should obey his parent and adds more general comments about the nature of children: ‘For it is a sacred matter, not only before God but in the face of humankind, to obey one’s parents in simplicity and without malice; and if children must obey their parents, how much more must they obey the God and Father of the universe!’¹⁹⁶ Second, he emphasises that it was not the commandment not to eat the fruit which led to the fall, but rather Adam’s disobedience of the commandment, and again imports a general homiletic

¹⁹⁵ *AA* 2.24.6.

¹⁹⁶ *AA* 2.25.4.

statement: ‘...when a law commands abstinence from something and someone does not obey, it is clearly not the law which results in punishment but the disobedience and the transgression.’¹⁹⁷ Theophilus’ reading is that God sought to test Adam, but by disobeying God’s command Adam failed the test. Thus responsibility for the fall lay with Adam: ‘So also for the first-formed human being, disobedience resulted in his expulsion from paradise.’¹⁹⁸

Exegesis can lead to issues being identified which call for more extended discussion, especially when the text is found to contain problems or difficulties requiring explanation. In *AC* one of the commentary’s functions was to consider difficult issues which arose in Plato’s text and to propose solutions, and there are parallels to this in *AA* when Theophilus identifies an issue or a question and seeks to explain or answer it. One example is when Theophilus asks why God created Eve as he did out of the body of Adam rather than simply *de novo*. His rather surprising -- and ingenious -- explanation is that God had foreknowledge that human beings would erroneously identify a multitude of gods and he wanted to prevent it being thought that one of those gods had made man and another had made woman; hence his statement that God ‘... did not make the two separately.’¹⁹⁹ He then gives an additional explanation of God’s action by saying that he made the woman out of the man’s side ‘...so that the man’s love for her might be the greater.’²⁰⁰ In a second example, Theophilus asks the question: how could God be described as walking in paradise when it is the nature of God not to be confined in one place? His response is that it is the Logos generated by God who is present in the garden and not God himself. The Logos has a divine nature

¹⁹⁷ *AA* 2.25.6.

¹⁹⁸ *AA* 2.25.8.

¹⁹⁹ *AA* 2.28.2: the translation here follows the substitution by Marcovich (*AA* 78n) of οὐκ for the manuscript οὖν and of ἀμφίς for the manuscript ἄμφω. It is possible that there was a theory extant that one god created Adam and another Eve which Theophilus is consciously refuting.

²⁰⁰ *AA* 2.28.3.

but is nevertheless able to be in a particular place: ‘Since the Logos is God and derived his nature from God, the Father of the universe, whenever he wishes, sends him into some place where he is present and is heard and seen. He is sent by God and is found in a place.’²⁰¹

When tackling a problematic issue, *AC* sometimes considers more than one rival interpretation of Plato’s text and discusses which should be preferred. There are instances of this in *AA*, although they are neither numerous nor prominent. When discussing the tree of knowledge and the fall of humankind, Theophilus refers twice to rival interpretations of Genesis, first saying: ‘For the tree did not contain death, as some suppose...’²⁰² and later when discussing God’s relationship with Adam: ‘Therefore God was not jealous, as some suppose, in commanding him not to eat from the tree of knowledge.’²⁰³ Recognition that other interpretations exist does not lead Theophilus to specify what these are and to discuss their relative merits, and from the brevity of his comments it is clearly not his intention to dwell on these issues. His commentary essentially promotes a single reading of the Sacred Writings -- his own -- and gives little consideration to others that might exist; in this respect his approach is consistent with Justin and Tatian when they discussed texts or ideas from their authoritative writings.

This is not to say that Theophilus is not concerned with combatting competing ideas: rather that his interest is in promoting the claims of the Sacred Writings against rival claims which derive from the Greek literary tradition. After his extended quotation from the Genesis creation narrative, and before his detailed comments on that text, he refers first in general terms to the quality of the Genesis text, contrasting it with the unsatisfactory accounts of creation found in Greek

²⁰¹ *AA* 2.22.6.

²⁰² *AA* 2.25.1.

²⁰³ *AA* 2.25.3: the translation here follows Marcovich’s addition of the words τοῦ ξύλου not in the manuscript.

culture.²⁰⁴ Speaking of the Genesis account of creation he writes: ‘No-one...if he were to live ten thousand years, continuing in this life, would be competent to say anything adequately in regard to these matters, because of the surpassing greatness and riches of the Wisdom of God to be found in this Hexaemeros quoted above.’²⁰⁵ He notes that many have tried to provide creation accounts, but subjects them to a blanket condemnation; even though he recognizes that they have ‘imitated’ Genesis or ‘taken it as their starting point’²⁰⁶ the claims made by philosophers, historians, and poets are characterised by ‘the abundance of their nonsense and the absence of even the slightest measure of truth in their writings.’²⁰⁷

This does not really explain *why* Theophilus considers the Greek accounts of creation to be wrong, but his criticisms become more specific as he singles out the poet Hesiod for attack and contrasts the latter’s creation account unfavourably with Genesis. First, he attacks Hesiod for claiming that Erebus, Earth and Eros were created out of Chaos to rule over gods and men and describes his account as ‘...false and frigid and entirely alien to the truth.’²⁰⁸ Second he argues that, whereas Genesis begins with the creation of the heavens, Hesiod begins erroneously with the creation of earthly things: ‘Furthermore, as for his [Hesiod’s] notion of describing creation by starting from beneath, with what is earthly, it is merely human and mean and, indeed, quite feeble in relation to God.’²⁰⁹

Condemning alternative Greek accounts of creation reflects a broader theme already found in Justin and Tatian: the contrast between the contents of the Sacred Writings on the one hand and the Greek literary tradition on the other.

²⁰⁴ The variety of approaches to creation among the Greek philosophical schools was noted in Chapter 3: Sedley, *Creationism*.

²⁰⁵ AA 2.12.1.

²⁰⁶ AA 2.12.2: an echo of the theft theory referred to earlier.

²⁰⁷ AA 2.12.3.

²⁰⁸ AA 2.12.6: the translation here follows the substitution by Marcovich (AA 58n) of ψυδρὸν for the manuscript ψυχρὸν.

²⁰⁹ AA 2.13.1.

The parallels between *AA* and *AC* are therefore considerable. There are, however, also differences, notably in the way that Theophilus uses techniques that go beyond expounding and explaining what is in the text, which advance his apologetic purpose.²¹⁰ The first is the identification of types to which attention is drawn to uncover hidden significance in the text; the second is the addition of descriptive details not in the Genesis text which are used to draw out points Theophilus wishes to share with his readers; the third is the use of a word or phrase as a trigger or starting-point for a discussion of issues only distantly related to the surface content of the text.

The word type, τύπος, appears a number of times in *AA*,²¹¹ when Theophilus identifies references in the Sacred Writings which he reads as types of entities external to the text and he uses them to expose meanings not found on the surface of the words. Thus Theophilus follows Justin in invoking symbols to explain the meaning of texts. An example is Theophilus' discussion of the fourth day of creation which includes the creation of the sun and the moon. He identifies these two heavenly bodies as types, the sun as a type of God and the moon as a type of humankind and the contrast between the qualities of the two physical entities, sun and moon, is used to point up differences between human and divine natures:

‘As the sun greatly surpasses the moon in power and brightness, so
God greatly surpasses humankind; and just as the sun always

²¹⁰ Parsons, *Ancient Apologetic Exegesis* 41 comments that ‘...unlike many modern commentators, he [Theophilus] did not provide an intentionally impassive, verse-by-verse exposition. Rather he commented on the Genesis text specifically to support his own apologetic polemic...’ but does not develop the idea.

²¹¹ Marcovich, *AA* 189 lists eight occurrences of τύπος or τύποι, all in Book 2. In one instance, at 2.13.4, Grant, *AA* 48 follows the 18C editor Maran in substituting τόπον for the mss reading τύπον (even though he acknowledges that Maran ‘did not make direct use of the manuscripts.’ (Grant *AA* xxii)).

remains full and does not wane, so God always remains perfect and is full of all power, intelligence, wisdom, immortality and all good things. But the moon wanes every month and virtually dies, for it exists as a type of humankind; then it is reborn and waxes as a pattern of future resurrection.²¹²

In other cases types have a prophetic edge when the text of Genesis is found to foreshadow later occurrences. God's blessing of sea creatures on the fifth day of creation is a type of the redemption of humankind in the future: '...those created from the waters were blessed by God so that this might serve as a pattern of humankind's future reception of repentance and remission of sins through water and a bath of regeneration...'²¹³ On the sixth day when land creatures are created, but are *not* blessed by God, they become a type of human beings in the future who '...are ignorant of God and sin against him and have regard to earthly things and do not repent.'²¹⁴ Introducing types in this way enables Theophilus to make points not apparent from the surface of the text of Genesis but significant for his apologetic purpose. A more complex example is when Theophilus is discussing the fourth day of creation, the day '...the luminaries came into existence.' This prompts him to backtrack and identify the first three days prior to the fourth, retrospectively, as '...types of the triad of God and his Logos and his Sophia.'²¹⁵ The fourth entity is humankind, which Theophilus adds to the triad, and which needs the light supplied by the luminaries created on the fourth day.

A second technique used by Theophilus is to embellish the Genesis narrative with additional details not in the original text and use them to identify significant points. Thus Genesis describes the creation of the heavenly bodies on the fourth

²¹² AA 2.15.3.

²¹³ AA 2.16.2.

²¹⁴ AA 2.17.2.

²¹⁵ AA 2.15.4.

day, but says nothing about there being different types of star. Theophilus, however, describes three different ranks of star, the brightest, the less bright and the least bright -- which are the planets -- and then goes on to describe how these correspond to three sorts of human beings: the brightest stars correspond to those who ‘...exist in imitation of the prophets...’ and ‘...remain steadfast...’, the less bright stars who are ‘...types of the people of the righteous...’, while those called planets are ‘...a type of the human beings who depart from God, abandoning his laws and ordinances.’²¹⁶ Theophilus fills out the Genesis narrative, which makes no reference to different sorts of stars, providing additional details and using them to identify different types of human beings.

Something similar occurs with the creation of sea creatures and birds on the fifth day. The Genesis account simply describes the act of creation and concludes with the words: ‘And God saw that they were good.’ Theophilus introduces the adjective σαρκοβόρα (carnivorous) to describe the birds created by God, a term not in Genesis. This enables him to identify two sorts of creature, which can crudely be described as the good and the bad; one sort: ‘...remain in their natural state, not injuring those weaker than themselves but observing the law of God and eating from the seeds of the earth...’²¹⁷, while the other sort: ‘...transgress the law of God, eating flesh and injuring those weaker than themselves...’²¹⁸ The addition of the term carnivorous is necessary to make this distinction, since the key difference between the two sorts of creature is that the good is herbivorous and the bad carnivorous. Theophilus then equates the two sorts of creature with two sorts of people: on the one hand the righteous: ‘...who keep the law of God, do not bite or injure anyone but live in a holy and just manner...’²¹⁹ while on the other hand the: ‘...robbers and murderers and the godless are like great fish and

²¹⁶ AA 2.15.5-6.

²¹⁷ AA 2.16.3.

²¹⁸ AA 2.16.3.

²¹⁹ AA 2.16.3.

wild animals and carnivorous birds; they virtually consume those weaker than themselves.²²⁰ Hence by making a small addition to the Genesis text -- introducing the adjective carnivorous -- Theophilus is able to develop a distinction of his own between two sorts of creature and use this to differentiate between righteous and unrighteous human beings.

The third technique employed by Theophilus is to use the text of Genesis as a springboard for a discussion which wanders far from the content of the text that generates it, so that the ensuing debate can scarcely be described as illuminating the originating text. The most extended example of this is the discussion of 'sea', which is triggered by Gen 1:10, where God is described as gathering together the waters beneath the firmament to form seas. Theophilus lights on the word sea, which he interprets symbolically, equating it to the world, and highlighting two features of it not mentioned in Genesis. The first is that the sea does not dry up because of the constant nourishment provided by the rivers and springs which flow into it. Theophilus equates this with 'the law of God and the prophets flowing and gushing forth with sweetness and compassion and justice and the teaching of the holy commandments of God.'²²¹ Theophilus' second observation is that the sea contains islands, some of which are '...habitable and well-watered and fertile...'²²² while others are '...rocky and waterless and barren, full of wild beasts and uninhabitable ...'²²³ Islands are also interpreted symbolically, with the first group equating to the 'holy churches' in which human beings can take refuge and find truth; the second equate to sources of heresy, and if human beings approach these for refuge, they are destroyed by erroneous heretical teachings. Nothing of all this is found, or even hinted at, in the Genesis text and it is only by

²²⁰ AA 2.16.3.

²²¹ AA 2.14.2.

²²² AA 2.14.3.

²²³ AA 2.14.4.

seizing on the trigger provided by the term ‘sea’ that Theophilus is enabled to develop his argument in two novel directions.

Use of such techniques enables Theophilus to consider a number of issues and it will be noted that they all relate to a favourite theme of his, the nature of humankind.²²⁴ That this is clearly a particular focus of concern is also seen when the commentary discusses verses in which the nature of humankind is the subject on the surface of the text. Thus when Theophilus discusses the creation of humankind in Gen 1:26 he describes how this ‘first reveals the dignity of mankind’ and, having explained the use of the first person plural (as discussed above), he then makes further comments on the divine creation of humankind: ‘When he [God] had made human beings and blessed them so that they would increase and multiply and fill the earth, he subordinated to them all other beings as subjects and slaves. He also determined that human beings should from the beginning have a diet derived from the fruits of the earth and seeds and herbs and fruit trees...’²²⁵ Later, when describing God’s establishment of the Garden of Eden he again focuses on aspects of the nature of humankind; he paraphrases Genesis briefly and says: ‘God transferred him [man] out of the earth from which he was made into paradise, giving him an opportunity for progress so that by growing and becoming mature, and furthermore having been declared a god, he might also ascend into heaven...’²²⁶

Given that Theophilus has such a clear focus on the nature of humankind when it is the overt subject of the Genesis text, it is not surprising that it is also the principal theme when he explores meanings below the surface of the words and a number of examples will illustrate this. One reference already noted is the

²²⁴ Discussed in Rogers, *Theophilus* 33–72.

²²⁵ *AA* 2.18.3: translation follows the addition to the text in Marcovich *AA* 65n of the word πληθύνεσθαι not in the manuscript, by analogy with Gen 1:28.

²²⁶ *AA* 2.24.6: Droge, *Homer or Moses?* 102–123 emphasises the importance of the ‘Idea of Progress’ in *AA*.

distinction Theophilus draws between those who are saved and those who are not when discussing islands in the sea;²²⁷ the salvation of humankind is also a theme when the waxing of the moon is equated to humankind's future resurrection²²⁸ and when the blessing of newly-created sea creatures is equated with the future salvation of humankind.²²⁹ A favourite theme of Theophilus' is the division of human beings into the good and the bad and three examples of this appear in his commentary on the creation narrative: first, there is a threefold division into 'those who remain steadfast', 'the people of the righteous', and 'the people who depart from God',²³⁰ second, a distinction is drawn between those who keep and those who transgress the law of God²³¹ and on the third occasion, humankind is divided into 'those who repent of their iniquities and live righteously' and 'those who are ignorant of God and sin against him.'²³²

Theophilus uses the identification of these issues below the surface of the text to advance his own teaching on the nature of humankind and he does this inside, and as part of, his commentary on the Sacred Writings. Thus while he presents complete texts to his audience, the effect of using the methodology of the commentary is to break those texts up into small sections, and then as they are explained, to create something new, which is his picture of the nature of humankind. There are affinities here with the way Justin combines his readings of individual prophetic texts together into a narrative of the life of Jesus. The commentary technique which Theophilus uses also means that his doctrines on humankind appear to be in some way derived from the Sacred Writings, even though close scrutiny shows that Theophilus' comments relate scarcely at all to the surface meaning of the Genesis text he is purporting to discuss. Thus by

²²⁷ *AA* 2.14.3-5.

²²⁸ *AA* 2.15.3.

²²⁹ *AA* 2.16.2.

²³⁰ *AA* 2.15.5-6.

²³¹ *AA* 2.16.3.

²³² *AA* 2.17.4.

including these comments as part of his commentary Theophilus in effect allows some of the gloss of the Sacred Writings to rub off on the views he expresses on the nature of humankind and his views acquire an enhanced status as a result.

The early chapters of Genesis are clearly important for Theophilus, and they were found in the last chapter to be important for Tatian as well. There is, however, a very clear contrast in the way the two writers present and make use of these texts. Tatian drew important ideas from Genesis but limited actual quotations to two key phrases, 'in the beginning' and 'the image and likeness of God'; his account betrayed no sense of Genesis 1-3 as a narrative text. Theophilus by contrast quotes the whole creation narrative as a coherent entity and provides a point by point commentary on it, using this as a vehicle to expound his own ideas. This is the clearest example in this study of two writers using the same scriptural text in their apologetic arguments, but doing so in completely different ways.

***Ad Autolyicum* and Graeco-Roman literary culture**

Locating *AA* in the context of Graeco-Roman literary culture raises similar issues to those encountered with Justin. On the one hand, Theophilus uses an overarching form -- that of a communication between two friends -- as the frame for his work. Such a form was very familiar in Graeco-Roman culture, as is evidenced by the extensive use of letter-writing as a means of communication between individuals, such texts often being collected together and circulated more widely.²³³ There are parallels here with Justin's use of the public, and popular, petition form. On the other hand, Theophilus makes use within this overall framework of more specific forms of writing, the historical chronology and the commentary on a high-status text. Such forms would be familiar to Graeco-Roman audiences from their own traditions, and they are used by Theophilus to serve his apologetic intentions. Justin's Proof from Prophecy exhibited parallels

²³³ Stowers, *Letter Writing*.

with a number of Graeco-Roman literary forms; with *AA*, however, the position is more straightforward since, as has been shown, direct parallels can be drawn between the historical chronologies and commentaries in the Graeco-Roman literary tradition and the use of these forms by Theophilus.

Characters in the text

In discussing Justin's *Apologia Maior* and Tatian's *Oratio*, the place in the text occupied by both the Graeco-Romans and the Jews was considered and this is also relevant to *AA*. The attitude towards Graeco-Roman culture is essentially a hostile one. There are numerous references to Greek literature,²³⁴ which is treated as an entity, with terms employed such as 'the writings of the poets and philosophers'²³⁵ or 'what has been said by philosophers, historians and poets.'²³⁶ This Greek literary tradition is subjected to volleys of criticism at intervals in *AA*.²³⁷ Theophilus draws strong contrasts between the shortcomings of the Greek literature -- including its mythological contents -- and the merits of the Sacred Writings; thus the qualities of antiquity, truthfulness and consistency possessed by the Sacred Writings are contrasted with the comparative novelty of the Greek literary tradition,²³⁸ the falsity of its contents²³⁹ and the inconsistency of its authors.²⁴⁰ The consequence is that like Justin and Tatian, Theophilus leaves no room for accommodation between the Sacred Writings and the Greek literary

²³⁴ Grant, *AA* 151-153 & Marcovich, *AA* 146-147.

²³⁵ *AA* 2.3.8.

²³⁶ *AA* 2.12.13. There are a number of other formulations, e.g. 'historians and poets and so-called philosophers' (2.8.1) and 'so-called wise men or poets or historiographers' (2.33.1).

²³⁷ Most notably at *AA* 2.1-8 & 3.2-8.

²³⁸ E.g. 'For most writers, such as Herodotus and Thucydides and Xenophon and the other historiographers, begin their accounts at about the reigns of Cyrus and Darius, since they are unable to make accurate statements about the ancient times prior to them.' (3.26.1).

²³⁹ E.g. 'So unwillingly they admit that they do not know the truth. Inspired by demons and puffed up by them, they said what they said through them.' (2.8.7).

²⁴⁰ E.g. '...their statements are inconsistent and most of them demolished their own doctrines. They not only refuted one another but in some instances even nullified their own doctrines...' (3.3.1).

tradition, and the battle of the literatures produces the same result: that acceptance of the one entails rejection of the other.

The Jews are given a more positive presentation in *AA* than in either Justin's *Apologia Maior* or Tatian's *Oratio*. They are not criticised as they are by Justin and are not referred to as barbarian²⁴¹ as they are by Tatian. Indeed, Theophilus refers to the Jews in uncritical terms as the predecessors of present day Christians, saying: 'These Hebrews were our forefathers, and from them we possess the sacred books...' ²⁴², and later refers to '...*our* sacred books...' ²⁴³ (italics added) as if Jews and Christians should not be differentiated from each other. These references are relatively low-key; a higher profile is, however, given to the Jews in Theophilus' chronology of human history from the origins of the world. This is presented from the perspective of the Jews, and their history is thus accorded a prominence which it did not have in Justin or Tatian; from the Garden of Eden to the return from the Babylonian exile it is the Jews whose chronology is described.

Conclusion

The Jewish scriptures were instrumental in Theophilus' conversion to Christianity and he uses material from these ancient and inspired texts to support his apologetic arguments. In his handling of the Jewish scriptures, Theophilus betrays considerable similarities with the works of Justin and Tatian, not least in the importance he attaches to the prophetic and the philosophical. Two novel features are introduced, however, which are not found in the work of the other two authors: use of the scriptures as a source for the accurate history of the world, and employment of commentary techniques to explain how texts should be read.

²⁴¹ The word 'barbarian' appears only once in *AA*, at 3.26.2, where it refers to the Persian kings Darius and Cyrus: Marcovich, *AA* 159.

²⁴² *AA* 3.20.6.

²⁴³ *AA* 3.26.1.

These novelties lead Theophilus to extend the scope of the way the scriptures are handled in different argumentative contexts, thus demonstrating the extent of the flexibility available to Christian writers in the 2C in their use of the Jewish scriptures. Employing the scriptures in Book 3 of *AA* to support a chronological case leads to a presentation of the Sacred Writings as a collection made up of a much broader spread of texts and one which has the coherence of an overall narrative sweep. Using the commentary format in Book 2 to apply to texts which are not known to his audience beforehand leads Theophilus to extract from the Sacred Writings complete, self-contained narratives of the creation and the Garden of Eden; they are taken verbatim from the Sacred Writings, and the length of the extracts contrasts markedly with the isolated and comparatively brief prophetic sayings quoted by Justin.

The sharpness of this contrast must be tempered in some degree, however, since Theophilus comments only to a limited extent on the two Genesis extracts as complete narratives; for the most part he breaks the texts up (as commentators tend to do) and comments separately on each short passage. Like Justin, he seeks to isolate hidden messages concealed in the texts. Theophilus does not re-assemble the hidden messages to construct a narrative of the life of Jesus as Justin does, however, but he does use what he finds to focus on the subject of most interest to him -- the nature of humankind -- and to this extent his approach might be regarded as reflecting (albeit somewhat dimly) that of Justin.

The form of Theophilus' chronological argument would have been familiar to his audience, because it draws on an existing literary tradition, although he christianises it to support an apologetic argument. It could well have been effective in debate in the 2C context because the argument is presented coherently, the detailed evidence put forward is fully supported by the

documentary sources cited and the accumulation of the evidence validates well the overall conclusion.

What impact the commentary on Genesis 1-3 might have had on an external audience is problematic. The commentary was presented in a form familiar to those who had experienced Graeco-Roman education where high status texts were similarly examined. Theophilus therefore shows in a very concrete way how the Sacred Writings should be regarded as analogous to the foundational texts of the Graeco-Roman literary tradition. The contents of his commentary were, however, fashioned to support apologetic objectives, and since Theophilus' promotion of Christianity entailed the rejection of the Graeco-Roman literary tradition and of the myths which were often its subject-matter, the arguments in his commentary might well not have appealed to an external audience steeped in the Graeco-Roman literary and religious cultural tradition.

While, like Justin and Tatian, Theophilus promotes Christianity and heaps criticism on the Graeco-Roman traditions of philosophy and mythological religion, he does not suggest an alternative focus for allegiance in barbarian culture, with the Barbarian Writings at their core, as Tatian does. Thus some ambiguity lingers as to the precise location of his Christianity in relation to Greek culture, although there is no doubt that he places the Sacred Writings inherited from Judaism at the heart of it.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This study began by highlighting the extensive references which some 2C Christian apologists make to the Jewish scriptures. To explore why this should be the case, three texts with implied Graeco-Roman audiences have now been considered in detail. Their literary strategies and the role the Jewish scriptures play in them have been examined. This final chapter highlights some of the more general themes to emerge from the study and suggests some avenues for further research.

It was not inevitable that these authors should have used scriptural texts to support their arguments; it was clearly a conscious choice on their part, since other apologetic works of the time do not do so. Justin does not draw on the scriptures to support the arguments in his *Apologia Minor* and the important concept of the *Logos Spermatikos* is introduced and developed without reference to the scriptures.¹ Athenagoras in his *Legatio*, dated to 176–180 CE,² hardly refers to the scriptures at all,³ even though his arguments have been noted as being strikingly similar to Justin's.⁴ Moreover, looking beyond Christianity to the mystery cults which were also attracting new adherents in this period, significant and successful movements -- those of Isis and Mithras -- focused on mythologies and rituals and not on the promotion of ancient scriptures.⁵

¹ Referred to at 2A 7.1 & 13.3.

² Athenagoras, *Legatio* xi.

³ Athenagoras, *Legatio* 154.

⁴ S Parvis, 'Justin Martyr and the Apologetic Tradition' 123–125.

⁵ H Bowden, *Mystery Cults in the Ancient World* (Thames & Hudson, London 2010).

In the three texts examined here, however, the Jewish scriptures *are* presented as a critically defining feature of Christianity. The authors all stress the significance of exposure to the Jewish scriptures for their own conversion narratives and the importance they attach to them is reflected in the way these texts are used in their apologetic arguments. The strategy of these apologists is to portray Christianity to Graeco-Roman audiences as grounded in ancient authoritative texts, which they promote as the route into Christianity both for themselves and for others. Thus the scriptures are instrumental in shaping the way the new religion presents itself, as it strives to engage with, and challenge, the culture and traditions of the non-Jewish world.

All three authors encourage their audiences to read the scriptures for themselves. They do not rely on summaries of scriptural material nor do they compose Rewritten Bible works as the Jewish apologist Josephus did in his *Jewish Antiquities*. It is an important feature of the works of Justin and Theophilus that they quote verbatim from the texts of the Jewish scriptures, while Tatian's protreptic approach offers readers direct exposure to the texts on later occasions. The Jewish scriptures are not, however, handed over to the audiences for them to read as they wish; the apologists always accompany the texts with their own interpretations and thus seek to retain control of their meaning.

The appeal to the Jewish scriptures in these apologetic works represents a new and decisive step in the use of such texts by Christian writers. It was noted in Chapter 1 that when other 2C Christian works, such as the *Epistle of Barnabas*, or indeed Justin's own *Dialogus cum Tryphone*, discussed the interpretation of these ancient scriptures, they did so in the context of dialogue with Jews, and sought to differentiate their Christian readings of the scriptures from those of the Jews. What the apologists did was to take the scriptures out of the context of the Christian-Jewish dialogue, bring them into a non-Jewish Graeco-Roman

debating arena, and use them as a source of valuable material to support Christian apologetic arguments. This significant shift in the role of the scriptures was part of the broader process which turned Christianity from an offshoot of Second Temple Judaism in Palestine into a movement which sought to appeal much more widely to non-Jewish populations across the Roman Empire. The scriptures were clearly Jewish in origin, but they were not one of the aspects of the Jewish heritage (like the dietary laws or circumcision) which Christianity abandoned. Instead they became a central feature of the increasingly universalist Christian culture.

For the great value of the Jewish scriptures for the Christian apologists turns out to be that these ancient texts are a rich and flexible literary resource able to provide a variety of material to support a wide range of arguments: prophetic, philosophical, ethical and historical. Thus the three authors utilize the scriptures extensively, but individually they do so in very different ways, reflecting the different argumentative contexts in which each of their own works was written. Indeed, the extent to which they differ shows that these writers were not following a single model for the apologetic use of scripture; individual circumstance shaped the way the ancient texts were deployed in argument. Thus it is no accident that each author uses a different term to denote the scriptures, one that reveals his own particular apologetic interest in the texts, so that with Justin the emphasis is on their prophetic nature, with Tatian on their barbarian origins and with Theophilus simply on their status as sacred texts.

The way that arguments were crafted in these apologetic works drew attention, in numerous respects, to affinities between the Jewish scriptures and various types of text which would have been familiar to their Graeco-Roman audiences. The references to Graeco-Roman literary culture, the techniques used to present arguments and the forms of writing in which the apologetic writings were themselves framed all served to underline such similarities. Moreover, in a

number of respects, all three authors treat the scriptures in the same way as high status texts from the Greek literary tradition would be treated, with the result that written works that originated in an alien culture have a guise of familiarity for a Graeco-Roman readership.

While introducing these texts into the world of Greek literary culture, however, the apologists make no attempt to claim that the Jewish scriptures belong to one of the established forms of Greek literature or to locate them within Greek literary culture more generally. They do not disguise the fact that although the texts are written in Greek, they emanate from an alien culture. Indeed, this separate and distinctive Jewish scriptural tradition is presented as a rival to Greek culture; the apologists are antagonistic and confrontational towards Greek literary tradition and as a consequence the gulf between the two traditions is made to appear wide and, indeed, unbridgeable. For acceptance of the claims the apologists make on the basis of the Jewish scriptures entails rejection of the Greek literary heritage, and there is no suggestion that there should, or could, be an accommodation between the two.

Since the audience to which the apologists are introducing the Jewish scriptures had no (or very limited) prior familiarity with them, it is necessary for the origins and characteristics of these ancient texts to be explained and for the nature and extent of their authority to be justified. Moreover, to present the Jewish scriptures as a multi-authored collection of texts rather than a single work leads to comparisons and contrasts with the multi-author Greek literary tradition *as a whole*, rather than with particular works or writers within it. Homer and Moses are compared and contrasted only as the originators of their respective traditions, and then chiefly in terms of their relative antiquity. The apologists do not so much compare the Jewish scriptures with the works of Homer, but rather contrast them with the whole Greek literary tradition. Like the Greek tradition, the Jewish scriptures are not a bounded set of texts and it is not actually clear which

writings are included under the umbrella headings used. Indeed, in the way the scriptures are portrayed they have the character of a loosely-defined textual tradition on which the apologists draw for material.

The apologists are not merely promoting one particular set of high-status writings in place of another; they are arguing for the replacement of a *literary* tradition, in which different views are expressed in different texts, by a *scriptural* tradition containing a single coherent message. Moreover, the Jewish scriptures include prophetic material which high-status texts in the Greek tradition did not. To the extent that the Jewish scriptures were a set of sacred texts, inspired, and ultimately authored, by God, they were radically different in nature from the texts in the Greek traditions of, for example, drama, philosophy and history. Thus the apologists introduced the very idea of scriptures to a Greek literary world not then acquainted with it.

The significance of the apologists' approach to the scriptures emerges more clearly when comparison is made with the *Contra Apionem* of Josephus. The description of the scriptures given there is of a bounded set of twenty-two books⁶ whose texts are fixed⁷ and whose primary significance is as the source of the Jewish Law.⁸ Josephus writes for an external Roman audience,⁹ but his stance is not that of a proselytizer, nor is he arguing that the scriptures should supplant the Graeco-Roman literary tradition. Rather he is defending Judaism as a tradition and culture to be respected and admired in the face of a climate of hostility and criticism, writing in Barclay's words '...to boost sympathy and support for the

⁶ The five of the Pentateuch by Moses, thirteen by other prophets and four containing '...hymns to God and instruction to people on life' (Barclay, *Against Apion* 1.38-1.40).

⁷ Barclay, *Against Apion* 1.42.

⁸ Josephus' summary of the contents of the Jewish Laws is given in Barclay, *Against Apion* 2.190-2.218.

⁹ Barclay, *Against Apion* xlv-li.

Judean people...'¹⁰ The Christian apologists, whose aims include the encouragement of outsiders to embrace the new religion, therefore go much further when they promote the scriptures as texts their audience should read and whose message they should accept in place of texts from the literary culture in which they had been schooled.

In the opening chapter reference was made to important works by Droge and Young. Nothing in this study has called into question the fundamental theses of their two works, so Droge's account of the development of an early Christian history of culture and Young's argument for a battle of the literatures stand uncontested. Droge's work, however, paid insufficient attention to the central place of the Jewish scriptures in early Christian apologetic writings, while Young's did not address fully enough the way early Christian authors employed the scriptures to support apologetic arguments. The present study has therefore been able to build on the work of these two scholars, but to go on and develop a fuller and richer understanding of the apologists, of their arguments and of their use of scripture.

Bringing together investigation of apologetic literary strategies and scriptural interpretation has shown how the reading of the scriptures in these works is driven by apologetic objectives. At one level, the selection of the texts these authors choose to cite is determined by the issues of debate with which they are engaged. A consequence of this is that large parts of the Jewish scriptures, notably the Jewish Law emphasised by Josephus, do not feature strongly in these apologetic works, since they are not relevant to the arguments being made. Thus when the apologists' presentations are compared with the total scope of the Jewish scriptures as they came to be codified, they appear to describe only a small part of the whole.

¹⁰ Barclay, *Against Apion* liii.

The apologists' handling of particular texts from scripture reflect, at another level, the demands of their apologetic arguments. The technique they most commonly use is to break an extended text down into small sections, to interpret each of them, and then to combine together their readings of individual portions of text to form something larger. Interpretation of a particular sentence or passage is therefore only the first step; readings of the individual passages are amalgamated together to produce an overall meaning which then, most importantly, is used to support an apologetic argument. Thus Justin's individual prophecies are summed together to furnish an account of the life of Christ and of the early growth of Christianity as foretold, Tatian's individual scriptural references are combined to build a Christian philosophy, while Theophilus' commentary on Genesis is used *inter alia* to present an account of the nature of humankind. Each writer seeks to persuade his audience of his case on the basis of evidence culled from the scriptures and they each treat a sacred text as having a single interpretation rather than more than one possible reading. Since the scriptures are examined by these authors from a number of different perspectives, however, and since they are deployed in various argumentative contexts, they may appear to be multi-layered texts which can be read from different standpoints.

In the opening chapter reference was briefly made to the variety of approaches to scriptural interpretation found in 2C Christian texts. This study has added an additional ingredient to the mix by showing how the scriptures could also have an important role in supporting externally-facing apologetic arguments directed at Graeco-Roman audiences and how those arguments could shape the way the scriptures are interpreted. The question which then arises is the extent to which the outcome is a distinctively apologetic mode of scriptural interpretation. This would be a fruitful issue for further research, and one way of investigating it would be to compare what has emerged from this study with evidence from other texts whose audiences and argumentative contexts were markedly different. Thus

Justin's *Dialogus cum Tryphone*, whose implied audience at least was Jewish, forms an obvious source of possible comparison, particularly with the *Apologia Maior*. Internally-focussed texts, whose avowed purpose was to challenge alternative forms of Christianity, such as the work of Irenaeus,¹¹ could also be examined for purposes of comparison. In both these cases scriptural interpretation forms an important feature of the argumentative battleground of the text and there is ample scope for comparison with the apologetic works studied here.

The meaning of scriptural texts is potentially problematic for Graeco-Roman audiences previously unfamiliar with them and the apologetic authors therefore routinely provide interpretations. Explaining texts thus becomes an essential feature of their works; text and interpretation are coupled together, and, indeed, appear inseparable. In the case of Justin, interpretation of scriptural texts through the lens of the Proof from Prophecy is especially prominent. A useful opportunity for further research would be to examine the Proof as a theme in early Christian writing more broadly. It has been unduly neglected hitherto, the sole study so far, of which the present author is aware, is the relatively brief discussion in a work by Fullerton dating from 1919 which necessarily takes no account of several generations of modern scholarship.¹² Yet the way prophetic texts should be interpreted features strongly in major Christian works of the period following Justin, in Irenaeus' *Adversus Haereses* Books 3 and 4,¹³ in Tertullian's *Adversus Marcionem* Books 3 and 4¹⁴ (both texts refuting alternative forms of Christianity)

¹¹ For a recent work discussing Irenaeus and scripture: J Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons: Identifying Christianity* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2013) 124–140.

¹² K Fullerton, *Prophecy and Authority: a Study in the History of the Doctrine and Interpretation of Scripture* (Macmillan, New York 1919) 3–50.

¹³ Irénée, *Contre les Hérésies Livre 3 2 volumes* eds A Rousseau & L Doutreleau (Éditions du Cerf, Paris 1974) & Irénée, *Contre les Hérésies Livre 4 2 volumes* eds A Rousseau, B Hemmerdinger, L Doutreleau & C Mercier (Éditions du Cerf, Paris 1965).

¹⁴ Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem 2 volumes* ed E Evans (Oxford University Press, Oxford 1972) Books 3 and 4.

and in Origen's work on the theory of scriptural interpretation, *De Principiis* Book 4.¹⁵

The interpretation of passages from the Jewish scriptures is presented by Theophilus in the format of a commentary, the earliest extant Christian example of this form. A fruitful avenue for further research would be to examine the development of Christian scriptural commentaries as a form of writing. For while the *contents* of the extensive literature of patristic commentaries have been much studied, the commentary as a *form* has been somewhat neglected, and for this tradition of writings to be fully appreciated its nature and evolution merits closer examination.¹⁶ This would establish whether later writers followed in Theophilus' footsteps to any extent and the degree to which the emerging Christian commentary tradition was influenced by Graeco-Roman precursors.

The need to focus for apologetic purposes on scriptures which are ancient has the consequence that no appeal is made to Christian writings, including those of the NT (which are inevitably of recent date). Christian texts therefore play little part in these works, even though the apologists betray some familiarity with Jesus traditions, and indeed allude (although without acknowledgment) to texts from the NT. As a result the categories OT and NT are not used in reference to scriptural texts, since these terms would have no meaning in a context in which there is no NT. Further, the figure of Jesus Christ does not feature strongly in these works, except insofar as he is the subject of ancient prophecies.

The low profile of Jesus also reflects the fact that Christianity is not presented as the religion of a great man to be followed. This contrasts with the approach used by Josephus in his *Jewish Antiquities* to retell the narrative of the Jewish scriptures

¹⁵ Origen, *On First Principles* trans G W Butterworth (SPCK, London 1936) Book 4.2.

¹⁶ For some interesting, though brief, comments on this: Horbury, 'Old Testament interpretation' 733-736.

as a series of portraits of successive leaders of the Jewish people.¹⁷ The apologists do not present the ancient prophets who wrote the scriptural texts in this way even though they are important figures in their arguments. They appear to be little more than names, and their qualities, other than their ability to utter prophecies, are barely described.

The strategy of presenting ancient scriptures to Graeco-Roman audiences as derived from Jewish roots is potentially problematic for the apologists' stance towards the Jews. For while the scriptural texts inherited from Jewish tradition are valued not just for the material they contain but also for the antiquity to which they give concrete expression, the apologists do not disguise the fact that they are at odds with the Jews over how the scriptures should be interpreted. They seek to differentiate themselves from the Jews and to present the ancient texts as Christian in the battle of the literatures with Graeco-Roman culture. Given the somewhat paradoxical nature of this position, however, it is unsurprising that the strategies employed by the three authors display significant differences. Justin acknowledges, but plays down, the Jewish origin of the texts, Tatian makes no reference at all to Jews or Judaism and prefers to call the texts barbarian, while Theophilus treats the Jews in a low-key but uncritical way as the forerunners of present-day Christians.

At the outset of this study it was made clear that the texts would be discussed as if they are directed at external Graeco-Roman audiences, even though it remains uncertain whether this was actually the case. Following this approach through, it has proved possible to analyse the texts and reach coherent conclusions. This does not, of course, demonstrate that there actually *were* external audiences for these texts; indeed, the debate on this issue has not really been advanced in any direction. The most that can be said is that no difficulties have been encountered

¹⁷ Feldman, *Josephus's Interpretation* 74-131.

with treating the texts as externally directed. Such an approach has, however, placed limits on the reach of this study, which has not considered, and has not been able to consider, how interactions between Christians and Graeco-Roman audiences actually took place; rather it has been restricted to examining how Christian apologetic texts portray their side of the interactions.

The other side of such interactions as there were is invisible to modern eyes, because any Graeco-Roman texts that may have existed have not survived. Even though direct evidence is lacking, however, it is worthwhile to reflect on what the responses from Graeco-Roman audiences might have been to the apologists' arguments and their use of the Jewish scriptures. Strategies which emphasise the ways in which the Jewish scriptures are made to appear familiar to those from a Greek cultural background and which treat them as high-status literature could have given persuasive power to the arguments the apologists built on them. Moreover, positioning Christianity as rooted in very ancient traditions, for which clear evidence survives in the form of authoritative texts available for contemporaries to read, could have given it a high degree of credibility and attractiveness, although such an approach might have been more effective in removing the obstacles and difficulties which arose from Christianity's apparent novelty than in providing positive grounds for accepting the Christian case.

It was however, demanding a lot from the audience not only to accept Christianity but to reject wholesale the Greek cultural tradition. Christianity could have appeared to be an attractive alternative to the Graeco-Roman mythological *religion*, but the apologists never really make use of the scriptures to confront the rival claims of Greek *philosophy*. They limit themselves to presenting their own case (with support from the scriptures) and then criticize and disparage the Greek alternative. This could well have been less than convincing for those who were educated in Greek philosophy and who retained a respect for that tradition.

If, however, members of their audiences were already dissatisfied with the traditions of Greek ideas and Greek culture -- as the apologists claim that they themselves were when they first encountered the Jewish scriptures -- and were thus open to arguments in favour of something different, then an apologetic case supported by the scriptures could have been persuasive to them as a radical alternative. This was particularly the case given the attraction at the time of doctrines based on ancient wisdom or derived from the founding texts of the philosophical schools. Those who saw continuing value in the ideas of the Stoic or Platonic traditions, however, or who simply retained a respect for the established authority of the Greek philosophical schools might have been more difficult to impress. They could have been drawn to works which used ancient authoritative texts not only to advance a case but also to support arguments which were capable of dismantling the alternatives, and this is what they could find in authors like Galen, building upon Hippocrates, or Alexander of Aphrodisias, drawing upon Aristotle; but it is not what the Christian apologists offered them.

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