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EUDOCIA: THE MAKING OF A HOMERIC CHRISTIAN

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by

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ABSTRACT

With over 3,400 lines of poetry and no single monograph dedicated to her literary productions, Aelia Eudocia is an understudied poet. This project, the first of its kind, explores Eudocia's three poems as a unified whole and demonstrates how they exemplify the literary and cultural concerns of the fifth century. Since her poems are each apparently unique, I approach them first in isolation and tease out their social background, literary dependencies, and possible interpretive strategies for them before painting a broader picture of Eudocia's literary contribution. The first of her surviving poems is a seventeen line epigraphic poem from the bath complex at Hammat Gader, which acclaims the bath's furnace for its service to the structure's clients but, at the same time, illustrates the religious competition that surrounded late antique healing cults, of which therapeutic springs were part. Next is the Homeric cento, which borrows and reorders lines from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* to retell parts of the biblical narrative. Eudocia's attempt at this bizarre genre underscores the interplay between the Homeric poems, and the classical culture they represent, and the biblical story, with its theology and ethics. Last is the *Martyrdom of Saint Cyprian*, the first verse hagiography of its kind, which, because of the disparate sources available to Eudocia, is divided into two sections. The first part relates the conversion of Cyprian, an Antiochene magician, a story, I suggest, that depends on the Christian apocrypha, particularly for the development of its heroine, Justa. The second part recounts, in a speech by Cyprian himself, how he learned magic and why he converted. This section provides a glimpse into the ways late antique Christians understood paganism and the rhetoric they used to limit its hold in the later

Roman empire. The big picture of Eudocia's poetry is that of a corpus, which uses Homeric language to convey fifth century, Christian concerns, and of a poet who can aptly be called a Homeric Christian.

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Introducing a Homeric Christian

The date was June 7th, 421 CE, and Theodosius II had just been married. The choice of bride would have been scandalous, had the marriage not been arranged by the emperor's sister and, some said, chief advisor, Pulcheria. The bride did not come from the Constantinopolitan aristocracy or even from the imperial family in the west. Indeed, she was hardly well-born at all–she hailed from Athens, a city long past its prime. It was said that her father had been an Athenian *rhetor*. After his death the young woman's brothers, enticed by the opportunity to fleece their sister of her share of the inheritance, gave her cause to seek justice in the imperial capital. During her stay in Constantinople, she caught Pulcheria's eye, and the rest, as they say, is history.

So begin most accounts of the empress Aelia Eudocia. That she was also one of the most prolific female poets of antiquity is not so evident from this, and will be the focus of what follows–not Eudocia's genealogy or the motivations behind her marriage to Theodosius, not the promotions to influential bureaucratic positions that she later orchestrated for her family or her fall from imperial influence and exile from Constantinople; nor will this be an investigation of Eudocia's period of exile (or pilgrimage) in the Holy Land as evidence for the growing freedom of religious expression available to aristocratic women in the east. Histories such as these have already been written, typically relegated to chapters within larger historical works or the occasional article.[1] The contributors of these political and social histories (Kenneth Holum, Alan Cameron, and Edward Hunt) are among the usual suspects in late antique studies.

Rather than tread upon a path already cleared by these pioneers, this investigation, the first of its kind, attempts to study the extant poetry of Aelia Eudocia and its socio-historical background. The goal here is to elucidate the literary rather than the historical Eudocia. But an inquiry of this type must be secured with an historical anchor; indeed, the historical Eudocia illuminates the literary Eudocia, especially when, as we will see, her poetry survives from the very ground upon which she walked while on pilgrimage. Yet on the whole, this investigation attempts to examine Eudocia's poetry from the broader perspective of the literary developments of the fifth century. Late Antiquity in general, the fifth century in particular, was a period of significant and long-lasting political, social, and cultural changes. The literary developments from this period are just now becoming a topic of inquiry. One thinks of Scott Johnson's *The Life and Miracles of Thecla*, a monograph on the fifth-century paraphrase of the second-century *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, and Scott McGill's *Virgil Recomposed*, a study of the extant pagan Virgilian centos, poems that appropriate Virgil's lines for new and varying subjects. With over 3,400 extant lines of verse attributed to Eudocia, it is only fitting to take her out of the list of obscure Christian poets from late antiquity and examine in detail one of the best attested female poets ever.

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[1] Cameron, 1965, 1982; Holum, 1982; Hunt, 1984; Biers, 1989-1990; Burman, 1994; and Cameron, 2000.

An approach of this type is perforce holistic in scope and allows us a glimpse of a formative period, one in which authors felt the freedom to retell narratives in new and fascinating ways. As a product of the literary culture of the fifth century, Eudocia evidences two literary trends common to the period. First, with a few conspicuous exceptions, her poetry demonstrates the "paraphrastic habit" that was prevalent during late antiquity. During this period, any literary work was susceptible to rewriting and revision, as the multiple versions of Christian narratives indicate. Eudocia's oeuvre follows this general practice. From the Byzantine bibliophile Photius, we know that Eudocia wrote many verse paraphrases including a Homeric cento (rewriting sections of *Genesis* and the gospels), paraphrases of the Old Testament books of *Daniel* and *Zechariah*, an extended paraphrase of the first eight books of the Old Testament, a verse translation of the *Conversion*, *Confession*, and *Martyrdom* of St. Cyprian of Antioch, as well as a few original compositions such as an encomium on the city of Antioch and one commemorating Theodosius' victory against the Persians. Although most of the productions listed by Photius are lost, a few survive and allow us to trace bigger and interesting literary trends that go beyond Eudocia and reveal a Christianity at play with a canonical literary corpus.

Second, Eudocia's extant poetry reveals how authors of the period had internalized two ideologically competing literary works, the classical corpus in which Homer held the central position and the Biblical corpus, which by Eudocia's time had been definitively canonized. Interestingly, each of Eudocia's poems exemplify how the Homeric epics influenced the ways in which she chose to describe her role as empress, to read and interpret the Christian scriptures, and to retell the lives of Christian holy men and women. It is in this light that the subtitle of this investigation is *The Making of a Homeric Christian*. Eudocia, just as Nonnus of Panopolis or Dioscorus of Aphrodite, was becoming more Homeric than Homer in the sense that her poetry evidences a dependence–occasionally to a fault–on the Homeric model. By reading Eudocia in Homeric light, one is able to examine not only her poetry but also her role as Theodosian empress in new and interesting ways. Because scholars, even those well familiar with late antique Christian poetry, are by and large unfamiliar with Eudocia's corpus, I will begin first with a discussion of Eudocia's three extant poems in isolation and will draw together at the end a brief, but broad, profile of a Homeric Christian.

The first chapter, *The Homeric Christian as Benefactor*, examines Eudocia's sole epigraphic poem, which survives in the floor of the bath at Hammat Gader in modern-day Israel. Since this poem, unlike the others that survive in the manuscript tradition, requires a discussion of Eudocia's life and travels, a brief discussion of her early life will open the chapter. This allows us to examine and elucidate Eudocia's two pilgrimages, the first in thanks to God for her daughter's marriage to Valentinian III in 437, and the second as a result of some fallout with her husband in Constantinople around 440. Therefore, when our evidence allows, these two trips will be distinguished by referring to Eudocia's first journey as a pilgrimage and her second as an exile. Although Eudocia would not return to the imperial capital, she maintained her imperial dignity and engaged in substantial euergetistic programs. Yet we have only two sources for her actual words during this period, an adaptation of Homer that she used to conclude a speech given in Antioch and the seventeen-line poem from Hammat Gader. Together this evidence, however meager it may be, reveals how Eudocia used and manipulated Homeric models to communicate her role as benefactress of the east. Previous research on Eudocia's pilgrimage (and exile) to the Holy Land was undertaken without adequately incorporating her literary productions, and studies on Eudocia's epigraphic poem tend to focus on how it fits into Eudocia's life and do not read Eudocia's life in light of her own words.

Chapter two, *The Homeric Christian at Play*, reappraises the one poem by Eudocia that has received recent attention, the so-called Homeric centos, which remove Homer's lines from their original context and use them to retell parts of the Old Testament book of Genesis and select pericopes from the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Recent scholarship has focused on the textual tradition and, fortunately, Rocco Schembra's 2007 *Homerocentones* and his 2006 *La prima redazione dei centoni omerici: Traduzione e commento* provide us with the best edition, translation, and commentary to date of the early recension of the centos. Since we have a detailed and recent critical edition, the chapter will not focus on the rather complex manuscript tradition, but will examine the role that the cento played as a genre in late antiquity. This allows us to consider the Christian Homeric centos in light of the numerous centos that survive from antiquity in both Greek and Latin on religious and secular subjects. Of particular interest here will be the introduction to the *Cento Nuptialis* written by Ausonius of Bordeaux, in which he explains his reasons behind the creation of the cento along with some theoretical discussion on how and why one writes such poems. Based on Ausonius' introduction, Scott McGill in his recent work *Virgil Recomposed* presents the cento as primarily a ludic literary type,[2] a model whose implications and shortcomings are evaluated in the opening section of chapter two. As we will see in Eudocia's introduction to her cento, she understood her poem as containing a sacred message, which hardly corresponds to Ausonius's *ludi*. Through an analysis of a single example from the Homeric centos, the Samaritan at the Well pericope from the Gospel of John, the second section of chapter two evaluates how and why Eudocia manipulated the canonical stories of the Bible into episodes ethically relevant to a fifth-century audience. This leads us to a reevaluation of the ways late antique Christians read, interpreted, and appreciated Scripture and why the Bible was emended, modified, and, in this case, versified.

Chapter three, *The Homeric Christian as Narrator, Part I*, examines book one of Eudocia's *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian*. Book one, or the *Conversion*, tells the story of a local Antiochene magician who eventually converts to Christianity after being scorned by Justa, a Christian woman whom Cyprian was hired to help seduce. Eudocia's version alludes to and plays with earlier Christian narratives, especially the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*. This chapter incorporates the social drama theory of Victor Turner to examine how Eudocia's narrative differs from those of male authors from early Christianity. By modeling her narrative on Christian stories that contain recurring themes of sexual ambiguity and reversal, Eudocia plays with the role of women in the church and in Christian fictions. Unlike narratives such as the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and *The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas*, which tell the stories of female characters who reject patriarchy and who increasingly take on male characteristics as the drama progresses, the *Conversion* creates in Justa a simple protagonist who never leaves the confines of her father's house and never takes on exclusively male characteristics. As narrator, Eudocia creates a narrative, despite its intertextual expectations, in which nothing happens. Although Turnerian theory serves as a useful tool in reading early Christian narratives in general, Eudocia's characterization of Justa hardly fits into Turner's social drama theory. This final observation allows us to distinguish how Eudocia's narrative correlates to and at the same time deviates from other early Christian narratives.

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[2] For an interesting discussion of the ludic quality of all poetry, ancient poetry in particular, see Huizinga, 1955, 119-135.

Chapter four, *The Homeric Christian as Narrator, Part II*, turns to the *Confession*, or book two of the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian*. The *Confession* takes the form of a speech given by Cyprian to the Christians of Antioch during the course of which he relates his introduction to magic as a child and his mastery of the various *technai* associated with a *magos* as a young man. His journey begins in Athens and after a tour of the major religious sites of Greece and Asia Minor moves to the usual places to study magic in antiquity, Egypt and Babylon. Eudocia follows her prose model rather closely throughout the *Confession*, primarily because of the often bizarre content of Cyprian's speech, and, for that reason, her interventions as narrator are less apparent than in the *Conversion*. Furthermore, the various references to the major cult centers of the eastern Mediterranean and the details of how and when one learns magic arts, which abound in the *Confession*, enable us to elucidate how Christians of Late Antiquity spoke about pagan practices in general and magic in particular. Therefore, the first part of this chapter of necessity appears more like a commentary that explains the occasionally obscure details and their place in Greco-Roman cult and ritual. This is the first complete investigation of its type in English for the *Confession*, but certainly the first of its type at all for Eudocia's version. The second part of the chapter challenges and clarifies the model behind the characterization of Cyprian, whom students of the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, in particular Nock and Nilsson, identified as Pythagoras or Apollonius of Tyana. Appended to the end of chapters three and four is a translation of the two surviving books from the *Martyrdom*, the first in English and the only complete translation to date.

What follows is a long overdue study of the writings of Aelia Eudocia. It claims to be the first academic monograph on Eudocia and her poetic corpus. There are the works of Tsatsos and Gregorovius, which the curious reader is encouraged to consult, but which uncritically blend the legends surrounding Eudocia and their authors' fantasies to produce a literary beauty who through good fortune finds herself empress of Constantinople only to become the victim of court intrigue and be exiled to the Holy Land. In the pages that follow, it is my hope to present, as critically as possible, a poetess who, as a product of her time, was responsible for a literary corpus that, although not palatable to all modern readers, reveals how Eudocia attempted to create, through story and speech, a Christian world that was Homeric yet, at the same time, a world of her own making.

Chapter 1

The Homeric Christian as Benefactor

In 1981, Hirschfeld and Solar published an initial report on their first three seasons of excavations at Hammat Gader located along the Yarmuk River, on the eastern border of modern day Israel.[3] Their initial investigation of the epigraphic evidence was cursory, but they claimed to have discovered a previously unknown poem by the empress Eudocia.[4] This hypothesis was corroborated the following year in a detailed discussion by Green and Tsafrir. Indeed a seventeen-line hexameter poem, attributed to the empress, had been recovered from the bath complex and was dated to Eudocia's second journey to the Holy Land around 441 CE. Although Green and Tsafrir's initial translation and commentary of the poem reveal the extent to which Eudocia's poetry was influenced by the Homeric corpus,[5] their article did not provide a holistic picture of Eudocia as poetic benefactress of Palestine. Her activity in the Holy Land, which included some stops along the way, is well attested.[6] By examining Eudocia's numerous benefactions, Hunt[7] and Brubaker[8] have demonstrated how Eudocia patterned herself on Helena, mother of Constantine and benefactress of Palestine. Neither study, however, used the single surviving epigraphic work written by an imperial woman and benefactress, the Hammat Gader inscription.[9]

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[3] The archaeological reports and discussions for Hammat Gader are contained in Hirschfeld and Solar, 1981; Hirschfeld, 1997; Broise, 2003.

[4] SEG 32.1502.

[5] See especially Green and Tsafrir, 1982, 83 and 86.

[6] For a general biography of Eudocia, see the relevant sections in Mazzarino, 1946; Beck, 1966; Haffner, 1996; Leppin, 1998; Haffner, 1999.

[7] Hunt, 1982.

[8] Brubaker, 1997.

And yet Eudocia's pilgrimage (and later exile) to the Holy Land, despite its similarity to Helena's journey a century earlier, was more than her attempt to be recognized as a "new Helena," a title given to Pulcheria, Eudocia's sister-in-law, after the council of Chalcedon in 451.[10] Before arriving in the Holy Land, Eudocia stopped at Antioch, and, in the course of her stay in the city, gave a speech, which concluded with an adaptation from Homer (ὑμετέρης γενέης τε καὶ αἵματος εὔχομαι εἶναι).[11] According to Bury, while in Antioch Eudocia "posed as one trained in Greek rhetoric and devoted to Hellenic traditions and proud of her Athenian descent [rather] than as a pilgrim on her way to the great Christian shrine."[12] Although Eudocia's travel itinerary, on the surface, might mirror that of Helena,[13] from the sparse remnants that survive from what Eudocia actually said or wrote, such as her speech to the Antiochenes and, as we will see, her poem in praise of a bath complex, her activities were distinctly non-traditional. As a Christian empress on pilgrimage (exile), Eudocia's activities were predictable in that she visited all the "must see" pilgrim destinations and, as an imperial figure on a tour of the empire, she stopped at many important imperial cities, overseeing or financially supporting *ad hoc* building campaigns. In this sense, Eudocia was quite similar to Helena. But here, for the first time in the history of the Roman empire, an imperial woman, who was both pilgrim (exile) and benefactor, selected a decidedly Homeric method of self-representation. What is more, Eudocia's poetic allusions, in her speech and her epigraphic poem, fit securely within a late antique context. Despite her classical *persona*–her poem and speech recall the distant past–Eudocia never loses sight of the realities of the fifth-century. Rather, by wearing the hat of a learned empress whose compositions were saturated with references to the better authors, Eudocia blends late antique and Christian concerns with a traditional and erudite vernacular. The present chapter will focus on this topic.

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[9] The reports of the excavation probably came too late for Hunt to consider. Recent studies on mosaics in the Holy Land (e.g. Baumann, 1999) also do not discuss the Hammat Gader inscription.

[10] Holum 1982, 216, and Brubaker, 1997, 62.

[11] Evagrius, *H.E.* 1.20.

[12] Bury, 1923, 226.

[13] See Hunt, 1982; Holum, 1990; Limeris, 1996, 60; Brubaker, 1997; and Elsner, 2005.

Unlike Eudocia's other extant poems, the Homeric centos and the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian*, whose compositional dates are unknown, the epigraphic poem attributed to Eudocia has clear chronological boundaries. Eudocia remained in Constantinople[14] for at least fifteen years after her marriage to Theodosius in AD 421.[15] It was in the imperial capital that she took up the title Augusta in 423 after giving birth to her daughter, Licinia Eudoxia, who was engaged in infancy to Valentinian III. When they reached adulthood, the couple celebrated their nuptials on October 29, 437, and to commemorate the event Eudocia went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land,[16] perhaps in the spring of 438.[17] At this time, Theodosius presumably did not travel with Eudocia, but she did not go alone. It so happened that Eudocia's pilgrimage coincided with a visit to Constantinople by Melania the Younger, an ascetic woman who was residing in Palestine and whose *vita* provides valuable information on Eudocia's activities in the Holy Land.[18] The two aristocratic women set out from the capital on different days, so Melania met Eudocia at Sidon to escort the empress personally on her journey from then on.

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[14] This is not to suggest that Eudocia forgot her family in Athens. See Pagano, 1988/1989, for a palace perhaps hastily attributed to Eudocia's family.

[15] This is hardly remarkable since the Theodosian emperors resided and remained in the imperial capital more than previous rulers. See Mitchell, 2007, 104-105.

[16] The imperial family also set up a dedication in St. Peter's basilica in Rome. The inscription from the dedication reads (*ILCV* 1779):

> Theodosius pater Eudocia cum coniuge votum,
> Cumque suo supplex Eudoxia nomine solvit.
> (Theodosius, father, with his wife Eudocia
> and Eudoxia, as suppliant, in her own name, completed their vow.)

[17] Bury, 1923, 221.

Eudocia's first noteworthy stop outside Palestine was at Syrian Antioch, where she was able to avoid the scandal and embarrassment that had clouded the travels of a few imperial figures of the past century. Both the model for post-Constantinian imperial women, Helena, as well as the infamous neo-pagan emperor, Julian the Apostate, found their receptions in Antioch more memorable than pleasant.[19] During her stay Eudocia gave an encomium to the city,[20] which concluded with the Homeric sounding line ὑμετέρης γενεῆς τε καὶ αἵματος εὔχομαι εἶναι. This is the only surviving evidence for

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[18] In addition to the *Life of Melania*, there is the *Life of Peter the Iberian*. For a recent discussion on the value of the latter *vita* as evidence for the relationship between Peter the Iberian and Eudocia, see Horn, 2004.

[19] Hunt, 1982, 36, recounts the events surrounding Helena, which seems to have been ignited by a comment by Eustathius, bishop of Antioch, about her low origins. For more on this see Chadwick, 1948. While Julian's *Misopogon* relates in the emperor's own words his perspective on the events that transpired in Antioch, Lieu, 1989, 44-46, has a useful discussion. For a more detailed recount, see Downey, 1951; Gleason, 1986; and Wiemer, 1995.

[20] The idea of a woman giving a public speech must have been remarkable in and of itself. There is little evidence for women giving speeches, although there are a few examples from classical Athens (Aspasia of Miletus), from Rome proper (Sempronia, Hortensia), and from elsewhere in the empire (Maesia of Sentinum, Carfania). For more on these women, see the articles in Ballif and Moran, 2005. These examples, as has often been observed, were exceptions to the rule, and their actions, notably in the cases of Maesia and Carfania, elicited rather harsh criticism. While there is plenty of evidence for female philosophers, particularly associated with the Pythagorean school, most of this evidence relates to the fourth century BCE, and does not reflect the situation in the later Roman empire, although it would be interesting to explore the effect that Neo-platonism had on late antique educated women. This leads us to the closest analogue both temporally and socially to Eudocia, Hypatia. This is not the venue to attempt to untangle the various, convoluted layers from the Hypatian legend; suffice it to say that from what little we know for certain about this fascinating fifth century woman, she most likely engaged in semi-public speaking engagements where she presented either a scientific lecture or a philosophical treatise. That being said, Eudocia's public and perhaps political speech to the Antiochenes was certainly noteworthy.

Eudocia's speech, which has subsequently been interpreted as a hexametric panegyric (πάτρια) to the city,[21] or even a Homeric cento.[22] Such assertions, despite their obvious appeal and the likelihood that Eudocia, a product of her time, was familiar with such πάτριαι,[23] are unfortunately not verifiable.[24] The main weakness to the argument that Eudocia's encomium was in verse is the centrality of poetic exempla in rhetorical training. Eudocia was doubtlessly able to cite any number of classical poets, most of all Homer, in her daily conversations, not to mention a prepared speech. In fact, this is the easiest and most likely suggestion; Eudocia was (almost) quoting Homer. Therefore, the only thing one can say with any degree of certainty regarding the content or form of Eudocia's speech is that it ended with an adaptation of Homeric verse.[25]

But there is more room for speculation when it comes to the empress' *intentions* behind her encomium.[26] Both earlier historians of the Later Roman empire, such as Bury, and cultural historians, such as Hunt, have interpreted this one line to reveal Eudocia's literary "intentions" during her visit to Antioch.[27] For the former, Eudocia found a symbiotic community among the cultured Antiochene aristocracy, one that was decidedly absent from the theology "addicts" of Constantinople.[28] To be sure, Constantinople found itself at the center of the trinitarian quagmires that bogged down many fifth-century theologians; however, Antioch was not entirely disinterested in those debates. Nor was either city noticeably more classical, i.e. pagan, than the other. Despite Bury's instance that Hellenism flowed more freely in Antioch than Constantinople, neither city could boast of substantial pagan communities such as in Alexandria, Aphrodisias, and Athens.[29]

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[21] Hunt, 1982, 229, following Cameron, 1970, 8-12.
[22] Ludwich, 1882, 207.
[23] Photius mentions that Eudocia wrote a panegyric on Antioch.
[24] What we know about encomia during the period does not shed light on the debate; verse and prose encomia were both common well into late antiquity. See Kennedy, 1983, 169, and Pernot, 1993, 121.
[25] See Horn, 2004, 199, following Cameron, 1982, 278.
[26] By using the word "intention," I do mean to emphasize the entirely speculative nature behind the traditional evaluation of Eudocia's activity in Antioch. For examples of the traditional evaluation, see below.
[27] Bury, 1923, 226, and Hunt, 1982, 229. Hunt's observation that Eudocia's activity in Antioch primarily follows a literary vein, not that of a pilgrim, is incongruous with his previous observation that Eudocia's poetry fits her *persona* in the imperial court. This sets up two diametrically opposed Eudocias, the learned, ex-pagan poet at the court and the humble, pseudo-ascetic Christian on a pilgrimage.

Furthermore, Bury and Hunt miss the greater point behind Eudocia's activity in Antioch. Her encomium, eagerly received by the Antiochenes, prompted the city to erect two statues in her honor, a gold statue in the curia and a bronze one in the museum. Honored by these statues Eudocia, according to Bury, convinced Theodosius to commit to multiple building campaigns within the city.[30] The city's response makes more sense if Eudocia's speech, from which only the conclusion remains, communicated more about her relationship to the city than her ability to (almost) quote Homer. Indeed, if Antioch erected multiple statutes to everyone able to quote a line of Homer, their magistrates would not have time for anything else–quoting Homer was hardly surprising. There was more, I suspect, to Eudocia's citation of Homer than meets the eye.

As we have seen, the Theodosian emperors remained in Constantinople for extended periods, a habit unknown to the immediate heirs of Constantine. Moreover, their reigns were by and large longer than those of their fourth-century predecessors. Extended imperial residence in one city most likely resulted in the estrangement of cities that had previously witnessed, if only for short durations, the daily activity of the imperial court. Antioch was one such city.[31] Indeed, after the fourth century, the city no longer served as a residence for the emperor, and, although the imperial presence could present multiple problems for residents and emperor alike, such as the famous affair surrounding Julian's stay in the early 360s, having the emperor's ear so close could be convenient. Only a decade after the Julian grain supply debacle,[32] the emperor Valens took residency in Antioch and set up a grain distribution system that remained in place for at least two centuries.[33] Indeed, Valens' activity in Antioch reveals a conflation of roles; he served as imperial benefactor, in the sense that as emperor he was patron of the entire empire. But Valens as de facto citizen of Antioch was obligated, not only as emperor but also as a local aristocrat and representative of the church, to meet the needs of the community.[34] Imperial figures of late antiquity had to wear multiple and manifold hats, especially when a city in which they were residing exhausted its grain reserves.

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[28] Bury, 1923, 226-227.

[29] Bowersock, 2006, 175. For a general history of Antioch in Late Antiquity, see Downey, 1961, and Matthews, 2006.

[30] Bury, 1923, 227, but he provides no primary reference.

Seen in this light, Eudocia's encomium of Antioch[35] contains a euergetistic message. As self-proclaimed kin to the Antiochenes, regardless of her Athenian birth,[36] Eudocia can be expected, as imperial personage and quasi-local aristocrat, to provide tangible, civic assistance to the city. Oversight of various public services, in particular a building campaign (a basilica), multiple restoration projects (the bath complex and an extension of the city's wall), as well as her provision of humanitarian care (food for the poor) typically falls under the auspices of the local aristocracy. The provision of food for the poor was a growing need for late antique cities in general and Antioch in particular. Fifty years earlier, John Chrysostom pleaded with his congregation to meet the physical needs of the poor within the city. His sermons indicate that the future bishop of Constantinople thought that less than two percent of the population was in dire need of aid.[37] Taken at his word, Chrysostom suggests that the city would have no need for imperial beneficence, if the city's sufficiently wealthy patrons stepped up to the plate. Evidence suggests, on the other hand, that cheerful givers among the upper class were, to borrow a phrase from Peter Brown, *rarae aves* in late antiquity.[38] The presence of one such "rare bird" had the potential to arouse a city's expectations for a wealthy patron,[39] and, I suggest, might be the best way to understand Eudocia's speech.

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[31] Mitchell, 2007, 323.
[32] This is not to imply that the particular circumstances surrounding Julian were unique; providing the city with ample grain was a growing concern in the fourth century and was exacerbated by the imperial presence and entourage. See Wiemer, 1995, particularly 190-194.
[33] Liebeschuetz, 1972, 129-130, and Downey, 1951, 382-383. This also included a series of building campaigns.
[34] For a discussion on the duties of the Christian aristocracy in late antique euergetism, see Brown, 2002, especially 26-32.
[35] Kennedy, 1983, 169, connects Eudocia's encomium within the wider rhetorical background of the fifth-century and suggests that Eudocia's presence in Palestine retarded the rhetorical developments that were taking place in the region, particularly in Gaza. According to Kennedy, Eudocia's support of Porphyry, bishop of Gaza, and his attempt to replace the traditional cults of the region with Christian equivalents had a negative impact on Gaza's rhetorical system. This

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assumes that in the mid-fifth century, pagans still made up most of the educated classes, an unlikely assumption.

[36] By reading Eudocia's Homeric allusion practically and metaphorically, one can avoid the historical gymnastics required to explain Eudocia's connection to Antioch (Holum, 1982, 117-118; McClanan, 2002, 20).

[37] *Homilies on Matthew* 66.3: Εἰ γάρ διέλοιντο οἵ τε πλουτοῦντες, οἵ τε μετ᾽ ἐκείνους, τοὺς δεομένους ἄρτων καὶ ἐνδυμάτων, μόλις ἂν πεντήκοντα ἀνδράσιν ἢ καὶ ἑκατὸν λάχοι πένης εἷς. (For if the wealthy, and those next to them, were to distribute amongst themselves those who are in need of bread and raiment, scarcely would one poor person fall to the share of fifty men or even a hundred.) See also Patlagean 1977, 207-214; Patlagean, 1997, 15-25; Brown 2002, 14; and Mayer, 2006.

[38] Brown, 2002, 48.

[39] Take for example an episode from the life of Melania, who upon arriving in northern Africa with her husband, Pinianus, received not a little attention from the churches in Hippo. See *Vita Melaniae* 21; Augustine, *Epistle* 126.7; Clark, 1985, 22-25; Brown, 2002, 55-56.

If Antioch, like most late antique cities, were always on the lookout for external patrons, this would explain its eagerness to commemorate Eudocia's speech with multiple statues. The expectation of mutual exchange, consistent with the wider social language of antiquity where cities were expected to show their appreciation for local and imperial *euergetai*, is also emphasized by the Homeric context of Eudocia's allusion. We need to explore possible Homeric sources for the encomium's conclusion as well as how those sources may affect our understanding of Eudocia's activity in Antioch. The line ὑμετέρης γενεῆς τε καὶ αἵματος εὔχομαι εἶναι is not as such attested in the Homeric corpus; indeed, ὑμετέρης is never attested at the beginning of a Homeric hexameter.[40] That Eudocia could manipulate Homeric lines is no surprise–one of her extant poetic projects depended on this ability.[41]

The closest analog to the line is found twice in the Homeric corpus, both from the *Iliad*: ταύτης τοι γενεῆς τε καὶ αἵματος εὔχομαι εἶναι (6.211 and 20.241). One can only surmise what the force of the lexical change would have been on Eudocia's audience–her modification of the line would not have escaped (their) notice. The context of either passage might have come to her audience's mind, with potentially different results; both contexts should be examined in turn. The first citation (*Iliad* 6.211) comes from the famous dialogue between Glaucus and Diomedes,[42] at the conclusion of Glaucus' speech about his heritage and pedigree. After hearing Glaucus' γενεῆς and αἵματος, Diomedes recognizes that their grandfathers were guest-friends (ξένοι), a Homeric relationship commonly sealed with the mutual exchange of gifts. Battle between the two heroes, now ξένοι, was impossible, and they sealed their relationship with a second exchange of gifts, albeit an unfair one, Glaucus' golden armor for Diomedes' bronze. The second potential source is *Iliad* 20.241. Once again, two warriors, Aeneas and Achilles, meet on the field of battle, and before the trial of arms begins, they test each other with a trial of words.[43] The engagement is abbreviated by the intervening hand of Poseidon who supernaturally removes Aeneas from the field of battle before Achilles can kill the latter.

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[40] The form ὑμετέρης does not begin a line in either the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*. What is more, the adjectival form of the word is never used first in the *Iliad*, although a prepositional phrase with some form of ὑμετέρος is used twice (5.686 and 20.116). In the *Odyssey* however, ὑμετέρος more commonly begins a line, but never in the feminine singular genitive. The feminine singular genitive is attested only once in the Homeric corpus (*Od*. 7.269).
[41] See chapter two, "The Homeric Christian at Play."
[42] The episode runs from 6.119 to 6.236.

Not all of the Antiochene audience would have the education to recognize the context of Eudocia's allusion, but this in no way prevents us from exploring how that context might have been interpreted. Since Eudocia ended her speech with the allusion, the closest Homeric analogy would be the *Iliad* 6 passage, in which Glaucus concludes his speech with a similar assertion. Aeneas' speech in *Iliad* 20, while containing the same line, does not end with ταύτης τοι γενεῆς τε καὶ αἵματος εὔχομαι εἶναι– the hero continues for another sixteen lines (242-258). Furthermore, we are fortunate to know the effects of Eudocia's speech. The multiple statues set up in her honor as well as Eudocia's various building projects and public food services indicate that neither party had inimical feelings. Both provide tangible services that the other required or appreciated; the empress oversees the construction of essential edifices as well as the distribution of the city's "daily bread," while the city honors their newfound patron with multiple statues at important civic locals. Not unlike Glaucus and Diomedes, the exchange is hardly commensurate; Eudocia's gifts are clearly worth more.

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[43] This episode runs from 20.75 to 20.352.

Yet, as suggested above, Eudocia does not exchange late antique social mores for a watered down Homeric substitute. In other words, the relationship between herself and the Antiochenes does not blindly follow the codes of ξενία, a guest-friend relationship, but rather, by alluding so strongly to the Homeric text, Eudocia has applied cultural components of the Homeric world in new and interesting ways to late antique society. As guest to the city, Eudocia, influenced, perhaps anachronistically, by the so-called "Homeric code," could be expected to receive presents, as Odysseus does from the Phaeacians. The statues she "receives" were hardly the types of presents exchanged in the epics–she was neither able nor expected to take the statues with her upon her eventual return to Constantinople. Furthermore, Eudocia actually gives presents in the form of a church, bath, walls, and grain. The exchange of honorific statues for practical and usable public and private space and commodities, fits the euergetistic mores of the Roman empire, not the Homeric epics. Rather than simply flaunting her *paideia*, Eudocia has fulfilled a fifth century obligation while making a culturally meaningful reference to a classical past. Just as the Homeric heroes created meaningful relationships based on pedigree and prestige, the late antique world did the same, but now commonly associated with one's origin. As wife to the emperor, Eudocia found herself in a position where her Athenian background meant less to the Antiochenes than did her actions during her visit. She communicated this is a meaningful way by posturing herself as an aristocratic Antiochene, not only a *rara avis* but one who appreciated being a cheerful giver.

What sense than can we make of Eudocia's activity in Antioch, particularly her encomium? We have seen how Antioch received much attention from the imperial family, with varying degrees of success, throughout the fourth century. As an occasional "host" for the imperial court, the poor in Antioch had become accustomed to public services, especially when affordable grain was in short supply.[44] Eudocia's speech with its Homeric ending therefore should be interpreted in light of social precedent and the empress' subsequent actions. Her Homeric allusion should not, as has been fashionable, be explained simply as an attestation of her erudition, nor is it evidence for a speech composed entirely in verse. On the other hand, the force of her Homeric allusion should also be kept in mind, especially since it recalls the theme of friendship and mutual gift exchange. By associating herself with the Antiochenes "in race and blood," Eudocia presented herself as patroness of the city, and her actions during the remainder of her stay there indicate that this interpretation is consistent with both Eudocia's Homeric allusion and her broader euergetistic agenda.

And Antioch was only the first stop.[45] Concerning the empress' *adventus* into Jerusalem, Bury remarks how uncomfortable she must have been in the exclusively Christian atmosphere of the city.[46] Unfortunately, the evidence points to the opposite conclusion; Eudocia's trip appears very traditional and is consistent with the social and religious programs of Constantine and Helena.[47] Along with Melania the Younger, Cyril, bishop of Alexandria, and Juvenal, bishop of Jerusalem, who were at least nominally part of Eudocia's entourage,[48] the empress presided over the dedication of the basilica to St. Stephen, which took place on May 15th, 439 (or 438).[49] The next day Eudocia was present for a second dedication for a martyrium erected by Melania the Younger[50] to house the relics of St. Stephen the proto-martyr, the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, as well as a number of Persian martyrs whose bones had been brought to Jerusalem by Peter the Iberian (Georgian).[51] At this time, it is unclear whether Eudocia had plans to organize any extensive building campaigns for the city; most of the more significant buildings associated with her were probably built during her Palestinian exile a few years later. But she did not leave the Holy Land empty-handed. The empress sent her daughter, Licinia Eudoxia, a section of the chains that Herod had used to bind St. Peter[52] as well as a portrait of the Virgin presumed to be the work of Luke the Evangelist.[53] To house the former relic, Licinia Eudoxia, now wife of Valentinian III and resident of Rome, built a church later renamed St. Peter ad vincula.[54] Eudocia also had in her possession relics of St. Stephen, which she carried with her back to Constantinople. These bones eventually were placed in the basilica of St. Lawrence.[55]

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[44] Veyne, 1990, 59-60.

[45] Not literally of course. Eudocia stopped regularly along the way, and her pilgrimage most likely received "national" attention. Antioch just happens to be the first major city for which we have any definite information. For an account of travel to late antique Antioch, see Matthews, 2006.

[46] Bury, 1923, 227-228.

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[47] See Hunt, 1982, 228-229; and Brubaker, 1997, 62. The Theodosian family had already patronized the city of Jerusalem, providing a cross for the church on Golgotha and money for the needy. They also received in return some relics, perhaps the hand of St. Stephen.

[48] Both Cyril and Juvenal were to play significant roles in the Nestorian controversy and its "settlement" at the council of Chalcedon in 451. As a supporter of Nestorianism, Juvenal would not have been part of the Monophysite faction comprised of Melania, Eudocia, Cyril, et al., so his presence was doubtless obligatory. For more on Eudocia's entourage, see Hunt, 1982, 230-232; Clark, 1986, 63-64; Burman, 1994; and Horn, 2004, 200-201.

[49] Hunt, 1982, 230 (note 59), argues that the year 439 is preferable since Eudocia's arrival at Jerusalem in May of 438 is too early. This is consistent with the *Itinerarium Burdigalense* 571.6-8 (Cuntz, 1990) which provides the typical duration that a pilgrimage via land could take.

[50] The nuanced relationships between Eudocia and both Melania the Younger and Peter the Iberian are beyond the scope of this chapter and have been discussed by Clark, 1982 and 1986, and Horn, 2004.

[51] *V. Pet. Iber.* 37; note also that the Life of Melania deemphasizes Eudocia's role in the ceremony, while the Life of Peter the Iberian alludes to an inscription that thanked Eudocia for her hand in the construction of the martyrium. Eudocia celebrated the festival to St. Stephen at this same shrine on Dec 26, 439 (Life of Melania 64).

[52] *Acts of the Apostles* 12:6.

[53] Theodore Lector, *Epitome* 353; Burman, 1994, 72.

A few years after her return to Constantinople, Eudocia found herself increasingly estranged from Theodosius II and his immediate circle of advisors.[56] According to the traditional model,[57] after Eudocia's return to court, a preexisting tension grew between the empress and Pulcheria, elder sister of Theodosius II. This competition allowed the court eunuch, Chrysaphius to alienate first Pulcheria then Eudocia from Theodosius.[58] According to Bury, Chrysaphius poisoned the emperor's counsel with rumors that his wife was involved with Paulinus, master of offices.[59] This would then explain the apple of discord legend that is related in John Malalas.[60] The legend runs as follows: A certain man sold the emperor an apple of remarkable size, which Theodosius immediately sent to Eudocia. Upon receiving the gift, Eudocia gave the apple to Paulinus, master of offices, who was suffering from an ailment in his foot. The master of offices in turn decided to give the apple as a gift to the emperor, who upon receiving the apple for a second time inquired of Eudocia whether she had eaten the apple or sent it to another. Eudocia insisted that she had eaten the apple, and when the apple was produced, Paulinus was first exiled and eventually executed. Eudocia, on the other hand, found herself estranged from her husband and soon thereafter was exiled to the Holy Land.

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[54] This is the same church in which the inscription which mentions a dedication by Eudocia and Theodosius II was found. See Bury, 1923, 227. For the inscription and translation, see above.

[55] Holum, 1979; and Brubaker, 1997, 56.

[56] The purpose of this section is not to revise the details surrounding Eudocia's fall from imperial favor, but rather to elucidate her literary corpus before and after those events. Details on the former can be found in Cameron, 1982; Clark, 1982; Holum, 1982; and Burman, 1994.

[57] Following Bury, 1923, and to some extent Holum, 1982.

[58] Cameron, 1982, 256, includes in the list of Chrysaphius' victims, perhaps correctly, Cyrus of Panopolis and Paulinus.

[59] Paulinus was a boyhood friend of Theodosius II, and served as παράνυμφος at his wedding. The role of Paulinus in Eudocia's downfall is tenuous at best, and the sources are ambiguous as to which imperial woman they refer to. Burman, 1991, 55-56; and 1994, 67-69, argues that the sources might refer to a scandal between Paulinus and Eudocia, Paulinus and Pulcheria, or Honoria and Eugenius.

[60] The entire episode can be found in Malalas 14 [ed. Dindorf (1831) 352-358; ed. Thurn (2000) 272-278].

The folk-tale motifs latent in the narrative have been much discussed.[61] On the one hand, Bury assumes Paulinus' involvement in Eudocia's downfall, but dismisses the apple narrative as entirely suspect;[62] on the other, Cameron argues for the exculpatory function of the narrative, which implies actual rumors.[63] To support Cameron's theory, Nestorius' allusion to the "prince of adultery"[64] might be evidence for rumors that were spreading from the capital during Eudocia's lifetime. Furthermore, the empress gave birth to a son, Arcadius, who is soon omitted from the records of the later chronographers and *fasti*.[65] Chrysaphius, whose role in the downfall of Pulcheria and Eudocia is generally agreed upon, likely had a hand in discrediting Eudocia's fidelity as well as the paternity of the young Arcadius.[66] Since Eudocia had already left Constantinople when Cyrus took up the bishopric of Cotyaeum in the autumn of 441, the events leading to her exile most likely occurred in 440.[67] Although Eudocia's involvement with Paulinus or any other member of the imperial court is shrouded in mystery, the events leading up to her dismissal from Constantinople were interpreted in antiquity as a response to an amatory affair that affected the legitimacy of Arcadius, and as a result, Eudocia was on her way to Palestine where she remained until her death in 460.

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[61] Littlewood, 1974; Cameron, 1982, 258-259, 270-279; Holum, 1982, 114; Scharf, 1990; and Burman, 1994, 64-69.

[62] As does Gibbon who says the apple of discord legend has a home in the 1,001 Arabian Nights, to which it is similar.

[63] Cameron, 1982, 258-259.

[64] *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, pg 379 (Driver and Hodgson, 1925).

[65] The evidence for a son by Eudocia and Theodosius comes from two sources: the calligraphic copy of the *Cento Probae* (Clark and Hatch, 1981, 12-13) and the Ravenna Inscription (ILS 818.3). Cameron, 1982, 266-267 suggests that the disappearance of Arcadius from the historical records is remarkable and points to some court scandal, perhaps infidelity on Eudocia's part. Burman, 1994, 84-86, following Holum, 1982, 178, is less convinced of Cameron's interpretation than the evidence for a son.

[66] Cameron, 1982, 266-267.

Within the context of Eudocia's second trip to the Holy Land, i.e. between 440 and 460 CE, she visited the medical springs at Hammat Gadar. The site, which was famous in antiquity, received much attention from the third century CE on.[68] Half a century before Eudocia, Eunapius recounted how Iamblichus traveled to the bath complex and performed a miracle there, winning the trust of his followers as a result.[69] According to Eunapius, the complex was second in importance only to the baths at Baiae[70] and contained springs named after mythological figures (Eros and Anteros).[71] At the same time Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, criticized the bath at Hammat Gader for containing co-ed bathing facilities, which the Christian leader found deplorable.[72] Nearly two centuries later, Antoninus of Placentia equates the bath with a healing cult, where part of the building was reserved for incubations,[73] particularly for lepers.[74] If the sick received a vision, he would avoid bathing for a week at the end of which time he would be healed.[75]

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[67] Cameron, 1982, 263.

[68] Origen (*Commentary on John* 6:41) is the earliest extant reference to the bath complex built around the natural springs. For a complete discussion on the primary evidence from the site and its general historical significance, see Schürer, second English edition (1974-1987) vol. 1, 100-104.

[69] Eunapius, *Lives of the Philosophers* 459.

[70] Eunapius, *Lives of the Philosophers* 459: ϑερμὰ δέ ἐστι λουτρὰ τῆς Συρίας, τῶν γε κατὰ τὴν ʽΡωμαικὴν ἐν Βαίαις δεύτερα. See Horace, *Ep.* 1.1.85: nullus in orbe locus Baiis praelucet amoenis.

[71] See also Hirschfeld and Solar, 1981, 202. The relevance of this point will be discussed in detail below.

[72] Epiphanius *Panarion Haer*. 30.7.

While in exile in the Holy Land, Eudocia visited the site and was so impressed that she composed a hexametric poem praising the bath. Because of the location of the poem in the pavement of the complex[76] and the presence of two crosses flanking Eudocia's nomenclature, Green and Tsafrir doubt that Eudocia oversaw the actual inscribing of the stone or its location in the pavement. [77] Most of the seventeen-line poem survives–only the bottom three lines are partially damaged. The text reads as follows:

Εὐδοκίας Αὐγούστης

Πολλὰ μὲν ἐν βιότῳ κ᾽ ἀπίρονα θαύματ᾽ ὄπωπα,
τίς δέ κεν ἐξερέοι, πόσα δὲ στόματ᾽, ὦ κλίβαν᾽ ἐσθλέ,
σὸν μένος, οὐτιδανὸς γεγαὼς βροτός; Ἀλλά σε μᾶλλο(ν)

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[73] Indeed they were effectively locked in the room, most likely to allow the individual to breathe in the spring's natural vapors. Galen thought this process eased a variety of diseases (Bourdy, 1992, 31-35).

[74] This is not to suggest that only those with ailments of the skin would frequent the spring, but healing cults, especially during late antiquity were becoming more specialized. Not all natural springs contained healing cults; the bath complex at Bourbonne-les-Bains was used as early as Roman times as a military hospital. The natural springs were also the site for the first modern military hospital that used thermal water. See Ronot, 1973; Troisgros, 1994; and Sauer, 2005.

[75] The primary source for this information comes from Antoninus Placentinus' *Itinerarium* 7. See the appendix to this chapter for the relevant text. During the excavations of the site, Hirschfeld and Solar discovered a room that appeared similar to Antoninus' description: a room, with a small pool, that could be closed off from the rest of the complex.

[76] The inscription has a height of 71 cm, a thickness of approximately 2 cm, and an original length of 184-186 cm. Part of the right edge is broken, reducing the extant length of the inscription to a length of 181 cm. It is unclear whether the inscription was part of a wider decorative schema in the room's floor.

[77] In 427 Theodosius forbade the presence of crosses on mosaic floors or any surface that saw pedestrian traffic. See Codex Justinianus 1.8.1; Green and Tsafrir, 1982, 82. Green and Tsafrir's argument is perhaps gratuitous; the commissioning of an inscription, its cutting and general preparation, and its placement in situ would have taken time, so Eudocia's presence at its "dedication" is unlikely. Relying on Theodosius' edict is unnecessary, especially since someone at Hammat Gader violated it.

ὠκεανὸν πυρόεντα νέον ϑέμις ἐστὶ καλεῖσϑαι,
Παιάνα καὶ γενέτην γλυκερῶν δοτῆρα[78] ῥεέϑρων.
Ἐκ σέο τίκτεται οἶδμα τὸ μυρίον, ἄλλυδις ἄλλῃ,
ὅππῃ μὲν ζεῖον, πῇ δ᾽ αὖ κρυερόν τε μέσον τε.
Τετράδας ἐς πίσυρας κρηνῶν προχέεις σέο κάλλος·

Ἰνδή· Ματρώνα τε· Ῥεπέντινος· Ἠλίας ἁγνός·
Ἀντωνῖνος ἐύς· δροσερὰ Γαλάτια· καὶ αὐτὴ
Ὑγεία· καὶ χλιαρὰ μεγάλα· χλιαρὰ δὲ τὰ μικρά·
Μαργαρίτης· κλίβανος παλεός· Ἰνδή τε· καὶ ἄλλη
Ματρώνα· βριαρή τε Μονάστρια· κ᾽ ἡ Πατριάρχου.
Ὠδείνουσι τεὸν μένος ὄβριμον ἠνε[κὲς ἀιέν,]
ἀλλὰ ϑεὸν κλυτόμητιν ἀείσο[μαι – - - – -]
εἰ̓ς εὐεργεσείην μερόπων τε χ[ρ - – - - - – -][79]

By Eudocia Augusta

I have seen many countless wonders in my lifetime, but what worthless mortal–how many mouths–can tell, o good clibanus, your might? But rather, it is fitting to call you a new fiery ocean, Paean and begetter, dispenser of sweet streams. From you is born the boundless swell, one here, another there, in some parts a boiling (swell), in others a cold and a tepid (swell). In four tetrads of springs you pour forth your beauty:

Indian woman and Matrona, Repentinus and St. Elijah, good Antoninus, dewy Galatea and Hygeia herself, the great warm (baths) and the small warm (baths), the Pearl and old clibanus, Indian woman, and another Matrona, the strong Nun and the spring of the Patriarch. For those, who are in anguish, your mighty strength is eternal, but I will sing of God, famous in skill for the benefit and … of mortals.[80]

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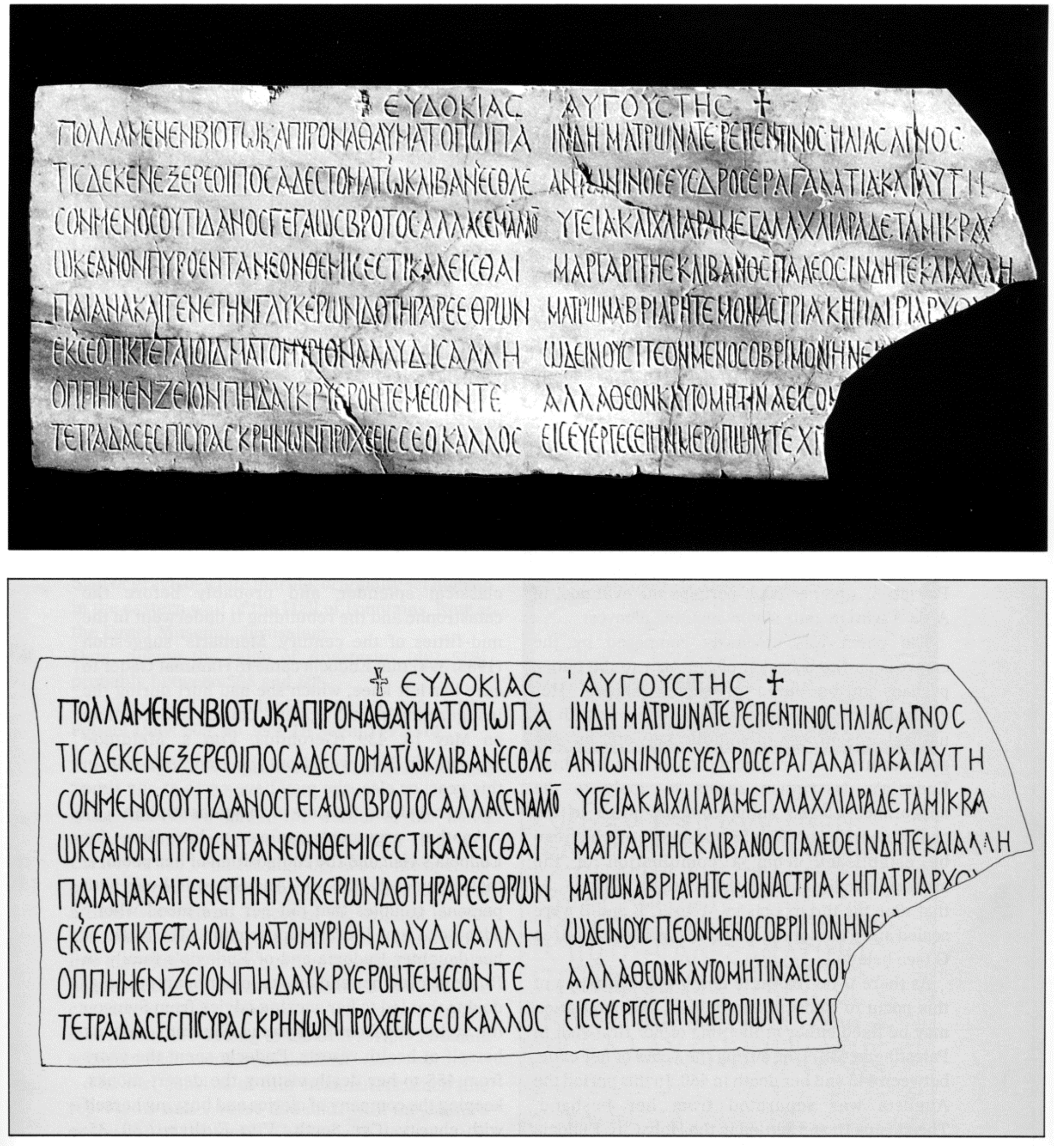
[78] Read δωτῆρα. See Bevegni, 1990, and Eudocia's martyrdom 1.115 and 2.406 for comparanda.
[79] Meimare 1983 reconstructs the final two lines to read:
ἀλλὰ ϑεὸν κλυτόμητιν ἀείσο[μαι ὄφρα σε σῴζω]
εἰ̓ς εὐεργεσείην μερόπων τε χρ[ῆσιν ἀείνων.]
[80] The translation is my own. I avoid reading any of the various reconstructions for the last two lines since they might very well misconstrue the final lines. For example, Meimare's reconstruction (see above) introduces a final clause after the ἀείσομαι in line 16, which is not required and somewhat weakens the overall flow of the poem.



† ΕΥΔΟΚΙΑϹ ʼΑΥΓΟΥϹΤΗϹ †
ΠΟΛΛΑΜΕΝΕΝΒΙΟΤΩΚΑΠΙΡΟΝΑΘΑΥΜΑΤΟΠΩΠΑ ΙΝΔΗΜΑΤΡΩΝΑΤΕΡΕΠΕΝΤΙΝΟϹΗΛΙΑϹΑΓΝΟϹ
ΤΙϹΔΕΚΕΝΕΞΕΡΕΟΙΠΟϹΑΔΕϹΤΟΜΑΤΩΚΛΙΒΑΝΕϹΘΛΕ ΑΝΤΩΝΙΝΟϹΕΥΕΔΡΟϹΕΡΑΓΑΛΑΤΙΑΚΑΙΑΥΤΗ
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Figure 1: Eudocia's poem from Hammat Gader

The poem opens with a series of Homerisms[81] reconstructed into an ecphrastic encomium praising the wonder of the bath's clibanus, or furnace.[82] Homer's πολλὴν ἐπ᾽ ἀπείρονα γαῖαν (*Od*. XV.79) is creatively modified in line 2 into πολλὰ καὶ ἀπίρονα ϑαύματα,[83] a remarkably untraditional, in the epic sense, yet viable prosaic expression.[84] What is more, line three contains an equally awkward Homerism[85] that had over time become a poetic topos, the invocation for a hundred tongues, parodied by the satirist Persius (Satire 5.1-2).[86] Late Antique poets had a penchant for lists, which were occasionally influenced by ecphrases.[87] What separates Eudocia's ecphrastic encomium from others about baths[88]

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[81] I use the term Homerism to refer to a manner of speaking, as opposed to a clear allusion, which brings to mind a defined context or perhaps multiple contexts. I borrow the term from Fournet, 1995, 302, who describes a Homerism more broadly: "Ce mot, loin de se restreindre à son

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acception grammaticale, denote ici tout ce qui ressortit à la lecture, l'étude et l'utilisation des textes homériques."

[82] See Green and Tsafrir, 1982, 83, for the appropriateness of ecphrasis during the period, as well as some recent bibliography. I would add Becker, 1995, and Boehm, 1995.

[83] Green and Tsafrir, 1982, 83 omits the perhaps banal observation that the use of ὄπωπα at a line's end is by far more common in the *Odyssey* than the *Iliad*. I have observed above how Eudocia modified a clearly Iliadic line by substituting the adjective ὑμετέρης at the beginning of the line. No form of the adjective ὑμετέρος is attested in the entire *Iliad* at the beginning of the line (Tebben, 1994 and 1998), but it is quite common in the *Odyssey*. Perhaps there is a pattern the empress follows in altering Homeric formulae. Eudocia appears more comfortable with the formulaic patterns of the *Odyssey* than the *Iliad*, or at least she found the formulaic pattern of the *Odyssey* more pliable to her own poetry.

[84] The usage of ἐν βιότῳ is indicative of later Greek prose and is therefore not in keeping with pure Homeric Greek.

[85] Green and Tsafrir argue that Eudocia has in mind, two Homeric passages, *Od*. 3.113-116 and *Il*. 2.488-489. The connection with these two passages rest entirely on two words, ἐξερέοι and στόματα, which I find slightly overstated. Nor do I agree with Green and Tsafrir on the rarity of ἐξερέω, which is attested, not infrequently in both Homer and Sophocles, particularly when the latter follows a Homeric idiom. To be sure, Eudocia's poetry was heavily influenced by the Homeric corpus, but her original poetry, as opposed to her cento, indicates that not every clausula or idiom had a clear Homeric model. For more on Eudocia's ability to manipulate Homeric formulae and her preference for the *Odyssey* over the *Iliad*, see chapter two, "The Homeric Christian at Play."

[86] vatibus hic mos est, centum sibi poscere voces,
centum ora et linguas optare in carmina centum.
There are a variety of other parallels to this motif: including Apuleius, Euripides, as well as some Jewish examples including Philo, Baruch, Yohanan b. Zakkai (Scheiber, 1984, 180-181).

[87] For example, note the opening of the Homeric centos, lines 8-29 (Usher, 1999, 1-2; Schembra, 2007, 5-6). The creation narrative opens by citing the first six lines from the shield of Achilles (*Il*. 18.483-488). For poetic lists, the poetry of Christodorus of Coptus, one of Cameron's "wandering poets" (sc. Cameron, 1965, 475, 481, 489) serves as a suitable example. He wrote a poem, almost certainly a list, entitled "On the pupils of the great Proclus," but more apropos for our purposes, his ecphrasis on the statues at the bath of Zeuxippus in Constantinople survives (*Anth. Pal.* 2) which describes the eighty statutes that decorated the bath. As a whole, the 416 lines hexameter poem is in the form of an extended ecphrastic list. See Whitby, 2003, 598-599; Bassett, 2004, 51-58, 160-185; and Kaldellis, 2007.

is how the poet directs the attention of her audience; she directly addresses[89] the bath's accoutrements, specifically the clibanus.[90] This shift from the third to second person gives the poem the appearance of an encomium disguised, albeit conspicuously, as an ecphrasis.

The clibanus at Hammat Gader, according to the encomiast, has such power (μένος) that no mortal, no number of mouths would be able to describe it. What follows (lines 4b-6) is a tripartite list of images for the clibanus.[91] These three images, a fiery ocean, Paean, and an emanating source of sweet streams, make up the most difficult and understudied section of the poem. The clibanus is first likened to a new fiery ocean (ὠκεανὸν πυρόεντα νέον), perhaps a vestige of the common use of the ocean (ὠκεανός) as an honorific epithet in public encomiastic acclamations.[92] That prytaneis were commonly addressed with the acclamation ὠκεανέ suggests that the term held some social meaning,[93] perhaps with Homeric undertones.[94] The ὠκεανός epithet was still common

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[88] Compare Thébert, 2003, 485-521.
[89] Most verse inscriptions from the fourth and fifth-centuries were written from the perspective of the viewer. It was not until the seventh-century where there are multiple examples in a third person perspective. See Kendall, 1998, 24 especially note 16.
[90] Some of the better examples of poetic inscriptions about bath complexes are: SEG 42.931 (5th CE), AP 9.615, 9.631, 9.680, 9.814, 9.815 (Didot, 1872). Green and Tsafrir, 1982, 84-85 cover the extent to which we can ascertain what function the clibanus served in the complex, most likely the ancient equivalent of a hot-water heater. The term is not to be found in Yegül, 1992, but there are some tempting suggestions, particularly the tank-boiler combinations described by Vitruvius; see Yegül, 1992, 373.
[91] Green and Tsafrir, 1982, 85 note 26, cites the reading of Ludwig Koenen who suggests that the engraver omitted a τε in line 6, which would then read Παιάνα καὶ γενέτην γλυκερῶν τε δοτῆρα ῥεέθρων. This would technically give us a list of four descriptors, but the final two are so closely related that they would best be discussed together. Green and Tsafrir briefly examine the first two images, but the third was neglected.
[92] See Peterson, 1929; Méautis, 1931; Merkelbach, 1988; Blume, 1989; Wiemer, 2004; Kruse, T, 2006.
[93] See P. Oxy. 1305, and 1413.

during late antiquity, as seen in John Chrysostom's *De inani gloria et de educandis liberis*,[95] where Chrysostom, in his invective against vainglory, gives the example of the ambitious (φιλότιμος) patron receiving praise from the city at large. The theater throngs with the entire citizen body, which in one voice praises the man's beneficence (φιλοτιμίαι). Some venerate him as a Nile of gifts (Νεῖλον τῶν δωρεῶν), while others, thinking the comparison ill-fitting, applaud him as the ocean, and say he is in his beneficence (φιλοτιμίαι) what the ocean is in water (ἐν ὕδασι). For Chrysostom the ambitious man is doubtless a pejorative exemplum–in his pursuit of glory, the man will suffer ruin and squander his wealth–but for οἱ πολλοί the ambitious man deserves their adoration, from which flows the oceanic metaphor.

It is interesting to compare Chrysostom's use of the ὠκεανός metaphor with Eudocia's. Just as Chrysostom's ambitious man, the clibanus takes on a quasi-patronizing quality: although the ambitious man abounds, like the Nile and later the Ocean, in gifts and beneficence,[96] the clibanus abounds in streams of "living water" that provide healing for those in pain (lines 6 and 15). The therapeutic quality of the spring is here the focus of Eudocia's encomium, not the bath's visual aesthetics, the expected emphasis in an ecphrasis. Without doubt, the bath's beauty (κάλλος) is mentioned in the first section of

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[94] From the Hellenistic period on, Homer was increasingly described as the ocean, or fountain-head from which flowed the greater witness of poets. Brink, 1972, 555, attributes the imagery as a rhetorical topos for flowing speech. For the best and most relevant examples, see Brink, 1972, 553-556.

[95] Consult Schulte, 1914, and Laistner, 1951, and the appendix below.

[96] Since these bodies of water brought good things to man, the language used to describe them takes on euegetistic imagery. Interestingly, the Nile rose sixteen cubits during the flood season, a level which was vital to the economic life of Egypt, and made its way in imperial coinage (see Bonneau, 1964, 336-337). Eudocia's sixteen fountains, just as the floodwaters of the Nile, abound in benefits for bathers.

the poem (line 9),[97] but Eudocia leaves her reader with an image of the services provided by the clibanus, namely the healing ability of its μένος. As in Chrysostom's disquisition, the ὠκεανός metaphor pinpoints what the patron does for the client (here the encomiast) and ignores or disregards the patron's true physical qualities. At Hammat Gader, the clibanus as local patron is responsible through its μένος for healing the sick.

In fact, healing is a recurring motif throughout the poem, implied in the countless wonders (ἀπίρονα ϑαύματα) of line 1 and the direct reference to Paean[98] in line 6. Of the obscure names[99] listed in lines 10-14, which perhaps refers to sixteen fountains visible in the complex, Elijah,[100] Galatia, and Hygeia are each associated with healing cults. Finally, in line 15 Eudocia explicitly mentions that those who suffer receive comfort from the clibanus' μένος. The sum of these references underscores how effective the bath's therapeutic ability was thought to be. The overarching theme of μένος, along with its associated ability to bring about ἀπίρονα θαύματα, gives the poem a distinct unity, despite its various images or intertextual allusions. Just as Chrysostom's Antiochenes, Eudocia compares the clibanus to a euergetistic ocean, in her words, the source and dispenser (γενέτην and δοτῆρα) of pleasant waters and good gifts. For the empress and the bath's ailing patrons, the good gifts provided by the clibanus were primarily curative wonders, Eudocia's ἀπίρονα θαύματα.

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[97] Note that Ovadiah, 1998, has overlooked the overall force of the poem and emphasized the role of κάλλος, in particular the role of beauty in Neoplatonic philosophy.

[98] Here most likely in reference to Asclepius, but could of course be used in reference to Apollo and also of Hygeia. The latter option is interesting in that Eudocia lists Hygeia among one of the fourteen springs or statues. For more on the connection between Apollo, Asclepius, and Hygeia and the nomenclature Paean, see Käppel, 1992, particularly Paian #37, 372-374.

[99] It would be superfluous to recapitulate what Green and Tsafrir, 1982, 86-91, have already said about the identity of the sixteen names, but a brief comment should be made about the *communis opinio* for each. The multiple attestations for the Indian and Matrona, each mentioned twice, indicate that Eudocia is likely referring to general, as opposed to specific, women. Green and Tsafrir suggest that two of the women appeared Indian-like, or perhaps they were in traditional Indian attire. Accordingly, the two Matronae looked like ladies. Repentinus, on the other hand, is interpreted as a past benefactor, whose image or name was still associated with a part of the bath complex or a fountain. The name was common in the high empire but not in the fifth century, a fact which leads Green and Tsafrir to suggest that this Repentinus patronized the bath a few centuries earlier. Following the same logic, Antoninus the Good is identified, tentatively, as Antoninus Pius. Helias the Holy causes a few more problems. There is a Helias, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, but he was active at the end of the fifth century. On the other hand, Green and Tsafrir assert that this was a reference to the Biblical Elijah who was associated with the Hammat Gader bath certainly in the sixth-century by Placentius (for more on this see below). The bath had fountains to at least one mythical figure from the Bible and at least two from classical culture–Galatia and Hygieia were commonly associated with bath complexes, particularly in Syria. Next in the list are three sections of the bath itself, the small and large warm-water pools and the old clibanus. The term used here for pool (χλιαρά) is problematic since it, like clibanus, is never used in reference to a bath complex. Μαργαρίτης is a strange name, and likely refers to a room that was decorated with pearls or had an appearance associated with pearls (Green and Tsafrir, 1982, 89). After the second Indian woman and Matrona, we have the strong nun, which Green and Tsafrir suggest might be taken as two nouns (βριαρή would then be taken as a noun and not, as the syntax demands, as an adjective). This argument is appealing since the list, as it stands contains only 15 names, not the four tetrads that the poem mentions. The final name, which

The centrality of healing is something one would expect from a fifth century holy site; late antiquity was a period of intense religious fervor and no religious center was complete without an appropriate healing cult. Some of the attested healing acts attributed to St. Menas of Cotyaeum,[101] Sts. Cyrus and John at Menouthis,[102] and Sts. Artemius,[103]

Green and Tsafrir interpret as ἡ κρηνὴ Πατριάρχου, the spring of the Patriarch, is particularly tenuous. Green and Tsafrir suggest that the Patriarch must refer to a Christian patriarch, specifically Juvenal of Jerusalem. Contrariwise, Habas, 1996, has persuasively argued that the term Patriarch was not used in the fifth century of Christian bishops, but instead (Habas, 1996, 114) likely refers to a Jewish figure. Habas' argument is supported but other non-local patrons of the bath (Antoninus Pius and Eudocia) who presumably visited Hammat Gader while in Palestine. I tend to agree with Habas, particularly since Juvenal of Jerusalem, although present for some of Eudocia's philanthropic activities, does not appear to have traveled with the empress. For more on the role of Jewish patriarchs as governmental representatives under the Theodosian emperors, see Demandt, 2007, 521-522.

[100] In antiquity the entire bath complex at Hammat Gader was associated with Elijah. For more on the role of Elijah in Hammat Gader, see below.

[101] Drescher, 1946.

[102] Marcos, 1975; Montserrat, 2005; and Gascou, 2006.

[103] Crisafulli and Nesbitt, 1997.

Cosmas, and Damian of Constantinople,[104] were compiled in the subsequent centuries and survive. While some saints or locations specialized in particular ailments–Sts. Cyprus and John specialized in eyes, St. Artemius in genitals–others were not restricted to specific locations and were curative "jack-of-all-trades." St. Menas is the best example of this latter type. If Antoninus of Placentia can be taken as his word, Hammat Gader and its therapeutic divinity[105] were responsible for skin ailments, leprosy in particular.[106] Interestingly, Antoninus attributes the healing efficacy of the springs to one of two personages, the prophet Elijah and John the husband of Thecla.[107] Be that as it may, holy figures of Jewish, Christian, pagan, and perhaps Hindu[108] origins were identified with the therapeutic *thaumata* at Hammat Gader.[109] Furthermore, incubations, a practice central to healing sanctuaries from the classical period on, were doubtless practiced in the bath complex. So if the fifth century world was one in which healings were occurring on every street corner, from Byzantium to Menouthis, how does Eudocia interpret these events, or more accurately, whom does she thank?

The answer to this question is not entirely certain because the final two lines of the poem are fragmentary. Regardless of the particular reconstructions of these lines, Eudocia certainly redirects her reader's attention from the μένος of the clibanus to that of God

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[104] Deubner, 1907, and Festugière, 1971. See Parmentier, 1989.
[105] Not all healing sites were associated with a divinity per se (compare Troisgros, 1975); late antiquity saw a rise in healing sanctuaries of the saints and other biblical figures.
[106] The surviving inscriptions evidence the extent to which healings were thought to occur at Hammat Gader. See Di Segni, 1997.
[107] See the appendix at the end of this chapter.
[108] For comparable examples of Hinduism in antiquity see Sigerist 1961, and Román López, 1995.
[109] Many other divinities were commonly associated with bath complexes (Heracles, Athena, Mercury, Sol, Minerva). See Dvorjetski, 1997.

(θεὸν κλυτόμητιν). Unlike those ailing, who turn to the clibanus in hopes of healing and, as a result, thank the power of the clibanus, Eudocia thanks God. The wording she chose to use, however, does not clarify matters; indeed, they have only confused the issue. The epithet κλυτόμητιν, although not to be found in the Homeric corpus, can be found in reference to Hephaestus and Asclepius in the Homeric Hymns[110] and in the epigraphic record.[111] In both cases, the poems praise the god, the latter example specifically for Asclepius' ability to heal the afflicted.[112] Furthermore, the opening of the Homeric Hymn might provide us with a syntactical model from which Eudocia borrowed; both lines are metrically similar–the divinity takes up the first foot and dactyl–and follow with the formulaic κλυτόμητιν ἀεί. The only substantial difference between the Homeric Hymn and Eudocia's line is the morphological shift of the predicate from the imperative to the first person indicative. The adjective's infrequency in the extant Greek corpus, along with the similarity of both poems in construction and position, argues against mere happenstance.

But which divinity does the poet intend to praise? One can, following Green and Tsafrir,[113] insist on a Jewish-Christian referent, which thereby forces one, although the attested examples of the epithet κλυτόμητις primarily concerns Hephaestus and Asclepius, to suggest that it is unlikely for a fifth century Christian to have credited the bath's miracles to any of the pagan pantheon. On the other hand, Asher Ovadiah's 1996 article opens the possibility of a more abstract referent.[114] If Eudocia was influenced by Neoplatonic philosophy to the extent that Ovadiah suggests, the divinity under question would be similar to Proclus' One.[115] More accurately, in Neoplatonic theology all divine qualities originate from the One, which permeates all matter and is manifest in any divinity associated with a particular locus, in this case, the natural spring.[116] Therefore, we are left with three radically different possibilities: the Christian god, a pagan deity, or a Neoplatonic divinity. Regardless of the possible presence of Neoplatonic ideas within the poem, Eudocia's other extant poetry is saturated with Christian theology, and since the Theodosian emperors were known for religious conservatism,[117] they were more likely to credit God or a saint with any miraculous event. The saint, as local medium between divine and mortal, would be a legitimate figure at a healing center, but since the poem explicitly mentions a god, the Christian one is the most likely and most reasonable option.

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[110] 20.1.

[111] IG 14.1015. It seems as if Green and Tsafrir knew of these examples, but they do not discuss them in detail. They are correct, however, in arguing that the poem most likely does not refer to Asclepius or Hephaestus, which I will discuss below. See appendix below for a citation of the exempla.

[112] But Homeric Hymn to Hephaestus does not overlook the benefits which Hephaestus gives to mortals, namely honor and happiness (or wealth). So at least, there is a recurring theme of gods giving gifts to mankind.

[113] Green and Tsafrir, 1982, 91.

What then does Eudocia's ecphrasis tell us about the social, religious, and ideological developments surrounding the empress? In a bath complex whose patron list spans the gamut– from an emperor,[118] a Jewish patriarch,[119] the prophet Elijah,[120] an unnamed nun,[121] as well as two mythological figures often associated with healing cults and bath complexes[122]– Eudocia's redirection of the reader's attention to the source of the spring's μένος, i.e. God, is striking. The physical manifestation of the bath's μένος, the comfort of those in pain, is the impetus for Eudocia's theological revision. The previous benefactors no longer receive credit for the *thaumata*, although their role in the history of the complex is not ignored. Indeed, Eudocia wrote her ecphrasis from the perspective of one walking through the bathhouse, sometimes describing who or what she sees and at other times reading the names of previous patrons or divine figures.[123] Further yet, Eudocia

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[114] Ovadiah, 1996, 391-392. Ovadiah focuses on the Neoplatonic ideas present in the poem, and he does not discuss who the θεόν of the poem might be.
[115] See Dodds, 1963.
[116] See Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, proposition 126 and 162.
[117] Limberis, 1996, 41-45.
[118] The reference to Ἀντωνῖνος ἐύς suggests that Antoninus Pius might have had some hand in the initial construction of the bath. See Hirschfeld, 1997, 4 and 11.
[119] See above or Habas, 1996.
[120] The sixth century author Antoninus of Placentia (see appendix at the end of this chapter for the text) associates the entire complex with Elijah. That Elijah would have been a logical choice for

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either Jew or Christian as associated figure at a healing sanctuary, particularly one involving water, might not be self-evident. As major prophetic figure of Jewish literature, Elijah was quickly incorporated into early Christian theology, in particular the role that Elijah *redivivus* would play in the coming of Messiah. This "second-hand" Elijah became associated with John the Baptist, for whom both the location near the Jordan was special, as was the image of water. Furthermore, Elijah was one of two Jewish figures associated with raising the dead, along with his protégé Elisha. Although Elisha would be a more natural choice, seeing that he also was known for healing miracles dealing with leprosy, it might be likely that the miracles of Elisha were easily attributed to those of Elijah, either by conflating the two characters (a mistake commonly made to this day) or by attributing Elisha's work to the spirit of Elijah that he had received. Contrariwise, Origen and Justin insist that Moses and the patriarch Joseph were the originators of Jewish practice of healing rituals (Simon, 1986, 340). It seems to have been common to attribute the healing properties of natural springs to religious founders. See Antoninus of Placentia 10 for a bath complex named after Moses. See also Green and Tsafrir, 1982, 88.

[121] Green and Tsafrir's suggestion (1982, 90), regardless how tentative it was made, that the Μονάστρια refers to Eudocia is highly unlikely, but, since there is no evidence that she took up the title of Μονάστρια, the suggestion is certainly incorrect. Μονάστρια enters the literary record in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, but it certainly is best attested in the centuries that follow. See John Chrysostom, *Ep*. 14.2; Isidorus Pelusiota *Epp*. 1.367; Justinian's *Novellae* 123.36; Joannes Moschus *Prat.* 60; Sophronius Hierosolymitanus *Mir. Cyp. et Jo.* 44; *Chron. Pasch.*; Council of Nicea (787).

[122] For comparanda for Γαλάτια and Ὑγεία see Green and Tsafrir, 1982, 88-89.

[123] This is perhaps the big picture of Eudocia's ecphrasis that Green, Tsafrir, and Habas overlook. In the list of sixteen fountains there are names that appear to be primarily descriptive (the two Indian women, the two matrons, the large and small pools, the old clibanus, and perhaps the Pearl and Nun) while others indicate that Eudocia read something in a room or section of the bath (Repentinus, Antoninus the Good, the Patriarch, and, most likely, Elijah). It is possible that the Patriarch is descriptive, but if Habas is correct in his suggestion that the Patriarch was a Jewish patron, then something must have distinguished him from a run of the mill Jewish patron. Concerning Elijah, it is possible that Eudocia recognized him from the quickly developing iconographic attributes of Biblical persons, but it is equally as likely that there was something in

does not attribute the bath's power to pagan figures; the ϑεὸς κλυτόμητις has subsumed them all, or at least relegated them to a list of the sixteen springs or fountains.[124] Just as imperial legislation during the Theodosian emperors marginalized traditional Greco-Roman cultic activity, so Eudocia's poem creatively emphasizes orthodox Christianity at the expense of pagan perspectives.[125]

It makes perfect sense that a fifth century Christian in general and a Theodosian empress in particular would engage in this type of ideological competition, especially in the area of supernatural healing. Note as well that Eudocia's presentation of the various ideological "options" is remarkably elusive. It is only in her list of the sixteen springs that one gets a glimpse of the various communities that frequented the bath,[126] some undoubtedly to be healed. Over time particular components of the complex were named after illustrious visitors from various backgrounds–pagan, Jewish, Christian, and perhaps Hindu. Furthermore, Eudocia never attempts to dismiss or explain away the therapeutic activity that took place at Hammat Gader–the empress herself might have traveled to the spring for that very reason.[127] Rather, she redirects the attention of her audience, who might have shared Eudocia's impression of the bath, its various rooms, and springs and who might have come in search of their own ἀπίρονα θαύματα. After her literary tour of

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the area that had Elijah's name on it. If the association of Ἠλίας ἁγνός with the Old Testament figure is rejected, then it is even more likely that Eudocia read the name Ἠλίας.

[124] If indeed, there are sixteen springs.

[125] For more on the competition that occurred in healing contexts, see Muir, 2006.

[126] This point has been made above on multiple occasions: the site was truly multicultural and over time, even dominant ideologies such as Christianity and Islam were unable to erase completely the bath's pagan past. For a history of the site and its patrons, see the introduction in Hirschfeld, 1997, 4-6.

[127] Meimare, 1983; and Habas, 1996, 112-113.

the complex, with its exotic and religious affiliations, Eudocia sums up her perspective: it is God who deserves praise, God who acts as *euergetes* par excellence.

If Eudocia's poem contrasts God's beneficence with that of the clibanus, then the latter does not fare too poorly since the poem was erected in the center of the bath complex and in a heavy traffic area.[128] To be sure, the poem honors the spring's various uses as well as the complex's multiple rooms, and Eudocia acclaims the clibanus with language that is traditional, as evidenced in the ocean acclamation in John Chrysostom, yet unique. Regardless of the relationship between Chrysostom and comparable examples from the papyrological record,[129] Eudocia has here modified acclamations for humans and creatively applied them to a section of the bathhouse. The clibanus, like the *prytaneis* in the papyri or Chrysostom's ambitious *euergetes*, serves as the patron of those in need; in actuality it just controlled the water temperature, but in the poem, its service facilitates the therapeutic wonders, thereby making the clibanus a metaphorical ocean of good gifts. Furthermore, the connection between euergetism and the needs of the sick is consistent with the late antique model of euergetism which was rapidly developing into our idea of charity. And no matter how expansive the clibanus' power is (the opening of the poem asserts that it is beyond expression), Eudocia directs the attention of her audience toward the power of God, the true source of euergetism. The inscription at Hammat Gader indicates how for a Homeric Christian such as Eudocia, God is never obscured, not even in the midst of her own benefactions.

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[128] This opinion assumes that Eudocia did not directly oversee the installment of the inscription, an argument begun and maintained from the earliest detailed publications on the poem.

[129] Kruse, 2006.

Epilogue: Copycat Eudociana

Soon after the initial publications of the Eudocia inscription in the early 1980s, several epigraphic poems were quickly attributed to Eudocia. Although Eudocian authorship has been seriously questioned regarding each of these poems, they warrant brief discussion here at the end of this chapter.[130]

Hammat Gader, Inscription #1

For the first inscription, one does not have to leave Hammat Gader–it is only a short walk to the other side of the bath complex.[131] Not long after the initial publications on the epigraphic finds at Hammat Gader, one other inscription at the site was attributed to Eudocia.[132] This inscription reads:

Μηκέτι τάρβος ἔχοιτε λοετροφόρου ἀσαμίνϑου
οὐλομένης, ἣ μύρια πολλοῖς ἄλγε᾽ ἔϑηκεν,
[ἄ]νδρας σινομένη κτείνουσα τε, πολλάκι παῖδας.
[ἥ τ᾽ ἀχανὴ]ς γὰρ ὑπέρϑεν ὅλην κατεχώσατο γαίη.
[Ἄνδιχ]α δὲ στορέσας φιλοπαίγμονα ϑήκετο χῶρον
Ν[ικᾶς ?, ἄλλο]ϑι δοὺς τερψίμβροτον ἑλκέμεν ὕδωρ.

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[130] I tend to err on the conservative side of the issue of their authorship and doubt that any of the three poems were written by Eudocia. On the other hand, it seems as if one was written with Eudocia in mind, perhaps to promulgate the rumors that spread soon after the empress left Constantinople for the final time.

[131] For the clearest plan of the bath with all the published inscriptions listed, see Di Segni, 1997, 187.

[132] Meimare, 1983; the poem under questions corresponds to Di Segni, 1997, inscription 1, 186-189. For the full poem, see the appendix at the end of the chapter.

Do not be in fear any more of the bathwater-bearing tub, that accursed thing, which
brought about myriad sorrows for many, harming men and altogether killing boys.
For the earth from above swallowed it whole. But once [name of patron] smoothed it (the ground) out, he built a place for male sports, and he allowed (one) to draw pleasing-to-mortals water elsewhere.

The inscription commemorates the reconstruction of the bath after an earthquake, either in 447 (less likely) or between 450 and 457 (preferable).[133] What had been for the author of the poem an accursed bathing area was leveled and turned into a palaestra. The content of this inscription warrants comparison with Eudocia's poem. First, the latter's poem celebrates the various pools of bathing water present at the site, while this anonymous poem calls at least one of these bathing areas accursed since its collapse killed men and boys who were bathing at the time. Rather than rebuild the pool, a patron, whom we know was male, paved over the preexisting structure to build an area primarily useful for male visitors. Second, whereas Eudocia's poem celebrates the various services provided by the bath and her tone is positive and light-hearted, the tone of the later inscription is considerably more serious, even melancholy or morbid. The reference to the tragic deaths of so many of the bath's patrons makes the poem read like a eulogy. Eudocia's beneficial clibanus, a metonymy for the entire complex, is contrasted here with the water-bearing tub, the harbinger of death; Eudocia's encomium is another's dirge.

But does this melancholy inscription evidence the dependence upon the Homeric corpus that characterizes Eudocia's poetry? Indeed it does; the Greek relies heavily on Homeric idiom, a point only partially realized by previous commentators, but in unique and decidedly non-Homeric ways. Of course, the second line of the poem modifies, albeit slightly, *Iliad* 1.2, a fact impossible to neglect. But the first line uses an apt Homeric word, ἀσαμίνθου, which, in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey,* typically bridges the first and second foot, with the sole exception of *Odyssey*. 4.128 where, like here, it sits at the end of the fifth foot and fills out the hexameter. In line 5, one notices another example of the fifth century poet imitating Homeric metrical position. The participial στορέσας is quite common in both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, but, as here, is located either as a bridge between the second and third feet or between the third and fourth. Furthermore the noun τάρβος is remarkably rare in the Homeric corpus (*Il.* 24.152 and 181),[134] yet is used in a comparable context. Finally, the use of the *hapax legomena* τερψίμβροτον and φιλοπαίγμονα would not have escaped the notice of the poet or learned reader.[135] These three qualifications, allusions, word position in the hexameter, and several exempla of rare words, conclusively qualify this poem as Homeric.

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[133] For more on the dates of the earthquakes, refer to Di Segni, 1997, 188.

On the other hand, the poem was not constructed out of whole Homeric cloth; the use of λοετροφόρου indicates how the *Sitz im Leben* of the poem informed key thematic aspects within it. Pausanius uses λοετροφόρος as the title for a priestess, connected to a sanctuary of Aphrodite.[136] The context of this section of the *Description of Greece* is a discussion about rituals associated with bath complexes and their adjacent gymnasia. Writing at the same time as Pausanius, the lexicographer Harpocrates[137] provides an entry for the noun/adjective[138] in reference to a person who bears ritual water for bathing, either in marital or funerary contexts.[139] The imagery of ritual water is apropos to the general functions of Hammat Gader which we have previously discussed. On the other hand, Harpocrates' use of λοετροφόρος in a funerary context is apropos to the broader context of the inscription–the water-bearing tub was the cause of numerous funerals. Contrariwise, λοετροφόρος can be taken in a strict ritual sense and refer to the therapeutic function of the pools. And yet despite any cultic significance the north-west wing of the complex might have had, after its sudden collapse it was rebuilt into a gymnasium. The opening lines of the poem reveal how the ritual function of the wing, evidenced here in the use of λοετροφόρος, was suddenly eradicated by the new patron and his athletically-oriented, male space.[140] This was an abrupt shift in the purpose of natural spring baths, which rarely contained athletic spaces,[141] and the palaestra's presence at the expense of bathing space makes this shift more pronounced. In the end, λοετροφόρος contains multiple connotations, one of which has a strong funerary setting that should not be ignored. Taken together, the force of λοετροφόρος is rather strong: the tub, previously used as a bearer of ritual water, collapsed, killed those bathing in it, and, as a result, became a tub used during funerary processions. Because the bath, which

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[134] Both lines read μηδέ τί οἱ θάνατος μελέτω φρεσὶ μηδέ τι τάρβος (24.181 reads τοι instead of οἱ).

[135] Technically, since τερψίμβροτον is used twice in the *Odyssey*, 12.269 and 274, it can hardly be a true hapax legomenon, but *Od*. 12.274 is a repetition of the prior line. Therefore, τερψίμβροτον was at the least rare enough to only be used in a single context in the same metrical position.

[136] Pausanius 2.10.4.

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[137] See the edition by Keaney, 1991, in particular 166.

[138] LSJ cites no proper noun, but Pausanius' substantive use of the adjective indicates that the adjective was commonly used and understood on its own.

[139] This explains how the word is used associated with both marriage and funeral rites. See Pollux Grammaticus (Bethe ed.) III. 43 and VIII.66 as well as Euripides, *Phoenician Women* 348.

[140] The differences between gymnasia and baths, particularly from the Roman period through late antiquity, become increasingly nebulous. Specifically, our sources do not accurately distinguish between the two; a site that has a clear bathing function is often called a gymnasium. But this pertains especially to bath complexes in cities, versus baths located near natural springs, which typically evidence little or no athletic activity (see Yegül, 1992, 124).

[141] Yegül, 1992, 124.

Eudocia had praised less than a decade earlier, was so detestable for its patrons, the unknown patron thought it best to pave over it and built a palaestra.

Meimare first suggested that the empress was responsible for this poem, but Eudocian authorship has been utterly rejected since.[142] While this inscription might have been commissioned and erected contemporaneously with Eudocia's encomium to the clibanus, perhaps in imitation of the empress' work,[143] the poem is certainly not about her–the participles in lines five and six are unambiguously masculine. Moreover, if the final line is reconstructed to read Nikas, and if we follow Di Segni's theory that the poem is about a local benefactor, Eudocia's role as author of the poem is even more dubious–imperial figures just do not write encomia to honor local figures.[144] As we have already seen, Eudocia was most likely not present to see her poem laid in the bath's floor, so it is even more unlikely that she was present for the dedication of the refurbished structure.[145] This poem, although not written by Eudocia, facilitates a study into the literary world of Palestine in late antiquity, in particular the role of local and imperial benefactors in healing cults.

Eukhaita, 1

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[142] Meimaris, 1983; Feissel, 1987; Di Segni, 1997.
[143] Di Segni, 1997, 189.
[144] There is no a priori reason why Nikas must have been a local magistrate, but Di Segni, 1997, 188-189, argues that there is good evidence that local governors were oftentimes responsible for building programs at the site. The epigraphic record from Hammar Gader supports this theory; see Di Segni Nos. 50, 51, 52, 54, 57.
[145] Di Segni, 1997, 186-189.

The next spurious Eudocian inscription comes from the basilica of St. Stephen in Eukhaita, the ancient town of Theodoropolis in Paphlagonia.[146] The text reads as follows:

σωτὴρ φανείς, Στέφανε, ἀλγεινῶν πόνων
λαιοῦ γόνατος καὶ ποδὸς οἰκτρᾶς φίλης,
ϑεῖον ναὸν δωροῦμαι κλεινῇ τῇ πόλει
τοῦ Θεοδώρου, κράντορος παλαιφάτου,
δωρουμένη ληφϑέντα δῶρον σὸν πόδα
αὐτῶι μένειν,[147] σύσσημον ἀλήστου μνείας.

ΒΣ ΕΥΔ Φ ΙΕ ΘΑΡΓ

Stephen, since you appear as a savior for the painful sufferings of the left knee and foot of your miserable lady-friend, I give a divine temple to the illustrious city of Theodorus, the legendary ruler. I (also) am giving a gift, your foot that I received, to remain here (in the temple as a) token of my unending remembrance (of you).

The poem commemorates the dedication of a basilica (ναός) and a relic, the proto-martyr's foot, within the sanctuary.[148] The dedicator was presumably a woman, evidenced by the feminine participle in line 5 as well as the οἰκτρὰ φίλη in line 2. The construction of the ναός and the deposition of the relic stemmed from a miraculous healing of the woman's left knee and foot, which the she attributed to the power of the martyr.

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[146] See Doublet, 1889; Halkin, 1953; Livrea, 1996. The inscription is perhaps a modern fake.

[147] A brief word should be said concerning my understanding of the infinitive here. I take the μένειν as an infinitive of purpose, which, albeit rare, accompanies verbs of giving, entrusting, appointing, taking, or receiving (here δωρουμένη) (Smyth # 2009). This is, to be sure, a typical prosaic construction, but poetry in Late Antiquity often contains strong prosaic constructions.

[148] The relic is said to have been seen as recently as 1856. See Halkin, 1953, 96.

The poem ends with a series of abbreviations, which have caused scholars to attribute the poem to Eudocia, although all admit to absence of comparanda, particularly for the abbreviations for Eudocia's titulature.[149] On the one hand Doublet accepted a Eudocian authorship a priori, whereas Livrea has subjected the text to a more thorough analysis. The latter has conclusively demonstrated that peculiar lexical and grammatical constructions from the Paphlagonian inscription have analogs in the undisputed Eudocian corpus, in particular the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian*.[150] The implications of the poem, as Livrea astutely points out, is that it adds substantively to the legend of the "apple of discord" surrounding what, for lack of a better term, can be called the Eudocian myth. This myth might have some historic validity, such as the injury of Eudocia's foot while in exile.[151] The problem arises when we discover that Eudocia's alleged lover, Paulinus, is also said to have injured his foot.[152] When the foot of St. Stephen is added to the mix, this gives us three feet to make sense of: Paulinus' injured foot which caused all of Eudocia's problems, Eudocia's foot (and knee), and the relic of the proto-martyr. One suspects, as has been suggested, that so many feet is the product of the legend that was promulgated and disseminated soon after Eudocia left Constantinople and has continued to the present day. Of course, a Eudocian authorship might still be accepted, but with the possibility that the inscription is a modern fake and without additional evidence for Eudocia's presence in Paphlogonia to commission a basilica and deposit a relic of St. Stephen at Theodoropolis, the most one can say is that the authorship of the poem is highly doubtful.

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[149] Livrea, 1996, 71 explains the abbreviations as follows: Β(α)σ(ιλίσσα) Εὐδ(οκία) φ(έρει) ιε´ Θαργ(ηλιῶνος), "the empress Eudocia carries (the foot here) on the 15th day of Thargelion." Doublet, 1889, 298-299 reads the first two abbreviations (ΒΣ ΕΥΔ) as suspect. Such abbreviations were unknown to Avi-Yonah (1940). The final abbreviation is the Athenian month Thargelion. Doublet insists that within the region of Paphlagonia, the Athenian calendar was still in use.

[150] Livrea, 1996, 73-74. See also, Livrea 1994, 1997a, and 1997b.

[151] Best attested in the *Vita Melaniae* 59.

[152] See John Malalas 14.21: τὸν μάγιστρον Παολῖνον ἀηδισθέντα ἐκ τοῦ ποδὸς ἀπρόιτον μεῖναι καὶ ἐκκουσεῦσαι. For more on the Eudocian legend in Malalas, see Gonnelli, 1989.

SEG 51.1735

The third and final inscription that warrants discussion here has not yet been attributed to Eudocia. The text is a nine line Homeric cento,[153] which possibly originated again from Paphlagonia, and dates to either the fourth or fifth century.[154] The text reads as follows:

πάντας [ ]
ἠὲ φιλόξαινος καί σφιν νόον ἦτο θεουδίς.
μοῖραν δ᾽ οὔ τινά φημι πεφυγμένον ἔμμεναι ἀνδρῶν,
ἀλλὰ οἱ ἀθάνατος μεγα<θ>ύμων θυμὸν ἀπηύρεν.
μικρότερον δὲ λέλειπεν ἀδελφεὸν ᾧ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ,
ὃν φιλέων ζωὸς μεγάλως ἐπεμαίετο θυμῷ.
καὶ ποτέ τις εἴπισι καὶ ὀψιγόνων ἀνθρόπων,
῾τὸν καὶ τεθνειιοῦτα θεῶν ὑπ᾽ ἀμύμονα πομπ[ήν]
μοῖρα καλὴ σάωσεν Ἰορδάνου ἀμφὶ ῥέεθρ[α.]᾽

All…and he was friendly to strangers and pious to them in his heart. I don't call him someone who has escaped the fate of men, but the immortal one robbed him of the desire of great-hearted ones. He left a younger brother in the house, which he, alive, loved and greatly desired in his heart. Let someone from posterity say, "the one who was about to die under the 'blameless' escort of the gods (i.e. he was a pagan), a fortuitous Fate saved alongside the waters of the Jordan."

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[153] For more on Eudocia's cento in particular and the literary phenomenon known as a cento in particular, see the following chapter, "The Homeric Christian at Play."
[154] Other editions of the inscription are Jonnes, 2001, and Chaniotis and Mylonopoulos, 2001.

Although Jonnes never attributes this cento to Eudocia, the comparison between the Christian Homeric centos and the inscription under question runs throughout his brief discussion. This is particularly apropos since the cento specifically mentions the Jordan river in the context of what appears to be baptism, a practice evidenced twice in the later recension of the Homeric cento.[155] The transposition of the Ἰαρδάνος river into the Jordan by Christian centoists was common according to Eustathius: Φειὰ δὲ πόλις παρὰ τὴν Ἦλιν, περὶ ἣν Ἰαρδάνος ῥέει ποταμός, ὁ χρησιμεύσας εἰς Ἰορδάνην τοῖς τοὺς Ὁμηρικοὺς συρράψασι ϑειότερον Κέντρωνας (671.14).

Without doubt, following Jonnes, the inscription is thematically Christian, but the creative production behind the epigraphic cento differs significantly from Eudocia's technique, if we can trust Schembra's edition, as well as the Christian centos from Rey's anthology.[156] The poem, whose original length is indeterminable, provides us with eight intact lines to study. A few simple observations can begin our inquiry. First, two of the eight lines stitch various Homeric lines together to form a single hexameter. If this were typical, the epigraphic centoist would use two-source lines 25% of the time, significantly less than Latin centos of comparable length[157] but remarkably more than the Christian centos from the editions of Usher, Rey, or Schembra.[158] Furthermore, line 5 warrants attention because the first hemistich is non-Homeric. In other words, the poet was compelled to compose his own half-line rather than find a suitable Homeric one. This practice is atypical of the Homeric centos.[159] Finally much of the Homeric dialect seems to have been intentionally or, worse yet, unwittingly prosaicized, which is to say, much of the lexical difficulties of the inscription come from the author turning the Homeric text into a more accessible form.[160] While other centos are attested from the epigraphic record,[161] this is the sole example with a clearly Christian content, thereby making it both unique and appropriate for discussion here.

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[155] Rey, 1998, 200.

[156] The now standard edition and commentary for the first recension of the Homeric centos is Schembra 2007 and 2006 which has replaced Usher, 1999. The critical edition of the second recension has yet to come out. The overall difference between Usher's edition and Schembra's is insignificant when the centoists overall technique is concerned.

[157] Bright, 1984, 85. The mean of all Latin centos for two source lines is 67.9%.

[158] To date, there has been no statistical analysis of the Christian Homeric centos. For a more complete discussion on Eudocia's centonic ability, see the chapter, "The Homeric Christian at Play."

Appendices

Appendix1.1: Antoninus of Placentia 7.12-22[162]

Transivimus Iordanem in ipso loco. Venimus in civitatem, quae vocatur Gadera, quae ipsa est Gabaon. In ista parte <Iordanis a> civitate ad milia tria sunt aquas calidas, quae appellantur termas Heliae, ubi lepriosi mundantur, qui e xenodochio habent de publicum delicias. Hora vespertina inundantur termae. Ante ipsum clibanum aquae est solius grandis, qui dum impletus fuerit, clauduntur omnia ostia, et per posticum mittuntur intus cum luminaria et incensum et sedent in illo solio tota nocte, et dum soporati fuerint, videt ille, qui curandus est, aliquam visionem, et dum eam recitarit, abstinentur ipsae termae septem diebus et intra septem dies mundatur. Nam et ibi mortuus est Iohannes de Placentia, maritus Teclae. Ipse fluuius calidus, qui vocatur Gadera, descendit torrens et intrat in Iordanem, et ex ipso Iordanis ampliatur et fit maior.

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[159] I make a distinction between substituting single words and composing entire clausula.
[160] Not unlike school texts as evidenced in the papyri in which a student first learned to read Homer by transliterating every line of the text into a current and vernacular Greek. One wonders whether the epigraphic centoist, who had no control over the readership of his text, manipulated the archaizing aspects of the text to make the text accessible to less educated readers.
[161] See Jonnes, 2001, and SEG 51.1735.
[162] The edition is by Geyer, 1965. Translation is my own.

In that place, we crossed the Jordan. We came to the city called Gadara which is also (called) Gabaon. In that part of the Jordan, at a distance of three miles from the city there are hot waters, which are called the springs of Elijah, where lepers are healed. The lepers receive benefits from the xenodochium (i.e. stay at the xenodochium) at public expense. In the evening hour, the springs overflow. Before the furnace, there is a great pool of water, and when it is filled, the doors are closed, and the lepers are sent in through the backdoor with candles and incense and they sit in that pool the whole night. When they are asleep, the one who is in need of healing sees some vision, and when he relates what he saw, he abstains from the springs for seven days during which the leper is cleansed. For in that place, John of Placentia, the husband of Thecla, died. That river which is called Gadara, cascades down and enters the Jordan, and as a result, the Jordan is made greater.

Appendix 1.2: John Chrysostom, *De inani gloria et de educandis liberis*. 4[163]

Πληροῦται τὸ θέατρον, καὶ πᾶς ὁ δῆμος ἄνω κάθηται ὄψιν πολὺ παρεχόμενος λαμπρὰν καὶ ἀπὸ τοσούτων συγκειμένην ὄψεων, ὡς πολλάκις καὶ τὸ τέγος αὐτὸ καὶ τὸν ὑπερκείμενον ὄροφον καλυφθῆναι τοῖς σώμασι τῶν ἀνδρῶν· καὶ οὔτε κεραμίδας οὔτε λίθους ἔστιν ἰδεῖν, ἀλλὰ πάντα ὄψεις ἀνθρώπων καὶ σώματα. πρὸ δὲ πάντων εἰσελθόντος τοῦ συναγαγόντος αὐτοὺς ἀνδρὸς φιλοτίμου διαναστάντες εὐθέως ὥσπερ ἐξ ἑνὸς στόματος μίαν ἀφιᾶσι φωνήν, συμφώνως ἅπαντες κηδεμόνα καλοῦντες καὶ προστάτην τῆς κοινῆς πόλεως καὶ τὰς χεῖρας ἐκτείνοντες. εἶτα μεταξὺ τῶν πάντων μείζονι παραβάλλουσιν αὐτὸν ποταμῷ τὸ τῆς φιλοτιμίας ἁδρὸν καὶ ἐκκεχυμένον τῇ τῶν Νειλῴων ὑδάτων ἀφθονίᾳ συγκρίνοντες· καὶ Νεῖλον αὐτὸν εἶναι φασι τῶν δωρεῶν. οἱ δὲ μᾶλλον αὐτὸν κολακεύοντες μικρὸν νομίσαντες εἶναι τοῦτο τὸ ὑπόδειγμα, τὸ τοῦ Νείλου, ποταμοὺς μὲν ἀφιᾶσι καὶ θαλάσσας, τὸν δὲ Ὠκεανὸν εἰς μέσον ἀγαγόντες τοῦτο αὐτὸν εἶναι φασιν, ὅπερ ἐκεῖνον ἐν ὕδασι, τοῦτον ἐν ταῖς φιλοτιμίαις καὶ οὐδὲν ὅλως εἶδος εὐφημίας ἀπολιμπάνουσιν.

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[163] The edition is by Malingrey, 1972. Translation is Laistner's (1951).

The theater is filling up, and all the people are sitting aloft presenting a splendid sight and composed of numberless faces, so that many times the very rafters and roof above are hidden by human bodies. You can see neither tiles nor stones, but all is men's bodies and faces. Then, as the ambitious man who has brought them together enters in the sight of all, they stand up and as from a single mouth cry out. All with one voice call him protector and ruler of their common city and stretch out their hands in salutation. Next, betweenwhiles they liken him to the greatest rivers, comparing his grand and lavish munificence to the copious waters of the Nile; and they call him the Nile of gifts. Others, flattering him still more and thinking the simile of the Nile too mean, reject rivers and seas; and they instance the Ocean and say that he in his lavish gifts is what Ocean is among the waters, and they leave not a word of praise unsaid.

Appendix 1.3: IG 14.1015[164]

Νουσολύτα, κλυτόμητι, φερέσ[βιε, δέσποτα Παιάν,]
σὴ δύναμις κακόεργον ἀνακρο[ύει…]
ἀνθρώπων, τρομέει τε πάλιν […]
4 Ἅδης τ᾽ εὐρυθέμιλος, ὅταν ζωαλ[κέα χεῖρα]
ἀντανύσῃς, βιοδῶτα, φερεσσιπό[νοις μερόπεσσι]
νῦν οὖν πάντα δόμον γενέτα[ς τε καὶ ἀγλαὰ τέκνα]
σῷζε, μάκαρ Παιάν, ἀκεσώδυν[ε, δῶτορ ὑγείης,]
Πατρώινου

Lord Paian, freer of illness, famous in skill, giver of life, your power curbs the evil […] of men, and once again trembles […] and broad-based Hades, when your life-preserving hand you stretch forth, o giver of life, to toil-bearing men. And so now save the whole house, the parents, and beautiful children of Patronos, o blessed Paian, allayer of pain, giver of health

Appendix 1.4: Homeric Hymn 20 (εἰς Ἥφαιστον)[165]

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[164] Translation is my own.

[165] The edition is by Allen, 1902. Translation is West's (2003).

Ἥφαιστον κλυτόμητιν ἀείδεο Μοῦσα λίγεια,
ὃς μετ᾽ Ἀθηναίης γλαυκώπιδος ἀγλαὰ ἔργα
ἀνθρώπους ἐδίδαξεν ἐπὶ χθονός, οἳ τὸ πάρος περ
ἄντροις ναιετάασκον ἐν οὔρεσιν ἠΰτε θῆρες.
νῦν δὲ δι᾽ Ἥφαιστον κλυτοτέχνην ἔργα δαέντες
ῥηϊδίως αἰῶνα τελεσφόρον εἰς ἐνιαυτὸν
εὔκηλοι διάγουσιν ἐνὶ σφετέροισι δόμοισιν.
Ἀλλ᾽ ἵληθ᾽ Ἥφαιστε· δίδου δ᾽ ἀρετήν τε καὶ ὄλβον.

Of Hephaestus famous for contrivance you shall sing, clear-voiced Muse, of him who with steel-eyes Athena has taught splendid crafts to mankind on earth, that previously used to live in caves in the mountains like animals. But now that they have learned crafts through Hephaestus the famously skilled, they pass their lives at ease in their own houses the whole year through. So be favorable, Hephaestus: grant me status and fortune.

Chapter 2

The Homeric Christian at Play

As we turn from the epigraphic Eudocia to the rest of her poetic oeuvre,[166] we see that that these works are as devoid of chronological links as they are strange. Such poems have been the target of literary criticism beginning in antiquity and continuing until today. Amidst the carnival of "literary freaks"–to borrow a term from David Bright[167]–is the Homeric cento. Briefly, a cento is a patchwork poem, composed by borrowing lines from other poets, particularly Virgil and Homer, which were reworked to tell a new narrative.[168] That centos were a common literary activity particularly in the later Roman empire is evidenced by the number of surviving centos from that period.[169] In Latin sixteen centos survive; four are thematically Christian,[170] while the remaining twelve narrate secular themes.[171] The extant Greek centos are less common than their Latin cousins, and most come to us in parodies or citations in classical authors[172] or in the Palatine Anthology.[173] The geographic proliferation of the cento spanned the empire: Ausonius is the lone Gallic centoist; Faltonia Proba was a known Italian; Eudocia composed her cento in Constantinople or, more likely, Palestine; and an entire collection survives from North Africa.[174] The themes of the Homeric and Virgilian centos are as diverse as their authors and range from the erotic (*Cento Nuptialis*) and the absurd (*De Panificio*) to the pious (*Cento Probae*). How these bizarre poems, which offend our post-Enlightenment taste for originality, functioned in antiquity is a question that until recently has been ignored by scholars of the ancient world. Our investigation into the literary world of Eudocia's *Homeric Cento* must begin not in the East or in the Greek speaking part of the empire, but rather in the west with Ausonius of Bordeaux.

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[166] For Eudocia's place in recent works on women poets of antiquity, see Homeyer, 1979; Wilson-Kaster, 1981; Snyder, 1989; Balmer, 1996; Plant, 2004; Greene, 2005; Stevenson, 2005.
[167] Bright, 1984, 80, attempts, explicitly, to raise the cento above its fellow attractions, as it were, and, I suspect, employs the term freak ironically.
[168] For a general but related discussion on Homeric poetry from Late Antiquity, see Stanislaus, 1938; Golega, 1960; Moraux, 1980; Jeffreys, 1981; Agosti, 1995; Cameron, 2000; Agosti, 2005. For discussion on Eudocia's role in poetry from Late Antiquity, see Van Deun, 1993; Nieto-Ibañez, 1994; Whitby, 2006, 171-175, and 2007.
[169] The standard summary of the cento as genre, a designation rejected by some, remains Salanitro, 1997; but see also Crusius, 1899; and Schelkle, 1954.
[170] The four Christian centos are Faltonia Betitia Proba's *Cento Probae* (sc. Petschenig, 1888; Schenkl, 1888, 568-609; Clark and Hatch, 1981), Pomponius' *Versus ad Gratiam Domini* (Schenkl, 1888, 609-615); *De Verbi Incarnatione* (Schenkl, 1888, 615-620), and *De Ecclesia*, perhaps by Mavortius (Schenkl, 1888, 621-627). For Irenaeus and the cento, see Wilken, 1967. For a discussion on the Christian epics (non centos) of the day, see Roberts, 1985, 1989, and 1993; and Green, 2006.
[171] They include Hosidius Geta's *Medea* (Lamacchia, 1958); Luxurius' *Epithalamium Fridi* (Baehrens 1882, 237-240; Happ, 1986); Mavortius' *Iudicium Paridis* (Baehrens, 1882, 198); *De Panificio* (Baehrens, 1882, 191); *De Alea* (Baehrens, 1882, 192-197); *Narcissus* (Baehrens, 1882, 197); *Hippodamia* (Beahrens, 1882, 199-205); *Hercules et Antaeus* (Baehrens, 1882, 205);

> *Centonem vocant, qui primi hac concinnatione luserunt. Solae memoriae negotium sparsa colligere et integrare lacerata, quod ridere magis quam laudare possis.*
>
> Those who first played with this type of composition called it a cento. It is an activity solely of the memory–gathering disparate and rent pieces and uniting them–an activity that you are can laugh at rather than praise. (Ausonius *Paulo sal*. 3-6)

Decimus Magnus Ausonius, fourth century grammarian, *rhetor*, and political opportunist, is noted today less for his pedagogical service to the imperial family than for his literary

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Progne et Philomela (Baehrens, 1882, 206); *Europa* (Baehrens, 1882, 207); *Alcesta* (Baehrens, 1882, 208), and Ausonius' *Cento Nuptialis* (Green, 1999).

[172] Aristophanes' *Peace* 1089-1093; 1270-1274; 1282-1287; and the other citations from Lucian, Arius, Diogenes Laertius, and Irenaeus (Salanitro, 1997, 2326-2328).

[173] A.P. 9.381, 382, 361. There are six epigraphic centos; see Jonnes, 2001; *SEG* 51.1735.

[174] See McGill, 2005, for a complete discussion on the Latin secular centos from Northern Africa.

contributions.[175] Amidst a corpus full of literary curiosities is his *Cento Nuptialis*. Written sometime after 374,[176] yet before Valentinian's death in 375, the *Cento Nuptialis*, a work commemorating Gratian's marriage, contains some 131 reworked Virgilian lines, as well as an introductory epistle, a prose digression that precedes the poem's climactic conclusion, and a prose postscript justifying the poem's occasionally graphic content. Although neither the prefatory epistle nor the cento itself alludes to the place of the poem's composition, the imperial capital of Trier is the most likely suggestion. The epistle prefixed to the cento is the most detailed description of a cento from antiquity and, as a result, has served as the basis for reconstructing what cultural circumstances, literary tastes, and social venues led to the creation of so strange a genre.[177] Interestingly, the only other extant preface to a cento introduces the Homeric centos and was written, most likely, by Eudocia. A comparison of Ausonius and Eudocia's introductions is tempting. In fact, any investigation of Eudocia's cento would be amiss if it did not first begin with Ausonius' preface and attempt to elucidate the extent to which the empress adhered to tradition and the degree to which she conceptualized her work as different or unique from Ausonius' model.

> *perlege hoc etiam, si operae est, frivolum et nullius pretii opusculum, quod nec labor excudit nec cura limavit, sine ingenii acumine et morae maturitate. centonem vocant, qui primi hac concinnatione luserunt.*

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[175] The standard introduction and commentary on the life and works of Ausonius is Green, 1991. Note also Evelyn White, 1919, Prete, 1978, and Green, 1999.

[176] Ammianus Marcellinus (29.6.7) mentions briefly that the daughter of Constantius was engaged to Gratian.

[177] The most recent and thorough investigation of the cento as literary activity is McGill, 2005. For recent uses of Ausonius' preface in discussing centos in general, see Bright, 1984, Usher, 1997 and 1998. The latter, however, mentions Ausonius' preface but does not use it for a detailed study of the cento.

> *solae memoriae negotium sparsa colligere et integrare lacerata, quod ridere magis quam laudare possis. pro quo, si per Sigillaria in auctione veniret, neque Afranius naucum daret neque ciccum suum Plautus offerret. piget equidem Vergiliani carminis dignitatem tam ioculari dehonestasse materia. sed quid facerem? iussum erat, quodque est potentissimum imperandi genus, rogabat qui iubere poterat. imperator Valentinianus, vir meo iudicio eruditus, nuptias quondam eiusmodi ludo descripserat, aptis equidem versibus et compositione festiva. experiri deinde volens, quantum nostra contentione praecelleret, simile nos de eodem concinnare praecepit. quam scrupulosum hoc mihi fuerit intellege. neque anteferri volebam neque posthaberi, cum aliorum quoque iudicio detegenda esset adulatio inepta, si cederem, insolentia, si ut aemulus eminerem. suscepi igitur similis recusanti feliciterque et obnoxius gratiam tenui nec victor offendi.*[178]
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> If it is worthwhile, read this frivolous, little work, as well, a worthless piece, which neither Labor composed nor Attention revised and which lacks intellectual penetration and the perfection that comes from taking one's time. Those who first played with this type of composition called it a cento. It is an activity solely of the memory–gathering disparate and rent pieces and uniting them–an activity that you can laugh at rather than praise. If it were on the auction block, Afranius would not give a dime for it, nor would Plautus offer a penny. Indeed it is a disgraceful act to debase the value of Virgilian verse with such ridiculous metal. But what was I to do? It was commanded, and it was the most compelling type of order–he who has the power to make demands was asking. The emperor Valentinian, an educated man, in my opinion, once described a wedding using this sort of literary "game," with verses that were quite appropriate and with a festive composition. He then wished to find out

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[178] The text cited here and throughout is from Green, 1999. All translation of the *Cento Nuptialis*, including Ausonius' prefatory epistle, are my own.

> the degree to which he surpassed me in competition and ordered me to arrange a similar work on the same topic. Imagine how unsettling this was for me. I desired neither to win or lose, since, if I suffered defeat, my disgraceful obsequiousness would be evident to all, yet if I emerged as a rival, my arrogance would be exposed. Therefore, I made an attempt, just like one who is unwilling–skillfully, under obligation, yet retaining his favor, as victor, yet not offending. (Ausonius *Paulo sal.* 1-21)

The opening of the preface, which appears in the guise of an epistle, evidences how familiar Ausonius was with the letter's recipient, Axius Paulus. In fact, of the twenty-four extant epistles by Ausonius, seven were written to Paulus, and two of Ausonius' poetic works open with epistles to the same.[179] The first aspect of the *Cento Nuptialis* highlighted by Ausonius, after his rhetorical self-deprecation,[180] is his insistence that the urge to compose a cento was not his own, but was rather the response to a literary challenge issued by the emperor.[181] That Valentinian was no stranger to the arts and had an astute memory[182] makes it likely that he could have composed such a cento,[183]

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[179] The *Bissula* and *Cento Nuptialis*. See Green, 1991, 514-515, 518, 606-608; and Sivan, 1992.

[180] Much could be said about how Ausonius describes his poetry. It must suffice for now to say that most of Ausonius' self-deprecations are ironic or, at least, tongue in cheek.

[181] For further discussion on the performative setting of the *Cento Nuptialis* see Green, 1991, and McGill, 2005.

[182] On the emperor's reputation for being learned, see Ammianus Marcellinus 30.9.4; Pseudo-Aurelius Victor *Epit. de. Caes.* 45.5-6; Matthews, 1990, 49; Sivan, 1993, 105-106; and McGill, 2005, 94.

[183] On the virtue of memory in ancient pedagogical theory and its application in centonic production, see Quintilian (*Inst. Orat* 1.1.36 and 11.2.40-41); Fortunatianus (*Ars Rhet* 3.13); Bright 1984, 81-82 (based almost entirely on Ausonius' preface); and McGill, 2005, 10-11. Usher, 1998, 29-31 argues that the role of memory was central to centonic production, an argument which sits well with Usher's thesis that centoists were late successors of the rhapsodic tradition. He argues that centonic performance fell under the general category of declamation, of which memory was a central virtue (see the Younger Pliny, *Ep* 2.3), yet at the same time deviated from Quintilian's five-fold process of rhetoric, *inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria,* and *pronuntiatio* (Quint. *Inst. Orat.* 3.3.1-10). Comparetti, 1997, 53, provides one of the most interesting, albeit one-sided, commentaries on the role of memory in centonic production:

> In fact, he (Vergil) was so thoroughly studied at school that to know his works by

although no such work survives. Ausonius' initial response to the emperor's challenge is one of earnest concern if not open anxiety: *quam scrupulosum hoc mihi fuerit, intellege*. Apparently, he is caught in a precarious position: dependent upon his patron's support on the one hand, yet as literary figure at the court obligated to accept and compete in the emperor's contest.[184] Losing the challenge would not only damage his reputation as accomplished rhetor and poet, but could be conceived, in the eyes of the imperial court (*iudicio aliorum*), as obsequiousness (*adulatio*). Contrariwise, winning the contest was also not a viable option since Valentinian's feelings were at stake, and defeating the emperor could be taken as arrogance (*insolentia*). Having recognized that his poetic production had to navigate, as it were, between a literary Scylla and Charybdis, Ausonius decided to accept Valentinian's challenge yet under contraint: *suscepi igitur similis recusanti feliciterque et obnoxius gratiam tenui nec victor offendi.*

Ausonius also implies that at the cento's initial performance[185] there was present a number of people who formed an audience. First and foremost were the members of the imperial entourage who were present during the performance of Valentinian's cento and his challenge. In other words, the anonymous *aliorum* would be present to judge between

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> heart from one end to the other was no uncommon feat. This great familiarity with his writings, coupled with the general poverty of ideas of the period, let to the production of the "Centos" in which, by the adroit combination of isolated lines and hemistichs, Vergil was made to say the most unexpected things. The idea of such "Centos" could only have arisen among people who had learnt Vergil mechanically and did not know of any better use to which to put all these verses with which they had loaded their brains.

[184] For the mutual attempt by both *amici* to "speak each other's language" as it were, see White, 1993, 14. That the poet could often feel a sense of obligation to please his patron has been pointed out by White, 1978, 76, as well as Coleman, 1988, 177, and Konstan, 1997, 144-145.

[185] Although the cento proper suggests that its initial performance was during the wedding reception, the prefatory epistle is silent on the subject and, to be sure, suggests otherwise.

the emperor and his client's cento. Although the opening of the cento mentions the presence of Gratian as well as Valentinian,[186] this is most likely due to the creation of a fictitious world created in the opening of the cento and is not an actual literary performance. Based on the prefatory epistle, the actual performance of the epithalamium was removed from the wedding itself,[187] and, as a result, the opening of the *Cento Nuptialis* can probably best be understood as a literary devise that creates the semblance of a wedding day, hence Gratian's presence, but which is devoid of any historical reality. Since Ausonius was charged to write the *Cento Nuptialis* some time after the wedding, Gratian might, but also might not, have been present for the work's initial performance. Therefore, to return to the topic of Ausonius' audience, it is safe to suggest that his audience certainly consisted of Valentinian as well as an undefined circle of hangers-on, many of whom were present for the emperor's performance. If we were to take Ausonius at his word, the audience as a whole, a particular group within it, or perhaps only the emperor himself, would serve as judge(s) of Ausonius' production. Therefore, the literary ability of all, most, or some of this audience to follow and appreciate a reordering of the Virgilian text at this level cannot be underestimated.

Furthermore, Ausonius' literary circle serves the same function as the Younger Pliny's audiences, which consisted of *amici* from a vast array of social and political positions, who met to network, socialize, and further one another's political careers.[188] In other words, Ausonius' epistolary introduction places the cento in the social world of the high empire, qualified as literary activities in a private setting during hours of leisure, *otium*.[189] Drinking parties, occasional social gatherings, and get-aways appear throughout the Ausonian corpus and often serve as the venues for literary activity. Indeed, not only does literary activity highlight such occasions, Ausonius' own testimony indicates that proper literary activity for the cultured *aristoi* was designed, if not reserved, for such occasions.[190] Agonistic events were part and parcel of literary or rhetorical challenges from Plato's *Symposium* to the *Cena Trimalchionis* section of Petronius' *Satyricon*, and in this same *jeu d'esprit* Ausonius introduces two of his poems, the *Cento Nuptialis* and the *Griphus*.

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[186] In addition to the epistle, there is a brief preface within the body of the cento (Aus. *Cento Nuptialis* 1-11).

[187] McGill, 2005, 92-93.

[188] Saller, 1989, 58-61; Konstan, 1997, 147-148; de Blois, 2001; and Anderson, 2002, 183-234.

> *hoc tum die uno et addita lucubratione properatum modo inter liturarios meos cum repperissem, tanta mihi candoris tui et amoris fiducia est ut severitati tuae nec ridenda subtraherem. accipe igitur opusculum de inconexis continuum, de diversis unum, de seriis ludicrum, de alieno nostrum, ne in sacris et fabulis aut Thyonianum mireris aut Virbium, illum de Dionyso, hunc de Hippolyto reformatum.*
>
> And so, when I found this thing in the midst of my heavily edited notes, hastily composed within a single day and night, my faith in your candor

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[189] Frye, 2003, 186-189, argues that Ausonius and his successor Sidonius hark back to the good old days, conceptualized as the literary world of the Younger Pliny and Juvenal. For Frye this phenomenon is evident most clearly in the dichotomy between urban and rural life, but I suspect it applies as well to the social interactions between literary *amici* (see White, 1993, 13-14). Evidence for this derives from the Ausonian corpus in which the poet is in constant communication with other elites and both share concern for literary matters in general and the dissemination of Ausonius' works in particular (*Epistula Theodosi Augusti* as well as *Epistula Symmachi ad Ausonium*). White, 1978, 85 argues that *amicitia* functioned as a means for the poet to disseminate his productions and that social networking was the main commodity that the poet received from his circle of friends, specifically from his "patron."

[190] For example, *Praefatio ad Bissulam*, *Moselle* 448-453, *Prefatio ad Technopaegnion (Ausonius Paulino Suo), Praefatio ad Griphum* 17-33*;* and *Epistle* 1. For more on the social role of *otium* see White, 1993, 5.

> and love was so great that I could withhold not even this ridiculous thing from your austerity. Therefore, receive my small work, continuous (yet) composed of the disconnected, a unity composed of the disparate, absurd composed of the earnest, my own (yet) from someone else's work; and do not wonder about Thyonianus or Virbius from the sacred writings or fables, the former was reconstituted from Dionysus, the latter from Hippolytus. (Ausonius *Paulo sal*. 21-28)

On the other hand, Ausonius was not compelled to produce an epithalamic cento extemporaneously.[191] Although full of rhetorical *topoi* commonly employed by Ausonius in reference to his written poetry, the quotation above argues in favor of an initially written *Cento Nuptialis*.[192] That Ausonius often refers to his poetry as hastily composed is evident from the preface to the *Griphus* in which he states: *coeptos inter prandendum versiculos ante cenae tempus absolvi, hoc est, dum bibo et paulo ante quam biberem*.[193] And if a work required more time that just half a day, the poet always had his evenings, *sit tuus hic fructus, vigilatas accipe noctes: obsequitur studio nostra lucerna tuo*.[194] Neither the *Griphus* nor the *Conclusio* evidence oral composition; both were written pieces that, as with the majority of poetry from the classical world, could have been performed. Ausonius' reference to a quick composition for the cento and an even hastier editing process–he did, in fact, find them in the scrapheap, *liturarios*, and immediately sent them to Paulus–does not, *a priori*, indicate with any historical certainty the time it took him to fulfill the emperor's request, nor does it indicate how long Ausonius used to reedit the poem before sending it to his *amicus*. Rather, it is simply the way Ausonius speaks of his written compositions intended for dissemination among his *amici* and beyond. And this final point is the one that warrants emphasis: Ausonius' introduction for the *Cento Nuptialis* is consistent with that of his other written poetry.

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[191] Usher, 1998 24-31, based on accounts from antiquity, envisions the process of creating a cento to be associated thematically and functionally with the activity of ῥαψῳδία; in other words, the centoist composed in performance. While Usher's arguments are illuminating and elucidate much about the ancient differentiation between rhapsody and creating a cento, the evidence from the few accounts of those ancients who composed centos suggests that their works were literary productions based on reading, writing, visual as well as aural activity, memory and performance. Favoring one half of the evidence does not, and indeed can not, produce a whole.

[192] In fact, I am unaware of any scholar who has suggested otherwise.

[193] "I finished these bits of verses before dinner, although they were only begun during lunchtime, which is, while drinking and a little before drinking again."

[194] *Libri de Fastis Conclusio* 1.5-6: "May this be your fruit, accept (my) vigilant nights; my lamp yields to your pleasure."

> *et si pateris, ut doceam docendus ipse, cento quid sit absolvam. variis de locis sensibusque diversis quaedam carminis structura solidatur, in unum versum ut coeant aut caesi duo aut unus sequenti cum medio. nam duos iunctim locare ineptum est et tres una serie merae nugae. diffinduntur autem per caesuras omnes, quas recipit versus heroicus, convenire ut possit aut penthemimeres cum reliquo anapaestico aut trochaice cum posteriore segmento aut septem semipedes cum anapaestico chorico aut…post dactylum atque semipedem quicquid restat hexametro, simile ut dicas ludicro, quod Graeci ὀστομάχιον vocavere.*
>
> If you will suffer me, who ought to be the student, to instruct what a cento is, then I will do so. The poem's particular structure is fashioned from various places and from diverse contexts, such that either two half-lines or one line plus a half-line immediately following join into one verse. It is unsuitable to place two (whole) lines side by side; three (whole) lines in a single series are pure silliness. Furthermore, lines are divided at all caesuras which heroic verse allows so that it is possible to join penthemimeres with an anapaestic remnant or trochaic with its following remnant or seven

> half-feet with a choric anapest or… after a dactyl and half foot whatever is
> remaining for the hexameter so that you may say it is similar to the game
> that the Greeks call an ostomachion. (Ausonius *Paulo sal*. 29-40)

Let us turn to the main section of the preface, Ausonius' guide to writing and appreciating a cento. As mentioned above, this section has been used as the standard *modus operandi* for cento composition and aesthetics in late antiquity, most recently by Scott McGill.[195] Accordingly, a cento is above all else, the removal and reworking of various elements, *variis de locis sensibusque diversis*, from an already existing poem, a task accomplished by joining two half lines, *caesi duo*, or a line and a half (with one hemistich), *unus sequenti cum medio*.[196] Following Ausonius' model, one and a half lines are the most an accomplished centoist could use in succession–two lines in succession demonstrated ineptitude (*ineptum*), while three were utterly ridiculous (*merae nugae*).[197] Borrowing half, third, or quarter lines was entirely acceptable; such line segments could be joined at any caesura which epic meter allowed. Although Ausonius does not mention the use of single whole lines (the Latin only mentions whole lines followed by a half line), from the numerous surviving Virgilian centos, the practice was quite common. Some 37% of the *Cento Nuptialis* consisted of whole Virgilian lines,[198] while Virgilian centos as whole use whole lines some 28% of the time.[199]

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[195] McGill, 2005, chapter 1: "Playing with Poetry," 1-30.

[196] For the difficulty in the sense of this phrase, see Bright, 1984, 84; and Green, 1991, 520-521.

[197] This statement should not be taken as a hard and fast rule–Ausonius thrice conjoins two whole lines in succession (lines 25-26, 75-76, 97-98). Overall his cento adheres to this pattern (Green, 1991, 518). For more on how the Latin centoists often broke their own rules, Bright's article is the most useful discussion, but his observation (84-86) that Ausonius only once broke his rule of using two consecutive lines is incorrect. Bright (84) is absolutely correct, however, in that Ausonius nowhere uses three divided lines to form one new line.

[198] Bright, 1984, 84-86.

[199] Bright, 1984, 85. Of course, throughout the sixteen centos considered by Bright, there is a significant degree of variation in number, with the *Progne and Philomela* (24 lines) containing

> *hoc ergo centonis opusculum ut ille ludus tractatur, pari modo sensus diversi ut congruant, adoptiva quae sunt ut cognata videantur, aliena ne interluceant, arcessita ne vim redarguant, densa ne supra modum protuberent, hiulca ne pateant.*
>
> Therefore, this slight product, my cento, is carried out just like that game with the result that different meanings come to agree, grafted elements appear to be naturally connected, (with the hope that) the foreign bits not be noticed or the introduced bits not reveal the "trick" of the work, that the densely packed items not stick out too much and the gaps rupture even further. (Ausonius *Paulo sal*. 52-57)

What this reordering accomplished was a new product, which flowed so smoothly that the reader, or audience in general, did not notice the various lines or line segments borrowed to create the cento. The focal point here is the centoist's attempt to conceal the previous author's words within a cogent and continuous narrative; indeed, lines are referred to as borrowed, foreign (not one's own), packed tightly together, but still containing gaps. This sounds convincing in Ausonius' introduction, but it is unlikely to have occurred in this way during antiquity. The words of Virgil and Homer had already taken on a life of their own; educated readers were so steeped in the epics that they could be expected to have much of Virgil or Homer committed to memory. It is very unlikely, therefore, that a centoist could reasonably expect to get away with using *the* poet's words

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zero whole lines to the *Epithalamium Fridi* (68 lines) containing 37 intact lines, some 54%. Additionally, when one considers qualities that diverge from Ausonius' guidelines, such as consecutive whole lines or original additions, there does not appear to be any correlation between the use of single whole lines and the presence of technical flaws. In other words, the most technically deft centos use single whole lines no differently than substandard pieces.

without his audience being cognizant of the fact. As we shall see, the audience's awareness of the cento's original context, which was inevitable, explains how sections of the *Cento Nuptialis*, particularly its erotic climax, are both internally coherent and intertextually ironic. The literature from late antiquity is replete with narratives that retell preexisting stories or paraphrase the works of previous authors,[200] and the inevitable result of paraphrastic literature in general and centonic composition in particular is multiplicity of images, ideas, and effects. The audience of these works, depending on their interests and education, were quite likely intended to recognize the various allusions that, in some cases, made up the lion's share of the product. Therefore, the "full-knowing reader"–to borrow the term from Joseph Pucci[201]–was not only able to recognize the allusive quality of the cento, but, through her recognition of the cento's "intertextual noddings, winks, and gestures,"[202] was expected to appreciate the ludic quality inherent to a cento's composition.[203]

This final point, the ludic quality of the cento, warrants further attention. Ausonius' preface qualifies the *Cento Nuptialis* as a game, *ludus*. In fact, he introduces the cento as a genre entirely ludic: *centonem vocant, qui primi hac concinnatione luserunt*. While golden age lyric poetry had been qualified as generally ludic, Ausonius applies the term *ludus* not just to the final product, but also to the actual compositional activity of producing a cento–the emperor Valentinian, *nuptias quondam eiusmodi ludo descripserat*. Note that poetry *qua* poetry, or rather light poetry versus weighty poetry, is not the focus, but rather the method of composition.

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[200] On the use of a canonical text to retell a new narrative, see Johnson, 2006, 98-99, in which biblical (and apocryphal) paraphrases, which included the Christian centos, and the Homeric (and by association the Virgilian) centos are presented as parallel phenomena. See Roberts, 1985; Springer, 1988; Dihle, 1994, 444 and 461; and MacDonald, 1994 and 2001. Lamberton, 1986, 57, discusses an example of a similar phenomenon under the high empire (Numenius).

[201] Pucci, 1998.

[202] Pucci, 1986, 240.

[203] The ludic quality of the cento is one of the main theses of McGill, 2005. I will subsequently evaluate its suitability as regards the Christian centos.

> *simile ut dicas ludicro, quod Graeci* ὀστομάχιον *vocavere. ossicula ea sunt: ad summam quattuordecim figuras geometricas habent. sunt enim quadrilatera vel triquetra extentis lineis aut <eiusdem> frontis, <vel aequicruria vel aequilatera, vel rectis> angulis vel obliquis: isoscele ipsi vel isopleura vocant, orthogonia quoque et scalena. harum verticularum variis coagmentis simulantur species mille formarum: elephantus belua aut aper bestia, anser volans et mirmillo in armis, subsidens venator et latrans canis, quin et turris et cantharus et alia eiusmodi innumerabilium figurarum, quae alius alio scientius variegant. sed peritorum concinnatio miraculum est, imperitorum iunctura ridiculum. quo praedicto scies, quod ego posteriorem imitatus sum.*
>
> …you may say it is similar to the game that the Greeks have called an ostomachion. There are little bones, 14 of them, which are in geometric shapes. There are quadrilaterals or triangles, with equal or extended sides, with equal legs or equilateral with right or oblique angles–some people call them isosceles or equal-sided triangles, right triangles or scalenes. Through the various arrangements of these pieces, a multitudinous array of forms are represented: a monstrous elephant or a vicious bear, a flying goose and a gladiator in armor, a hunter waiting in ambush and a barking dog–even a tower and a cantharus as well as countless other images of this type which depend in each particular on the player's skill. The arrangements of skilled players are amazing, while those of unskilled players are laughable. That being said, rest assured that I am merely an initiate of the latter sort. (Ausonius *Paulo sal*. 39-52)

Ausonius compares the process of making a cento to an, apparently, common geometric game (*ludus*), the ostomachion.[204] According to Ausonius, a regulation ostomachion set consists of fourteen bones of fourteen different geometric shapes, and the player, who corresponds to the centoist, is judged on his ability to arrange the bones into various and complicated shapes, which range from elephants to tankards. So Ausonius, like the boy learning his isosceles and his scalenes, has rearranged lines from the Virgilian text to give the appearance of a new whole, in Ausonius' case an epithalamium. Yet, the *ludus* is not limited to the method of composition, but rather extends to the meaning of the new product. In other words, a ludic cento is not judged by the arrangement of pieces, but rather, by the ability to present a finished product that in appearance is similar to a recognized type of narrative, such as an epithalamium, and flows smoothly enough not to disrupt the new product.[205] An accomplished centoist, therefore, is so adept at the game that, in his depiction of an epithalamic Virgil, or of a Homeric Jesus, depending on his desired effect, her audience seemingly forgets that they are reading the words of Homer or Virgil, just as in the ostomachion one sees an elephant and forgets that they are conjoined bones.

If the cento, from the perspective of a fourth or fifth century author, were simply a ludic pastime, modernity would be justified in its general disdain for this "literary freak."[206]

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[204] The closest contemporary analogue to the ostomachion is the Chinese tangram, which incorporates seven *tans*, which are configured to make various images. See Crawford, 2002.

[205] See Ausonius *Paulo sal*. 52-57.

[206] Bright, 1984, 80, includes the cento among a list of oddities of literary production. But he elucidates some nuances that separate the cento from other games, like rhopalic poetry, which

Yet there is good cause to suggest that a cento was not entirely a game. As has been suggested earlier, Latin poetry of the golden age was often characterized as play: Catullus has his *nugae*,[207] and Ovid finds himself engaged in amatory *ludi*.[208] With this deep tradition of poetry as play, Ausonius' presentation of the cento as just a *ludus* takes on entirely different connotations. Additionally, there are a handful of references throughout the Ausonian corpus in which his "literary freaks" as well as his traditional, amatory poetry are termed *ludi*.[209] These comments turn Ausonius into a literary gamester with regard to his poetry as a whole, not just the cento. Undoubtedly, as we have seen, the cento is intrinsically ludic in the sense that it is allusive, but by referring to his literary productions as *nugae*, *opuscula*, and *ludi*, Ausonius places them into an established and well-respected literary tradition.[210] The value that literate society conferred upon poetic *nugae* and *ludi* from the neoterics through late antiquity should not be underestimated.[211]

On the other hand, from a metrical or literary perspective, the words of Virgil (or Homer) hardly qualified as light verse, such as the Younger Pliny's poems[212] or Catullus' lyrics. Composing epic was a serious poetic activity both metrically and linguistically. Since the cento was composed of whole lines and hemistichs, it was caught in a literary no man's

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sacrifices narrative content for metrical or visual accomplishments. What follows in this paragraph is influenced by Bright's article.

[207] Salvatore, 1953; and Carilli, 1975.

[208] *Tristia* 3.3.73. See also Tibullus 2.1.87-90.

[209] Ausonius *Pacato Proconsuli* (the preface to the *Technopaegnion*) 1.12-15; *Technopaegnion* 5.2; *Griphus* 89-90; Ausonius *Paulo suo s.d.* (the preface to the *Bissula*) 6-9.

[210] Compare Pliny the Younger *Epistles* 7.9.9.

[211] To be clear, I am not suggesting that epithalamia were inherently ludic, but that the medium which Ausonius chose to use was. Epithalamic poetry of late antiquity, such as those by Claudian, Venantius Fortunatus, and Sidonius Apollinaris, were intended to be quite serious. See von Albrecht, 1997, 1300-1339 and 1348-1349.

[212] Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 7.9.

land–neither original epic, nor lyric or other light poetry.[213] Ausonius describes the tenuous position of the cento as a debasement of Virgil's dignity by transforming his words into a non-Virgilian narrative: *piget equidem Vergiliani carminis dignitatem tam ioculari dehonestasse materia*.[214] Therefore, whereas the narrative's substance is unquestionably epic, i.e. made up of *the* epic poet's words, the content of the narrative diverges from the traditional Virgilian corpus–we are no longer in Turnus' Latium.[215] By using Virgil's words, the centoist's product fell into the broad category of serious (*gravis*), not trivial or light (*levis*), poetry.

Furthermore, to characterize a cento as inherently parodic fails to characterize the variety of subjects evidenced in the surviving examples.[216] Although some of the extant centos contain subject matter hardly worthy of epic verse, not to mention Virgil's actual words,[217] none are simple, comedic exaggerations. What is more, of the numerous epithalamia from late antiquity, at least eight are in hexameters, including two Virgilian centos,[218] and are consistent with other serious literary activity of the day.[219] Despite the sometimes bizarre topics of the shorter Virgilian centos, the Christian centos are certainly intended to be serious–the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus is hardly a laughing matter. More will be said on this topic subsequently. Moreover, if the extant centos accurately indicate the topics appropriate for the genre, mythological centos must have been the most common. Hosidius' *Geta* rewrites Virgil into a tragedy, while the rest, *Narcissus, Hippodamia, Hercules et Antaeus, Progne et Philomela, Europa, Alcesta*, retell traditional myths in heroic meter.[220] Two seemingly parodic centos, the *De Alea* and *De Panificio*, survive, but they comprise less than 20% of the extant pagan Latin centos and are most likely the exceptions that prove the rule. Bright's conclusion is apropos, "The cento aspires to keep the company of its literary betters, and is much closer to the generic mainstream of literature than other sorts of composition."[221] If, as we have seen, the cento was intended to be read as serious poetry, what interpretive models should we employ that best facilitate a clear and fruitful reading of centos in general and Eudocia's Homeric cento in particular?

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[213] See Gotoff, 1974.

[214] Ausonius *Paulo sal.* 8-9.

[215] Bright, 1984, 80.

[216] For more on the limits of parody and the cento's divergence from that category, see Bright, 1984, 80-81.

[217] The *De Panificio*, for example, despite its brevity–eleven lines survive–relates the process of making and selling bread.

[218] Specifically Ausonius' *Cento Nuptialis* and Luxurius' *Epithalamium Fridi*.

[219] The history of wedding songs in general and the epithalamium in particular can be traced back as far as Homer but was primarily composed in lyric (e.g., Sappho, the tragedians, and Aristophanes); see Mangelsdorff, 1913. The epithalamia of Theocritus and Catullus have received much attention by scholars (e.g., Westerbrink, 1970), but it was Statius' epithalamia that had the most significant impact on late antique Latin poetry. This idea was first explored by Morelli, 1910, and more recently by Wilson, 1948, and Pavlovskis, 1965. The number of late antique epithalamists, particularly those authors whose works survive, is remarkable: Paulinus of Nola, Claudian, Himerius, Sidonius Apollinaris, Magnus Felix, Ennodius, Luxorius, Ausonius, Dracontius, Venantius Fortunatus, and Choricius of Gaza. Interestingly, this list includes two

Scott McGill's *Virgil Recomposed* presents new and vibrant ways of reading allusive poetry from Late Antiquity, especially the secular Latin centos. According to McGill, the cento, through its appropriation of a canonical and renowned poet, provides for a substantial degree of intertextual play. The proper navigation of the intertextual grid, i.e. the observation of and subsequent interpretation of literary allusion, is the role of the

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prose epithalamia (Himerius and Choricius of Gaza), two Virgilian centos (Ausonius and Luxorius); the others composed primarily hexameter epithalamia that more or less imitated or responded to Statius. See also Roberts, 1989.

[220] McGill, 2005, is the best, and most recent introduction and exposition of the mythological centos.

[221] Bright, 1984, 81.

cento's audience. This type of poetic composition demands an audience make up of what Joseph Pucci has termed "full-knowing readers."[222] Certainly not a new approach in Ausonian studies,[223] Pucci's adaptation of reader-response theory emphasizes a learned readership that is integrally involved in the interpretation of a poet's allusive play. When this interpretative model was applied to Ausonius' prefatory epistles, Nugent asserted, "Ausonius' curious poetic prefaces document an intense awareness of and an ambivalent relationship to the reader; the boundaries of the text are open, permitting a remarkable engagement between author and reader."[224] Since a de-emphasis on authorial control of a narrative has become increasingly more fashionable as literary theory evolves and breaks away from the traditions of the so-called New Criticism, post-modern literary theory allows for fresh interpretations of marginal literature, particularly works produced during eras of so-called cultural decline.

Roland Barthes characterizes the tensions or, more accurately, the dichotomy between author and audience quite aptly, "No vital 'respect' is therefore due to the Text: it can be broken…the Text can be read without its father's guarantee; the restoration of the intertext paradoxically abolishes inheritance."[225] The peculiar nature of the cento makes it the ideal "genre" to demonstrate this lack of authorial respect.[226] No other secular authors had acquired such prominent status as Virgil and Homer, particularly in late antiquity, nor had another poetic "text" received such a sacrosanct function or usefulness. Their poetry contained significant practicality for a late antique readership, i.e. Virgil and

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[222] Pucci, 1998.
[223] This type of literary theory had been espoused in part by Nugent, 1990.
[224] Nugent, 1990, 29.
[225] Barthes, 1986, 61.
[226] Nugent, 1990, 37.

Homer could be used or reused for numerous purposes from divination to literary pilferage, as the Virgilian and Homeric centos evidence. Furthermore, an accomplished readership was a *sine qua non* for centonic interpretation. In other words, whereas an author was doubtless saturated with Homer or Virgil, her audience, on the other hand, which interpreted a text that was perforce unrestrained by authorial control, had to be "full-knowing." As Nugent explicates, "All the charm, novelty, humor of the nuptial cento [of Ausonius] lies in the *reading* of it–specifically, in the response of a reader who will bring to the poem the requisite intertextual expertise to recognize the provenance of its Vergilian fragments and savor the incongruity of their displacement."[227] Accordingly, at the culmination of the *Cento Nuptialis*, a passage full of blue language, a full-knowing reader reads *tollet se arrectum* ("it raised itself erect," *Aen*. 10.892) and recognizes Mezentius' horse or he reads *monstrum, horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum* ("huge, shaggy, ugly monster with just one eye," *Aen*. 3.658) and perceives Virgil's Polyphemus behind the centoist's euphemism.[228] The interpretational field available to a full-knowing reader transcends authorial control only to the degree that he, the reader, can recognize and interpret the cento's hyper-intertextuality.[229]

We have explored, through Ausonius' *Cento Nuptialis*, the social and literary heritage of the cento. On the one hand, centos were quite common especially in late antiquity and, despite Ausonius' assertion to the contrary could be taken quite seriously. According to the poet, only when first compelled by the emperor did Ausonius reluctantly accept Valentinian's literary challenge to produce an epithalamic cento. Moreover production of the *Cento Nuptialis* was two-fold: first the poet competed in a literary contest in which the imperial retinue served as ad hoc judges, and second Ausonius published the *Cento Nuptialis* by sending it to his literary *amicus*, Axius Paulus. Despite the former's assertion that centos are merely *ludi*, we have seen how serious they were–Ausonius here should not be taken at his word. The interpretive challenge inherent in an allusive work such as a cento, on the other hand, is quite ludic; the cento's audience was expected to figure out the poet's intertextual game and to make sense of a work that contained at an organic level various and divergent interpretive directions.

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[227] Nugent, 1990, 40.

[228] For a list of the sexual references in the *Cento Nuptialis,* see Adams, 1981.

[229] Pucci, 1998, 28, describes the event of allusive reading, "I will argue that (1) the allusion exploits the constructed, arbitrary quality of literary reading, drawing specifically on the power of the reader to configure meaning in relation to his desires, as (2) the power of the author to intend meaning and the power of language to mean in a set, stable, referential field evanesces."

Up to this point, this chapter has introduced the nuts and bolts of the cento to the reader, and we must now turn to the focal point of this chapter, Eudocia's Homeric cento. Christian Homeric centos, although demonstrating a significant degree of continuity with their secular (and Latin) counterparts, are fraught with substantial difficulties and idiosyncrasies.[230] Foremost among these difficulties is the issue of authorship, or more accurately the question of textual authority. As will be demonstrated subsequently, Eudocia received an existing version of the Homeric cento that she in turn reworked, and her product would soon be redacted at least twice. Identifying authorial hands is further complicated by a divergent manuscript tradition. Although one modern editor championed an individual manuscript and suggested that it accurately transmits Eudocia's final product, this thesis is dubious and has not gained widespread support.[231] That the cento has been redacted, modified, corrected, and emended from the time of its inception is abundantly evident from the radically different versions that survive in the manuscript tradition. Recently, Rocco Schembra has worked through the various traditions more thoroughly than any previous editor and has published three volumes on the Homeric cento's first and second redaction, and his edition of the cento's first recension will be consulted throughout.[232] This study does not attempt to decide which is Eudocia's version but intends first to explore the socio-historic background and literary implications of narrating the Bible in Homeric verse and second to analyze the degree to which centos could manipulate Biblical accounts.

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[230] The list of current scholars working on the Homeric centos is, as one would suspect, rather short. Some of the best places to begin (in alphabetic order) are the following: Alfieri, 1987, 1988, and 1989; Arbea, 2002; Pignani, 1985 and 1987; Rey, 1998; Salanitro, 1995 and 1997; Schembra, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998a, 1998b, 2000a, 2000b, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2007a, and 2007b; and Usher, 1997, 1998, and 1999.

Exactly when Eudocia composed her cento is unclear. General consensus suggests that the empress most likely undertook the endeavor while on pilgrimage to Palestine.[233] Since Eudocia does not explicitly indicate when she composed her work and since the cento contains no specific chronological data, the precise date is unknown.[234] The little verifiable information we have concerning her cento comes from a prefatory poem to the Homeric cento, presumably from Eudocia herself. The poem evidences the empress' literary concerns and anxieties, and elucidates the intended social and literary contribution of her redaction. The preface reads as follows:[235]

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[231] The solo manuscript theory was championed by Mark Usher, 1997, 1998, and 1999, but since Usher this theory has not gained widespread support. See Schembra's 2007 thorough introduction to the manuscript tradition of the Homeric centos, particularly CX-CXXIX for his summary and discussion of Usher's thesis.

[232] Schembra, 2006, 2007a, and 2007b. These two redactions correspond to Eudocia's initial revision of the Homeric cento, which I will discuss in detail below, and the final revision of the centos under Cosmas of Jerusalem. The previous editions of the Homeric centos, are Ludwich, 1897; Rey, 1998; and Usher, 1999.

[233] Holum, 1982, 219-220. Holum seems to conflate members of Eudocia's "Jerusalem circle" with later Homeric redactors, specifically Cosmas of Jerusalem. While there might have been a member of her literary circle named Cosmas, the *communis opinio* is that the Cosmas of Jerusalem associated with the Homeric centos is the eighth century Cosmas of Maiuma, also known as Cosmas of Jerusalem, Cosmas Hagiopolites, and Cosmas Melodus, a well known poet and commentator. For more on Eudocia's known literary and charitable activities while in the Holy Land, see Chapter one, "The Homeric Christian as Benefactor."

[234] Of course, some sections of the cento might indicate theological developments after the ecumenical council of 451, but such material can easily be dismissed as later redactions.

ἤδε μὲν ἱστορίη θεοτερπέος ἐστὶν ἀοιδῆς.
Πατρίκιος δ’, ὃς τήνδε σοφῶς ἀνεγράψατο βίβλον,
ἔστι μὲν ἀενάοιο[236] διαμπερὲς ἄξιος αἴνου,
οὕνεκα δὴ πάμπρωτος ἐμήσατο κύδιμον ἔργον.
ἀλλ’ ἔμπης οὐ πάγχυ[237] ετήτυμα πάντ’ ἀγόρευεν·
οὐδὲ μὲν ἁρμονίην ἐπέων ἐφύλαξεν ἅπασαν,
οὐδὲ μόνων ἐπέων ἐμνήσατο κεῖνος ἀείδων,
ὁππόσα χάλκεον ἦτορ ἀμεμφέος εἶπεν Ὁμήρου.

ἀλλ’ ἐγὼ ἡμιτέλεστον ἀγακλεὲς ὡς ἴδον ἔργον
Πατρικίου, σελίδας ἱερὰς μετὰ χεῖρα λαβοῦσα,
ὅσσα μὲν ἐν βίβλοισιν ἔπη πέλεν οὐ κατὰ κόσμον,
πάντ’ ἄμυδις κείνοιο σοφῆς ἐξείρυσα βίβλου·
ὅσσα δ’ ἐκεῖνος ἔλειπεν, ἐγὼ πάλιν ἐν σελίδεσσι
γράψα καὶ ἁρμονίην ἱεροῖς[238] ἐπέεσσιν ἔδωκα.

εἰ δέ τις αἰτιόῳτο καὶ ἡμέας ἐς ψόγον ἕλκοι,
δοιάδες οὕνεκα πολλαὶ ἀρίζηλον κατὰ βίβλον
εἰσὶν Ὁμηρείων τ’ ἐπέων πόλλ[239] οὐ θέμις ἐστίν,
ἴστω τοῦθ’, ὅτι πάντες ὑποδρ’’ηστῆρες ἀνάγκης.

εἰ δέ τις ὑμνοπόλοιο σαόφρονα[240] Τατιανοῖο

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[235] I follow here Rey's edition of the preface, but include some of Usher's readings in the notes. As a whole, I think Rey's edition is superior and Usher's readings muddy the waters. Schembra, 2007, CXXXIII-CXXXV, follows Rey's edition, but he includes a discussion of the poetic quality of the preface (CXXXIX-CXLII).
[236] Usher ἀθανάτοιο.
[237] Usher πάμπαν.
[238] Usher ἱερὴν.
[239] Usher θ’ ὅπερ.

μολπὴν[241] εἰσαΐων σφετέρην τέρψειεν ἀκουήν,
δοιάδας[242] οὕνεκα κεῖνος Ὁμηρείων ἀπὸ βιβλων[243]
οὔ ποτε συγχεύας σφετέρῃ ἐνεθήκατο δέλτῳ,
οὐ ξένον, οὕνεκα κεῖνος Ὁμηρείης ἀπὸ μολπῆς,[244]
κείνων δ’ ἐξ ἐπέων σφετέρην ποίησεν ἀοιδὴν
Τρώων τ’ Ἀργείων τε κακὴν ἐνέπουσαν ἀϋτὴν,
ὥς τε πόλιν Πριάμοιο διέπραθον υἷες Ἀχαιῶν,
αὐτὴν Τροίαν ἔχουσαν ἐν ἀργαλέῳ τε κυδοιμῷ
μαρναμένους αὐτούς τε θεούς, αὐτούς τε καὶ ἄνδρας,
οὕς ποτε χαλκεόφωνος ἀνὴρ ἀΰτησεν Ὅμηρος.

Πατρίκιος δ’, ὃς τῆνδε σοφὴν ἀνεγράψατο δέλτον,
ἀντὶ μὲν Ἀργεῖων στρατιῆς γένος εἶπεν Ἑβραίων,
ἀντὶ δὲ δαιμονίης τε καὶ ἀντιθέοιο φάλαγγος
ἀθανάτου ἤεισε[245] καὶ υἱέα καὶ γενετῆρα.

ἀλλ’ ἔμπης ξυνὸς μὲν ἔφυ πόνος ἀμφοτέροισι,
Πατρικίῳ κἀμοί καὶ θηλυτέρῃ περ ἐούσῃ·
κεῖνος δ’ ἤρατο μοῦνος ἐν ἀνθρώποις μέγα κῦδος.
ὃς πάμπρωτος ἐπήξατο κλεινὸν ἕδος γε δόμοιο
καλὴν ἐξανάγων φήμην βροτέοιο γενέθλης.[246]

This is the account of a poem pleasing to God.
Patricius, who sagaciously authored this book,
is eternally worthy of ever-flowing praise,
especially since he was the very first to plan the glorious work.
On the other hand, he didn't tell everything entirely truthfully,
nor did he preserve the complete harmony of the verses
nor in his singing did he keep in mind only the verses

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[240] Usher σαόφρονος.
[241] Usher μορφὴν.
[242] Usher δοιάδος.
[243] Usher Ὁμηρείης ἀπὸ μολπῆς.
[244] Usher omits lines 22-23.
[245] Ludwich ἀθανάτους ἤεισε.
[246] Usher omits lines 37-38.

which the brazen heart of blameless Homer sung.

But when I beheld Patricius' glorious, half-completed project
and took the holy pages in hand,
whatever verses were not in order
I ripped out of that man's clever book,
and whatever he neglected, I
wrote back into the text and I gave harmony to the holy verses.

But if someone casts aspersions and drags us into censure
because in the remarkable book there are many double lines
and many Homeric verses in succession are not customary,
let him know this–all men are the slaves of constraint.

But if one, upon hearing the poet Tatian's wise song,
were to find his ears tingle with pleasure,
because he never mingled double lines
from the Homeric texts in his book,
(know that) this is not so strange since he (Tatian) from Homeric song,
made out of those verses his own ballad,
that recounted the wretched cry of the Trojans and Argives,
when the sons of the Achaeans destroyed the city of Priam,
and held Troy itself, and in a grievous din
those fighting, both the gods themselves and the men,
of whom, once upon a time, the brazen-voiced man, Homer, sung…

But Patricius, who wrote this clever book,
rather than the Argive army recounted the race of Hebrews,
and, rather than the battle array, demonic and sacrilegious,
spake of the son and begetter of the immortal one.

Nonetheless, the work is shared by both
Patricius and myself, although I am a woman.
36 But he alone among men received great honor,
who was the first to construct the renowned base of the house
bringing forth good news for the mortal race.

From the opening section of the preface and throughout, Eudocia emphasizes the written quality of the cento and balances it with a ubiquitous performative component. Patricius is characterized as the author of a book (βίβλον) which Eudocia read, or, in her words, saw (ὡς ἴδον ἔργον) and judged to be in need of substantial revision. At this point she undertook the task of editing the centos, which was a two-fold process: (1.) she removed (ἐξείρυσα) from the book whatever was not in order and, (2.) whatever Patricius had needlessly omitted (ἔλειπεν) she wrote (γράψα) in the pages (ἐν σελίδεσσι). The compositional setting for Eudocia's cento is, just as Ausonius' *Cento Nuptialis*, decidedly a written one.[247] On the other hand, unlike Ausonius, Eudocia never claims to have begun her project *tabula rasa*; indeed, the pages she took in hand (σελίδας ἱερὰς μετὰ χεῖρα λαβοῦσα) were full, albeit incomplete (ἡμιτέλεστον). On the other hand, just as Ausonius, Eudocia is in some ways competing with a predecessor whose work she must surpass–from her self-perceived ability to outdo Patricius she has put her mark on his pages.

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[247] Usher, 1998, argues that Eudocia's cento is primarily orally composed. Usher, 1998, 19-20, admits that the preface contains multiple references to books, texts, pages, reading, but he emphasizes, at the expense of Eudocia's bookish comments, the presence of orality (singing, hearing, songs) in the preface (Usher 1998, 20-25).

This final point leads to a rather unique quality of the preface, the empress' overt attempt not to deprive Patricius of the honor due to him as progenitor of the Christian cento.[248] As the initial author of the book, Patricius alone is worthy of eternal renown. Indeed, Eudocia mentions him by name three times in the thirty-eight line preface, while she never once names herself.[249] Eudocia's reiteration of Patricius' name is even more pronounced when compared to another preface for Patricius' cento that names him only once.[250] What is more, Eudocia characterize Patricius' role as author of the cento with

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[248] This point does not imply that Patricius preceded Proba's Christian cento in Latin. Rather it reveals how Eudocia presented her work in relation to its Greek predecessor. That Proba preceded Patricius is quite likely and that Eudocia possessed a copy of Proba's cento is almost certain. This comes to us from an inscription (*ILS* 818.3); see Cameron, 1982, 267; and Whitby, 2007.

[249] This brings up the issue of the authorship of the preface. A Eudocian authorship has been maintained primarily from internal references that indicate that the author was a women. Participles are exclusively feminine (sc. lines 10, 12 and 35), and in line 35 the author explicitly states that she is a woman. Compare Sheridan, 1998.

[250] This preface summarizes the content of Patricius' cento and, for that reason, has been used to reconstruct his initial product and the extent of Eudocia's hand as editor. The text is available, along with a French translation, in Rey, 1998, 516-518, and with an Italian translation and discussion on its poetic style in Schembra, 2007, CXXXVIII-CXLII. For convenience, the preface reads:

Βίβλος Πατρικίοιο ϑεουδέος ἀρητῆρος,
ὃς μέγα ἔργον ἔρεξεν, Ὁμηρείης ἀπὸ βίβλου
κυδαλίμων ἐπέων τεύξας ἐρίτιμον ἀοιδὴν,
πρήξιας ἀγγέλλουσαν ἀνικήτοιο ϑεοῖο·
ὡς μόλεν ἀνϑρώπων ἐς ὁμήγυριν, ὡς λάβε μορφὴν
ἀνδρομέην καὶ γαστρὸς ἀμεμφέος ἔνδοϑι κούρης
κρύπτετο τυτϑὸς ἐὼν, ὃν ἀπείριτος οὐ χάδε κύκλος·
ἠδ᾽ ὡς παρϑενικῆς ϑεοκύμονος ἔσπασε μαζὸν
παρϑενίοιο γάλακτος ἀναβλύζοντα ῥέεϑρον·
ὡς κτάνεν Ἡρώδης ἀταλάφρονας εἰσέτι παῖδας,
νήπιος, ἀϑανάτοιο ϑεοῦ διζήμενος οἶτον·
ὥς μιν Ἰωάννης λοῦσεν ποταμοῖο ῥεέϑροις·
ὥς τε δυώδεκα φῶτας ἀμύμονας ἔλλαβ᾽ ἑταίρους·
ὅσσων τ᾽ ἄρτια πάντα ϑεὸς τεκτήνατο γυῖα,
νούσους τ᾽ ἐξελάσας στυγερὰς βλεφάρων τ᾽ ἀλαωτύν·
ἠδ᾽ ὅππως ῥείοντας ἀπέσβεσεν αἵματος ὁλκοὺς

either σοφῶς or σοφός a total of three times.[251] The presence of the adjective in line 12 is remarkable–at the same time Eudocia reminds the reader of Patricius' preeminence, she expunges his lines. At the end of the preface, although the "remixed" cento belongs to both Eudocia and Patricius, all authorial emphasis belongs to Patricius. He laid the foundation upon which she built, and consequently he alone (μοῦνος) receives honor (κῦδος).

Since Eudocia's Homeric cento was initially written, is it possible to conclude that her poem was either (a) not performed or (b) not intended for performance? Eudocia's preface is the only extant commentary on her poem, and its silence regarding an actual performance might prevent us from answering this question with any certainty. Based on the evidence at hand, there is no evidence for an actual performance given by Eudocia to her literary circle. On the other hand, the preface, although not specifically mentioning an aural performance, uses language that strongly hints in its favor.[252] As has been argued previously, given the emphasis on the written word, the physical text, and visual

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ἁψαμένης ἑανοῖο πολυκλαύτοιο γυναικός·
ἠδ᾽ ὅσσους μοίρῃσιν ὑπ᾽ ἀργαλέῃσι δαμέντας
ἤγαγεν ἐς φάος αὖθις ἀπὸ χθονίοιο βερέθρου·
ὥς τε πάθους ἁγίου μνημήϊα κάλλιπεν ἄμμιν·
ὥς τε βροτῶν ὑπὸ χερσὶ τάθη κρυεροῖς ἐνὶ δεσμοῖς,
αὐτὸς ἑκών· οὐ γάρ τις ἐπιχθονίων πολεμίζοι
ὑψιμέδοντι θεῷ, ὅτε μὴ αὐτός γε κελεύοι·
ὡς θάνεν· ὡς Ἀΐδαο σιδήρεα ῥῆξε θύρετρα,
κεῖθεν δὲ ψυχὰς θεοπειθέας οὐρανὸν εἴσω
ἤγαγεν ἀχράντοισιν ὑπ᾽ ἐννεσίῃσι τοκῆος,
ἀνστὰς ἐν τριτάτῃ φαεσιμβρότῳ ἠριγενείῃ
ἀρχέγονον βλάστημα Θεοῦ γενετῆρος ἀνάρχου.

[251] Preface lines 2, 12, and 30.
[252] Usher, 1998, 20-23.

perception, the conclusion follows that Eudocia's cento, just as Ausonius' a century earlier, was initially written. On the other hand, from the multiple references in the preface to songs, the act of singing, speech, aural perception, and the ears, the proper cultural setting of the cento is performance. The preface's opening line emphasizes the role of song (ἀοιδῆς), and aural language persists throughout. Not only is Patricius' cento, and by association Eudocia's redaction of it, characterized as song, Eudocia uses similar language for another cento composed by Tatian (lines 19-29). In fact, in Eudocia's discussion of Tatian's cento song and orality are mentioned exclusively.[253] Through hearing Tatian's song (ἀοιδὴν), his audience has the potential for aural pleasure (σφετέρην τέρψειεν ἀκουήν). Such overtly aural vocabulary in conjunction with the written text suggests that fifth century poets were not only composing centos but were performing them for authors of similar works.[254]

The preface's emphasis on auditory perception most likely fits the cultural context of reading in antiquity, in general, and of the cento, in particular, and fall under Johnson's category of "reading event," which he characterizes as the "contextualization of a particular 'reading'."[255] Accordingly, since reading in antiquity was in certain circumstances done aloud, reference to the singing of poetry and its effect on a reader's ears might have resonated with Eudocia's audience. In other words, by using the language of performance (songs, hearing, ears, and voice), Eudocia situates her "reading event" in performances that could have been public, private, or a mixture of the two. But that is not to say that all reading was done in groups and aloud; there are now well-known examples to the contrary.[256] Perhaps Eudocia's preface might be taken as an example of a private, text-based reading event, which she describes with visual and material language (seeing, book, pages),[257] and a public audience based reading event, characterized with aural and oral language (hearing, ears, songs, voice). Furthermore, the mention of hearing Tatian's cento indicates that public reading events involving centos were not limited to the author's literary circle; subsequent performances were held with literary figures or professional readers in attendance. The numbers involved in such an event probably also varied from large gatherings (truly "public performances") to select audiences (perhaps best called "semi-public"). These small audiences, perhaps as few as three or four highly educated individuals, blurred the line between vocalized reading and performative event.[258] Making a distinction between the two reveals a modern division between the act of reading and public performance. Therefore, whether Eudocia read her cento to a circle of literary figures with whom she engaged in erudite conversation or whether subsequent readers participated in a hearing of her cento, the social context of the Homeric cento can be included under the broad category of public reading event.

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[253] This gives us three centos which, from the evidence at hand, were likely performed or which later centoists thought had been performed: Ausonius' *Cento Nuptialis*, Eudocia's *Homeric Cento*, and the cento by Tatian, which picked up where the *Iliad* left off. This gives us three different types of performed centos: epithalamic, biblical, and epic. Although the *Cento Nuptialis* as epithalamium is encomiastic and therefore lent itself to performance, it does not seem that the other centos, which were not at all encomiastic, were performed less frequently, or not at all. Therefore the content of a cento was not the decisive factor regarding the work's performance.

[254] In this sense alone is Holum 1982, 219-220, probably correct in his postulation that Eudocia's literary circle was also producing centos. At the same time, there is little substantial evidence to assert this with any certainty.

[255] Johnson, 2000, 602.

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[256] See Johnson, 2000, 594-600, for a summary of the argument over the last century on the issue of silent or aloud reading.

[257] This is not to say that the private reading that Eudocia describes was done in silence. The text does not speak toward this issue one way or the other, nor is it my intention here to enter the debate on silent or aloud reading.

[258] This is in no way a compromise between Usher's performative context and the evidence to the contrary from within the preface. The mixture of sight and orality, between text and voice bespeaks at least two different, but not mutually exclusive, types of reading event, one which emphasized sight and text, and the other which gives priority to aural perception and song.

Not only does Eudocia situate the performative context of her cento in the world of public and private reading events, she assumes that there already exists an audience base that will appreciate her work. The empress had been part of such an audience when she read Patricius' cento, and, from the familiarity with which she speaks of Tatian's cento, she had either heard or read his work as well.[259] Certain members of fifth century literary circles, therefore, not only had a taste for preexisting centos but were also able to produce their own and market their versions in direct competition with their predecessors. These circles, not unlike the literary circles in which Ausonius traveled, had particular expectations of what an accomplished cento looked like. In other words, Eudocia and her idealized readership were familiar with the genre and shared similar criteria for judging them.

Although the extent to which we are able to reconstruct Eudocia's ideal reader or her actual audience in general is limited, that reconstruction is multivalent. As we have seen, Eudocia's ideal or "full-knowing reader" was either a reader in the modern sense of the term or an audience member at a more public reading event. Her "reader" had access to the standard literary texts, such as Homer and the lyric poets,[260] and was familiar with some of the best and most recent literary productions of the day, i.e. Tatian's cento.[261]

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[259] This is not a new suggestion. Holum, 1982, 219-220 also suggests that members of Eudocia's literary entourage were engaged in the reading and revising of centos. For a discussion on the dissemination of early Christian works, see Haines-Eitzen, 2000, 77-104.

[260] To characterize the standard or best authors as canonical is perhaps anachronistic, particularly among the lyric poets whose popularity in reading circles often differed significantly. The typical authors mentioned are Alcman, Alcaeus, Sappho, and Pindar.

[261] Tatian's work was so well recognized as an accomplished Homeric pastiche that Libanius (*Ep*. 173) incorporated it in the classroom.

Although Tatian's cento does not survive, and his name is today only an obscure reference, Eudocia mentions both poet and his work as if her ideal reader would be familiar with them. Of course, this in no way implies that Tatian's poetry was in every educated reader's library–to be sure it was not. But his cento was appreciated enough to find its way into Libanius' classroom,[262] an accomplishment of some merit. Eudocia mentions Tatian's cento, despite its author's modern obscurity, as if her audience would or should be acquainted with it.

Moreover, Eudocia does not prefer secular or Christian poetry. That Tatian picked up where Homer left off has been one of the more popular suggestions for the subject matter of his cento and is in keeping with what Eudocia says about it. Its inclusion in Libanius' classroom curriculum does not necessarily imply its widespread dissemination. Patricius' cento is hardly mentioned outside the confines of the Homeric centos, and, like Tatian's cento, does not appear to have circulated broadly. How much of the Biblical narrative his cento contained has been much discussed, with some suggestions outlining the length as well as specific emphasis of the poem.[263] Regardless, Eudocia's preface directly refers to one of the best known–although unfortunately no longer extant–secular Greek centos as well as the first Christian Greek cento. Unlike Ausonius, whose *Cento Nuptialis* is justified through the precedent of reputable authors,[264] Eudocia has selected a fellow centoist–a secular centoist at that–to justify her revision of the first Christian Greek cento.

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[262] For a general discussion on Libanius and his legacy in Antioch, see Cribiore, 2007.

[263] Reconstructions of Patricius' cento are typically based upon his preface to the work, which provides a clear outline of its content.

[264] Ausonius' main concern is to justify the erotic content of the cento. He invokes Juvenal, Martial, Pliny, Sulpicia, Apuleius, Cicero, Plato, Annianus, Laevius, Evenus, Menander, and finally Virgil himself.

On what grounds then does Eudocia feel obligated to apologize for her cento? Or better yet, on what grounds does she defend her decision to revise the words of another poet who, ironically, had literally pilfered his lines from Homer? With Patricius' cento introduced, Eudocia continues:

ἀλλ’ ἔμπης οὐ πάγχυ ἐτήτυμα πάντ’ ἀγόρευεν·
οὐδὲ μὲν ἁρμονίην ἐπέων ἐφύλαξεν ἅπασαν,
οὐδὲ μόνων ἐπέων ἐμνήσατο κεῖνος ἀείδων,
ὁππόσα χάλκεον ἦτορ ἀμεμφέος εἶπεν Ὁμήρου.

ἀλλ’ ἐγὼ ἡμιτέλεστον ἀγακλεὲς ὡς ἴδον ἔργον
Πατρικίου, σελίδας ἱερὰς μετὰ χεῖρα λαβοῦσα,
ὅσσα μὲν ἐν βίβλοισιν ἔπη πέλεν οὐ κατὰ κόσμον,
πάντ’ ἄμυδις κείνοιο σοφῆς ἐξείρυσα βίβλου·
ὅσσα δ’ ἐκεῖνος ἔλειπεν, ἐγὼ πάλιν ἐν σελίδεσσι
γράψα καὶ ἁρμονίην ἱεροῖς ἐπέεσσιν ἔδωκα.

εἰ δέ τις αἰτιόῳτο καὶ ἡμέας ἐς ψόγον ἕλκοι,
δοιάδες οὕνεκα πολλαὶ ἀρίζη’λον κατὰ βίβλον
εἰσὶν Ὁμηρείων τ’ ἐπέων πόλλ οὐ θέμις ἐστίν,
ἴστω τοῦθ’, ὅτι πάντες ὑποδρηστῆρες ἀνάγκης.

There are four aspects of centonic production that concern Eudocia: truth (line 5), harmony (lines 6 and 14), adherence to the mother text, i.e. Homer (lines 8-9), and double lines (lines 16-17). Let us examine each of these individually.

The dichotomy between truth and falsehood and its role in literary criticism developed quite early in the Greek tradition, and yet few poet-critics have been able to express this polarity as well as Pindar,[265] "Yes, wonders are many, but then too, I think, in men's talk stories (μῦθοι) are embellished beyond the true account (ἀληθῆ λόγον) and deceive by means of elaborate lies (ψεῦδεσι)."[266] According to Pindar and Plato after him, myth is not, contrary to the modern dichotomy between myth and truth, inherently false, but only those myths that are embellished (δεδαιδαλμένοι) beyond the true tale (ἀληθῆ λόγον).[267] It is only fitting therefore that truth receive the initial attention in Eudocia's preface. Accordingly, Patricius had not related everything truthfully (ἐτήτυμα). Exactly what "inaccuracies" Patricius's cento contained might not be recoverable, yet Eudocia's mention of truth is not limited to the details of his cento but bespeaks her activity as redactor. This is especially forceful since truth is absent from the remainder of the preface and receives no further attention or elaboration from Eudocia. According to Nagy, truth in archaic poetry correlates with the activity of selection or sorting out (κρίνω).[268] It is the activity of κρίσις that characterized the Alexandrian critics in particular and ancient critics in general, who "sorted out" the truth from the texts they received.

Taken in this light, Eudocia's concern for the narrative's truth (ἐτήτυμα) places her activity into the wider tradition of literary criticism which consisted in the judgment of a received work's truth and the removal of any unsuitable or false sections. Just as Pindar attempted to present unembellished μῦθοι, so Eudocia, upon receiving an embellished cento, purged from the text whatever was inappropriate and added what was lacking. But where exactly had Patricius gone wrong? Which story had he not told truthfully? Perhaps he had not told the narrative in true Homeric fashion and had added lines of his own, a practice that was *nefas* for accomplished centoists. We will see that Patricius certainly did insert non-Homeric lines into the text, but this falls under a different criticism. More likely, Patricius' cento did not tell the Biblical story to Eudocia's liking. Although this could have included so-called heretical doctrines, her greatest concern was likely episodes that Patricius had not included, suggested by the later recensions that contain an increasing number of Biblical episodes. One of the most notable additions, if we can reconstruct the contents of Patricius' cento from its preface, was the creation account, which included the fall of humanity as well as God's decision to send the Son into the world.[269] Altogether this takes up the first two hundred lines of the first recension.[270] There would have been other additions and omissions to Patricius' text, but the result of this activity, we are assured, was harmony.

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[265] Kennedy, 1989, 22.

[266] ἦ θαύματα πολλά, καί πού τι καὶ βροτῶν
φάτιν ὑπὲρ τὸν ἀληθῆ λόγον
δεδαιδαλμένοι ψεύδεσι ποικίλοις ἐξαπατῶντι μῦθοι. *Ol.* 1.27-29.

[267] See Ledbetter, 2003. The discussion between logos and mythos in classical literature is a long one. For their role in Plato see Racionero, 1998. See Trimpi, 1971, for a discussion from Plato to the second sophistic.

[268] Nagy, 1990, 60-63.

Eudocia's second criticism is that Patricius did not preserve (ἐφύλαξεν) the harmony (ἁρμονίην) of the verses (ἐπέων). The earliest examples of the term harmony and cognate words similar to it often refer to the combination or attachment of two or more objects.[271] This connotation persists even in Aristotle, despite his other technical uses of the term. In his *De anima*,[272] he presents ἁρμονία as κρᾶσιν καὶ σύνθεσιν ἐναντίων, which, *mutatis mutandis*, is remarkably similar to Ausonius' accomplished cento which is constructed in such a way *sensus diversi ut congruant, adoptiva quae sunt ut cognata videantur, aliena ne interluceant, arcessita ne vim redarguant, densa ne supra modum protuberent, hiulca ne pateant*.[273] The combination of disparate and unrelated elements into a whole is the very nature of making a cento, and even though Ausonius never uses the term harmony, there is a sense that in his attempt to prevent the "foreign, introduced, and densely packed bits" from being observed or from revealing the nature of the poem's composition, harmony, the κρᾶσιν καὶ σύνθεσιν ἐναντίων, is ever present.

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[269] These additional episodes had the clearest influence on Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Milton had a copy of the Homeric centos along with other early Greek and Latin Christian poetry (Harris, 1898). There was precedent for rewriting the Genesis account; the book of *Jubilees* had already done so. For more examples of Judeo-Christian paraphrases, see Harding, 2003, 147-153; and Johnson, 2006, 78-104.
[270] Schembra, 2007, I.1-205.

Finally, Eudocia insists that Patricius did not keep in mind only Homer's word. As a mimetic song–it imitates as it quotes–the cento was required to use only the words of Homer or Virgil; any degree of elaboration or unique composition was thought to undermine the whole and was strictly frowned upon. Patricius clearly diverged from what he memorized and incorporated some original matter into the cento.[274] Accordingly, his original additions compromised both his model (Homer) and the inherent balance of the cento, which was supposed to be made up solely of Homer's words. Although Ausonius never prohibits the inclusion of original lines, he certainly adhered to this standard–none of his 131 lines are original.[275] This final defect in Patricius' cento tipped the scales in Eudocia's favor, and she took up the task of editing the cento she had received.

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[271] For the full discussion on the semantic development of the term ἁρμονία, including its Mycenaean origin, see Ilievski, 1993; and Lambropoulou, 1996; 1997; and 1998.

[272] 407b30-32.

[273] Aus. *Paulo sal*. 53-57.

[274] Cameron, 1982, and Usher, 1997, 310-311, point this out, doubtless dependent upon Eudocia's preface.

Once Eudocia has fully justified her decision to revise Patricius' cento, she turns to apologize for the quality of their combined work. This section goes beyond Ausonius' assertion that he is merely an initiate in the game of centoizing; indeed, Eudocia explicitly points out weaknesses in their poem, the presence of δοιάδες, which were not appropriate (οὐ θέμις). Usher challenged the *communis opinio* concerning the meaning of δοιάδες, which to that time had been understood as double meanings.[276] Schembra's introduction provides a few examples of "double meanings" from the cento,[277] but as we will explore later, such double meanings were part and parcel of creating as well as interpreting a cento. On the other hand, Usher argues that the δοιάδες, a term attested only in a gloss, most likely refers to multiple lines in succession, an argument supported by an apology for Eudocia's revision, which has been preserved in the manuscript *Neap.* II C 37.[278] The text is worth quoting in full:

> ἀπολογία Εὐδοκίας λαμπροτάτης τῆς καὶ τὸν παρόντα

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[275] Bright, 1984, 85. Interestingly, the other cento Eudocia is known to have in hand was the Virgilian Christian cento by Proba. Proba, an accomplished centoist, also adhered to this rule; of her 666 lines, none contain original additions. On the other hand, there are numerous examples of centos that do contain original material, the most notorious being the *De Alea* and the *De Ecclesia* which contain 112 and 111 lines respectively. Each exhibit five original additions, roughly 4.5% of the whole.

[276] So Ludwich, 1897, 84; Salvaneschi, 1981, 128-129; Alfieri, 1988, 154-155; and Schembra 1994, 328-331 and 2007, CLXXXVIII-CXCI. Interestingly, in Schembra's introduction to his 2007 edition, he does not address Usher's argument concerning the meaning of δοιάδες.

[277] Schembra, 2007, CLXXXVIII-CXCI.

[278] This is preserved in Pierleoni, 1962, 306, and Mioni, 1992, 261, and reprinted with translation in Usher, 1997, 314. For a discussion on the manuscript tradition of the Homeric centos see Schembra 2007.

> ὁμηροκεντρῶνα τὸν συντεθέντα παρὰ Πατρικίου τινὸς ἐπισκόπου διορθωσαμένης, ὑπέρ τε τοῦ αὐτὸν ταύτην διορθῶσαι, καὶ ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἐν μὲν τῷ ὁμηροκεντρῶνι, ὃν Τατιανὸς ἐκ τοῦ Ὁμήρου τὰ μεθ᾽ Ὅμηρον ἔγραψε δύο στίχους ἐφεξῆς κειμένους ὁμηρικοὺς μὴ εὑρίσκεσθαι· ἐν τούτῳ δὲ πολὺ τὸ τοιοῦτον εἶναι.[279]

At the very least, someone read Eudocia's preface and interpreted δοιάδες to be successive Homeric lines, which suggests that Eudocia was either familiar with Ausonius' prefatory epistle or is aware of the wider aesthetics of centonic composition. A copy of the *Cento Nuptialis* in Eudocia's possession is unverifiable and indeed irrelevant; at the least, she and her readership knew independently the qualities of a deft cento. Furthermore, Eudocia's recension[280] contains as many as seven sequential lines, which, if one were to follow Ausonius, according to whom double lines were inept and three ridiculous, would have been a glaring fault. On the other hand, Eudocia explicitly points out the product's inherent flaws, which shows that she was aware of their shortcomings and concerned that her audience would recognize them as well. Many of the lines she used and the order in which she presents them were not appropriate (οὐ θέμις). Taken this way, line 17 qualifies Eudocia's previous admission of multiple lines in succession, which for the creation of a good cento was *nefas*.

Although the cento, according to Ausonius, was merely a *ludus*, a stitching of disparate lines from a variety of contexts into a unified whole, it could be taken quite seriously, perhaps even revered by its audience. In her preface Eudocia conceptualizes the Christian cento as one such meritorious production. Her preface opens, "This is the account of a poem pleasing to God (ϑεοτερπέος)." From the start, the Christian cento is more than a literary *tour de force*; it is a production intended to please God, a tall order, indeed. Quite removed from the hours of leisure and imperial banquets of Ausonius' *Cento Nuptialis*, Patricius undertook to compose a poem in which God himself would take part and was expected to enjoy. That he succeeded in Eudocia's mind is evident: she says that the cento earned Patricius eternal praise, which, to be sure, could be in the time-honored tradition of commemorating literary productions, had not Eudocia continued and characterized Patricius' cento, and the very pages upon which it was written, as holy (ἱερὰς).

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[279] "This is the apology of Eudocia, the splendid woman who corrected the present Homeric cento composed by a certain bishop, Patricius; the apology is about her editing him, and about the fact that two successive Homeric lines are never found next to each other in the Homeric cento which Tatian composed on a post-Homeric theme using verses taken from Homer; whereas in this poem of hers [she says] there is much of this sort of thing." (Translation Usher's)

[280] This corresponds to Schembra's first recension.

Furthermore, despite her esteem for Tatian's cento, the Christian cento deserves greater renown, not based on superior production or literary merit, but solely on content. Considering Eudocia had to edit and complete Patricius' cento, his poem hardly qualifies as superior, but what makes it worthy of praise is its subject matter–instead of recounting the battle between Trojans and Argives, Patricius chose a more honorable topic, the race of Hebrews and the son/father of God. The pages of the Homeric cento are sacred because they contain in essence a versified Bible. As we will shortly see, a versified Bible hardly implies a close adherence to the biblical text, contrary to what one might expect. The intrinsically ludic nature of the cento precludes such an adherence, and as a result, the Christian centos contain episodes that intentionally blend the Biblical world with the Homeric. The use of many Homeric lines in succession exacerbated Eudocia's deviation from the Biblical narrative or her blending of the two narratives, which resulted in a classical, Hellenized, and "Homeric" Jesus.

In his recent investigation on fourth century paraphrastic literature, Johnson suggests that by rewriting a preexisting narrative, authors responsible for works such as the *Life and Miracles of Thecla* were able to reduce potentially difficult theological issues, thereby curbing rival and heretical theologians.[281] Although this is evident in parts of the cento, particularly those that emphasize Jesus' divine and human nature,[282] the poem is not primarily intended to be an anti-heretical tract. Rather, as paraphrastic literature, the cento retells a pre-existing story in new and relevant ways, an activity Johnson characterizes as a "backward looking forward" through which the author "consolidates the past and reinterprets it for a contemporary culture and literary concerns."[283] What better medium to accomplish this than the cento, which simultaneously forced the author to follow, elaborate, or interpret a traditional story?[284] But this interpretation, rereading, or perhaps misreading of the source text directs how the story's audience understands the original.[285] Paraphrastic literature, of which the Christian centos in general and Eudocia's redaction in particular is part, assumes not only a "full-knowing reader," but also one who will allow the (mis)readings of the source text(s) to influence his reception of the source text. In other words, by presenting a Homeric Jesus, Eudocia intends this retelling to have a profound effect on her audience. This is alluded to at the end of the preface, in which Patricius is characterized as the one who "brings forth good news for the mortal race." This implicit or vague reference to proselytizing is made explicit in the opening of the cento proper:[286]

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[281] Johnson 2006, 33-34.

[282] In my opinion, Eudocia's preface reveals her penchant for qualifying Jesus as both human and divine (line 33); while hardly implying that the numerous references to Jesus throughout the centos as the son of God and man come from Eudocia's hand, this fact does reiterate the centrality of Trinitarian theology for the fourth and fifth century Christians.

[283] Johnson, 2006, 15 and 28.

[284] For Johnson's perspective on the role of the cento in the paraphrastic milieu, note his pages 95-104.

[285] This is the case with any retelling or interpretation. What sets the cento apart from the various other paraphrastic activities during late antiquity, i.e. *The Life and Miracles of Thecla, The Acts of Peter*, the Codez Bezae manuscript of the *Acts of the Apostles*, is the role of ἀνάγκη. The cento's unique manner of composition compels the author to charge the text with a high degree of interpretational freedom. Homer and Virgil are always lurking in the shadows of the text and, for those learned enough to recognize the source text, are always eager to "aid" or "hinder" in the interpretation of the new story.

> Κέκλυτε, μυρία φῦλα περικτιόνων ἀνθρώπων,
> ὅσσοι νῦν βροτοί εἰσιν ἐπὶ χθονὶ σῖτον ἔδοντες,
> ἠμὲν ὅσοι ναίουσι πρὸς ἠῶ τ᾽ ἠέλιόν τε
> ἠδ᾽ ὅσσοι μετόπισθε ποτὶ ζόφον ἠερόεντα,
> ὄφρ᾽ εὖ γινώσκοιτ᾽ ἠμὲν θεὸν ἠδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα,
> ὃς πᾶσι θνητοῖσι καὶ ἀθανάτοισιν ἀνάσσων.
>
> Listen, ye myriad races of men around the globe,
> as many mortals as are now eating grain upon the earth,
> as many as dwell facing the dawn and sun
> and as many as dwell on the other side facing the western shade,
> so that you might know him who is God and man,
> who rules over all mortals and immortals.

From the opening lines of the cento, the role of evangelism in the cento is clear: a proper experience of the cento results in the knowledge of θεὸν ἠδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα, a recurring circumlocution for Jesus, the purpose of which is two-fold. Since the centoist is limited to Homeric lines and therefore to Homeric nomenclature, Eudocia is limited in how she introduces specific characters in the narrative. For that reason, Adam and Eve, Mary and Joseph, the apostles, and Jesus himself are never explicitly named. The hemistich, θεὸν ἠδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα, is a decidedly convenient referent for Jesus since it unambiguously refers to him (no one else in the Biblical narrative is both God and man). Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, the circumlocution explicates in the clearest way possible in Homer's words the dual nature of Jesus, a theological issue of some concern in late antiquity. Therefore, from the opening of the cento, the work is positioned within the theological tradition of late antiquity, thereby emphasizing its didactic purpose–to know the Divine Human.

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[286] All citations from the first recension of the cento come from Schembra, 2007.

The cento, along with the message it contains, is attributed not to a preexisting corpus but rather to a specific individual, the centoist (εἴπω, με) who speaks whatever her ϑυμὸς bids her. The centoist takes up the role of invocational poet, yet where Homer and Hesiod invoke the Muses for their inspiration, Eudocia invokes an audience in need of the gospel message. Any inspiration is congenital to the poet–she not only has the words but the knowledge within her. Rather than the need for the divine to impart knowledge or poetic ability, the centoist needs an audience that is receptive to her message. On the other hand, an invocation of this sort, particularly with its lack of direct reference to a pre-existing, canonical text or to a direct command by God, separates the poet from her source text and allows her the freedom to tell an evangelistic narrative with room for creative paraphrases.

The best example of Eudocia's creative and paraphrastic ability that at the same time demonstrates the conflation of the Homeric with the Biblical is the story of the Samaritan women at the well.[287] The Eudocia's primary source for the episode comes from the gospel of John 4.4-42, and an outline of the Biblical episode follows:[288]

Part 1: Jesus and the woman (4:4-27)
    I. Introduction to the event (4:4-6)
        A. Location (Samaria, city of Sychar, well of Jacob)
        B. Immediate setting (Jesus and his disciples in the middle of a journey, tired, at the sixth hour)
    II. Initial conversation between Jesus and the woman (4:7-9)
        A. Entrance of the woman (4:7a)
        B. Jesus' request for a drink (4:7b)
            i. Narrator's aside concerning absence of the disciples (4:8)
        C. Woman's astonishment for being addressed (4:9a)
            i. Narrator's aside concerning Jewish-Samaritan relations (4:9b)
    III. Transition to the living water conversation (4:10-15)
        A. Jesus' response and introduction of the living water motif (4:10)
            i. Focus on the gift of God
            ii. Ignorance of the woman–she doesn't know Jesus' identity
        B. Woman's response (4:11-12)
            i. Jesus lacks a bucket and the well is deep (4:11)
            ii. Jesus greater than ancestors? (4:12)
        C. Jesus' counter (4:13-14)
            i. Quality of normal water (4:13)
            ii. Quality of living water (eternal life) (4:14)

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[287] Schembra, 2007, lines 1053-1160. This corresponds to Usher, 1999, lines 1046-1152. The only gospel parallel is John 4:4-42; by selecting this episode, I hope to avoid the issue of reconciling the synoptic gospels and can focus on a single source. Furthermore, this text is also desirable in that Usher has given it some attention (1998, 113-126) probably due to the number of interesting qualities it contains. It further provides me the opportunity to add to and deviate from Usher's interpretations. While he focused on the role of the Odyssey in the creation of the Samaritan woman passage, I hope to elucidate the degree to which the cento elaborates on the Biblical narrative.

[288] The text follows Nestle-Aland's 27th edition. For the Greek and a standard translation of the passage, see the appendix at the end of the chapter.

        - D. Woman's request for water (4:15)
            - i. Explicit goal–to alleviate work (4:15b)
    - IV. Sexual ethics (4:16-19)
        - A. Jesus' command to get her husband (4:16)
        - B. Woman's assertion that she does not have a husband (4:17a)
        - C. Jesus' revelation of the woman's past (4:17b-18)
        - D. Woman's amazement (4:19)
            - i. Guess at Jesus' identity (4:19b)
    - V. Digression on Samaritan-Jewish worship (4:20-26)
        - A. Woman's statement on Samaritan-Jewish worship (4:20)
        - B. Jesus' response (4:21-24)
            - i. Evolution of worship away from locus centered (4:21)
            - ii. "Superiority" of Jewish worship (4:22)
                - a. Salvation as central theme
                - b. Emphasis on knowing and unknowing
            - iii. Evolution of new worship (4:23-24)
                - a. Inclusive worship
        - C. Woman's general statement about the Messiah (4:25)
        - D. Jesus' declaration of his Messianic identity (4:26)

Part 2: Jesus, the woman, his disciples, and the townspeople (4:27-42)
- I. Return of the disciples and the woman's exit (4:27-30)
    - A. Disciples return and are amazed (4:27)
        - i. No one speaks up or asks Jesus (4:27b)
    - B. Woman leaves and tells townspeople about Jesus (4:28-29)
        - i. Ability of Jesus to tell the unknown (4:29a)
        - ii. Wonder if Jesus is Messiah (4:29b)
    - C. Townspeople leave the city to meet Jesus (4:30)
- II. Interlude (Conversation between Jesus and his disciples) (4:31-38)
    - A. Disciples ask Jesus to eat but he refuses (4:32-33)
        - i. Claim that he has bread that the disciples don't know about

        - B. Disciples wonder at Jesus' answer (4:33)
        - C. Digression on the "bread" of Jesus (4:34)
            - i. "Food" is to do the work he has been entrusted with (4:34)
        - D. Metaphor of disciple's role in evangelism (4:35-38)
            - i. Disciples unable to see that the harvest is ripe (4:35)
            - ii. Coordination between sower and reaper (4:36-37)
            - iii. Explanation of the disciple's role as reapers (4:38)
    - III. Townspeople and Jesus (4:39-42)
        - A. Many believe in Jesus (4:39)
            - i. Emphasis on the woman's role as witness (martyr)
        - B. Townspeople invite Jesus to remain with them (4:40)
        - C. More townspeople believe (4:41)
        - D. Response to the woman (4:42)
            - i. They believe based on their own sensory perception (4:42a)
            - ii. Declaration that Jesus is the savior of the world. (4:42b)

A few preliminary points should be noted before we turn to the corresponding episode in the cento. First, the passage, although disguised with digressions or metaphors about water, food, or even nuances of Samaritan-Jewish religious practices, has two consistent themes: Jesus' identity and the ability of others to perceive and believe in him. In fact, by the end of the episode the metaphors of living water and food are forgotten–the townspeople initially believe because of the woman's testimony but at the end of the episode because of their personal interaction with Jesus. Transcending the vague imagery of living water and food, the narrative concludes with a Messianic Jesus, the savior of the world. Two additional points should be made that will aid us as we turn to the cento. First, in verse 10 the question of Jesus' identity is conflated with the theme of the gift of God. Second, the episode concludes with the village welcoming Jesus for two days during the course of which many come to believe in him. This is explicitly mentioned in the episode proper (4:40-41) and in the transition to the next episode (4:43).

The corresponding episode in the Homeric centos, while apparently simpler, demonstrates substantial revisions or re-readings of the John passage. The length of the narrative is 106 lines, roughly as long as John's narrative. An outline of the Samaritan woman passage is as follows:[289]

Part 1: Jesus and the woman
    I. Introduction to the event (1053-1058)
        A. Time of day (midday)
        B. Location of the spring (no specific names used)
    II. Initial conversation between Jesus and the woman (1059-1079)
        A. Entrance of the woman (1059-1063)
            i. Repetition of the spring description (1060-1061)
            ii. Woman's ethnicity is absent
            iii. Jesus approaches woman (1062-1063)
        B. Jesus' speech (1064-1071)
            i. Woman's ignoring of Jesus #1 (1064-1065)
            ii. Woman's sexual ethics (1066-1068)
            iii. Woman's ignoring of Jesus #2 (1069-1071)
                a. Narrator's aside on the woman's marital status (1072)
        C. Woman's initial response and Jesus' second statement (1066-1072)
            i. Woman's silence and shame #1 (1073-1074)
            ii. Jesus' second statement (1075)
            iii. Woman's silence and shame #2 (1076-1079)

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[289] The text follows Schembra, 2007. For the Greek text and my translation, see the appendix at the end of the chapter.

- IV. Woman's prolonged speech (1080-1122)[290]
    - A. Explanation of shame (1080-1083)
    - B. Verification of truth (1084-1087)
    - C. Jesus as guest of the city (1088-1097)
        - i. Jesus and woman "travel" to the city (1089-1093)
            - a. Both speak to the people
        - ii. People will provide food, drink, and gifts (1094-1096a)
        - iii. People will honor Jesus as God (1096b)
    - D. Initial image of Jesus as bride (1097-1098)
        - i. Reference to dowry
    - E. Woman's Inquisition (1099-1114)
        - i. Apologetic prelude (1099-1102)
            - a. Invocation to speak the truth (1100)
            - a. Appearance of Jesus as moral man (1101)
            - b. Invocation to speak the truth (1102)
        - ii. Initial inquiry (1103-1106)
            - a. Standard line of inquiry (1103)
            - b. Focus on parents (1104-1105)
            - c. Focus on the city (1106)
        - iii. Assertion of Jesus' humanity (1107-1110)
            - a. Jesus born from someone
            - b. All people have names
        - iv. Secondary inquiry (1111-1112)
        - v. Assertion of woman's awe (1113-1114)
    - F. Future return of Jesus to his home (1115-1120)
        - i. Woman as the first to be given life
        - ii. Woman will pray to Jesus conveying honor and respect
    - G. Conclusion statement (1121-1122)
        - i. "Good to give gifts"
        - ii. Woman as means of spreading message of Jesus

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[290] What is section III in the biblical account is absent here. More will be said on this below.

Part 2: Jesus, the woman, and the people

- I. Exit woman and her message to the city (1123-1150)
    - A. Exit woman and description of the city (1123-1127)
        - i. City becomes entirely Homeric, not Palestinian
        - ii. Woman recognizes that Jesus is God
    - B. Woman's message to the people (1128-1150)
        - i. Call for the people to gather in the agora (1129-1130)
            - a. Purpose: to know this stranger
        - ii. Description of Jesus (1131-1136)
            - a. He knew everything (1131-1132)
            - b. From the Paian race (1134-1135)
            - c. Good character of the man (1136)
        - iii. Woman's recognition of her life (1137-1140)
        - iv. Inquiry into the man (1141-1148)
            - a. Standard questions (1141-1142)
                - i. Where he is from
                - ii. Kin and parents
            - b. Jesus as a god disguised as man (1143-1148)
        - v. Over to townspeople to discern for themselves (1149-1150)
- III. Response to woman's speech and town's acceptance of Jesus (1151-1158)[291]
    - A. Immediate reaction and initial gathering of the town (1151-1153)
    - B. Physical greeting of Jesus (1154-1157)
        - i. Touching with hands
        - ii. Gazing with eyes
        - iii. Addressing him as if God
    - C. Second gathering of town (1158)

The degree to which the centoist has in part revised or misread the original episode from the gospel of John is remarkable–entire sections of the narrative, such as the digression on Samaritan-Jewish worship, have been omitted entirely, while other sections, such as the woman's speech to the townspeople have been fabricated, apparently, out of whole cloth. On the other hand, the centoist has presented a new version of a canonical story by emphasizing particular aspects of the original narrative and minimizing or deleting others. This new version demonstrates thematic continuity with the source text and significant modifications. The final product transforms the Samaritan woman at the well episode into a narrative appealing to a philosophically or theologically sophisticated audience which appreciated the conflation of traditional epic with "a good sermon."

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[291] The cento omits section II. More will be said on this below.

Before exploring the cento's interpretive freedom (and restriction), let us first consider how the cento's version differs from the canonical record. The first and probably most significant difference lies in the exclusion of the disciples from the cento version. Undoubtedly, they are present in lines 1047-1048, but by the time the woman arrives upon the scene, the disciples are absent and do not return until line 1183, when they need to be present for the distribution of the miraculous loaves of bread. On the other hand, in the gospel account, the disciples are never said to be traveling with Jesus, although the narrative makes little sense if they were not–all verbs from John 4:4-6 are singular and there is no mention of the disciples. Furthermore, in the gospel account, the disciples return to confront Jesus and engage in the conversation that fills John 4:31-38, whereas in the cento, they are never on the scene. That the disciples never reappear when a "full-knowing reader" would expect them to demands a shift in the presentation of the episode, one that emphasizes the main characters, Jesus and the anonymous woman, at the expense of the secondary characters. Therefore, although technically the disciples are present within the cento's version of the episode, their role is minimized to such an extent that they are entirely omitted. The effect of their exclusion from the narrative requires substantial changes in the second section of the episode. Rather than a conversation between Jesus and his disciples, the narrative shifts to the woman and her evangelistic message.

Not only was the centoist free to alter specific roles of characters, she could amend the setting of the narrative as well. Both versions indicate quite explicitly that the chance meeting of Jesus and the woman took place at midday, the sixth hour, according to John; and when the sun was at its apex, according to the centoist. The gospel narrative centralizes the geographic locus of the event in a Samaritan polis, a recurring and central point throughout the narrative. That Jesus was present, even working within Samaria, was intended to shock the reader, as it did both the woman he meets and his disciples. Such an account was useful to the first generation of Christians for whom the theme of the religion's inclusiveness was still hotly debated, but by the fifth century the distinction between Samaritan and Jew was hardly an important one for the church, and any reference to ethnicity is absent from Eudocia's version.[292] Regardless, the exclusion of the locus of the event allows the episode to convey a more relevant and meaningful message to a fifth-century audience. In other words, no longer a narrative dealing with the breakdown of social and political barriers in first century Judaism–important to the first generation of Christians–the cento's version is transformed into a general conversion narrative, undoubtedly more relevant to a later audience.

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[292] This is not to suggest that Samaritans ceased to exist by the fifth-century; they had not. Christian concerns during the fifth century were decidedly more globally oriented, and the focus of the clerical order was on heretical theology, not on isolated Jewish factions. Interestingly, Samaritans were increasingly conflated with heretical factions (see Noethlichs, 2007), a fact perhaps related to Simon Magus' origin in Samaria.

By making the narrative more universally relevant, the centoist was limited in what sections of John's narrative she was able to use. The initial conversation between Jesus and the women was useless, with the exception of Jesus' request for a drink. Since a harmful request for water would hardly warrant astonishment on the woman's part–keep in mind she is no longer a Samaritan–Eudocia modified the initial conversation between the woman and Jesus. On the other hand, prophetic knowledge of the woman's past, particularly her sexual license, would elicit astonishment from the woman, and it had the benefit of being both consistent with the narrative and relevant to the cento's audience.[293] This authorial selection truncated what were twenty-three verses of the biblical account to less than ten, and necessitated the addition of original material. Yet this "original" material was not plucked out of thin air, nor was it created from a strictly Homeric paradigm. Rather, Eudocia used half a verse that was not only thematically cogent, but was still relevant to a fifth century audience, John 4:10a.[294]

Jesus' identity is a recurring theme throughout the gospels as well as during the religion's incipient development, yet by late antiquity, the religious world was buzzing with Christological interest. This was more than a matter of theological import–political favor often waxed or waned with the Christological persuasion of bishops and emperors. More often than not the distinction between various religious factions in late antique

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[293] More on the role of sexuality in the cento and its place in late antique Christianity below.
[294] ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ· εἰ ᾔδεις τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τίς ἐστιν ὁ λέγων σοι…

Christianity was their Christology. In fact, few themes were as fashionable within theological circles and none were more important when proselytizing potential initiates. Furthermore, Christ was coined the gift of God as early as the first generations of Christians, an image preserved well into late antiquity. How Eudocia misread and reinterpreted the identity of Jesus and the theme of God's gift influenced her version of the episode. The rhetorical presentation of that episode reinforces her thematic preferences, and concurrently melds the Homeric narrative with Christian theology. It is to this end that we now turn our attention.

If the Samaritan woman episode was composed with the Biblical narrative in mind, and if that preexisting narrative served as the structure which the poet rebuilt with different material (Homeric lines) but with a similar end in mind (a Christological Jesus), then it is to be expected that the flow of the reworked narrative will appear Homeric, and in fact will progress Homerically, but the structure will reinforce a clearly ideological goal. In other words, the narrative should evidence that the centoist has asked herself two questions: What would Jesus do? and What would Homer say? This is evidenced best in the speech sections of the episode. Jesus' initial conversation with the woman uses one of the most repeated Homeric narrative techniques, the ring composition. He begins with a question that criticizes the woman's reservation–she does not engage him in conversation (lines 1064-1065). Nor does Jesus waste time; he promptly addresses the woman's sexual impropriety (1066-1068) and concludes that no other woman would dare avoid conversation with him (1069-1071). This speech begins with an overt criticism and terminates with the same criticism, while the focus of the section, the woman's sexual activity, sits in the central section of the speech and is emphasized by the narrative's structure.

Presented with a narrative charged with allusive energy, the "full-knowing reader" is free to interpret the narrative in a variety of directions. On the one hand, he may first turn to the narrative's source text, the Gospel of John. By doing so, the reader bases his interpretation on Christian ethics. But in the gospel Jesus never explicitly criticizes the Samaritan woman, and any shame implied in the episode is cultural, based on Palestinian mores, not explicit doctrine. In fact, although sexual morality recurs throughout the early Christian texts, the cento's presentation reveals late antique concerns, not those of early Christians.[295] The first two generations of Christians did espouse a sexual ethic, but that ethic never explicitly identified marriage as the *sine qua non* for proper sexual behavior.[296] But Eudocia's Jesus explicitly demarcates proper sexual activity around the confines of marriage, and to prevent any ambiguity, the narrator interjects, ἡ δ’ οὔτ’ ἠρνεῖτο στυγερὸν γάμον οὔτε τελεύτα ("but she, i.e. the woman, did not reject marriage as disdainful nor did she bring it about").[297] By including this aside into the story,

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[295] Note Nathan, 2000, particularly 74-106 and 130-132; and Cloke, 1995, 100-133.

[296] Undoubtedly, some of the texts imply the centrality of marriage, but the ethic was developed later. For example, note the simplicity in the *Didache* (2.2): οὐ παιδοφθορήσεις, οὐ πορνεύσεις. See Milavec, 2003, 4-5. On the other hand, the centrality of celibacy in the second century work *The Shepherd of Hermas* indicates that the ascetic life was known, although the movement was not as prevalent as it would be in the fourth and fifth centuries. See Moreschini and Norelli, 2005, 162; Miller, 2005, 256-257; and Trevett, 2006, 131.

[297] Schembra's edition prints this line as ἡ δ’ αὖ ἠρνεῖτο στυγερὸν γάμον οὔτε τελεύτα, which is both awkward and confusing. Moreover, the line comes from *Od*. 24.126, which reads ἡ δ’ οὔτ’ ἠρνεῖτο στυγερὸν γάμον οὔτε τελεύτα. Ignoring for right now the connection between this line and its Homeric context, which I will discuss below, my reading is rather straightforward. The woman had first not rejected marriage, ἠρνεῖτο στυγερὸν γάμον, a reading consistent with the multiple uses of this phrase in the *Odyssey*, nor had she brought it about (τελεύτα), again consistent with Homeric idiom. Perhaps the only confusing aspect of my reading is the use of

Eudocia, just as the authors of similar treatises on sexual ethics from late antiquity, presents two proper, albeit unequal, options for a woman: rejection or acceptance of marriage.[298] In other words, a late antique woman could choose between an ascetic lifestyle (virginity)[299] or a Christian marriage, and her prerogative was protected by law under the Theodosian emperors.[300] The woman in the narrative had in fact chosen neither, which was not a viable option and therefore sinful.

On the other hand, the "full-knowing reader" might first respond to the allusive potential inherent within the words of the narrative, the Homeric source.[301] Since a detailed summary of even the general structure the centoist used to create the woman at the well episode would be burdensome, and since Mark Usher has already initiated much of this discussion, this section will limit itself to the marriage/dowry imagery and will explicate how intertextuality necessitates various degrees of interpretational latitude. First, let us

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στυγερόν. The adjective is essential to the Homeric context and in all such cases is taken attributively. In this case, I think it best to take the adjective predicatively, "she did not reject marriage as shameful," to emphasize a late antique understanding of marriage, i.e. a lifestyle inferior to perpetual virginity.

[298] This dichotomy is in fact exclusively Christian. Although Roman and Jewish traditions valued and encouraged virginity, it was not culturally accepted, with the exception of clearly defined religious purposes, as an alternative to marriage. Virginity was therefore appropriate and socially demanded for a defined period of time, i.e. before marriage, but was intended to lead up to marriage (Nathan, 2000, 77 and 130-131). For an alternative perspective, see Foskett, 2002, 46 who contrasts Jewish and Roman perspectives on virginity, and Deming, 2004, passim, for a general argument for the Hellenic roots of asceticism. Compare also Hunter, 1992, and Shaw, 2000.

[299] Placing both options of equal footing could be potentially dangerous. Jovinian, the fourth century founder of the heresy that bears his name, for example, rejected the ascetic lifestyle, and attempted to place virgins on the same moral level as married women. This provoked an emotional response by Jerome (*Adversus Jovinianum*). See Hunter, 2007, particularly 30-35.

[300] Indeed, the choice rested with the woman, who was legally able to choose between virginity and marriage (CTh 9.25:2.). See Nathan, 2000, 131. Legislation on marriage and divorce remained, for the most part, unchanged until the time of the Justinian, when many provisions that allowed the husband to retain the dowry, the so-called retentions, were repealed. See White, 1982, particularly 541-543; and Clark, 1993.

[301] For more on this episode's dependence on the Homeric narrative, see Usher, 1998, 113-126.

briefly summarize how the original Samaritan woman episode (John 4:4-42) develops marriage/dowry imagery.

Unlike the cento version, marriage in the gospel version serves solely as a pretext for Jesus to prophetically reveal the woman's past. He sends her to call her husband and bring him to the well (4:16), and her response of not having a husband (4:17a) moves the conversation toward Jesus' revelation of the woman's past–she has been with five men, and this one, the sixth, is not her husband (4:18). After this brief exchange, the woman's marital status is absent from the rest of the episode, until she relates to her countrymen what Jesus had prophetically told her. In fact, cultural mores within the marriage rite, such as the exchange of gifts in general or the dowry in particular, are never introduced. Contextually, this gift of 4:10 has nothing to do with a dowry nor is it connected with nuptial imagery. On the other hand, over time wedding imagery, including the engagement,[302] became a more common means of describing Christ's relationship to the church.[303] A conflation between the gift of God (in a soteriologically metaphoric sense) with imagery of Jesus as groom and the church as bride is the next logical step.[304]

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[302] Wedding negotiations were elaborate and typically involved discussions of dowry as well as the exchange of engagement gifts, which were different from the dowry proper and could be retained in the event of a divorce. See Evans Grubbs, 1994, 364-365. For a complete discussion on the role of the dowry from the late republic to the high empire, see Treggiari, 1991, 323-364. For late antiquity and the nuances between dowry and engagement presents, see Clark, 1993, and Evans Grubbs, 1995, 156-171.

[303] While wedding imagery was popular, moralistic tractates on marriage were not. The two typically cited ante-Nicene discussions on marriage are book 3 of Clement's *Stromateis* and Tertullian's *Ad Uxorem*. See Evans Grubbs, 1994, 387-388.

[304] See Clark, 1986, and Hunter 2000.

The corresponding episode in the cento inherits the image of the gift of God but modifies the narrative by conflating contradictory imagery from the Homeric narrative. For example, it is the woman who initiates gift giving, albeit through the alleged generosity of the town (1096) that honors Jesus with gifts, in the form of food and drink (1094), as well as unspecified gifts (δωτίνῃσι). The woman continues by blessing the man (κεῖνος, ὅς) who would lead Jesus into marriage and weigh him down with a dowry (ἔδνοισι).[305] This reverses the expected marital roles and conflates the imagery of Jesus as global benefactor[306] into a recognizably Homeric motif of a divine figure in human disguise whom ignorant mortals receive as guest friend.[307]

This reversal has the potential to undermine the thematic force of the episode, particularly since the narrative evidences a concentration of Homeric material–most of the lines are from the *Odyssey*, and 60 out of a total of 106 lines come from books 6, 8, 17, and 23.[308] Moreover, the material used for the woman's speeches comes from these particular Homeric passages, which creates a new product decidedly different from the Biblical exemplum and allows for a reevaluation of the characters involved. For example, the episode contains numerous Homeric lines originally spoken to or about female characters from the *Odyssey*. Usher states, "we notice that two Homeric episodes in particular are favored in this scene's reconstruction: (1) Odysseus's encounter with Nausicaa on the beach and his subsequent stay at Scheria (from Odyssey books 6 and 8); and (2) Odysseus's two prerecognition encounters with Penelope in Ithaca (from Odyssey books 17 and 23)."[309] Although Usher assumes that the reader would recognize the melding of Homeric language with Biblical theology, this is a likely, but not the only interpretation.

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[305] For more on the characterization of Jesus (and God) as female, a common motif, see Bynum, 1982, 110-169, and 1991, 35; and Mathews, 1999.

[306] This idea appears, perhaps in an incipient stage, in the gospel narrative–the townspeople assert that Jesus is the σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου (4:42).

[307] Usher, 1998, 114-115. In fact, Usher argues that the main thrust of the narrative derives from Homeric influence. That the Homeric narrative influenced the centoist's presentation of the gospel story is clear; however, since the overall narrative was restricted to an already defined presentation, i.e. John's episode, it is more likely that the Homeric material was secondary in the creation of the narrative. For the reader primarily familiar with Homeric material, the social and cultural world of Homer would be self-evident. On the other hand, the reader ignorant of, or less interested in, the Homeric material could read the narrative as a simple retelling of the Biblical episode. The interpretative multivalence of the cento precludes myopic readings, since individual readers were free to engage the allusive quality of the poem as they saw fit.

[308] Usher, 1998, 113.

The range of interpretations available to a reader of the cento is more apparent in the sexually tense dialogue between Jesus and the woman that borrows heavily from Homeric passages involving Nausicaa and Penelope. In Homer, both heroines are subject to intense scrutiny as regards marriage, and, interestingly, both are praised for the chastity they exhibit. Nausicaa's own words, καὶ δ᾽ ἄλλην νεμεσῶ ἥ τις τοιαῦτά γε ῥεζοι· ἥ τ᾽ ἀέκητι φίλων πατρὸς καὶ μητρὸς ἐόντων, ἀνδράσι μίσγηται πρίν γ᾽ ἀμφάδιον γάμον ἐλθεῖν,[310] although creatively reappropriated into Jesus' criticism of the woman's sexual license, present the reader with not one but many interpretive options.[311] Is this woman so unlike Nausicaa that a Homeric Jesus must castigate her or is she similar to Nausicaa, thereby undermining Jesus' criticism? The narrator explicates Jesus' criticism with an equally obscure line: ἡ δ᾽ οὔτ᾽ ἠρνεῖτο στυγερὸν γάμον οὔτε τελεύτα. On the surface, and from an exclusively Biblical perspective, the line is an overt criticism, as has been argued earlier. On the other hand, the line, in its Homeric context, is spoken by Amphimedon, a suitor complaining about the Penelope's delay in picking one of her gentlemen callers.[312] It was in fact Penelope's nocturnal adjournment that allowed her to remain faithful to her husband until he was able to return to Ithaca. This causes the reader to reevaluate the licentious woman in the cento. Are Jesus' criticisms warranted, if she, as the allusive nature of the poet's words suggest, is so like Penelope and Nausicaa? The reader can conclude that the Homeric allusions reinforce Jesus' criticisms; by calling to mind chaste women from Homer, the woman's sexual conduct is made more objectionable.

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[309] Usher, 1998, 117.
[310] *Od*. 6.286-288.
[311] Another legitimate interpretive line, although not set out here, is the perspective that viewed the sexual activity of Nausicaa and Penelope in a negative light. I am grateful to Dennis MacDonald for this observation.

Excursus: Mark Usher and his *Homeric Stitchings*

Although Usher's *Homeric Stitchings* came out a decade ago, it remains the best theoretical reading of Eudocia's cento and one of the few discussions of her poetry in English. For that reason, some time should be spent outlining his most salient points and how they complement or conflict with the reading presented here. Leaving aside Usher's synchronic approach, which creatively introduces his reader to a variety of theorists, I will here focus on his reading of the cento and his reconstruction of Eudocia's literary contribution. The goal of this excursus is to position my project alongside that of Usher, to provide further examples of how the cento can be read and to present alternatives when I suspect Usher's reconstruction of Eudocia has missed the mark.

Usher's primary goal is to identify how Eudocia's poetic technique relates to known literary trends from antiquity, specifically the classical rhapsodes (Usher's first section, "Cento Contexts"), how Eudocia composed her Homeric cento (his second section, "Cento Poetics"), and finally how a modern reader should best read the Homeric centos

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[312] *Od*. 24.126.

(section three "Cento Semiotics and Aesthetics"). Let us begin with Eudocia's technique and her place in late antique literature. First and foremost, Usher sees Eudocia as a fifth century vestige of the rhapsodic tradition, one who performed Homer by memory. This makes Eudocia's poetry rather outdated and Eudocia herself a literary dinosaur. Usher describes this as "Outsider Art," characterized by self-taught artists, who have a propensity for reusing "discarded material" and whose works are outside "canons of taste." Outsider Artists often find themselves at the margins of society.[313] I hope this chapter facilitates a move beyond such negative reconstructions of the cento's place in late antique literary culture. From what little comes through Ausonius' *Cento Nuptialis*, the literary value of the cento could be quite valuable. Despite Ausonius' assertions that the *Cento Nuptialis* is useless drivel, we have seen how he describes his cento with language similar to that of his other poetry, including his serious poetry. The number of surviving centos in Greek and Latin and the fact that the Homeric centos were incorporated in an anthology of Greek and Latin Christian poetry should cause us to pause before accepting Usher's "Outsider Art." Indeed, some influential Christian authors railed against the centos, but their comments are most likely individual responses to attempts to versify the Bible and are not typical of the aesthetic tastes of the day.

Usher takes Eudocia, but not the authors of the other Greek and Latin centos,[314] as a reader-rhapsode, an argument that comes out of Eudocia preface, which I have discussed elsewhere. Unlike Usher, I suggest that Eudocia's preface should be taken at face value, particularly her balance between text and reading, on the one hand, and song and hearing, on the other. Usher is no doubt correct when he says that Eudocia's world still manifests remnants of oral performance–Eudocia herself presented a speech to the Antiochenes. But for every example Usher presents, such as Eudocia' encomium in Antioch, which as we have seen was not necessarily in verse, there are other examples of Eudocia's written poetry, such as her encomium at Hammat Gader. What is more, Ausonius says that he heard a cento performed and was then challenged to write a cento and perform it for the emperor and his entourage. This balance of written and performed poetry agrees with what Eudocia says about her reception of Patricius' cento: she read his attempt, saw that it needed to be edited, and wrote on his pages the corrections she deemed necessary. The presence of song (ἀοιδῆς) in line 1 should not distract from the references to reading and writings that abound in the first half of Eudocia's preface. Only in the second half of Eudocia's preface does one observe unambiguous references to performed and aurally received centos.

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[313] Usher, 1998, 17.

[314] Usher, 1998, 52-53, distances Eudocia from known Greek and Latin centoists, an argument that seems more apologetic than historical, particularly since we have such little evidence to begin with. Eudocia's cento is doubtless different from others and her ability as a poet should be studies in isolation, but this hardly warrants separating Eudocia as a literary figure from others like her. She is more a product of her time than Usher is willing to admit.

While this section alone of *Homeric Stitchings* is subject to serious criticism, Usher's rhapsodic Eudocia colors the rest of his argument, which as a result requires slight revision. Usher's second section, "Cento Poetics," elucidates how Eudocia created her cento, with a particular eye toward accommodations, or adaptations of the original Homeric text, and enjambement, the continuation of the sense of a phrase over two verses. How Eudocia accommodates Homeric idiom to retell the Bible and how the lines she borrows flow smoothly reveal how accomplished a centoist she was. Although most accommodations are the product of necessity and are limited to slight grammatical changes, such as the case, gender, and number of nouns, adjectives, and pronouns, or the person, tense, and mood of verbs,[315] some accommodations reveal other concerns entirely. Usher calls this more interesting type "semantic accommodations," a category that includes substitutions not represented in the Homeric textual tradition. While some semantic accommodations simply reveal Eudocia's need to include a particular item or exclude an inappropriate one, others suggest how dogmatic concerns influenced Eudocia's word choice.[316] Usher concludes this section by suggesting, "Moral and religious considerations play an important role in Cento composition, and the Centos invite further study with such considerations in mind."[317] Within reason, Usher is certainly correct here; moral and theological concerns had as much a part in the creation of the cento as did Homeric idiom.

Eudocia's use of enjambement, Usher suggests, corresponds to the known categories in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, which reveals how intimately familiar Eudocia was with the Homeric texts and how this influenced her own generative techniques. Although one would expect a cento poet to imitate her source text, Usher applies Eudocia's use of enjambement to demonstrate how semantic triggers from lines she borrows or lines in close proximity to ones she borrows helped her recall needed lines from other sections of the Homeric texts.[318] These semantic triggers facilitated Eudocia during her composition of the cento, but she used them stylistically as well. For example, in the raising of Lazarus episode (Usher lines 1236-1239), Eudocia recalls the use of the adjective λυγρῆς from *Il*. 17.642 and *Od*. 1.341, but her placement of these lines in sequence creates an un-Homeric anaphora, which Usher calls a "hyperenjambement."[319] From the example of the Samaritan woman and the well episode discussed above, one notes the repetition of οὐ in lines 1107-1109 and the use of ξεῖνος as a semantic trigger throughout the woman's speech, notably lines 1091-1101.[320] By examining Eudocia's poetic technique, in this case in her use of accommodation and enjambement, Usher reveals how she stitched together Homeric lines, sometimes subconsciously, and, at other times, with a hand intent on clarifying or elaborating the biblical narrative.[321]

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[315] Usher, 1998, 37.

[316] Usher, 1998, 39, presents a good example (Usher's line 1889 = *Od.*11.584, πιέειν δ’ οὐκ εἶχεν ἑλέσθαι) where the εἶχεν "he was not able" was changed to ἤθελ(εν) "he did not want." The εἶχεν almost certainly would have brought about negative connotations for late antique Christians.

[317] Usher, 1998, 39.

Continuing his analysis of how Eudocia composed her cento, Usher turns to interpretive models available to the modern readers. Throughout the second half of his book, Usher elaborates upon a central thesis: Eudocia tells the bible in Homer's words by first interpreting the biblical episodes in terms of Homer's themes and scene-types. These individual scene-types, e.g. hospitality, recognition, eating, sleeping, holding assembly scenes, constitute blocks of text that Eudocia selects from as she retells similar episodes from the Bible.[322] This forces the reader to interpret Eudocia's words on multiple levels, or as Usher says, "To comprehend themes in the Homeric Centos, we must go below the poetic surface of the Centos and venture into the area of context, referentiality, and meaning."[323] In this sense Usher's model of reading agrees with the one presented in this chapter, that of intertextuality. He puts it this way, "as a concatenation of Homeric verses expressing biblical themes, the Homeric Centos are a perfect instance of intertexuality: the condition or quality of being poised between texts."[324]

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[318] Usher, 1998, 64-65, provides an excellent example. Eudocia uses *Od*. 9.264 (τοῦ δὴ νῦν γε μέγιστον ὑπουράνιον κλέος ἐστί), which is followed by *Il*. 10.213 (πάντας ἐπ᾽ ἀνθρώπους, καί οἱ δόσις ἔσσεται ἐσθλή). According to Usher, the enjambement is fulfilled when Eudocia hears the words ὑπουράνιον κλέος and recalls their use in *Il*. 10.212, the only other place in the Homeric corpus where the phrase ὑπουράνιον κλέος is found. Eudocia uses the following line, *Il*. 10.213. Usher presents other examples of this kind, and his argument is quite persuasive.

[319] Usher, 1998, 71.

[320] Usher, 1998, 110 and 117, discusses this point in some detail.

[321] I think Usher goes too far when he recreates the compositional setting of Eudocia's cento, which is to say, a composition in performance. He often compares Eudocia's technique with Parry's theories of oral poetry (Usher, 1998, 73), although he also points out similarities between Eudocia as reader and Eudocia as poet. He states, 72, "In the Centos, the processes of reading Homeric poetry (reception) and composing with it (response) are complementary, even symbiotic, and this is what makes them so intriguing." One is left with two conflicting images of Eudocia, an oral poet and a reader-poet, which blur how Eudocia composed the cento. Either she read the text, committed it to memory, and recalled Homer's lines (in an amazing fashion) to tell a new story, or she memorized blocks of formulae, which she strung together to tell a new story.

The first aspect of centonic intertextuality that Usher discusses is the role of Homeric characters in the Christian narratives. In the annunciation scene (Usher lines 202-268), Usher identifies at least twelve different Homeric characters that are used to create the Virgin Mary, including Calypso, Nausicaa, Helen, Arete, Briseis, Priam, Tyro, Penelope, Hera, Thetis, Eurycleia, and a Sidonian slave girl.[325] Although Usher attempts to explain some of these intertextual references, with varying degrees of success, he notices that behind these seemingly unrelated characters spread throughout the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* is one commonality, they each come from the "reception of a visitor" scene-type. Usher's reading elucidates how Eudocia recalls unconnected lines and create this scene, but it hardly explains how later readers could respond to the intertextual pastiche Eudocia has stitched together. The intertextual grid is full of inconcinnities, or in Usher's words *Verfremdungen*, which force the reader to make sense of the inappropriate references. For example, to the reader of the annunciation episode, the connection with the Sidonian slave girl could be out of place. In context (*Od.* 15.420-422), the girl is seduced by a trader, and the two make love to his ship, hardly behavior appropriate for the virgin mother. Usher is certainly correct in suggesting that for Eudocia the line is chosen based on its narrative function (receiver of guests) not as a direct comparison between the slave girl and Mary, but this observation does not take account for the various interpretive directions available to each readers,[326] which Usher addresses as follows, "Whether there is a satisfying congruence or a startling discrepancy, characters' attributes nuance every Cento episode. They are, as it were, adjectival elements in the narrative syntax; as such they are telling of the reader's aesthetic response to both texts, and cannot be neglected."[327]

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[322] Usher, 1998, 81-82, makes some strange suggestions concerning Eudocia as reader of the Bible. He states, 81, "Eudocia's choice and treatment of her themes, like her selection and combination of Homeric verses, reveals that she was not directly dependent upon texts, much less any single text, in composing the centos." What Usher seems to mean by this is that Eudocia does not blindly follow a single gospel or a unified narrative about Jesus' life. In other words, Eudocia's cento is not the same as Nonnus' *Paraphrase of the Gospel of John*, which follows a single gospel exclusively. Eudocia incorporates various gospel episodes, including episodes not found in the canonical scriptures, such as Jesus' descent into Hades, and episodes that are entirely original, such as the heavenly conversation between the Father and Son. As I have already suggested in my discussion of the Samaritan woman at the well episode, Eudocia felt free to elaborate upon and even modify the biblical account, but she does this with an eye toward the canonical texts.

[323] Usher, 1998, 82.

[324] Usher, 1998, 86.

[325] Usher, 1998, 93.

Since Eudocia tells biblical episodes with stock scenes from Homer, Usher explains most additions, omissions, or substitutions to the biblical episodes as a product of necessity– such details are in the scene-types and make their way into the biblical account. One brief example should suffice, the wedding at Cana story. According to Usher, Eudocia constructs the wedding at Cana episode with selections from the feast type-scene and for that reason it contains details not found in John's gospel (bachelors and maidens, minstrel, acrobats, and large sacrifices).[328] This reading is both persuasive and consistent, but, I suggest, not the only way of reading a cento scene. Let us turn to the example that we have already discussed in detail, the Samaritan woman at the well episode, and examine how Usher's reading of the story differs from my own. First we will recall that I have previously outlined both accounts from the *Gospel of John* and the Cento and argued that for the most part the accounts follow the same progression of events. A few sections are abridged or omitted, such as the reference to living water, details about Samaritan worship, as well as any detail involving the disciples, who are completely absent from the cento account. I suggest this is part of the game of retelling the Bible during late antiquity; authors manifest a remarkable freedom to edit, omit, correct, or contemporize the canonical text. In this sense Eudocia is not unique.

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[326] Usher, 1998, 94-95.
[327] Usher, 1998, 95-96.

When we compare my reading with Usher's, we see how both begin from different starting points but end with only slightly different conclusions. In my opinion both approaches are valuable. In Usher's reading the scene begins with a meeting scene (Usher's lines 1047-1054); Jesus arrives at his destination and a description of the surroundings follows.[329] Later in the episode, Eudocia incorporates other type-scenes including a reception and feast scene (Usher's lines 1081-1089), an identification scene (Usher's lines 1093-1098), and an exchange of information scene (Usher's lines 1133-

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[328] Usher, 1998, 103.

[329] Usher, 1998, 114.

1144). Two quotes by Usher are representative of his conclusions, "it is tempting, in fact, to read the entire poem as a *theoxeny* ('the hospitality shown to a god'),"[330] and "Eudocia's treatment of Jesus' encounter with the Woman and the Well as a *xenia* scene–in all its facets–shows that Homer continued to be a Bible for Greek-speaking Christians."[331] Certainly Homer maintained his prominence in late antiquity, but the woman at the well scene is not solely built on a Homeric foundation. Much of the scene transmits–in stock Homeric scenes–most of the biblical episode. Eudocia adds to and subtracts from the scene, as she does elsewhere in the cento, but to begin with her Homeric source ignores the prominence of Eudocia's other source, the Bible. The interplay between the biblical and the Homeric is something only occasionally appreciated from Usher's perspective, and an analysis of how Eudocia expands and conflates her biblical rather than her Homeric source would be most welcome.

Finally, Usher discusses the role of similes in the cento and their function as narrative intertexts, starting with the similes relating to Judas Iscariot (Usher lines 1519-1521; 1643-1616; and 1658-1660–*Il.* 12.299-301; 22.93-96; 17.281-283, respectively). Contextually, these lines come from Homeric heroes (Sarpedon, Hector, and Ajax), but as Usher points out each of the animals portrayed (lion, serpent, and boar) are used in the biblical accounts for Satan or the demons.[332] When Usher tries to explain the heroic context of the similes, he is less persuasive, "In using these similes to describe the villain Judas, Eudocia disregards the fact that in their original context the comparisons serve to enoble brave, heroic actions. In her disregard, she is no respector of persons, but predicates the martial fury of both Achaeans and Trojans to the traitor Judas without partiality."[333] Unfortunately, Eudocia's intentions behind the Judas similes are irrevocably lost, and it is not clear when she ignores Homeric context or when she intends to create an interpretive logjam. What we can say is that some of Eudocia's similes, such as the comparison of Jesus to a ram in the crucifixion scene, would open certain interpretive avenues to late antique Christians, just as it does today.[334] Usher hits upon this point when he observes, "In these cento similes we see the interpretant processing Homeric icons (i.e. similes) as symbols for something larger than the similes themselves."[335]

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[330] Usher, 1998, 127.
[331] Usher, 1998, 129.
[332] Usher, 1998, 132-133.

At the end of his book, Usher concludes with an open-ended interpretive model similar to the one presented in this chapter. Concerning making sense of inevitable inconcinnities, Usher has this to say, "In the Centos, the surface meaning is not obliterated. Discrepancies are allowed to stand; indeed, they are fostered by the very act of appropriation, sometimes multiplied, as we have seen, by accommodation."[336] I have chosen to focus on these discrepancies as the basis for interpretation because it is those very discrepancies which Ausonius innocently attempts to cover over (*aliena ne interluceant, arcessita ne vim redarguant, densa ne supra modum protuberent, hiucla ne pateant*). That was, after all, part of the game of writing a cento.

Conclusion

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[333] Usher, 1998, 133.
[334] Usher, 1998, 134.
[335] Usher, 1998, 133.
[336] Usher, 1998, 144.

Allusive tension creates interpretational loopholes. While Eudocia could not control the inherent allusions, which saturated her poem, it seems as if the cento's multivalence was an integral part of the ludic nature of centonic composition. Recognition of this interpretational latitude requires modernity to approach centos differently than it does traditional poetry. The recent literary theory of Joseph Pucci focuses on a "full-knowing reader" who responds creatively to allusions within a given literary work.[337] Centos are viable mediums to demonstrate such theories, and interpretational models like those of Pucci are the best suited to elucidate how this bizarre literary form functioned in late antiquity.

Eudocia's cento is consistent with the wider literary concerns of late antiquity. In the face of canonical literatures, both secular and religious, the cento provided a viable option for creative literary production. Since its inherent multivalence allowed the author the freedom to tell a new narrative–albeit one composed out of borrowed lines–a first-rate cento surpasses other literary *tours de force*.[338] From her preface to the cento, Eudocia assumes a readership that is familiar with at least one of the best centos of the previous generation, and she lists secular and religious centos side by side. Furthermore, she expects her ideal reader to be able to aesthetically critique her product, and as a result, she apologizes for the number of double lines her cento contained.

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[337] Pucci, 1998.

[338] This is not to suggest that Eudocia was an accomplished centoist or that her product is a superior example of a cento. Rather, I suggest that in late antiquity, making a cento was not an activity relegated to poetasters or literary charlatans.

The cultural function of the Christian centos, in contrast the secular centos, was at least in part didactic. By late antiquity, Christianity had spread to the farthest limits of the empire, but tenacious opposition to it came from cultured elites. Pockets of influential families remained that had successfully evaded conversion. Patricius first attempted to reach this demographic (καλὴν ἐξανάγων φήμην βροτέοιο γενέθλης), and the opening lines of the cento indicate that belief in Christ remained central to Eudocia's revision. But many of the narratives, such as the woman at the well episode, contain many interpretational loopholes and the reader is left to make sense of a text with multiple, often contradictory, conclusions. Whereas educated Christians such as Jerome viewed the Biblical centos as potentially subversive and therefore a threat to orthodox Christianity, others, such as Eudocia and presumably Patricius and Faltonia Proba, were quite comfortable turning Jesus into a Homeric (or Virgilian) hero and allowing their audience to make sense of their ludic productions. Perhaps this was part of the appeal that not only allowed the Homeric centos to survive, but also encouraged poets in later generations to turn their hands to the task of revising and adding to Eudocia and Patricius' product.

Appendices

John 4:4-42

4 ἔδει δὲ αὐτὸν διέρχεσθαι διὰ τῆς Σαμαρείας. 5 ἔρχεται οὖν εἰς πόλιν τῆς
Σαμαρείας λεγομένην Συχὰρ πλησίον τοῦ χωρίου ὃ ἔδωκεν Ἰακὼβ [τῷ] Ἰωσὴφ τῷ υἱῷ
αὐτοῦ· 6 ἦν δὲ ἐκεῖ πηγὴ τοῦ Ἰακώβ. ὁ οὖν Ἰησοῦς κεκοπιακὼς ἐκ τῆς ὁδοιπορίας
ἐκαθέζετο οὕτως ἐπὶ τῇ πηγῇ· ὥρα ἦν ὡς ἕκτη. 7 ἔρχεται γυνὴ ἐκ τῆς Σαμαρείας
ἀντλῆσαι ὕδωρ. λέγει αὐτῇ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· δός μοι πεῖν· 8 οἱ γὰρ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ
ἀπεληλύθεισαν εἰς τὴν πόλιν ἵνα τροφὰς ἀγοράσωσιν. 9 λέγει οὖν αὐτῷ ἡ γυνὴ ἡ
Σαμαρῖτις· πῶς σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ὢν παρ᾽ ἐμοῦ πεῖν αἰτεῖς γυναικὸς Σαμαρίτιδος οὔσης;

οὐ γὰρ συγχρῶνται Ἰουδαῖοι Σαμαρίταις. 10 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ· εἰ ᾔδεις τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τίς ἐστιν ὁ λέγων σοι· δός μοι πεῖν, σὺ ἂν ᾔτησας αὐτὸν καὶ ἔδωκεν ἄν σοι ὕδωρ ζῶν. 11 λέγει αὐτῷ [ἡ γυνή]· κύριε, οὔτε ἄντλημα ἔχεις καὶ τὸ φρέαρ ἐστιν βαθύ· πόθεν οὖν ἔχεις τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ ζῶν; 12 μὴ σὺ μείζων εἶ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἰακώβ, ὃς ἔδωκεν ἡμῖν τὸ φρέαρ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἔπιεν καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ θρέμματα αὐτοῦ; 13 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ· πᾶς ὁ πίνων ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος τούτου διψήσει πάλιν· 14 ὃς δ᾽ ἂν πίῃ ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος οὗ ἐγὼ δώσω αὐτῷ, οὐ μὴ διψήσει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, ἀλλὰ τὸ ὕδωρ ὃ δώσω αὐτῷ γενήσεται ἐν αὐτῷ πηγὴ ὕδατος ἁλλομένου εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον. 15 λέγει πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡ γυνή· κύριε, δός μοι τοῦτο τὸ ὕδωρ, ἵνα μὴ διψῶ μηδὲ διέρχωμαι ἐνθάδε ἀντλεῖν. 16 λέγει αὐτῇ· ὕπαγε φώνησον τὸν ἄνδρα σου καὶ ἐλθὲ ἐνθάδε. 17 ἀπεκρίθη ἡ γυνὴ καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· οὐκ ἔχω ἄνδρα. λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· καλῶς εἶπας ὅτι ἄνδρα οὐκ ἔχω· 18 πέντε γὰρ ἄνδρας ἔσχες καὶ νῦν ὃν ἔχεις οὐκ ἔστιν σου ἀνήρ· τοῦτο ἀληθὲς εἴρηκας. 19 λέγει αὐτῷ ἡ γυνή· κύριε, θεωρῶ ὅτι προφήτης εἶ σύ. 20 οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ ὄρει τούτῳ προσεκύνησαν· καὶ ὑμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις ἐστὶν ὁ τόπος ὅπου προσκυνεῖν δεῖ. 21 λέγει αὐτῇ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· πίστευέ μοι, γύναι, ὅτι ἔρχεται ὥρα ὅτε οὔτε ἐν τῷ ὄρει τούτῳ οὔτε ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις προσκυνήσετε τῷ πατρί. 22 ὑμεῖς προσκυνεῖτε ὃ οὐκ οἴδατε· ἡμεῖς προσκυνοῦμεν ὃ οἴδαμεν, ὅτι ἡ σωτηρία ἐκ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐστίν. 23 ἀλλὰ ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστιν, ὅτε οἱ ἀληθινοὶ προσκυνηταὶ προσκυνήσουσιν τῷ πατρὶ ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ· καὶ γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ τοιούτους ζητεῖ τοὺς προσκυνοῦντας αὐτόν. 24 πνεῦμα ὁ θεός, καὶ τοὺς προσκυνοῦντας αὐτὸν ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ δεῖ προσκυνεῖν. 25 λέγει αὐτῷ ἡ γυνή· οἶδα ὅτι Μεσσίας ἔρχεται ὁ λεγόμενος χριστός· ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐκεῖνος, ἀναγγελεῖ ἡμῖν ἅπαντα. 26 λέγει αὐτῇ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ἐγώ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι.

27 καὶ ἐπὶ τούτῳ ἦλθαν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐθαύμαζον ὅτι μετὰ γυναικὸς ἐλάλει· οὐδεὶς μέντοι εἶπεν· τί ζητεῖς ἢ τί λαλεῖς μετ᾽ αὐτῆς; 28 ἀφῆκεν οὖν τὴν ὑδρίαν αὐτῆς ἡ γυνὴ καὶ ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὴν πόλιν καὶ λέγει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις· 29 δεῦτε ἴδετε ἄνθρωπον ὃς εἰπέν μοι πάντα ὅσα ἐποίησα, μήτι οὗτός εστιν ὁ χριστός; 30 ἐξῆλθον ἐκ τῆς πόλεως καὶ ἤρχοντο πρὸς αὐτόν.

31 ἐν τῷ μεταξὺ ἠρώτων αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ λέγοντες· ῥαββί, φάγε. 32 ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· ἐγὼ βρῶσιν ἔχω φαγεῖν ἣν ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἴδατε. 33 ἔλεγον οὖν οἱ μαθηταὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους· μή τις ἤνεγκεν αὐτῷ φαγεῖν; 34 λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ἐμὸν βρῶμά ἐστιν ἵνα ποιήσω τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με καὶ τελειώσω αὐτοῦ τὸ ἔργον. 35 οὐχ ὑμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι ἔτι τετράμηνός ἐστιν καὶ ὁ θερισμὸς ἔρχεται; ἰδοὺ λέγω ὑμῖν, ἐπάρατε

τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ὑμῶν καὶ θεάσασθε τὰς χώρας ὅτι λευκαί εἰσιν πρὸς θερισμόν. ἤδη 36 ὁ θερίζων μισθὸν λαμβάνει καὶ συνάγει καρπὸν εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, ἵνα ὁ σπείρων ὁμοῦ χαίρῃ καὶ ὁ θερίζων. 37 ἐν γὰρ τούτῳ ὁ λόγος ἐστὶν ἀληθινὸς ὅτι ἄλλος ἐστὶν ὁ σπείρων καὶ ἄλλος ὁ θερίζων. 38 ἐγὼ ἀπέστειλα ὑμᾶς θερίζειν ὃ οὐχ ὑμεῖς κεκοπιάκατε· ἄλλοι κεκοπιάκασιν καὶ ὑμεῖς εἰς τὸν κόπον αὐτῶν εἰσεληλύθατε.

39 ἐκ δὲ τῆς πόλεως ἐκείνης πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτὸν τῶν Σαμαριτῶν διὰ τὸν λόγον τῆς γυναικὸς μαρτυρούσης ὅτι εἶπέν μοι πάντα ἃ ἐποίησα. 40 ὡς οὖν ἦλθον πρὸς αὐτὸν οἱ Σαμαρῖται, ἠρώτων αὐτὸν μεῖναι παρ᾽αὐτοῖς· καὶ ἔμεινεν ἐκεῖ δύο ἡμέρας. 41 καὶ πολλῷ πλείους ἐπίστευσαν διὰ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ, 42 τῇ τε γυναικὶ ἔλεγον ὅτι οὐκέτι διὰ τὴν σὴν λαλιὰν πιστεύομεν, αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἀκηκόαμεν καὶ οἴδαμεν ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς ὁ σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου. (Nestlé-Aland)

4 And He had to pass through Samaria. 5 So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; 6 and Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. 7 There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." 8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. 9 Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) 10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."11 She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water? 12 You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?" 13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life." 15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw." 16 He said to her, "Go, call your husband and come here." 17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have correctly said, 'I have no husband'; 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly." 19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive

that You are a prophet. 20 Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." 21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. 22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." 25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us." 26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

27 At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why do You speak with her?" 28 So the woman left her waterpot, and went into the city and said to the men, 29 "Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?" 30 They went out of the city, and were coming to Him.

31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." 32 But He said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." 33 So the disciples were saying to one another, "No one brought Him anything to eat, did he?" 34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work. 35 Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. 36 Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. 37 For in this case the saying is true, 'One sows and another reaps.' 38 I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor."

39 From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all the things that I have done." 40 So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there

two days. 41 Many more believed because of His word; 42 and they were saying to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world." (NASB)

The Samaritan Woman at the Well (Eudocia's cento version)

ἦμος δ᾽ ἠέλιος μέσον οὐρανὸν ἀμφιβεβήκει,
καὶ τότε δὴ στείχοντες ὁδὸν κάτα παιπαλόεσσαν
ἄστεος ἐγγὺς ἔσαν καὶ ἐπὶ κρήνην ἀφίκοντο
τυκτὴν καλλίροον, ὅθεν ὑδρεύοντο πολῖται.
ἀμφὶ δ᾽ ἄρ᾽ αἰγείρων ὑδατοτρεφέων ἦν ἄλσος,
πάντοσε κυκλοτερές, κατὰ δὲ ψυχρὸν ῥέεν ὕδωρ.
κούρῃ δὲ ξύμβλητο πρὸ ἄστεος ὑδρευούσῃ,
ἣ μὲν ἄρ᾽ ἐς κρήνην κατεβήσατο καλλιρέεθρον
ἀρτακίην· ἔνθεν γὰρ ὕδωρ προτὶ ἄστυ φέρεσκεν.
ἔνθα καθέζετ᾽ ἰών, τῇ δ᾽ ἐξερέεινεν ἕκαστα,
μειλιχίοις δ᾽ ἐπέεσσι καθαπτόμενος προσέειπεν·
"τίφθ᾽ οὕτως ἀνδρὸς νοσφίζεαι, οὐδὲ παρ᾽ αὐτὸν
ἑζομένη μύθοισιν ἀνείρεαι ἠδὲ μεταλλᾷς;
καὶ δ᾽ ἄλλην νεμεσῶ, ἥ τις τοιαῦτά γε ῥέζοι,
ἥ τ᾽ ἀέκητι φίλων πατρὸς καὶ μητρὸς ἐόντων
ἀνδράσι μίσγηται πρίν γ᾽ ἀμφάδιον γάμον ἐλθεῖν.
οὐ μέν κ᾽ ἄλλη ὧδε γυνὴ τετληότι θυμῷ
ἀνδρὸς ἀποσταίη, ὅς τοι κακὰ πόλλ᾽ ἐμόγησε·
σοὶ δ᾽αἰεὶ κραδίη στερεωτέρη ἐστὶ λίθοιο."
ἡ δ᾽αὖ ἠρνεῖτο στυγερὸν γάμον οὔτε τελεύτα.
ὣς ἔφατ᾽· αἴδετο γὰρ θαλερὸν γάμον ἐξονομῆναι
ἀνδρὶ φίλῳ· ὁ δὲ πάντα νόει καὶ ἀμείβετο μύθῳ·
"ἄστυ τέ μοι δεῖξον, δός μοί θ᾽ ὕδωρ κορέσασθαι."
ἡ δ᾽ ἄνεω δὴν ἧστο, τάφος δέ οἱ ἦτορ ἵκανεν,
ὄψει δ᾽ ἄλλοτε μέν μιν ἐνωπιδίως ἐσίδεσκεν.
τὸν δ᾽ αὖτε προσέειπε γυνὴ καὶ ἀμείψατο μύθῳ,
οὔδει ἐνισκήψασα καρήατα· αἴδετο γάρ μιν·
"ξεῖνε, ἐπεὶ θυμός μοι ἐνὶ στήθεσσι τέθηπεν,
οὔτε τι προσφάσθαι δύναμαι ἔπος οὐδ᾽ ἐρέεσθαι

οὐδ᾽ εἰς ὦπα ἰδέσθαι ἐναντίον. αἰδέομαι γάρ.
ῥεῖ᾽ ἔγνως, ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ τά τ᾽ ἄλλα πέρ ἐσσ᾽ ἀνοήμων.
ταῦτα δ᾽ ἅ μ᾽ εἰρωτᾷς καὶ λίσσεαι, οὐκ ἂν ἐγώ γε
ἄλλα παρὲξ εἴποιμι παρακλιδόν, οὐδ᾽ ἀπατήσω·
τῶν οὐδέν τοι ἐγὼ κρύψω ἔπος οὐδ᾽ ἐπικεύσω,
πᾶσαν ἀληθείην μυθήσομαι, ὥς με κελεύεις,
ἄστυ δέ τοι δείξω, ἐρέω δέ τοι οὔνομα λαῶν.
εἶμ᾽, ἵνα θαρσύνω ἑτάρους εἴπω τε ἕκαστα.
ἔρχεο· ἶσον γάρ σε θεῷ τίσουσιν ἅπαντες.
ξεῖν᾽, ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἀχάριστα μεθ᾽ ἡμῖν ταῦτ᾽ ἀγορεύεις,
ἀλλ᾽ ἐθέλεις ἀρετὴν σὴν φαινέμεν, ἥ τοι ὀπηδεῖ,
ξεῖν᾽, ἐπεὶ ἡμετέραν τε πόλιν καὶ γαῖαν ἱκάνεις,
οὔτ᾽ οὖν βρώσιος δευήσεαι οὔτε ποτῆτος.
ἔνθα δ᾽ ἄνδρες ναίουσι πολύρρηνες πολυβοῦται,
οἵ κέ σε δωτίνῃσι θεὸν ὣς τιμήσουσι.
κεῖνος δ᾽ αὖ περὶ κῆρι μακάρτατος ἔξοχον ἄλλων,
ὅς κέ σε ἔδνοισι βρίσας οἶκόνδ᾽ ἀγάγηται.
ξεῖν᾽, ἦ τοι μὲν τοῦτό γ᾽ ἐναίσιμον οὐκ ἐνόησα,
ἀλλ᾽ ἄγε μοι τόδε εἰπὲ καὶ ἀτρεκέως κατάλεξον·
ξεῖν᾽, ἐπεὶ οὔτε κακῷ οὔτ᾽ ἄφρονι φωτὶ ἔοικας,
καὶ μοι τοῦτ᾽ ἀγόρευσον ἐτήτυμον, ὄφρ᾽ ἐῢ εἰδῶ·
τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν; πόθι τοι πόλις ἠδὲ τοκῆες;
τρισμάκαρες μὲν σοί γε πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ.
εἴπ᾽ ὄνομ᾽ ὅττι σε κεῖθι κάλεον μήτηρ τε πατήρ τε,
ἄλλοι θ᾽ οἳ κατὰ ἄστυ καὶ οἳ περιναιετάουσιν·
οὐ γὰρ ἀπὸ δρυός ἐσσι παλαιφάτου οὐδ᾽ ἀπὸ πέτρης.
οὐ μὲν γάρ τις μάμπαν ἀνώνυμός ἐστ᾽ ἀνθρώπων,
οὐ κακὸς οὐδὲ μὲν ἐσθλός, ἐπὴν τὰ πρῶτα γένηται,
ἀλλ᾽ ἐπὶ πᾶσι τίθενται, ἐπεί κε τέκωσι, τοκῆες.
εἰπὲ δέ μοι γαῖάν τε τεὴν δῆμόν τε πόλιν τε,
εἰπέ μοι, αἴ κέ ποθι γνώω τοιοῦτον ἐόντα.
οὐ γάρ πω τοιοῦτον ἴδον βροτὸν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν,
οὔτ᾽ ἄνδρ᾽ οὔτε γυναῖκα· σέβας μ᾽ ἔχει εἰσορόωσαν.
χαῖρε, ξεῖν᾽, ἵνα καί ποτ᾽ ἐὼν ἐν πατρίδι γαίῃ
μνήσῃ ἐμεῖ᾽, ὅτι μοι πρώτῃ ζωάγρι᾽ ὀφέλλεις.
τῷ κέν τοι καὶ κεῖθι θεῷ ὣς εὐχετοῴμην

αἰεὶ ἤματα πάντα· σὺ γάρ μ᾽ ἐβιώσαο κούρην.
ὦ ξεῖν᾽, ἔξοχα δή σε βροτῶν αἰνίζομ᾽ ἁπάντων,
αἰδῶ καὶ φιλότητα τεὴν μετόπισθε φυλάσσω.
ὦ ξεῖν᾽, ἦ ῥ᾽ ἀγαθὸν καὶ ἐναίσιμα δῶρα διδοῦναι.
εἶμ᾽, ἵνα θαρσύνω ἑτάρους εἴπω τε ἕκαστα."
ὣς ἄρα φωνήσασ᾽ ἀπεβήσατο, τὸν δ᾽ ἔλιπ᾽ αὐτοῦ,
ἡ δ᾽ ἔθει οὐ μάλα πολλὸν ἐπὶ χρόνον· αἶψα γὰρ ἦλθεν.
αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν πόλιος ἐπεβήσατο ἣν πέρι πύργος
ὑψηλός, καλὸς δὲ λιμὴν ἑκάτερθε πόληος,
θάμβησεν κατὰ θυμόν· ὀΐσατο γὰρ θεὸν εἶναι.
αὐτίκα καὶ πᾶσιν μυθήσατο ἀνθρώποισι·
"δεῦτ᾽ ἄγε, Σικήμων ἡγήτορες ἠδὲ μέδοντες,
εἰς ἀγορὴν ἰέναι, ὄφρα ξείνοιο πύθησθε,
ὅς πέρ μοι βίον εἶπε καὶ ἔργματα καὶ νόον αὐτόν,
ὥς τέ που ἢ αὐτὸς παρεὼν ἢ ἄλλου ἀκούσας.
τί πρῶτον, τί δ᾽ ἔπειτα, τί δ᾽ ὑστάτιον καταλέξω;
ἰητρὸς δὲ ἑκάστῳ ἐπιστάμενος περὶ πάντων
ἀνθρώπων· ἦ γὰρ Παιήονός ἐστι γενέθλης.
ὁ ξεῖνος μάλα μοι δοκέει πεπνυμένος εἶναι,
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ τῷ πάντα κατὰ μοῖραν κατέλεξα,
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ τῷ πᾶσαν ἀληθείην κατέλεξα,
ὅσσ᾽ ἔρξα τ᾽ ἔπαθόν τε καὶ ὅσσ᾽ ἐμόγησα βίῳ κεν,
ὅττι μοι ἐν μεγάροισι κακόν τ᾽ ἀγαθόν τε τέτυκται.
αὐτὸν δ᾽ οὐ σάφα οἶδα, πόθεν γένος εὔχεται εἶναι·
νῦν δὴ κάλλιόν ἐστι μεταλλῆσαι καὶ ἐρέσθαι
ὁππόθεν οὗτος ἀνήρ, ποίης ἐξ εὔχεται εἶναι
γαίης, ποῦ δέ νύ οἱ γενεὴ καὶ πατρὶς ἄρουρα.
οὐκ ἔσθ᾽ οὗτος ἀνὴρ διερὸς βροτὸς οὐδὲ γένηται·
οὐ γάρ πως ἂν θνητὸς ἀνὴρ τάδε μηχανόῳτο
ᾧ αὐτοῦ γε νόῳ, ὅτε μὴ θεὸς αὐτὸς ἐπελθὼν
ῥηϊδίως ἐθέλων θείη νέον ἠδὲ γέροντα.
ὥς τέ μοι ἀθάνατός γ᾽ ἰνδάλλεται εἰσοράασθαι,
ἄλλῳ δ᾽ αὐτὸν φωτὶ κατακρύπτων ἤϊσκεν.
ἀλλὰ ἴδεσθε καὶ ὔμμες ἀνασταδόν· οὐ γὰρ ἔγωγε
εὖ διαγινώσκω· δοκέει δέ μοι ἔμμεναι ἀνήρ."
ὣς εἰποῦσ᾽ ὤτρυνε μένος καὶ θυμὸν ἑκάστου.

καρπαλίμως δ᾽ ἔπληντο βροτῶν ἀγοραί τε καὶ ἕρδαι
1155 ἀγρομένων· πολλοὶ δ᾽ ἄρα θηήσαντο ἰδόντες
χερσίν τ᾽ ἠσπάζοντο καὶ ἑδριάασθαι ἄνωγον
βηλῷ ἔπι λιθέῳ· τοὶ δ᾽ ὡς ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖσι,
πάντες ἀνήϊξαν, κάλεόν τέ μιν εἰς ἓ ἕκαστος,
ἀμφαγαπαζόμενοι ὡς εἰ θεοῦ υἱὸν ἐόντα.
1160 πλῆντο δ᾽ ἄρ᾽ αἴθουσαί τε καὶ ἕρκεα καὶ δόμοι ἀνδρῶν.

When the sun had gone around the middle of the sky,
at that moment as they proceeded along a rugged path
1055 they were near a town and arrived at a spring,
perfect and flowing beautifully, whence the townspeople drew water.
All about was a grove of water-nourished poplars,
all in a circle, and cool water flowed down there.
Before the city, he happened upon a woman as she was drawing water,
1060 who came down to the beautiful-flowing spring,
gushing forth, for from there she brought water to the city.
Approaching, he sat down and inquired all things of her,
and he spoke to her with these sweet words,
"Why do you turn your back on a man and not
1065 sit next to him and ask or make inquiries of him?
I am indignant at a woman who would do this:
who, against the will of those dear to her, father and mother,
had intercourse with men before engaging in a public wedding.
No other woman who had a strong heart
1070 would stand aloof from a man who suffered many toils,
but your heart is always more unyielding than stone."
But she neither refused marriage as shameful nor did she consummate it.
He said this, but she was embarrassed to speak of lusty marriage
with the friendly man, but he perceived all these things and answered her,
1075 "Point out the city to me, once you have given me my fill of water."

But she was silent and wonder come to her heart.
With a glance she looked him in the eye
and addressed him and answered,
hanging her head to the ground, for she was embarrassed.
"Stranger, since my heart within my breast is dumbfounded,
I am unable to speak or ask for anything,
nor am I able to look you in the eyes, for I am ashamed.
You easily perceived these things, for in nothing do you lack sense.
But the things you ask and request, I would not
shrewdly speak of other matters nor would I beguile you.
I will conceal or hide none of my words,
and I will relate the whole truth, as you bid me.
I will point out the city to you and I will relate to you the name of the people.
I will go to encourage my companions and tell them each of these things.
Go (as well) for everyone will honor you as God.
Stranger, since you speak words not unpleasant to us
since you desire to reveal the virtue that accompanies you,
stranger, since you have arrived at our city and land,
you will lack neither food nor drink.
The oxen- and sheep-rich men who dwell there
will honor you with gifts as if to God.
But that man is the most blessed of all in heart,
the one who leads you homeward, having laden you with a dowry.
Stranger, I know this is not proper,
but come, tell me this and tell me truthfully.
Stranger, since you seem to be a man neither wicked nor without sense.
So say this to me truthfully, so that I might know it well:
Who are you? Whence and wither do you go? What city and parents are yours?
Thrice-blessed are your father and dear mother.
Tell me the name your father and mother called you there,
as well as the others who live throughout the city and in the surrounding region.

For you are sprung from men, not from the famed oak nor from stone.
No one is entirely anonymous,
neither the wretched nor the noble man, for when they are first born,
parents give names to their children.
Tell me your land, people, and city.
Tell me, if I might know someone who is so great.
For I have never seen with my eyes so great a mortal,
neither a man nor a woman. Wonder holds me as I gaze upon you.
Rejoice, stranger, so that when you return to your homeland,
you might remember me because you owe your life to me first.
I would pray to you in this place as to God,
forever, because you gave life to me, a girl.
Stranger, of all men, I praise you,
and I guard your respect and friendship hereafter.
Stranger, truly it is good and proper to give gifts.
I will go to encourage my companions and tell them each of these things."
After she said these things, she went away and left him there,
but she was not gone for long, for she returned.
But when she proceeded to the city which had a high wall around it
and a beautiful harbor on both sides.
In her heart, she was amazed because she recognized that he was God.
Immediately she told the story to the people,
"Come here, o leaders and rulers of the 'Sicarites,'
go to the agora to get to know the stranger
who told me my life, my deeds as well as my innermost thoughts,
as if he himself were there or heard it from another.
What should I relate first, second, and last?
He is for each a doctor, more knowledgeable than anyone else,
for he is of the race of Paian.
The stranger seems to be of sound mind.
I have related to him everything in its proper way,

and I have related to him the whole truth–
what sort of things I did, experienced, and suffered in my life,
what evil and good has been done by me in my house.
But I did not fully understand, whence he claims his origin.
Now is a better time to inquire and ask
whence this man is, from which land he claims to be
and where his kin and paternal land was.
This man is not a living mortal, nor can he be,
for a mortal man could not devise such things
in his mind, unless God himself wanted to come
and take the guise of a young or old man (then it is easy).
And he appears to me as God to behold,
but disguising himself, he took the appearance of another, a man.
But stand up and look, for I do not
discern well, and he seems to me to be a man."
She said this and roused the courage and emotion of each person.
The places and seats of the assembled men were quickly filled,
and many were amazed when they saw him.
They shook his hand to greet him and led him to sit
upon a stone doorway, and, as they gazed upon him,
they rushed forward to speak with him and each one beckoned Him,
welcoming him as if he were the son of God.
And then the porticos, the courtyards, and the houses were filled with people.

Chapter 3

The Homeric Christian as Narrator, Part I: *The Conversion*

1. The Story

As early as the fourth century the stories of a previously unknown[339] bishop and martyr, Cyprian of Antioch, began to circulate throughout the empire. According to the legend, a magician,[340] Cyprian, was hired to help seduce a young Christian virgin, Justina, for an Antiochene aristocrat, Aglaidas. Cyprian agreed and invoked three increasingly more powerful demons to apply their magical charms and cause the maiden to fall under Aglaidas' control. The virgin, armed with the power of the cross, repelled the demons, and as a result the magician converted to Christianity and eventually obtained the bishopric of Antioch. These events correspond to the first third of the Cyprian legend, or the *Conversion*.[341]

An expansion of the *Conversion* is the *Confession,*[342] which contains Cyprian's testimony from his childhood, including the training he received in the occult, to his conversion.[343] Although sections of the *Confession* have received attention by scholars of the

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[339] Cyprian is not to be found in any of the earliest martyrologies.

[340] Eudocia's text describes Cyprian (I.116) as δυσσεβέος μαγίης ὑποϑήμονα.

[341] A prose version of the *Conversion* survives and is printed in Zahn, 1882, 139-153, and no. 3 'Fassungen' in Radermacher, 1927.

[342] A prose version can be found in (*A)AS(S) Sept.* 7.204-223 and in Gitlbauer, 1878.

[343] Zahn's translation remains the only complete modern rendition of the prose version of the Cyprian legend.

religionsgeschichtliche Schule,[344] it is overall the most elusive narrative about Cyprian's life.[345] Finally, the story ends with the *Martyrdom*.[346] Cyprian and Justina are arrested, brought to Damascus, and after being tortured condemned to die in a boiling cauldron. This does not kill the two and they are transferred to Nicomedia where they are beheaded. Church tradition dates the events to the end of the third century, although some have suggested the beginning of the fourth.

During the middle of the fifth century,[347] Eudocia took the prose versions of the *Conversion*, *Confession*, and *Martyrdom* and produced hexameter versions, of which all of the *Conversion* and most of the *Confession* survive. The life and death of Cyprian, although packed with previously unknown details about religion in the later Roman empire, remain thoroughly unappreciated. The next two chapters will focus on Eudocia's retelling of the Cyprian legend. A complete English translation of the *Conversion* and *Confession* can be found at the end of chapters three and four, respectively, and is to date the first complete English translation of the extant verses.[348] Before we turn to the history of the text as it survives, a brief discussion on the type of literature that the *Martyrdom* exemplifies is necessary.

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[344] The use of the Cyprian narratives by scholars of the so-called *religiongeschichtliche Schule* has its roots in the middle of the nineteenth century, with Ludwig Preller. See Nock, 1927; Nilsson, 1947; Festugière, 1950; and Nilsson 1950. See Jackson, 1988.
[345] Jackson, 1988, 36, "not the least difficulty with our document is simply understanding what the text means."
[346] Available in (*A)AS(S) Sept.* 7.204.
[347] Livrea, 1998, dates Eudocia's versification of the Cyprian legends to her first journey to the Holy Lands (438-439 CE).
[348] Bevegni 2006, is the first complete translation of the *Conversion* and *Confession*. Plant, 2004 translates part of the *Conversion*, and Salvaneschi, 1982, has a bilingual (Greek–Italian) edition of both books but this was published before the beginning of the *Conversion* was discovered and published by Bevegni, 1982. A word should be said here concerning the title of Eudocia's poem. Bevegni and others refer to it as the *Martyrdom*, which, if I take their meaning, consists of the final compilation of the three narratives (*Conversion, Confession,* and *Martyrdom*). To avoid confusion between the final episode, *Martyrdom*, and the work as a whole, also called the *Martyrdom*, I attempt to make it clear when I refer to the final episode. Since the former is no longer extant, most uses of the title *Martyrdom* refer to the entire poem.

2.1 Christian Narratives

One aspect of Christian narratives[349] from late antiquity has dominated scholarship over the last few decades, their genre.[350] The relationship between Christian narratives and the ancient novel–a category which includes both *vitae* and *acta*–is a fact most scholars today recognize. The particular nuances between Christian narrative and the novel is not agreed upon, nor is there an established *communis opinio* of what constitutes a novel. Concerning the genre of the novel, scholars are generally divided into two camps. The first, championed by Müller,[351] Reardon,[352] and Morgan,[353] asserts that only five Greek novels should be included in the canon.[354] According to this camp, any narrative, however similar to the canonical five, is to be considered part of a related but different genre. The second camp, associated with Wehrli,[355] Perry,[356] and Holzberg,[357] subdivides the novels into idealized novels and comic-realistic novels.[358] The latter category includes the two Latin novels as well as the *Ass* of Pseudo-Lucian. In a camp all to her own is Ruiz-Montero who rejects the two-fold division and recommends a more holistic approach to ancient fictions. Accordingly, the novel does not have its origin in one monolithic source, but in a variety of literary types– history, epic, tragedy, comedy, oratory, and religious texts.[359] The inevitable result of Ruiz-Montero's theory is the breakdown of harsh, and indeed modern, divisions between genres, thereby securing a place in the literary history of the novel for later adaptations of the canonical five, such as early Christian narratives.[360]

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[349] The types of works represented under the umbrella category of Christian narrative are immense, including the canonical and apocryphal gospels, the canonical and apocryphal acts, the lives of the saints, the martyrologies of the same, and perhaps the apocryphal Old Testament. A complete discussion of the origins of each of these literary types is well beyond this chapter. It is not my intention here to limit the category of Christian narratives to any particular selection of works, at the exclusion of others. Nor is it my intention to elucidate the relationship between Christian narratives and their pagan relatives, such as the lives of philosophers, the ancient novel, romances, or biographies. Although the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian* will fall under what Delehaye (1961, 4) calls a hagiographic romance, I will avoid using this term since it has not taken hold in the scholarly dialogue. I also avoid the use of the terms legend or legendary, save in reference to fictional additions, when they are identifiable, in the narrative.

[350] To name just a few over the last few decades, Hägg, 1983; Aune, 1987; Pervo, 1987; Morard, 1991; Reardon, 1991; Schneemelcher, 1991; Bowersock, 1994; Dihle, 1994; Bovon, 1995; Bremmer, 1995; Holzberg, 1995; Bremmer, 1996; Thomas, 1996; Bremmer, 1998; Hock, Bradley, and Perkins, 1998; Bremmer, 2000; Bremmer, 2001; Bovon, 2003; Rhee, 2005; Mitchell, 2006.

[351] Müller, 1981.

[352] Reardon, 1991.

[353] Morgan, 1994. See Holzberg, 1994, 13.

[354] Which is to say, the writings of Chariton, Xenophon of Ephesus, Achilles Tatius, Longus, and Heliodorus.

To move beyond subjective, modern criteria for genre studies, one has to examine the ancient testimonies concerning prose fictions,[361] and in the center of this debate is the fourth-century academic emperor, Julian the Apostate. In a letter, he writes, ὅσα δέ ἐστιν ἐν ἱστορίας εἴδει παρὰ τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν ἀπηγγελμένα πλάσματα παραιτητέον, ἐρωτικὰς ὑποθέσεις καὶ πάντα ἁπλῶς τὰ τοιαῦτα.[362] What Julian refers to as πλάσματα, traditionally explained as "prose narratives with fictive plots" is unclear, but openly fictitious works or fictitious works written under the guise of history are the most common explanations.[363] This awkwardly relates to the ancient novel, because, even among the canonical novels, there is a significant fluctuation in the degree of "fictitiousness" of their plots.[364] Moreover, the authors of Christian narratives present their subjects in a clear, historical framework–real people (the apostles, saints etc), real places (major cities, holy sites), at real times (during specific persecutions, reigns of specific emperors)[365]–which appears more similar to the biographical tradition than that of prose "fiction". But many motifs common in the ancient novel are present in these same Christian *acta* and *vitae*, and Christian narratives appear to have been strongly dependent upon a broader literary tradition that included, but was not limited to, the novel. This dependency helps explain the similarity between early Christian narratives and a variety of genres, such as biography, history, epic, tragedy, and comedy.

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[355] Wehrli, 1965.
[356] Perry, 1967.
[357] Holzberg, 1995 and 1996.
[358] Delehaye, 1961, now dated to be sure, was less concerned with the literary sources behind legends or romances, but focused instead on how narratives popularized by the masses could easily conflate the historical with the fictitious, the realistic with the imaginary. Delehaye's approach blurs the distinction between the idealized novel and the comic-realistic ones.
[359] Ruiz-Montero, 1996.
[360] Taking the novel as a broad category allows comparison with other works from antiquity such as the biography of Aesop, see Holzberg, 1993, and a broad list would certainly include many early Christian fictions, such as the apocryphal *acta* and *vitae*. For a brief discussion, see Bremmer, 1998b, particularly 158-159; and Lalleman, 1998. Literature from the Byzantine empire, the west Middle Ages, during the English Restoration, and even contemporary cinema has been included in the discussion; see Frye, 1976; de Jong, 1989; Elsom, 1989; van der Paardt, 1989; Huber, 1990; Kortekaas, 1990; and Aerts, 1997.
[361] This list of references is reproduced in some form in every argument on the genre of ancient fictions. It is not my intention here to reproduce all of the primary and secondary sources dealing with the ancient novel. For a good introduction see Holzberg, 1996, and Schmeling, 1998.

Moreover, reading the novel in general and Christian narratives in particular as an amalgam of various literary types forces us to ask different and, perhaps, more fruitful questions. Increasingly, scholars are beginning to turn away from inquiries based on modern ideas about the novel, but rather investigate how an ancient reader would have responded to narratives that appear to us to fall in different categories. Some controversies have come up, such as Pervo's assertion that an ancient reader would have placed the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* alongside a novel, a hypothesis that Holzberg in the same volume decidedly rejects.[366] Unfortunately, we have little substantial information about what an ancient reader thought about the *Acts of Peter* and *Chaereas and Callirhoe*, for example. The sparse and nebulous references currently invoked to prove the exclusivity or inclusivity of the genre insufficiently support even the most innocent assertions.

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[362] *Fragmentum Epistolae*, 301B, (Hertlein ed., 1875).

[363] Holzberg, 1996, 25.

[364] The earliest novels were built on a historical foundation in that they contain references to specific cities and historic people. Over time, the characters, not unlike those in new comedy, developed into stock characters. Compare Perry's (1967) discussion on Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoe*, 137-140, with the events in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, 262-264.

[365] Based on this, Thomas, 2003, concludes that Christian fictions are more similar to earlier novels. To be sure, Thomas bases this argument on the two-fold division in genre studies, an approach which has obvious shortcomings, especially for late Roman literature.

In the case of the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian* we have a hexametric hagiography, a Christian narrative in epic meter. Since one can no longer rely on Julian's πλάσματα as a suitable explanation for the work's genre, how can a literary anomaly such as an epic martyrology be explained? Should it be understood as primarily epic, with a Christian prose (fiction) foundation, or is it a Christian (prose) fiction simply in epic meter? Moreover, is Eudocia's clear dependence upon Homer incompatible with the novel tradition? The influence of the Homeric texts on the traditional novelists have been recognized to such an extent that Müller aptly characterized the latter as "Homeride der Prosa"[367] while the genre as a whole has been coined the "latter day epic."[368] These observations lead to questions about the *Martyrdom*'s initial function–how it was used in antiquity, why it was created, and for whom. Unfortunately, asking such questions results in many more questions that reveal how little we actually know about literature from antiquity. The *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian* straddles the gap between prose and poetry, fact and fiction, performance and intertext.

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[366] See the appropriate articles in Schmeling, 1996.
[367] Müller, 1981.
[368] Perry, 1967, 46.

2.2 Performative Setting of Hagiography in Late Antiquity

The transition from prose to verse could be facilitated by other social factors, such as the initial performance of the piece. The *vitae* and *acta* of holy men and women were not free traveling narratives, as some have suggested for certain ancient novels,[369] but were closely associated with religious loci, shrines and basilicas, dedicated to or affiliated with the holy person.[370] Story, ritual, and locus were bound together.[371] During the festival of the saint, the devout would travel to the shrine, and among the various rituals, a telling of the story of their lives was quite common.[372] Hägg has gone so far as to suggest that the repetitive nature of Christian narratives reveals its performative function.[373] Although Hägg's thesis has not yet been generally accepted, Christian fictions, even if they were not written with an intended performative function, were incorporated into the day's program[374] quite early in the development of the saint's day. [375]

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[369] Unlike the pure romances which are free from temporal and geographical boundaries, the earlier narratives are associated with specific regions, such as western Asia Minor. Konstan, 1998, discusses this issue at some length.

[370] Brown, 1981, discusses the function of religious narrative in sacred places throughtout late antiquity. For the role of verse in those sacred places, see Roberts, 1993, 189-197.

[371] Merkelbach, 1962, had already suggested that the classical novel was initially associated with cultic centers and their rituals. This idea is no longer fashionable among scholars, but it should be emphasized that while Merkelbach's overall hypothesis is no longer accepted, there is overwhelming literary evidence to suggest that Christian fictions were being performed at religious centers on a saint's day.

[372] Pervo, 1996, 691; Coon, 1997, 5-7; and Rapp, 2007, 194-222.

[373] Hägg, 1994.

[374] Some of the best evidence, although perhaps slightly exaggerated, are the homilies of John Chrysostom, some of which were certainly given during the festivals of the Antiochene and Contantinopolitan saints (see Mayer and Allen, 1999, 17-25). John's Encomium on Egyptian Martyrs evidences the fluidity in literary types–here the homily and encomium come together.

This association of cultic center and written text can be observed in the ancient novels, some of which contain references to writing a narrative and placing it for safe keeping in the temple of the god.[376] These examples are mostly literary pretensions that have little bearing on a particular cult center, but there are examples of *acta* of gods that were stored at religious centers, such as the *acta* of Serapis.[377] Not only was there a prose version of the Serapian aretalogy, but there was a second version in verse as well.

The evidence for performances of *vitae* and *acta* of holy men are even more prevalent under Christianity than in the classical period. As early as the second and third centuries, the stories associated with Christian figures were read during celebrations of their lives.[378] But the primary function of the story's reading was not to commemorate the saint's life, although that was part of the day's purpose. There was also a significant spiritual element: the holy man or woman was viewed as actually present during the story's performance, and examples abound of spectators suddenly healed during the

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Unfortunately, little is known of the performative context of the encomium (see Mayer, 2006, 209).

[375] The development of the cult of the saints is a fitting digression since there was certainly a difference in the actual location of the saint's burial and the later site where his or her relics were deposited (see Markus, 1994, and Mayer's 2006b introduction). Of central relevance to our discussion is the role of Antioch as the locus for martyrologies, especially during the persecution under Domitian. This forces us to question the historical reliability of the Cyprian and Justina legend which locates the two in Antioch before their deaths in Nicomedia. That saints who were associated with Antioch but actually martyred elsewhere were eventually buried back in Antioch (rather, immediately outside the city) is paralleled by Domnina and her two daughters who were executed in Edessa but interred in Antioch.

[376] Xenophon's *Ephesiaca* 5.15.2.

[377] See Longo, 1969; Vidman, 1970; Engelmann, 1975; and Totti, 1985.

[378] This includes but is not limited to the Apocryphal Acts (Pervo, 1996, 691); the *Martyrdom of Perpetua* (Salisbury, 1997, 169ff); and the *Vita* of St. Martin of Tours, (Rapp, 2007, 219-220). Technically, the homilies mentioned above, see Mayer, 1999 and 2006, were not stories, but ethical sermons with only the bare bones of a narrative.

reading of the text.[379] Christian fictions were so vital to the ideological landscape of late antique Christianity that Rapp has aptly termed them "scripture writ small."[380]

From this picture of the performance of Christian *vitae* and *acta* on a saint's day, it stands to reason that the prose version of the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian* was annually read at Cyprian's shrine. Although nothing prevented multiple versions of the legend from developing over time– the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*[381] underwent numerous revisions as Thecla's cult spread–it is curious that in the case of Eudocia's version of the *Martyrdom* we have one of the few verse hagiographies from late antiquity. What would be the purpose behind writing a verse hagiography? Certainly, nothing precluded an author from writing in verse, although from the time of Christianity's inception simple prose was a hallmark of its literature, and breaking from that mold was a centuries long process.[382] During the fourth century, particularly after the reign of the emperor Julian, Christian poetry flourished. Some poems, such as the *Christus Patiens*, which rewrote the gospel account into a Euripidean tragedy, lent themselves to public consumption–tragedies were performative pieces. Ancient audiences had an ear trained to appreciate performed pieces, including pieces in verse. But does this necessarily imply that Eudocia rewrote the *Martyrdom* in verse to be performed in Antioch on the saint's day of Cyprian and Justina? Asked differently, was Eudocia's imagined recipient strictly a performance-based audience? This topic must be addressed before we turn to the first book of the *Martyrdom*.

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[379] Gregory of Tours, *De virtutibus sancti Martini episcopi* 2.29. See also Rapp, 2007, 219-222.
[380] Rapp, 2007, 222.
[381] See Davis, 2001.
[382] The edict of Julian was a watershed for Christian poetry and many genres that had up to that time been exclusively prose were now turned into verse, and the poetry of fathers such as Gregory of Nazianzus might indicate a continued impetus to write Christian works that compete with the classics.

2.3 Audience and the Ideal Reader

Since Christian narratives were part of a wider religious praxis, specifically ritual associated with the shrines of saints, the issue of readership becomes increasingly complex. Models for the readership of the ancient novel such as those of Wessling,[383] Stephens,[384] and Bowie[385] insufficiently address the complex nexus of social phenomena surrounding Christian narratives, while reconstructions of ancient literacy rates[386] do not consider the oral and aural component of religious ceremony.[387] Hägg[388] argued that ancient novels were broadly read and well known at all levels of society, but it might be dangerous to assume *a priori* that Hägg's theory applies to Christian narratives from late antiquity. It is likely that the elite readers in the minimalist models of Stephens and Bowie are analogous to clerical readers, who, *mutatis mutandis*, represented the aristocratic readership in the late antique world.[389] Such male-centered models often ignore or dismiss the various references of a female readership for early Christian narratives. Female members of the elite such as Eudocia certainly read or heard performed *vitae* and *acta*; her decision to put her poetic hand to the task of rewriting the

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[383] Wessling, 1988.
[384] Stephens, 1994.
[385] Bowie, 1994.
[386] Harris, 1989.
[387] Many more people heard the Bible and non-canonical writings during religious gatherings than were actually literate.
[388] See Hägg, 1983 and 1994.
[389] Over time the social ladder became increasingly connected with church authority, and one way local aristocrats advanced their careers was to take competitive positions in the church. Although examples of elite readers outside the church do exist during late antiquity, they were becoming more and more rare.

Martyrdom of St. Cyprian reveals her interest in and familiarity with such works. To be fair to the surviving evidence, female readers, limited here to literate women who had access to such texts, were rare birds–not every woman had a copy of Achilles Tatius or the *Martyrdom of Perpetua* under her pillow.[390]

On the other hand, with the lives of holy men and women regularly performed in religious contexts, we should not underestimate how these stories affected both literate and illiterate men and women alike. With their hyper-moralistic tone, the didactic purpose of Christian narratives is evident. Not every person in the audience would have appreciated the intertextual landscape created in the narrative, but there is no evidence to suggest that women would have been more susceptible to misunderstanding, or failing to appreciate, the author's creativity.[391] In areas surrounding cult centers, the *vitae* of the saint and whatever other narratives the local clergy collected in addition[392] would have been quite familiar to the devout.

3. Textual History

As recently as the 18th century, Eudocia's poetic rendering of the martyrdom of St. Cyprian was known only through Photius' *Bibliotheca*.[393] Fortunately, Photius provided a detailed summary of the poem, which was divided into three sections, Cyprian's conversion, confession, and martyrdom.[394] These sections correspond to the three books in which Eudocia's *Martyrdom* was written. Her text was thought to have been lost until 1760 when Angelo Maria Bandini, director of the Bibliotheca Medicea, discovered in the 11th century manuscript Laurentiano VII.10, an as yet unknown poem inserted in book four of Nonnus' *Paraphrase of the Gospel of St. John*.[395] The folios contained 801 lines of a poetic version of the *Conversion*, *Confession*, and *Martyrdom* of St. Cyprian, Eudocia's lost poem.[396] Although the discovery of the poem was fortuitous, the *Martyrdom* was incomplete–the final 322 lines of book one along with the first 479 lines of book two were all that had survived. None of book three was extant.

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[390] One of the many miniature codices that contained a number of apocryphal works (the *Sherpherd of Hermas,* the *Acts of Peter,* the *Acts of Paul and Thecla,* the *Protevangelium of James,* the *Didache,* the *Apocalypse of Peter,* the *Life of Mani, Bel and the Dragon,* and the *Gospel of Mary*) would fit securely under one's pillow. See Kruger, 2005, 33-34.

[391] This idea is strangely prevalent throughout scholarship. Even well read women such as Eudocia are assumed to parrot the words they see without a complete understanding of their wider context. See Nock, 1927.

[392] There is good evidence that a shrine could procure other *vitae*, and even read some of them during festivals; see Coon, 1997, 5-7 and 23.

[393] Photius, *Biblioth.* 184.

From the time of its discovery to the middle of the nineteenth century, little work was undertaken on the *Martyrdom*, but in 1860 Migne republished Bandini's edition in the *Patrologia Graeca*,[397] and opened the way to some of the most innovative scholarship to date. In 1882 Theodor Zahn turned to the prosaic versions of Cyprian's life and death and attempted to arrive at an Ur-Text behind the numerous, often disparate traditions.[398] Fifteen years later, Ludwich reedited the *Martyrdom* along with Eudocia's Homeric centos and provided an apparatus criticus, new readings based on Zahn's research, and a critical discussion of the *Martyrdom*. Ludwich claimed that his edition was finished with great difficulty and that he was forced to compare Eudocia's text with the prosaic version of the martyrdom available in Zahn.[399] His 1897 volume remains the only critical edition for Eudocia's *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian*.[400]

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[394] For the division of the Cyprian narrative into a tripartite structure, note Sabattini 1973, 182-183.
[395] Ludwich 1897, 20; Bevegni 1982 (2), 249-250.
[396] Bandini published the *Martyrdom* in *Graecae ecclesiae vetera monumenta ex bibliotheca Medicae* 1, Florence, 1761, 130ff. (non vidi).
[397] *Patrologia Graeca* 85 (1860), 827-864.
[398] Zahn, 1882. Zahn identified one ms. (Paris. gr. 1468) as the prototype for all subsequent martyrdom traditions. His research was later expanded and somewhat contradicted by by Radermacher, 1927 who identified three versions (Fassungen) of the martyrdom. Zahn's Ur-Text (Paris gr. 1468) corresponds with Radermacher's Fassung I.

The next great discovery came nearly sixty years later: the director of the Leiden University library, K.A. de Meyier, chanced upon an unstudied section of an 11th century manuscript (BPG 95) which had been given the title "Fragmentum Homerocentonis."[401] Upon reading the text, de Meyier realized that the text was not a Homeric cento, but contained instead the first 99 lines of the first book of Eudocia's *Martyrdom*.[402] In fact, the pages from the Leiden text had been removed from *Laur*. VII.10, the manuscript discovered two centuries earlier by Bandini.[403] De Meyier left the fragmentary section unedited, a task undertaken by Claudio Bevegni who in 1982 published a few notes on the text as well as an edition of the first 99 lines with a critical apparatus.[404]

4. Summary of Cyprian's *Conversion*

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[399] Zahn 1882, 137-153. Editing Eudocia's work by comparing difficult readings with the prosaic versions continues today; see Bevegni, 1982.

[400] Salvaneschi, 1982, published a new edition of the *Martyrdom* that does not contain the first 99 lines of book one. This edition also lacks a critical apparatus, but includes a commentary and Italian translation.

[401] De Meyier 1956, 93-94, and Bevegni 1982, 251.

[402] The confusion of Eudocia's *Martyrdom* with a Homeric cento bespeaks the extent to which her original poetry is saturated with Homeric vocabulary and syntax.

[403] For a good summary of de Meyier's argument see Bevegni 1982, 252-253. Apparently the pages had been removed in the 16th century by the Dutch philologist P. Rulaeus, the first editor of the prosaic versions of the martyrdom of St. Cyprian of Carthage.

[404] Bevegni 1982b, 258-261. See also Bevegni 1981, 1982a, 1990; Danesin, 2001; and Bevegni 2003.

Since the details of Eudocia's *Vita* of St. Cyprian is most likely unfamiliar to scholars interested in the hagiography from Late Antiquity, a summary of the general plot follows.[405] Since this chapter will focus exclusively on the *Conversion*, we shall limit ourselves here to the first 421 lines of Eudocia's work (lines 1*-99*, 1-322).[406] The *Conversion* opens with an eight-line *prooimion* that summarizes the gospel and its spread throughout the earth. God (ϑεός) as the divine actor opens the poem; he was the bringer of light and the gospel from heaven to earth, but it was the evangelists (I.4*) who disseminated God's radiance and message. The reader can recognize herself as part of the global conversion which is spoken of as already past. This is apropos since by the reign of Theodosius II the known world had indeed become Christian. The author constructs a God who adheres, perhaps ambiguously, to the theological constraints of the time: one God (ἕνα ϑεὸν) made up of father (πατέρα), son (υἱέα), and holy spirit (πνεύματος ἠγαϑέοιο). The relationship of the latter with the father and son is unclear.[407] This prooimion sets the stage for the broader themes of the work's first book: the spread of the gospel which leads directly to mass conversions and baptisms.[408]

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[405] For a translation of the *Conversion*, see the appendix at the end of this chapter.

[406] I have chosen to distinguish between the *Conversion* and the *Confession* with Roman numerals, I and II respectively. Concerning the line numbers of the *Conversion*, I have chosen to distinguish between Bevegni's numbers for lines 1-99 and Salvaneschi's line numbers by affixing an asterisk to Bevegni's number.

[407] I do not imply here that one can use these references to position Eudocia's theology in relationship to the Councils of Ephesus or Chalcedon. More than likely, it would be expedient for those less theologically inclined throughout the second half of the fourth and the first half of the fifth centuries to speak of the trinity or divinity of Christ in only the vaguest of terms, not to mention the implications of a woman taking a stance on theological matters (although we do know the commotion that Eudocia made when she sided with the monophysites after the Council of Chalcedon in 451).

[408] Van Minnen, 2006, suggests that hagiographies of Late Antiquity functioned as a kind of aetiological narratives, explaining to a Christian audience how the world came to be Christianized. See also Brandt, 2000.

With the stage now set, the actors enter, and in decidedly prosaic language (ἦν δέ τις)[409] the fairytale begins, "once upon a time." Yet it is not Cyprian who enters the stage, but a virgin, Justa, whose parents Aedesius[410] and Clidonia[411] are native Antiochenes. Justa, just as female characters in the *Apocryphal Acts*, such as Thecla, is explicitly described as a maiden, but unlike Thecla she is not presently engaged. The closest male character to Justa is Aedesius.[412] After a description of Syrian Antioch, the second male character enters, Praulius,[413] a minister or local teacher who begins to preach the Christian message from his house. Conveniently, Justa is able to listen to Praulius' message from the safety of her own bedroom, and from this vantage point she first hears the gospel. The intertextual allusions to Thecla in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, who also overhears a teacher (Paul) preach the good news from the safety of her living quarters, are some of the strongest in the *Martyrdom*. Praulius' sermon lasts only thirteen lines but spans from messianic prophecies in the Old Testament to the annunciation, incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and glorification of Christ.

With the sermon freshly complete, Justa experiences a series of emotions for Praulius. These emotions recall Thecla's feeling for Paul, and the description of Justa's emotions abounds in sexual imagery. As was common in Christian adventure literature, the heroic maiden next undergoes a series of trials on the path to conversion, often at the hands of authorial figures, typically parents, spouses, or suitors. Justa attempts to communicate to her mother her desire to learn more about Christ and to leave behind the worship of idols. The similarities between Justa's speech and Paul's speech to the Areopagites (*Acts* 17) are striking and lend apostolic authority–in the loosest sense–to Justa's words. Clidonia responds–the first and only thing she says in the narrative (I.51*-52*)–"Let this counsel never come to your father's ears." Justa repeats how she has fallen in love with God (no longer with Praulius) and will search for him regardless of her parents' opposition. The adjective ἀντιϑέῳ used here (I.53*) to describe Justa's father will be used later on for the various demons that Cyprian will invoke against Justa. The family has been persuaded (I.43*), albeit indirectly, to live lives inimical to God, and Aedesius finds himself in the same camp (anti-God) as the satanic horde.[414]

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[409] For example compare this opening with the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*: "καί τις ἀνήρ" (2.1) and again "Θέκλα τις παρϑένος" (7.2). Much more will be said about the comparison between the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian* below.

[410] The name was not uncommon, particularly in the Syrian environs of Antioch (Jones, 1971; and Martindale, 1980).

[411] Perhaps the name should read Cledonia, since the name Cledonius is attested twice for the fifth century (Martindale, 1980).

[412] The heroines of the *Apocryphal Acts* are commonly engaged to pagan aristocrats whose resistance to Christianity serves as the first trial that the heroine must overcome.

[413] This is likely a historical error. While the late antique prosopographies do not list the name Praulius, the bishop of Jerusalem from 417-422 was a Praulius. The names of clergy and other Christians used throughout the *Martyrdom* are an amalgamation of various Christian figures from various locales.

The conversation between Justa and Clidonia is brief, and after its conclusion, Justa retires to her bedroom[415] to pray, while Clidonia at night relates the day's events to Aedesius. Night, which is closely associated with demons and witchcraft in ancient demonology,[416] presents a fitting contrast between the efficacy of Justa's prayers and her parents' conversation. During the night, Aedesius and Clidonia have a dream of an angelic host, with Christ at the center. Christ speaks briefly and calls on husband and wife to join with the rulers of heaven. Immediately, scales fall from Aedesius' eyes, which undoubtedly symbolize that he has seen the error of his ways, and he leads his family to the house of God.[417] Somewhat abruptly, the preacher Praulius is listed as a member in their entourage and together they seek audience with Optatos,[418] the local priest. Aedesius expresses his desire for conversion by symbolically casting down his idols, an action that echoes Justa's response to Praulius earlier (I.42*-49*)–the mark of conversion is the destruction of idols. Interestingly, neither mother nor daughter is mentioned after the family enters the church. The women are silent observers of their own conversions and Aedesius as head of the family presumably speaks for his entire family. That the identity of female characters was bound up with that of their male counterparts (not always personal relations) is a recognized theme in late antique hagiographies, but the role of this motif in a narrative written by a woman needs to be explored further below.

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[414] Lerza, 1982, discusses the use of ἀντιϑέῳ throughout the *Martyrdom*.
[415] Much more will be said below about the narrative function of locus in the story, particularly when the precise location of a conversation or pericope is ambiguous.
[416] Note the multitude of spells from the Greek magical papyri which call for nocturnal rituals. See Betz, 1992.

Before Aedesius could be baptized he first learns more about the prophecies leading up to the life and crucifixion of Christ and, as a further symbol of his commitment to the church, cuts his hair (an important comment in the story) because he was a pagan priest.[419] Once Aedesius completes his physical transformation into a neophyte, his family returns to the narrative (I.86*). Their presence is only implied,[420] since they are not named or mentioned throughout the conversion pericope. Aedesius, apparently an adept Christian, quickly advanced to the position of presbyter, a post which he held for one year. Not only does Aedesius' advancement underscore the family's piety; it also suggests that they were from the Antiochene aristocracy.[421] With the conversion and progress of Aedesius complete, Justa returns to the forefront of the narrative: she regularly goes to the house of God. As will be argued later, the act of leaving her house, which Justa had desired to do when she first heard Praulius' sermon, exposes her to various threats and brings on her second trial. While the first threat was against Justa's (and by association her family's) conversion, the second will be directly against the maiden herself.

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[417] The text along with the historical conflation with a fifth century bishop (Praulius) perhaps implies, anachronistically, a fifth century basilica, not a house church. The Greek, on the other hand, is the rather ambiguous ϑεοῦ ἤλυϑε σεπτὸν ἐς οἶκον (I.75*).

[418] A popular Roman cognomen, the name here might be a conflation with the Numidian saint and bishop St. Optatus, who lived at least two generations after the reign of Domitian and was a known opponent of Donatism. St. Optatus should not be confused or conflated with Optatus of Thamugadi, also a fourth century Numidian bishop. The latter was a known Donatist and the repeated subject of Augustine's writings.

[419] This is odd since Christians, particularly the clergy, wore the traditional hairstyles of the philosophers, which included a fuller beard and occasionally longer hair. The typical style of the day was shorter hair and beards. See Sauer, 1924, and Zanker, 1995. What is more, the pagan priest who converts to Christianity is a rare theme in early Christian literature.

Here enters Aglaidas, a local aristocrat and known "associate" of demons–he is a pagan who happens to observe Justa while she was on her way to the house of God. At first, Aglaidas attempts to court and marry Justa, but the latter rejects the idea of an earthly marriage and desires to court only Christ, a common image for celibacy. Soon the protagonist, emboldened by his claims and the mob's support, leads a group of Antiochenes against Justa in the church, but their efforts fail when an unspecified group of Christians come to Justa's rescue. Not easily discouraged, Aglaidas makes a second attempt, this time in private–he tries to assault Justa. This encounter between Aglaidas and Justa strongly echoes the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*: the maiden makes the sign of the cross, which perhaps gives her the physical strength to overcome her attacker; she throws him to the ground, tears at his hair and face, and rends his clothing.[422] Being so utterly dominated by a woman was a humiliating experience for Aglaidas, as it was for Alexander in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*; indeed, Justa is said to have made Aglaidas an object of derision. To guarantee that the Thecla allusion is recognized, Justa's physical mastery of Aglaidas is explicitly compared to Thecla's victory over Alexander (I.14). With her virtue intact and defended, Justa, who has been outside of the protection of her domicile for the entirety of the episode,[423] returns to the house of God.

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[420] The verbs in lines 86 and 87 are plural.

[421] The main characters in Christian narratives written from the later second century on are occasionally from the upper classes.

Whereas Alexander in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* seeks justice from the Antiochene courts, Aglaidas turns to a more nefarious figure, the local magician Cyprian. With a purchase price of two talents of gold and an unmentioned amount of silver, Aglaidas hires Cyprian to force Justa to concede to his amorous desires. Cyprian pities Aglaidas and summons the first of three demons who will assail the maiden. The spirit first asks why he has been summoned, to which Aglaidas admits that he desires a Galilean girl;[424] he asks if the spirit is powerful enough to tame her. The theme of power recurs throughout the three seduction scenes as Justa by the power of the *signum crucis* demonstrates the superiority of God's power over demonic guile. Interestingly, Cyprian requires the spirit to give his *curriculum vitae*, as it were, which the latter relates in good order. The demon admits to have been the bravest of the angelic host but to have chosen afterwards to follow his father (Satan) against God, an act which led to their joint exile from heaven. Furthermore, he claims to have deceived Eve single-handedly, brought about Adam's exile from paradise, and encouraged Cain to slay his brother Abel. The imagery that the demon uses here is vivid–he (the demon) drenched the earth with blood. In his description of the earth, he takes credit for the curse placed upon the land[425] and follows this up by crediting himself with three commonly committed sins: adultery (beds of theft), idolatry, and animal sacrifice. The list climaxes at the pinnacle of human deception: the crucifixion of Christ by the Jews.[426] What follows is a summary of the demon's activities: the overthrow of cities[427] and divorce.[428] With these iniquitous deeds under his belt, the demon questions whether he will not be able to obtain the maiden for Aglaidas.

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[422] The connection between this section of the narrative and the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* will be outlined in greater detail below. Overt intertextuality between the two narratives in no way precludes other allusions, such as to Perpetua's gladiatorial vision, which will also be discussed below.

[423] Although Justa's whereabouts are never explicitly mentioned, she is certainly not in the church (she returns there after the encounter), nor is it likely that Aglaidas attacked her at home (conflicts at Aedesius' house come later in the story). Since Aglaidas sees Justa traveling between her home and the ecclesia, this vulnerable "no man's land" is the most likely spot of the attack.

[424] "Galilean" was a commonly used pejorative adjective for Jesus and by association Christians. That it is used in Antioch is apropos since the most famous uses of "Galilean" in reference to both Jesus and Christians was Julian's *Against the Galileans*, a text written after the emperor's rather unpleasant stay in Antioch. See Wilken, 1984; Burr, 2000; and Hoffman, 2004.

Apparently pleased with the demon's prior experience, Cyprian gives him an herb with instructions to sprinkle it in a circle around the maiden's bedroom. The magical herb, along with Cyprian's invocation of Satan, will bring about the girl's seduction. With the plan set, the scene turns to Justa, who in the third hour of the morning is singing holy songs. Fear suddenly falls upon the maiden, and she perceives that some nefarious device has been planned for her destruction. Once she has protected herself with the *signum crucis*, she turns her thoughts to prayer, which opens with an extended invocation to Christ lasting half the length of the prayer. Justa's supplication provides the ability to conquer the demon; it also serves as the antithesis of his *curriculum vitae*. While the demon emphasized his nefarious deeds, Justa enumerates the actions of Christ. Whereas the demon related how he stood with Satan and lost the battle for heaven, Justa emphasizes how the Son of God expelled Satan and his colleagues from heaven and created the cosmos, the earth, as well as the celestial bodies.[429] The demon takes credit for the deception of the primordial humans and their subsequent expulsion from paradise, while Justa's encomium culminates in the creation of Adam, whose loss of paradise is attributed to the serpent's deception. Christ's role as defender of humanity is highlighted by the redemption of the cross. Heaven and earth resound with salvation, and together they identify Christ as supreme ruler. Unlike the demon's activities, which were limited to the past, Christ continues to interact with creation, which gives Him an efficacy that the demon cannot rival and anticipates Satan's defeat and Cyprian's conversion.

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[425] Compare *Genesis* 3:17-18.

[426] This antagonism against the Jews is compounded by their culpability for the death of Christ. While the tradition of anti-Semitic rhetoric was well founded by the fifth-century, it is interesting that one can detect an allusion, albeit ever so slightly, to the fourth evangelist. That the author responsible for the gospel according to St. John manifests a particular distaste, as it were, for all things Jewish has long been remarked. For the remnants of this tradition in current Christianity, see Glock and Stark, 1966.

[427] Might this refer to the string of barbarian invasions that occurred throughout the empire during late antiquity?

[428] I would attempt to avoid the biographical fallacy here and not suggest that this refers to Eudocia's marriage problems. Rather, this seems to be in keeping with the demon's allusions to Genesis, specifically the fall (*Genesis* 3) whereby family unity was undermined.

When she has finished praising Christ, Justa presents her request to Christ: that he might preserve her chastity and prevent her from undergoing evil. Justa's desire to remain Christ's lover is the motivation behind her request. This erotic imagery not only juxtaposes Justa's desire for Christ with Aglaidas' lust for the maiden, it also echoes Justa's conversion narrative, which abounded with sexual language for Christ. Moreover, Justa asks God that she not be subjected to the enemy's hand; the maiden describes her affection for Christ as tender and affectionate, while the attempts of Satan are vile and animalistic. Her prayer ends with a request that she not transgress God's laws by being the victim of a sinful plot, and Justa closes her prayer with the *signum crucis*, which opens and closes Justa's words.

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[429] This episode is reminiscent of the sixth book of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Interestingly, Harris, 1898, argues that Milton owned a copy of Aldus' edition of the Greek and Latin Christian poets, which included the Homeric cento of Eudocia and Nonnus' paraphrase of the gospel of John, the poem in which the *Martyrdom* was found.

At the exact moment when Justa makes the *signum crucis*, the demon, whose presence in the bedroom the narrator never explicitly mentions, flees. To avoid any ambiguity, the action is summarized: Justa routed the demon. The narrator leaves Justa to the solace of her bedroom and follows the spirit as he returns, tail between his legs, to the magician and suitor. At this point in the *Conversion*, the narrator increasingly ignores Aglaidas' role and occasionally even his presence in the narrative. This allows Cyprian to become the primary antagonist in the story. When asked by Cyprian what had transpired, the demon refuses to provide any details but is willing to admit that he feared the φοβερὸν σῆμα, the *signum crucis*. Hardly impressed, Cyprian summons a second demon (Beliaron), who claims to have been sent by Satan to aid Cyprian and Aglaidas in their endeavor and receives from Cyprian a potion which he will use to seduce Justa. The scene shifts back to the maiden's bedroom where she is still praying through the night. This prayer consists of a confession of Justa's sins, a petition for forgiveness, and an enumeration of God's powers, which, through her very mention of them, will conquer the enemy. According to Justa, God is the one who received Abraham's sacrifice, who conquered both Baal and the dragon, and who showed the Persians his power through the prophet Daniel.[430] Furthermore, the death of Christ has properly aligned the cosmos and brought those in darkness into the light. Justa's invocation takes up three-fourths of the prayer, but at the end, she repeats her request for Christ to protect her body and preserve her chastity.

Justa is hardly able to finish her prayer before the demon flees from her chamber, although the reader had not yet been informed of his presence. This reinforces how ineffective the demons really are–their presence hardly warrants mention because they flee at the prayer of a simple girl. The second spirit, just as the one before him, returns in shame to Cyprian and Aglaidas, although the latter is again not explicitly mentioned. Omissions such as this serve to focus the reader's attention on the conflict between Justa and Cyprian, and, as a result, Aglaidas slips into the shadowy recesses of the narrative. When asked by the magician where Justa was, the demon admits to have been conquered by the sign (σημήιον, I.137) of the cross, which he affirms is an unbearable thing to behold, overwhelming and irresistible (ὑπέρβιον, οὐχ ὑποεικτόν, I.138). Although this comment is consistent with what we have seen thus far about the *signum crucis*, the reader is left with a glaring problem: during this demonic encounter, Justa never made the sign of the cross. Justa doubtless made the *signum crucis* at the end of her prayer, but the demon left during the prayer not at its conclusion. This can hardly be an oversight by the narrator, and the reader must assume Justa made the *signum crucis* earlier. Showing the audience only pieces of a whole, the narrator limits how much the audience is allowed to experience of the movements of the demon. The narrator makes the reader dependent on her for the essential information in a scene, and the rest is presented only piecemeal or not at all.[431]

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[430] Does this imply that Eudocia had read the apocryphal accounts of Daniel? While the answer to that question might be impossible to give, it is interesting that Daniel would be introduced here in the narrative. Eudocia was quite familiar with the story of the Persian exile and even wrote a poetic version of the book of Daniel.

Despite two setbacks, Cyprian invokes a third demon, who rules over and is the father of all demons, i.e. Satan. Perhaps the magician has lost some of his confidence; he ridicules Satan, calls him a coward, and asks if he, like his companions before him, will flee before the virgin. When Satan insists that he has already begun to seduce the girl, Cyprian requests a sign (σημήιον I.144),[432] which Satan gives: for six days he plans to torment the girl with fever and, once she has been thoroughly terrified, he will bring Justa to Cyprian at night. This plan, never mentioned again in the *Conversion*, is most likely an interpolation of a variant account of the *Conversion*.[433] Rather than strike Justa with a fever and eventually a nocturnal attack, Satan disguises himself as a fellow maiden and in the morning attempts to deceive Justa.

Unlike the previous demons, Satan attempts a more nefarious scheme. In the morning hours, he disguises himself as a maiden, enters Justa's bedroom while she is still asleep, and sits on her bed. Satan claims that the Lord has called "her" to be made perfect (that is, to make the vow of celibacy) and asks Justa about the rewards of chastity. Satan also provides some valuable information about Justa and her lifestyle: her body is compared to a corpse and she lives as if in a desert. This is the first time the reader is informed of Justa's ascetic lifestyle, and the demon's description of the maiden is unambiguous. Not only is she physically decrepit, but the imagery of being scorched by the sun and dry as a bone brings to mind the image of the desert fathers, a motif common in the fourth and fifth centuries, but unknown to the empire under Diocletian.[434]

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[431] Eudocia is not unique in this regard; narrators often leave spaces in their stories that the audience is forced to fill (or elide).

[432] This might allude to the final conversation between Satan and Cyprian, after Justa has rebuffed the former (I.285). On the other hand it is ironic that Cyprian would request a σημήιον because it was a σημήιον that routed both previous demons. By the end of the *Conversion*, Cyprian learns which "sign" is the most effective and allies himself with the *signum crucis.*

[433] I discuss this point in greater detail at the end of chapter four. Briefly, the account contains traces of a variant account that I argue are based on the biblical character of Job: Cyprian attacks her (or her parents') flocks and her health. The integration of various and contradictory Cyprian accounts took place before Eudocia versified the prose versions, and a detailed analysis of these various accounts–fruitful, no doubt–is best left for another time.

Justa's response is innocent, perhaps naïve, and her conversation with Satan echoes Eve's conversation with the serpent in *Genesis* 3. According to Justa there is no immediate reward for ascetics but a greater one to come. The demon deepens the deception by pointing out that Eve was no maiden and was still honored with the appellation "mother of mankind." In the process of bearing children, Eve, according to Lucifer, "learned all good things." This comment is fascinating in its ambiguity. First, one can take the referent to be the tree of knowledge of good and evil, of which Eve ate. Second, one can interpret the fall as the primordial couple's sexual discovery, a well-known reading in late antiquity. If we take the line thus, the serpent has creatively revised the narrative to focus only on the good, while conveniently omitting the evil. Third, the "good things" mentioned by Satan could refer to childbirth, which for late antique ascetic women (and men) was the lesser of two "goods;" virginity was exclusively preferred over motherhood. Accordingly, Satan's reference to motherhood as a good thing could be taken as ironic. Regardless, Eve's role as mother of all humanity will be contrasted at the end of the *Conversion* with Justa's role as the mother of all virgins (I. 318-319).

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[434] Rousselle, 1983, 168-177; and Brown, 1988, 213-240.

Satan's words are persuasive, but, as Justa is about to follow the disguised spirit outside her house, she perceives the trick. Unlike her previous encounters with the demons where Justa was prayerfully passive, in this one she actively responds with a series of offensive maneuvers: prayer, the *signum crucis*, a shriek, and a command, which sends the spirit out of the house. After she catches her breath, Justa turns herself once more to prayer and contemplation, while the spirit returns to Cyprian just as those before him, thwarted and shamed.

Cyprian mocked Satan before the latter even faced Justa, and his words after Satan returns are even more biting, but, behind Cyprian's contempt, one can detect a slight interest in learning more about her power, which remind one of Simon Magus, the archetypal magician turned Christian convert. In the *Acts of the Apostles*, Simon's conversion was motivated by the desire to possess the power he sees in the apostles. This tradition continues in early Christian prose fiction, particularly the *Acts of Peter*, which culminates in the battle between St. Peter and Simon.[435] Before Satan will speak of the maiden's power, he requires Cyprian to swear by the powers of the earth an oath of loyalty. Once Cyprian has sworn the oath, Lucifer succinctly recalls how he saw the *signum crucis*, turned, and fled. Cyprian inquires further into Justa's strength and begins to realize Satan's ineffectiveness and God's supremacy.

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[435] See the following chapter in which the similarity between Cyprian and Simon Magus is discussed in some detail. For a comprehensive discussion and bibliography on Simon Magus from the early church through modernity, see Ferreiro, 2005.

When Satan confesses that the demonic horde is concerned with nefarious deeds which lead humanity to the judgment of God, Cyprian immediately admits his desire to know more about Christ since he has fallen in love with him (just as Justa before him). The demon reminds the magician that he has sworn an oath to him and is bound to demonic power, which the magician repudiates by declaring his preference for the cross of Christ. Reminded of the efficacy of the cross in Justa's prayers, entreaties, and actions, Cyprian places the *signum crucis* upon himself, renounces demonic counsel, and discharges the spirit.

The resolute Cyprian goes on to the next stages of his conversion and begins his transformation from champion of evil to warrior for Christ. He proceeds to the ecclesia first to dispose of his magical texts[436] and then to request of the priest, Anthimus, that he be initiated into the Christian mysteries. The priest, probably assuming that Cyprian's conversion was insincere, just as that of Simon Magus, grows angry and rebukes the would be convert. Cyprian responds by recounting the evening's events: how with the help of demonic forces he had attempted to seduce a girl and how that same girl had conquered the demons through prayer and the *signum crucis*. He offers the priest his magical texts as a sign of his sincerity, to indicate that his choice of Christ was an exclusive one. The priest accepts the texts, destroys them, and sends Cyprian home with his blessings. When Cyprian returns home, he destroys his idols and spends the night in self-flagellation.[437] His words express the magnitude of his remorse: he must appear wretched in God's eyes since he intentionally harmed others with the aid of demons. The scene closes with the convert begging God in silent prayer to extend to him mercy and compassion.

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[436] The ownership of magical texts was a *sine qua non* of any aspiring sorcerer. The simple act of disposing of the texts bespeaks that his conversion was genuine. This has a clear parallel in the *Acts of the Apostles* 19:19.

The next day, which is described as the great Sabbath,[438] all of Antioch bustles with the commotion one would expect when the city's leading magician has converted to Christianity. Cyprian, along with what seems to be a good number of citizens, goes to the ecclesia where he prays to be found worthy of conversion. What follows is a summary of a Christian service, beginning with a series of readings from the Psalms, the prophets, and St. Paul. Conveniently, all of the passages are about the gospel in general and conversion in particular.[439] Finally, the congregation sings a hymn, and the priest gives an address to the congregation. When the service is over, a priest dismisses the congregation, but Cyprian desires to remain in the church. A deacon, Asterius,[440] asks him a second time to exit the building, but the convert, admittedly not yet fully initiated, expresses his desire to learn more and join the faith. The priest converses with Cyprian, and after the latter expresses his desire to be initiated, he is baptized. Eight days later, he becomes a lector of the scriptures and on the twenty-fifth day as an initiate, is made deacon second-class, whose primary responsibility consisted of watching the door during services.[441] After another twenty-five days, he is promoted to deacon first-class[442] and exhibits power in exorcisms, healings, and conversions.[443] When a year is past, Cyprian is given the position of priest, which he faithfully fills for sixteen years under the auspices of Anthimus, bishop of Antioch.[444]

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[437] For more on self-flagellation in antiquity, see Collas, 1913.

[438] This perhaps alludes to Easter, the day when new converts were baptized. This reading would agree with Duchesne, 1904, 292-293; Thompson, 1914, 19; and Jungmann, 1960, 74-86. On the other hand, there is good evidence that not all baptisms were done on Easter (see Kretschmar, 1977). That being said, the evidence suggests that baptisms were typically performed during the Easter service; see Bradshaw, 1992, 161-163. If one were to take the line as referring to Easter, two significant problems arise. First, the service begins at sunrise, while the typical Easter service was an evening one, preceded by a vigil that lasted from Saturday evening to Sunday morning. Second, a typical Easter service contained some readings from Exodus and the gospel of John, not the ones that follow here (see Dix, 1945, 338-339).

[439] It is unlikely that this lectionary selection would have comprised an Easter baptismal service (see note on this above) or a regular service which typically had readings from the Psalms, a gospel, and a Pauline epistle. The inclusion of two prophets (Hosea and Isaiah) at the expense of a gospel passage is strange. See Dix, 1945, 360-362.

[440] Asterius was a common name in late antiquity, but none associated with Antioch until the sixth century. There were two Asterii known to Gregory of Nazianzus, and even in the fourth century, a good number of the known Asterii were Christian, including at least one Asterius who wrote theological treatises, Asterius the Sophist. See Jones, 1971, and Martindale, 1980.

Near the end of these sixteen years, bishop Anthimus gathers the neighboring bishops, settles his affairs, and bestows his see on Cyprian. Not long after the bishop dies, Cyprian takes up the Antiochene bishopric. One of his first acts is to make Justa, who is renamed

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[441] Although the text lists doorman as the only responsibility of the sub-deacon, he most likely would have also been responsible for the care and protection of the sacred objects (see Wipszycka, 1996, 234).

[442] Eudocia uses poetic words to describe an official Christian position. The first, which I translate lector is αἰπυβόης, which in context must mean one who shouts forth the Christian texts. This must correspond to ἀναγνώστης (see Wipszycka, 1996, 238-248). The second, διακτορία, refers to the position of the διάκτορος which was explained variously in antiquity, but typically came to mean a minister of some sort. The word διάκτορος is attested in Homer (*Il*. 2.103; *Od*. 5.43; 12.390; 15.319) and was also used by Nonnus (*D*. 31.107; 30.250; 39.82).

[443] In other words, Cyprian's life as a convert is that of an inverted magician: he continues in the same practices, i.e. exorcisms and healings, but from a different perspective (godly rather than demonic). That he still engaged in those activities is not strange since Christians, from the middle of the first century on, spoke of exorcisms and healing as central manifestations of their faith. Rather, the rhetorical force behind Cyprian's life is that he now used his powers for good rather than evil.

[444] The Greek clearly reads Antimos, but the name almost certainly was Anthimus, a common name in antiquity. There are two Anthimi during the early third century, one bishop of Rome and the other bishop of Nicomedia (where Cyprian and Justina were eventually martyred). Both Anthimi were martyred during the persecution under Diocletian and were commemorated in their respective cities. The real bishop of Antioch at the time would have been Cyril I (283-303).

Justina,[445] a deaconess in the church, one of the highest roles available to an urban Christian woman. Her primary responsibility is the oversight and development of Antioch's virgins, and she fulfills this task so efficiently that she was soon known as "the mother of all maidens." This appellation recalls Justa's conversation with Satan (I.161-166) where Eve is coined "the mother of mankind." The early church allegorically interpreted the primordial parents as symbols for Christ and the church, with Christ as the second Adam. In this case, Justa takes up the role as second Eve. The book closes by balancing Justina's chastity and role as mother of virgins with Cyprian's power and efficacy in bringing many Antiochenes into the flock. As will be argued below, gender roles are rigidly kept throughout the *Conversion*, although the author occasionally provides for a degree of ambiguity. As the *Conversion* ends, however, it is Cyprian who teaches, exorcizes, and heals, which leads to mass conversions throughout the city, while Justa, by whose power and virtue Cyprian was originally converted, is restricted to exclusively feminine activities, the oversight and teaching of women. Even a remarkable and indeed controversial author such as Eudocia did not challenge the gender roles of the fifth century in her hagiography, while her own life challenged patriarchal authority at nearly every turn.

The ways in which Eudocia engenders her narrative deserves more attention. Investigating how she creates a feminized heroine is apropos, since female characters and gender roles are central themes in many late antique hagiographies.[446] Of particular interest here will be the ways in which Eudocia's characters adhere to popular motifs, such as feminine identity defined by male moderators/sponsors, but also ways in which the author ignores convention and strays from well-known exemples such as the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, which, as we have already seen, served as a template for Eudocia's story. As is well noted, one of the most striking and influential themes in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* is gender ambiguity, specifically the masculinization of typical female characteristics: hairstyles, clothing, and cosmetics. Since these so-called transvestite motifs are so bizarre, scholars use them to explain patriarchal control or resistance to it within early Christianity or as an indicator of how the early church defined and/or restricted femininity. On the other hand, since many of the more bizarre gender inversions, of which transvestism is just one example, are found in anonymous or pseudepigraphic texts, their presence is often used as evidence for female authorship. The weakness with many explorations into engendered texts and authors is that the criteria they use are subjective–we just cannot say with certainty that any of the texts used in these studies were written by women. The *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian* provides feminist scholars with a text undisputably written by a woman, who has read the best Christian fiction of the previous centuries, such as the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, and who models her leading female character on that model. And yet as we will see, Eudocia's Justa breaks from Thecla's mold in remarkable ways, and the differences reveal how a female author of the fifth century created feminine characters who were more traditional than subversive. Indeed, there is good evidence to suggest that transvestism and other inversion motifs, in the Turnerian sense, point to male authors.

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[445] Name changes, although never common, were known in antiquity, particularly for individuals whose given names were associated with rival gods or, under Christianity, with demons; see Horsley, 1987. What makes Justa's name change remarkable is its insignificance. There is little etymological difference between Justa and Justina. Perhaps this evidences some disagreement in the Cyprian tradition about her name that was later elided with an account saying that Justa changed her name to Justina.

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[446] See Kazhdan, 2001.

5.1 Inversion motifs

Central to our investigation into the role of female characters in the *Martyrdom* is social drama theory as set forth by the Scottish anthropologist Victor Turner.[447] Briefly, Turner identifies four stages of social drama as it pertains to a character. The character experiences a (1) breach between social elements, which leads to a (2) crisis that the character addresses through (3) adjustment or redress, and as a result the character is (4) reintegrated into the social structure or recognizes the breach.[448] Recently, Caroline Bynum has applied Turner's model to the characters in late medieval hagiography; she concludes that Turner's model is appropriate when evaluating male authors, but female authors, she suggests, tell narratives differently.[449] Indeed, women's stories are, at least as far as social drama is concerned, stories in which "nothing happens."[450] Before we turn to a social drama reading of the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian*, a few examples from other Roman or late antique hagiographies might be useful. Two Christian narratives will be explored in some detail in this section, *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* and the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas*.

Let us begin with the one that is closer to the compositional date for the *Martyrdom* of Cyprian, *The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas*. The story, most likely written in the third century, contains the account of Vibia Perpetua, an aristocratic matron martyred in Carthage in 203. The martyrdom is thought to contain at least some of Perpetua's personal memoirs, in addition to a conclusion certainly written by an anonymous redactor, and is unique in early Christian literature. Recently all or part of the three visions, which are purported to come from Perpetua's hand, have been subjected to closer scrutiny.[451] Following the approaches modeled by Vierow and Perkins, the text here will be treated as a narrative unit, not divided into three sections (primary narrator, Perpetua, and Saturus). Examining the account as a narrative whole reveals many of the inversion motifs recognized in other later Roman and late antique Christian fictions. Just as Justa, Perpetua initially faces difficulties overcoming parental control, in particular her father's desire for her to apostatize.[452] Her father, an aristocratic pagan, visits Perpetua three times while she is in prison and eventually takes away her child. Through her perseverance, Perpetua is able to rebuff her father's requests, even when he is publicly shamed and beaten, and she moves to the next trial on the road to perfection, the arena. The female character in late Roman Christian narratives often serves as a means of social upheaval, which in *The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* is demonstrated through Perpetua's rejection of the *pater familias* and his *potestas*.[453] This tradition continues well into the early medieval period, with analogous heroines in late antique Christian narratives as well.[454]

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[447] See Turner, 1974 and 1979, and Turner and Turner, 1978. Bynum, 1991, applies Turner's theory to late medieval hagiography. I have found Bynum's argument intriguing and persuasive in many ways. The following section, if not dependent upon Bynum's article, began in large part as a result of her research.

[448] Turner, 1981, 145; but see also Turner, 1978, 249, for a three-fold division of rites of passage (separation, margin or limen, and reaggregation). Bynum, 1991, 29-30, briefly summarizes this argument.

[449] Bynum, 1991, 39-40.

[450] Bynum, 1991, 40.

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[451] For the most persuasive arguments against a Perpetuan authorship, see Perkins, 2007, 324, where she summarizes the argument. See also Hefferman, 1995, and Vierow, 1999, whose philological analysis of the text is central to all subsequent work. For opposing views see Salisbury, 1997, 14-15; Bremmer, 2002, 83-86; and Plant, 2004. See also, Shaw, 1993, and Bremmer, 2004 and 2006.

[452] See Rossi, 1984.

[453] Perkins, 1994, 838, goes on to relate how the social upheaval eventually balances itself out with the women, no longer under an earthly authority, but a heavenly one.

In the midst of this social drama, if the text should be read as such, Perpetua experiences a series of visions, which foreshadow–to the matron and her reader–Perpetua's martyrdom. Moreover, her visions contain some of the most entertaining, albeit controversial, sections of the story. Of interest here is the third vision, doubtless a premonition of her future tribulation in the arena, in which Perpetua combats an Egyptian. To prepare for battle she is stripped and oiled; then she discovers that she has become a man.[455] This single comment has received quite a bit of scholarly attention and has perhaps overly influenced interpretations of the *Martyrdom* as a whole.[456] And yet, Christian narratives from the second century through the medieval period occasionally contain what have become known as transvestite motifs,[457] a literary topos that perhaps began with the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*.[458]

Composed sometime during the second century, the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* became one of the most popular apocryphal narratives in the early church. During the early centuries of Christianity, Thecla was the most popular Christian woman, rivaled only by the Virgin

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[454] Compare the *Vitae* of Melania and Paula (see Coon, 1997; and Castelli, 1991).

[455] *Veniunt et ad me adolescentes decori adjutores et favitores mei, et exspoliata sum, et facta sum masculus.* 10.6-7.

[456] Perkins, 2007, points out the narrative's overall emphasis on the female body, both before and after the third vision. See especially page 326.

[457] For a more complete discussion on this topic than can be provided here, see Anson, 1974; Castelli, 1991; and Davis, 2002. To be clear, I am not suggesting that the Perpetua account contains elements of transvestism; it certainly does not. Perpetua dreams that she has become male, whereas Thecla in the Apocryphal Acts cuts her hair and dresses like a man.

[458] Davis, 2002, 15, discusses the intertexual models for transvestism available to late antique authors. The *Acts of Paul and Thecla* features prominently in Davis' argument.

Mary,[459] and it is no wonder that her story underwent a series of revisions and redactions[460] and served as a model for centuries of Christian prose fiction authors.[461] We have already seen how the Thecla legend significantly influenced Eudocia's presentation of the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian*, but we need to examine first how the Thecla myth portrayed women and second how Eudocia incorporated certain themes from the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* while omitting others.

The *Acts of Paul and Thecla* opens with Paul on a missionary journey, through the city of Iconium. While there, he visits the house of Onesiphorus where the apostle preaches a "remixed" version of the Sermon on the Mount, particularly the beatitudes.[462] His words are heard by a certain young woman, Thecla, who is identified as a virgin, daughter of Theoclia, and fiancé to Thamyris. Just as Justa, Thecla is defined and controlled through a series of authorial relations, her main "sparring partners" during her initial trials. Upon hearing Paul's sermon from the safety of her bedroom, Thecla falls in love with him and deeply desires to hear him face to face, but her mother, worried that Thecla is wasting away, asks her fiancé, Thamyris, to intervene. The initial conversation, reminiscent of the conversation between Perpetua and her father, sets Thamyris and Theoclia against Thecla as the family attempts to persuade their loved one to reject this strange, new religion.

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[459] Davis, 2002, 16.

[460] In fact, certain redactions seem to intentionally reinterpret the teachings of Paul for a fifth-century audience, specifically regarding sexual mores (Johnson, 2006, 35). See also Haines-Eitzen's (2007) fascinating discussion of the attempted editing of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*.

[461] Davis, 2002, 16, uses the example of the life of Eugenia, as a 6th-century narrative which recontextualizes the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* for a new audience.

[462] *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 5.

When this fails, the entire household mourns Thecla as if she were dead.[463] The funerary imagery reinforces how vividly disturbing Thecla's decision and the social transgression implied by it actually were; Thecla is described as dead, no longer a contributing member of the family.

After Thamyris investigates the matter in some detail, particularly Paul's message, he decides to take it to the civic authorities, but his speech indicates that he is primarily concerned about the propagation of socially subversive ethics. This anxiety is repeated in subsequent hearings, as Paul is eventually scourged and expelled from Iconium, while Thecla, at the instigation of her mother, is condemned to burn as an example for the other women who might be tempted to follow her and spurn marriage. When she has been stripped naked, Thecla mounts the pile of sticks, but a miraculous storm sent by God extinguishes the fire and preserves the heroine's life.

Soon after Thecla's divine rescue from the fire and her subsequent release, she discovers Paul's current location, and, as a demonstration of her desire to join him on his evangelistic travels, she cuts her hair. This intentional self-masculinization has a two-fold effect, one positive, the other negative–Thecla is able to join Paul's itinerant entourage, but her male disguise is not able to protect her from sexual advances. While at Syrian Antioch, Alexander, a local aristocrat, sees Thecla and, assuming that she is a prostitute and Paul her procurer, attempts to hire her services. When Paul denies that he knows her,[464] Alexander forces himself upon the maiden, but in a series of hyper-masculine actions Thecla overcomes her would-be assailant.[465] She tears his cloak and throws his crown to the ground, which both effeminizes the strong man and makes him a spectacle, a target for the gaze of others. Being the object of public gaze was a characteristic associated with the lower social order–actors, gladiators, and courtesans–and was avoided by the elite at least in the western half of the Mediterranean.[466] Alexander uses Thecla's socially transgressive behavior to have her condemned to death in the arena, Thecla's second major trial.

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[463] *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 10.7-9. Thamyris mourns the loss of a wife, Theoclia the loss of a daughter, and the maidservants that of a mistress.

At this point in the narrative, gender distinctions become more pronounced–women (or female animals) side with Thecla, and men (or male animals) side with Alexander. The Antiochene women take up the persona of a tragic chorus and lament Thecla's unmerited condemnation. Moreover, a local aristocratic woman, Tryphaena, who sees in Thecla her recently deceased daughter, adopts the heroine and accompanies her on her way to face the beasts. Thecla first faces a lioness, which, like the Antiochene women, allies herself with the maiden and licks her feet. The following day Thecla faces a series of animals, first a male bear and male lion, both killed by the lioness who subsequently dies as a result of wounds sustained in her battle with the bear and lion. Since the lioness, Thecla's only means of protection is now dead, the women in the crowd express their concern for her. The male authorities, on the other hand, release a second throng of beasts, and Thecla recognizes that her death is imminent. She looks for a way to baptize herself and discovers a pool, which would be suitable were it not, unknown to Thecla, full of man-eating seals. But when Thecla jumps into the pool, a bolt of lightning sent from heaven kills the seals, and God causes a cloud to cover the now naked virgin, preserving her modesty. Moreover, when all other beasts refrain from attacking Thecla, Alexander, as the game's financier, provides some wild bulls to tear her apart. They tie Thecla's limbs to the bulls, whose genitalia are burned so that by their inevitable reaction she will be torn asunder. Once again, God preserves Thecla's life by sending fire to burn her ties.

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[464] Paul's role in the narrative is bizarre, especially in his disinterest in Thecla and his cowardice. His denial of Thecla here, perhaps, echoes Abraham of his relationship to Sarah (*Genesis* 12:10-20).

[465] Indeed, the narrator emphasizes Alexander's strength (26.7: ὁ δὲ πολὺ δυνάμενος) in contrast to Thecla's vulnerability. At first, she begs for mercy, invoking her pedigree and status as exile. This puts Thecla in the role of guest friend who by the rules of social conduct was to be welcomed and protected.

[466] See Parker, 1999. This does not mean that being an object of spectacle had entirely different connotations in the Greek east. Hawley, 1998, has examined the role of spectacle in Attic drama and argued that the male body is often the subject of the audience's gaze during central moments in the story. Two of Hawley's categories are relevant here: the "man in pain" and sexual humiliation (86-88). See also, Duncan's (2006) discussion on this, particularly 188-217.

Tryphaena, overwhelmed by Thecla's tribulations, dies (only to be revived, presumably by Thecla, later in the narrative)[467] and the city magistrates, worried that the bizarre death of a kinswoman of Caesar might lead to the city's destruction, free Thecla who proselytizes a good number of the women in Tryphaena's household. The heroine perseveres and continues to search for Paul, who has once again abandoned Thecla and left Antioch. When she discovers that Paul is in Lycia, she sets out to meet him there, and to prepare for the journey Thecla dons male clothing. In masculine attire and hairdo, Thecla joins Paul's entourage and is sent to preach and teach the gospel,[468] which she does in her hometown of Iconium. Thecla returns home to find Thamyris dead and, after she preaches the gospel to her mother, travels to Seleucia where she takes up the ascetic life. According to a later account, Thecla travels to Rome where she discovers that Paul had long since been martyred. Apparently, she remains in Rome, dies there, and is buried near the apostle.[469]

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[467] Following Johnson, 2006, 59-60, who has an interesting note connecting the language of Tryphaena's resurrection with the resurrection of Lazarus in Nonnus' *Paraphrase of John* (11.44).

[468] Roles which Paul himself was uncomfortable with and which the author of the pastoral epistles explicitly disallows (MacDonald, 1983, 86-98; Kraemer, 1992, 153-155, 175; Castelli, 1999; MacDonald, 1999, 245-251; and Wire, 2004). Contrariwise, the presence of female evangelists in the *Acts of the Apostles* and the epistles of Paul were clearly problematic for later Christian

As has already been noted, Thecla and the legend surrounding her were immensely popular in the early church,[470] and she was the first in a series of transvestite saints in Christian narratives well into the medieval period. Although the classical sources behind the transvestite motif have been much elucidated,[471] its function in a Christian setting was debated already in antiquity, particularly during the fifth century. Basil of Seleucia, a contemporary of Eudocia, suggested that by cutting her hair a woman would protect herself from danger, in particular the sexual advances of strangers.[472] This explanation, however, does not fit the Thecla passage in which the female character cuts her hair in preparation for the evangelistic lifestyle, and subsequently does not protect Thecla from the gaze of strangers.[473]

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authors, such as Tertullian. Moreover, certain heretical groups emphasized the role of the evangelizing female. See Trevett, 1999, and Cloke, 2000, 432-433.

[469] Thereby bringing some closure to the erotic ambiguity between Thecla and Paul. By being buried near to him, the two share a common identity, perhaps as spiritual kin or spouses.

[470] Davis, 2002, 16.

[471] See Söder, 1932, 127-128.

[472] Anson, 1974, 3.

[473] Anson, 1974, 3.

During the 1960s when the social sciences were very influential, Marie Delcourt suggested that transvestite imagery symbolized the rupture of a former existence.[474] While psychological readings of ancient texts have their shortcomings, understanding character development through an analysis of the author's epistemology of gender and social mores might be elucidating. Not only can this inform modern readers of the social world of the author, it might also reveal how and why different types of authors tell remarkably different stories.[475] In other words, it matters how an author deals with gender and how women in the narrative are portrayed undergoing a social drama, including transvestism.[476] First, we must ask ourselves how Eudocia's Justa differs from her predecessors and other later Roman Christian fictions.

Our hypothesis, influenced by Bynum's application of Turnerian theory, is that unlike the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and the *Martrydom of Perpetua*, where the female protagonists undergo radical social and personal alterations, the *Conversion* will be a story in which "nothing happens" to the heroine. In other words, there will be little social drama compared to other Christian fictions written by men. This hypothesis is supported by the *Confession* itself. Justa, unlike Thecla and Perpetua, remains within the confines of her house and under her father's authority. Justa's conversion is delayed in the story until Aedesius and Clidonia can join her, a fact remarkably different from Thecla and Perpetua who are converted despite rather serious opposition from their families. On the other hand, Thecla's conversion brings with it dire social implications, a point which Theoclia uses to convince Thamyris to intervene[477] and which the slighted suitor takes up when he brings Paul before the governor.[478] As we have already seen, Justa's conversion occurs without any significant familial or civic drama; indeed, her conversion is elided and replaced by that of Aedesius, and Antioch appears as if it is mostly Christian, i.e. there is little pagan resistance to the family's conversion. Moreover, whereas Thecla and Perpetua–each in a different manner and to a different extent–take on masculine traits (Thecla's cross-dresses and Perpetua dreams she is a male), Justa never takes on the physical appearance of a man. In the case of Thecla, gender ambiguity directs the narrative and brings about the civic disturbance in Antioch, but the only drama in the *Conversion* occurs when Justa leaves the confines of her *oikos*, and it is limited to the individual and the spiritual.

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[474] Delcourt, 1961.
[475] This idea is, of course, influenced by Bynum, 1991.
[476] Bynum, 1991, 37-38.

5.2 Sexual ambiguity

In our cursory examination of the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* and the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, we have seen how authors of Christian narratives from the later Roman period created sexually ambiguous female characters. If one were to follow Judith Perkins[479] and not include the *Martyrdom of Perpetua* in that list, there remain numerous examples from Christian *vitae* and *acta*. The *Acts of Paul and Thecla* is not only the first extant Christian narrative to incorporate the Christian transvestite motif; the story served as the source which subsequent authors followed when creating sexually ambiguous characters. There were typically three ways an author created a gender neutral or sexually ambiguous character, male, female, or occasionally divine: hairstyle, clothing, and physical attributes. Each of the three needs to be discussed here as we explore how Eudocia differs from other authors in character development and sexual identity.

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[477] *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 9.
[478] *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 15.
[479] Perkins, 2007, insists that the sexual ambiguity in the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* has been seriously exaggerated.

5.2.1 Hairstyle

Thecla expresses her desire to follow Paul in no uncertain words: περικαροῦμαι καὶ ἀκολουθήσω σοι ὅπου δ’ ἂν πορεύῃ (I will cut my hair and follow you wherever you go).[480] In addition to serving as a sign for special holiness,[481] this motif implies a degree of social transition–Thecla moves from the confines of house and home to the sanctity of evangelistic or monastic life. Of course, a woman who underwent this transformation, symbolized through her hair, certainly did not experience any kind of social equity; after she cuts her hair, Thecla is mistaken for a prostitute and sexually assaulted. This shows how the androgynous woman in the narrative could still be the target of gaze and grasp, thereby maintaining the traditional gender hierarchy. On the other hand, by cutting her hair, Thecla is able to join Paul's entourage, however briefly, and leave her paternal city. For authors of early Christian narratives hairstyle serves as a means to mark social transgression.

The motif of hairstyle, while present in the *Confession*, functions in the narrative quite differently than in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*. Unlike the author of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, Eudocia nowhere mentions Justa's appearance, her clothing, jewelry, or hairstyle. In Justa's third demonic encounter, Satan notices that Justa looks like a corpse and has taken up a "sun-scorched lifestyle" and a bone-dry table (I.155-158), clearly references to the ascetic lifestyle, which will be covered in some detail below. But the *Conversion* contains two references to hair both of which deal with the development of male characters in the story, not Justa. The first is about Aedesius, who cuts his hair and beard upon conversion, and the second about Aglaidas, whose hair Justa tears during his attempted rape.

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[480] *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 25.
[481] Castelli, 1991, 43.

The narrative relates the first case in a rather banal fashion–Aedesius has converted, and because he was a pagan priest, he cut his hair.[482] Although Aedesius is made presbyter, the little substantial information given about Justa's father in the narrative does not indicate that he was in any way remarkable.[483] In this case, Aedesius' haircut symbolizes his transition from paganism to Christianity.[484] Moreover, as we have seen, Aedesius' conversion preserves the heroine's relationship to hearth and home and the traditional social hierarchy–Justa maintains a clearly defined relationship with her father and mother. The absence of social drama is here facilitated by Aedesius' haircut, unlike the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* where Thecla's choice to cut her hair increases her marginality and highlights the story's social drama. In other words, Thecla's haircut symbolizes the breakdown of the Roman family, with the implicit loss of patriarchal control and *potestas*, whereas Aedesius' haircut has the complete opposite affect–Justa's relationship with Aedesius is preserved as is his role as head of the family. The conversions/martyrdoms of Thecla and Perpetua are brimming with social upheaval, and paternal authority is either rejected or subsumed under an apostolic husband/father, but in the *Conversion*, Justa never overthrows her social world; the family as a whole is effortlessly incorporated into the Christian world.

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[482] I.84*-86a*: αὐτίκα δ᾽ Αἰδέσιος περικείρατο βόστρυχον ἀμφὶς ἐκ κεφαλῆς γενυός τ᾽ ἱερεὺς γὰρ ἔην ἀμενηνῶν εἰδώλων.

[483] Contra Castelli, 1991.

[484] Aedesius cuts his hair and beard because these were physical manifestations of his position as pagan priest.

The second mention of hair is part of a scene that depends heavily on the sexual tensions of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, but its presence, although part of the character development of Justa and Aglaidas, reinforces the differences between Justa and Thecla. After Justa's initial rejection of Aglaidas, the rejected lover attacks her, but she defends herself with aplomb (I.10-14). That the narrator alludes to Thecla's assault on Alexander is unquestionable since she explicitly says so (Θέκλης ἀντιθέης τὸν ὁμὸν δρόμον ἐκτελέουσα, "she ran the same course as glorious Thecla," I.14). Yet whereas Thecla tears Alexander's clothing and throws down his crown, Justa's assault is decidedly more physical: she throws Aglaidas to the ground, claws at this cheeks and hair, rends his clothes, and makes him an object of ridicule. Justa goes well beyond Thecla's encounter with Alexander; she adds injury to Thecla's insult, as it were. The physical attack Aglaidas suffers at the hand of his would be prey leads him to hire Cyprian's services. Just as in the case of the conflict between Alexander and Thecla, Justa's battle with Aglaidas transitions to her next great trial, the three-fold demonic attack.

Justa's physical domination of her attacker is more vivid than Thecla's; her predator is made to lay supine, a position of submission and physical, not to mention sexual, vulnerability. His face and hair are disfigured as is his clothing. At the end of the encounter, Aglaidas is no longer the same; he has been humiliated and made effeminate.

The shamed "girly-man" continues his pursuit which is now motivated by anger (χωόμενος, I.16), not sexual desire, although he is still described as love-sick (I.22). Since he is unable to physically dominate Justa, he must dominate her on the spiritual plain which may allow him to tame her body. In this case, hair symbolizes social drama: Aglaidas finds himself outside typical gender roles because a girl has asserted her physical dominance over him. Justa, on the other hand, experiences no social drama. She remains as she was prior to the attack, and her demonstration of hyper-feminine strength does not alter her way of life. She is still associated with the *oikos* and returns to the house of God after her encounter with Aglaidas (I.15). Although Aglaidas experiences some social drama, he also maintains the same course of action, the corruption of the girl.

5.2.2 Clothing

Not only are spiritual and social changes symbolized by the cutting of one's hair, change in dress is also a viable metaphor for social and spiritual transition.[485] The narrator of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* makes this explicit: ἀναζωσαμένη καὶ ῥάψασα τὸν χιτῶνα εἰς ἐπενδύτην σχήματι ἀνδρικῷ ἀπῆλθεν ἐν Μύροις.[486] As we have seen, Thecla marked her initial attempt to join Paul's entourage by cutting her hair; to mark her second attempt to join Paul she dons masculine clothing. Surprisingly, when Thecla finds Paul and is sent out as a missionary, the activity that will characterize her journey (teaching the gospel, 41.6) is prohibited in the genuine Pauline as well as in the so-called Pastoral epistles.[487] By wearing men's clothing, Thecla is supernaturally equipped to do "men's work," despite cultural and scriptural prohibitions. In other words, she has successfully transitioned from feminine mores (house and home) to the world of men (itinerant proselytizing). This motif recurs in many late antique hagiographies, especially when women join anchoritic men in the desert.[488]

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[485] See Coon, 1997, 52-70.

[486] *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 40.3-4.

[487] I Cor. 14:34; I Tim. 2:9-15. For a fourth century reading of these passages, see John Chysostom, *Homilies on First Corinthians* 37, and *Homilies on Timothy* 9.

The clothing motif in early Christian narratives has been explained as a device for describing control over self and others. To be denuded against one's will is the most obvious example of this motif: Perpetua and her fellow martyrs upon entering the arena are stripped,[489] an act which reinforces the dominance of their captors as well as the vulnerability of the combatants.[490] A variant of this motif is the forced exchange of clothing when one is about to enter the arena; in preparation for Thecla's second confrontation with the beasts, her captor's strip her and clothe her in a girdle. To be sure, there was also a practical purpose behind the costumes used for prisoners sentenced to the arena, but by refusing to wear these costumes, Perpetua and her companions maintain some control over themselves and, to a degree, over their captors who find themselves unable to force the prisoners.[491] Control in the midst of chaos recurs in the *Martyrdom of Perpetua*; Perpetua covers her breasts even at the moment of her death, thereby preserving her chastity, and in an act of supreme control, she guides the executioner's hand as he deals the final blow–she directs her martyrdom to the very end.[492]

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[488] For examples from other Christian narratives, see Coon, 1997.

[489] *Passio Sanctarum Martyrum Perpetuae et Felicitatis* 6.3.

[490] The latter is evidenced by the pity aroused among the spectators when denuded women enter the arena.

[491] I am not suggesting here that the narrative relates a historical reality; the manipulation of a well-known practice has, in my opinion, a primarily rhetorical function.

[492] Perkins, 1994, 844-845.

On the other hand, to forcefully remove or tear another's clothes is tantamount to complete domination. When attacked by Alexander, Thecla responds by tearing her assailant's cloak and throwing his crown to the ground. Justa, as we have already seen, goes one step further: she scratches his face, tears out his hair, and rips his clothing. This act of domination ironically undermines the male character–he is humiliated and, at least in the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian*, made effeminate. Since a woman has forcibly ripped his clothing, Aglaidas moves to the periphery of Antiochene society, whereas Justa remains stably under the purview of house and church. Unlike the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* where the Thecla cross-dresses and becomes male, the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian* never uses the clothing motif in the context of female social reversals, only male ones. Justa is always characterized as a women; she moves about in female contexts, and expresses female concerns. Any social transgression in the *Conversion* is significantly different from that evidenced in other early Christian texts in which holy women dress as men and spend their lives in monastic communities.

5.2.3 Physical attributes

In the descriptions of late antique holy women, particularly ascetic anchorites, the neglected body is a recurring image. The first sign of a penitant women who is about to enter a monastic community is a rejection of feminine accoutrements (cosmetics, jewelry, and opulent clothing), which symbolize vanity and pride. Since these women have done away with traditional feminine attire, they are quite often mistaken for men. Moreover, it is not uncommon for the women in these narratives to carry weights on their backs in order to better identify with the sufferings of Christ and, as a result, they develop hunches. Just as their male counterparts, these holy women subsist on meager diets, and the narrators of their lives eagerly relate how prolonged fasts, intermittently dispersed with "bread only" meals, had a profound effect on their bodies. They describe in great detail the physical appearance of holy women, more often than that of men. This is part of a greater development during late antiquity to reduce feminine virtue to physical appearance; for example, wearing jewelry and fine clothing were reminders of sin, particularly pride, and the rejection of such finery took on a didactic function in hagiographies.[493]

And yet there is a time and a place in hagiography for social inversions–typically after conversion and in a remote area, preferably the desert. As Christian asceticism evolved and developed at the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth centuries, ascetic praxis became increasingly associated with the desert, whereas opulent living had its home in the cities. Hidden abodes, camelhair clothing, and periods of intense fasting along with the occasional self-flagellation were the monk's cup of tea, while large basilicas, adornments of gold and silver, and elaborate tables were the concern of the urban bishop.[494] But there is a sense of reality behind these rhetorical tropes; for example, Jerome entered the ascetic life and relocated to the wilderness.

Ascetic practice in the *Confession* is limited to an isolated incident, but the scene is unusual and merits attention. When Satan attempts to seduce Justa, he takes on the guise of a contemporary maiden, observes that Justa looks like a corpse, and asks her what reward there is for the chaste life, a sun-scorched living and a bone-dry table. The language here incorporates a few key anchoretic qualities and appropriates them for Justa: a disfigured body, exposure to the sun, and a meager diet. Although the narrative nowhere describes Justa as withered or decrepit–indeed she is always beautiful, youthful, and energetic–Satan describes her as lifeless, on the very brink of death. We are to imagine a Justa who has been neglecting her physical needs, specifically food in addition to clothing, jewelry and cosmetics. Satan characterizes her diet as a dry table, implying that it was neither elaborate nor sufficient. Furthermore, Justa is exposed to the elements and has taken on a ruddy appearance (sun-scorched), thereby abandoning her heritage as a female aristocrat as well as the comforts of house and home.

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[493] Coon, 1997, 36-41.

[494] This dichotomy between bishop and monk is more certainly partially rhetorical. Following the tradition that segregated country from city, Christian communities in the countryside, particularly those that intentionally sought the tranquility of the wilderness, increasingly viewed themselves as the opposite of their urban brethren, and vice versa.

What makes this section so remarkable is that an anchoretic Justa occurs nowhere else in the *Conversion*. She prays during the night, at set hours, but the text never suggests an emaciated, androgynous maiden. Although anchoritic women in hagiographies, even the most physically decrepit, still elicit sexual advances from men, this is hardly how the *Confession* flows. Justa regularly moves to and from the house of God, but she remains securely in her father's house, not in a convent. It is as a typical pious maiden that Justa becomes victim of Aglaidas' advances. Therefore, the anchoretic imagery is out of place and paints a picture of a Justa who is at the same time an urban and rural Christian.[495] Moreover, the ascetic Justa comes not from the mouth of the primary narrator, but from a secondary one, Satan, who engages in misinformation in rapid succession. The reader is left to make sense of Satan's deceptive questions and, I suggest, misleading observations. In fact, by characterizing her as an anchorite, the demon attempts to draw Justa out from her urban domicile into the desert. Ambiguous language assists the purposes of both primary and secondary narrator; when Justa is the most liminal, she is the most vulnerable.[496]

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[495] Were this text not from an urban, female Christian, Satan's description of Justa might be explained as an interpolation by the monastery to explain Justa's piety, which they could characterize only with ascetic language. That this has come from the pen of a woman and an urban one at that warrants a reevaluation on the monastic control on late antique hagiography.

If one reads this section in light of its place in the narrative, Satan's description of an anchoretic Justa is not primarily descriptive but rather functions as a rhetorical device to draw the maiden outside. The primary narrator stresses the maiden's chastity, but never with ascetic and barren imagery. By placing Justa between city and desert, inside and outside, Satan nearly succeeds in luring the maiden away from the safety of her house and into the wild and demonically controlled "outside." This dichotomy between inside and outside, the security of the *oikos* and the threats of the demonic world, requires us to elucidate the social and domestic role of women in Christian narratives and how Eudocia manipulated a common trope to create a narrative that would be, on the one hand, understandable to her audience and, on the other, unique.

5.3 Gender as social determinant

As one might expect, the role of extraordinary women in early Christian narratives is a much discussed topic, with nearly as many theories as scholars. Such narratives have been explained as liberation pieces,[497] intended to free women from the confines of patriarchal authority, or as a means to reinforce the social hierarchy, now centered around religion, not hearth and home.[498] Women in these narratives, despite their differences with women of the past, are generally predictable–for the most part, their responsibilities consist of prayer, hard work, and celibacy. The holy woman, who has left the confines of her home, does not as a rule engage in the same transient lifestyle as anchoretic men who travel to the wilderness, live in caves, and battle demonic powers.[499] Women, particularly those represented in hagiographies of the fifth and sixth centuries, can reside in the desert, but their abode is typically a house where, for the most part, they remain and rarely, if ever, battle demons.[500]

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[496] I will elaborate on this theme in the section on *locus* in the narrative.

Justa never even leaves the confines of her paternal house and, unlike Thecla and Perpetua, never experiences freedom from traditional patriarchy. As we have seen, her conversion is defined and determined by that of her father, which prevents tension between family members. Eudocia's characterization of Justa moves beyond this *topos* in early Christian literature. Early *vitae* and *acta* reorient women under clerical authority or describe them as the property of a divine husband. While the *Conversion* explicitly describes Justa as the suitor of Christ, she remains within her father's household. Only at the end of the book is she removed, although not in the clearest of terms, from her father's authority and made a deaconess. While other Christian narratives such as the *Acts of Paul*

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[497] See Aubin, 1998.
[498] For example, Coon, 1997, 72-73, examines the role of clothing, particularly the veil, as a symbol of subservience in Christian fictions, and yet she elucidates how these same fictions overturned classical social mores, (93-105).
[499] This comes from Coon, 1997, 74-80.
[500] Read this way, the life of Pelagia is the antithesis of the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian*. See Miller, 2005.

and Thecla and the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* create an immediate breach between family and holy woman, Eudocia's Justa remains in her familial position which, as we will see, serves as a means of protection. Indeed, when Justa leaves the confines of hearth and home, she is vulnerable to human and demonic assaults.

On the other hand, Justa battles demons and beats up Aglaidas, which, according to Coon, is the preserve of holy men, not women.[501] In other words, Justa is unique in two ways. First, unlike most female characters in early Christian literature, she remains in her father's house and is bound, as it were, to a newly converted patriarch. Second, from the ostensibly protective confines of her father's house, Justa battles a series of increasingly powerful male demons. As we have seen, Justa conquers her foe with the *signum crucis*, which, although not always explicitly mentioned during the battle, is always the specified cause of victory. To be sure, Justa's role in the first two spiritual encounters is generally passive. In the first she senses a plot against herself, and through her prayers and the *signum crucis*, the demon, whose entry into the domicile is never explicitly mentioned, abandons his plan and returns to Cyprian. The second encounter is over before it begins. Justa is penitently in prayer, and because of this the demon flees; only when he relates the events to Cyprian does the demon mention the *signum crucis*. The final encounter is the most detailed and elaborate; Satan, disguised as a maiden, attempts to deceive and lure Justa from the safety of her house. Overall, the confrontations between Justa and Satan and his demons differ from other anchoretic encounters in early Christian literature. For example, St. Anthony frequently faced demons, but those episodes typically focus on his conversations with the demons and the torments he experienced at their hands.

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[501] Coon, 1997, 77.

At the same time, Justa's role remains the traditional feminine triad: prayer, hard work, and celibacy. It is in prayer that she spends her evenings; it is on behalf of her chastity that she asks for God's protection; and it is her diligence in worship and other activities in the house of God that actually leads her into initial danger–Aglaidas first espies Justa as she travels to and from the church. After Justa expresses her desire to convert (I.53*-57*), she is repeatedly characterized as a pious and virtuous woman who engages in prayer (I.58*; I.63-92; I.110-131; I.170; I.174-178; I.211; I.235), attends services in the house of God (I.91*; I.95*-96*; I.4;[502] I.15), performs other spiritual acts (I.56-57, singing in penitent position; I.110, performing vigils), and, above all, preserves her chastity (I.1-2; I.85-90; I.127-129; I.159-160; I.316-319). These actions are staple motifs of fifth century Christian narratives; even when the subject of the narrative was a converted prostitute, such as Pelagia and Mary of Egypt,[503] their sexual renunciation remains one of the central themes of their stories. Therefore, whereas Justa is presented as an extraordinary figure in the history of the church, even in comparison with other remarkable holy women, she fits securely in the framework of late antique hagiography. By blending tradition and innovation, Eudocia is able to create a heroine who is understandable yet innovative.

5.4 Locus as Power and Male Mediators

This balance between tradition and innovation brings us back to two themes that have been briefly discussed before, but warrant further attention, namely the *oikos* as *locus* of power, and the central role of typically male authority figures. As we have seen, the *oikos*, along with its associated patriarchy, recurs and develops throughout the *Conversion*. When the narrative opens, Justa overhears Praulius' sermon from the safety of her domicile, but, love-struck by his message, she desires to leave the confines of the house to see Praulius face to face. Her desire spurned, Justa does not rebel or leave her house, as Thecla did; she returns to her room and sings songs of praise to God. Yet when Aedesius is converted, he leads the entire family from their abode to the house of God, an act which initiates their spiritual journey: together they convert and join God's family.

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[502] It is implied here that Justa is at church and Aglaidas will attempt to rape here there.
[503] For more on Mary of Egypt, see Connor, 2004.

From the time of her conversion, Justa habitually travels between Aedesius' house and the church. As we have seen, this liminal position makes Justa vulnerable to Aglaidas' gaze, desires and eventual rape. After she victimizes her would-be assailant, Justa returns to her customary behavior, worship at the church. By the time Cyprian is involved in the treachery, Justa has returned home, a *locus* that Cyprian must first control with magic. He sends the first demon with an herb to encircle her room and the second with a potion used to bind the entire house. The dichotomy between inside and outside is even more pronounced in the third confrontation; Satan attempts to lead Justa outside her house (I.166-167), which implies that had the maiden left her house, she would be at the demon's mercies. Fortunately, Justa realizes that Satan is actually a demon in disguise, and she expels him from the *oikos*. The *oikos* serves here as symbolic *locus* of power, feminine power no less, and Justa's chastity depends on the preservation of the *oikos*.[504] At the beginning of the *Conversion*, threats to Justa's virtue occur when she leaves the safety of her domicile (or the house of God).[505] As the narrative progresses, demonic threats enter her house, and the heroine has the ability to combat these threats only as long as she remains in her *oikos*.

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[504] For more on the role of the *oikos* in other Christian narratives, see Coon, 1997, 76.

Not only is Justa protected and, indeed, defined by the *oikos*, she always remains under the protection of a male figure. Aedesius is introduced in the narrative at the same time as Justa, and she never transgresses his authority. Initially, her interest in learning more about Christ is detained until her father converts, and during her father's conversion Justa's conversion is mostly ignored. The reader is confronted with Aedesius' actions: his journey to the house of God, his education as a neophyte, his baptism, and finally his rapid advancement to the position of deacon. To prevent the reader from forgetting that Justa is present, the narrator emphasizes–at the end of the conversion scene–how regularly she went to the house of God. If extraordinary women in early Christian narratives overthrow one authority figure for another,[506] Justa does not foot the bill. After her conversion, she spends her Christian life attending church. During her walks to church, Aglaidas espies her and desires to marry her, but his proposal, which would have transferred Justa from Aedesius' authority to Aglaidas', is rejected. Like Thecla's Thamyris, a scorned Aglaidas seeks retribution by hiring Cyprian to work his magic. When Cyprian's attempts fail, Justa remains under the authority of her father, just as at the beginning of the story. Only at the end of the *Conversion* do the lives of the bishop Cyprian and Justa, now named Justina, intertwine; the maiden is so inextricably bound to

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[505] Or by leaving the domestic boundary, the heroine's beauty seduces men, causing them to make attempts against her chastity. See Coon, 1997, 76.

[506] Coon, 1997, 82-89, argues that female characters in hagiographies nearly always derive their spiritual identities from a male figure.

Cyprian that they will be martyred together. Before we turn to the deaths of Justina and Cyprian, i.e. the *Martyrdom* proper, the converted magician must first explain his life to the Antiochene Christians. This speech comes to us as book two of Eudocia's work, the *Confession*.

Appendix: The *Conversion*

Proem

1* When God in heaven brought light to earth
and the true voice of wondrous men was accomplished,[507]
a life-producing radiance filled the whole earth
through the words of (other) prophets, the evangelists.
5* For all vigorous men embraced one God,
the heavenly father, lord of all, and his son.
And they were washed with water in the name of the Holy Spirit
from their many sins with which their bodies had been entirely sullied.

Narrative Proper

Once upon a time, there was a venerable maiden, Justa by name.
10* Her father was Aedesius and her mother, Cledonia,
from the majestic city which Antiochus founded.
Near that city, is a field, crowned with laurel,[508] pleasant to behold,
and mighty cypress trees wave their boughs,
and silver drops of holy Castalia drip.
15* There was a certain man there, Praulius, the bearer of Christ,[509]

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[507] i.e. the words of the prophets were fulfilled.
[508] Daphne, the suburb of Antioch and key site for the cult of the martyrs.

a very holy man, a wise minister of God
who was crowned with good cheer[510] and faith,
and studied the prophetic books, always singing
the good faith and the holy voice of the prophets.
The noble maid continuously heard from him–
for there was a light-bearing[511] window nearby–while she looked from her chamber
into the house of the man appointed minister,
the great acts of God and the body
that the immortal took on, and the message of the great and noble prophets,
and the travail of the renowned and glorious virgin Mary
and of the Magi, how they kissed the glorious son of
God with a beautiful star shining when it
revealed him, lying in a manger, to the inspired magi with its beams,
and the truth and the heavenly citizens'
divinely orchestrated sound of amazing praise of the Lord,
and the awesome power of the divine cross, and how
a mortal race emerged from the dead after Christ suffered,
and when, after his death, he met his disciples,
how he related the things ordained for each of his followers,
and how he returned to his eternal father's house

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[509] Χριστοφόρος was a common adjective in the patristic period and could be used of Christians generally (Ign. *Eph*.9.2; Ath. *Ar*.3.45; Cyr. of Jer. *Catech*.22.3) or of those with special relationships with God, saints, apostles, martyrs (Ath. *Gent*.5; Eus. *H.e*.8.10.3 Gr.Nyss. *Steph*.2).
[510] ὅστις ἐϋφροσύνῃ κεκορυθμένος. Although both εὐφροσύνη and κορύσσω are well attested Homeric words and were quite common in the early poets, the juncture is unhomeric. In fact, εὐφροσύνη is never attested in the *Iliad* while this particular form of κορύσσω is used almost exclusively in the *Iliad* (only two attestations of the participial form in the *Odyssey*). While the former word is well attested in later Greek literature, including the Septuagint and the New Testament, κορύσσω appears to have fallen out of poetic usage. This might be Eudocia's Homeric influence put to good use. In other words, she uses Homeric vocabulary to describe a Christian idea (contra *Psalm* 15:11 and *Acts of the Apostles* 2:28).
[511] While it is certainly possible that the window referred to had glass in it, it is unlikely because Justa would not have been able to hear Praulius' message. Glass windows are well attested in Britain from the third century, and it is quite likely that glass windows were popular at that time in Palestine, since that area was responsible for most of the glass produced in the Mediterranean. See Harden, 1968 and 1969; and Engle, 1987, 79-83.

and sat on the throne to his right and in the position of authority.

The arrow of divine love put (all) this into the heart of the maiden,
and she was no longer able to hide her burning passion within
but desired to see the appearance of the very pious man
40* as well as to learn the whole truth from his mouth.
And when she (did not find a dream), she said to her dear mother,
"Listen to your little girl, mother.
Trusting false and wretched demons, we are in distress.
They are made of stone and from fresh hewn trees
45* and burnished gold or radiant silver
and made from the white bones of dead animals[512]
by the hands of vigorous men. If someone
from the race of Israel would come near, he would publicly
smash them with his words and prayers without even lifting a finger."
50* But (her mother) grew angry; thinking things dear to demons,
she said, " – – – let this counsel (idea) never
come to your father's ears." (Justa) immediately responded,
"My dear mother, know this along with father, who is in opposition to God,[513]
that since I have been stung in my heart by the love of God,
55* I search for Christ his son, who, according to the words of his Father,
rules over long life and eternity–
the only-begotten son, the great Christ is always near."
And when she said these things, she went back to her house,
as is customary, to speak intimately with the immortal Christ.

And when dark night covered the paths of the earth,
60* the mother and father of the wise child, Justa,
(the text is missing some lines here)

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[512] i.e. ivory.
[513] Literally anti-God, which can interpreted as in God's place, i.e. a god to her, or merely inimical to God.

And first, the dear and shrewd spouse addressed him,
relating to him the whole truth about the girl.
In the silent night they fell asleep at the hour
65* which by force poured upon them sweet sleep.
And in their sleep, angels stood gathered round,
and they saw men in their house, more than a hundred,
bearing torches, and Christ, standing in the middle of (the angels),
speaking to them, "Come, both of you,
70* close to me, so that I give to you the right to heaven."
The gates of Aedesius's eyes were loosed,
and fleeting, anxiety-banishing sleep left the man,
and because he had been terrified, Aedesius (bless him) jumped up.
He took his dear wife along with the respected girl
75* in his hands and went to the holy house of God,
going there with the faithful and righteous Praulius,
until he came before the priest of Christ,
the famous Optatus,
and earnestly accomplished the affair: at once with his feet he trampled
80* his idol, and everyone began to pray in unison
that they would receive the seal of eternal life from the one carrying out the sacred rite.
But he (Optatus) did not give his assent until he learned about the
divine prophecy and the desire of the respected maiden for Christ.
And Aedesius immediately cut his hair on both sides
85* from his head and chin–for he was a priest of powerless
demons. They did not leave the one carrying out the sacred rite behind
until they received the blameless seal
and Aedesius obtained the position of presbyter,
which he embraced for twelve whole months plus six
90* and then he left human cares behind (i.e. died).
The zealous child went to the houses of God unceasingly.

There was a certain Aglaidas a wealthy man,
extremely well born, who excelled in cunning and
whose heart was possessed by the lawless desire for idols.
Upon seeing the very lovely maiden habitually rushing to
the houses of almighty God, he was distracted in his thoughts,
and he sent many men and women as well,
begging her parents that he would marry
the holy maid to share his bedchamber.
But she grievously was accustomed to send away all the young men and women,
because she established the Lord Christ as her only suitor.
But (Aglaidas) gathered a crowd, since he intended
to defile the holy maiden by force among the Lord's seats.[514]
Those who were following her shouted greatly,
and everyone rushed out of the rooms with weapons
and forthwith caused Aglaidas' oncomers to disappear.
But because he held pure lust in his heart
and as if struck with blindness, he hid himself to try to grab the girl.
But she immediately performed the powerful sign of Christ,
threw the wretch forthwith on his back, and with her hands tore
Aglaidas' body as well as his cheeks with their curly foam.
She rent his beautiful clothes and in all she caused laughter,
since she ran the same course as glorious Thecla.
After she did these things, she returned to the house of God.

But Aglaidas grew angry and requested of an evil man,
Cyprian, the counseler of impious magic,
offering to him two talents of gold
and of shining silver, that he compel by force
the maiden, however unwilling she be, to consent to amatory activity–

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[514] This most likely refers to the church.

Aglaidas did not know the power of Christ, the untiring one.
Because the magician pitied the wretch, with an invocation
he quickly summoned an irksome, evil-working demon.
When he quickly arrived, he said, "Why do you call on me? Speak."
Aglaidas said, "The love for one Galilean girl
has tamed me terribly in my heart. Tell me, whether you are
powerful enough to bring her to my bed, for I deeply desire her."
The dimwitted adversary agreed to give that which should not be hoped for.
And Cyprian immediately addressed the villain,
"Tell me your deeds, so that I might have confidence."
And the demon answered, "I was once the best of the angelic ranks,
but in obeying my father, I abandoned the highest Lord
of the seven-vaulted sphere. All that I have done,
you shall know: I will relate it. The foundations of the pure heaven
through my wickedness I myself shook up and divided in two;
I cast an array of the heavenly host to earth;
in turn, I deceived Eve, the mother of mortals, by force;
I separated Adam from delightful paradise;
I myself made the hand of Cain fratricidal;
I drenched the earth with blood, and it (the earth) bears thorny
and meager fruit for the race of mortals all because of me.
I accomplished wonders inimical to God–I made
adulterous beds, I beguiled the human mind
to worship feeble idols, and I revealed to men
how to make a sacrifice to a horrid bull.
I myself urged the Hebrews destructively to stretch on a cross
the mighty Word of God, the eternal Son.[515]
I have confounded cities and thrown down their high walls.
By dancing a jig, I derail many marriages with strife.

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[515] ἄναρχον is very commonly used in reference to God (see citation in Lampe for the multitude of citations). By the middle of the fifth century, ἄναρχον referred to God's divine nature.

Since I have accomplished all these evils and countless others,
how will I not also obtain this holy, sagacious maiden?"

And Cyprian said to the baneful demon, the rejoicer in evil,
"Take this herb and in a circle sprinkle the room
of the daughter of Aedesius; I will come later
and place her father's mind into her heart.
And in a trance she will obey whatever you want."
At that same time, the pious maiden, with her face to the ground,
in the third hour of the night sang of the noble God.
But when the girl deep in her heart began to tremble
and she perceived in her mind's eye the evil worker's treachery,
she burned with fire in both her kidneys and quickly set her thoughts on
the Lord, whom she constantly longed for. Then with her hand she forthwith made
the sign of the cross over her whole body and said lovingly,
"Lord of all, glorious God, father of the immaculate child,
Jesus Christ, you who bound the Tartarean,
serpentine monster into its shadowy abode,
dearest Lord, you saved all those whom the serpent imprisoned in fetters.
With your hand you have delineated the stellar heaven and
in the midst of chaos you have firmly situated the earth on a watery foundation.[516]
You supplied fiery brands to Titan's progeny,
you yoked the silvery moon to the night,
entirely in your image you fashioned mortal man
whom you enjoined to satisfy themselves in the garden's pleasure.
But by the advice of the most shameful beast, the serpent,
man was separated from the wooded plain, but once again you
sought him out and preserved his life, Lord, thanks to your compassionate heart.

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[516] That Eudocia is here presenting a detailed cosmology, like that of Cosmas Indicopleustes, is questionable. This is most likely a poetic rendering of *Genesis* 1:9, because the context of the line is an account of creation.

Through your cross you cured his punishment,
and in the name of Christ you have cleansed all his sufferings (sins).
For His sake, the whole earth that sustains mankind shines forth.
heaven has been firmly established, the earth has been fixed,
and waters pour forth–the whole course from beginning to end
knows that you are the ruler of all. Come, save
your servant by your mighty will; let shameful
disgrace not conquer me. O performer of lasting things, for your sake
I very much wish to remain a holy virgin always.
For I love you with all my heart, blessed Jesus,
my praiseworthy master. For you have kindled
a blazing torch of desire for you and placed it in my heart.
Therefore, never subjugate your servant to the hand
of your enemy, the abominable, lawless anti-God.
Blessed one, never allow me to transgress your decrees
but ward off the conceited sinner, the terrible sophist."

When she had said each of these things, she quickly
girt her body with the sign of God, and straightway set in flight
the grotesque demon with the name of Christ.
She completely routed the scoundrel.

But the demon in great shame returned to the magician
whereupon Cyprian inquired, "Where is the girl
whom I bid you bring here in all haste?"

And the enemy replied, "Do not ask me everything precisely,
for when I saw the terrible sign, I became afraid."
But the magician smiled, with faith in nefarious deeds,
and once again, he called another dreaded demon, Beliar.
He said to Cyprian, "I have learned your command

and this one's dismal failure; therefore my father has sent me
as an aide to your distress." The magician, immediately pleased by this,
answered, "This is the plan, demon: the entire house of the holy maiden
bind with a potion. And I will go behind you.
I intend immediately to persuade her." He went on his way, but the most holy,
reverent maiden was praying through the middle of the night
to the Lord and issued forth these words from her mouth,
"In the middle of the night I rose from my bed
to confess, o great one, the sins I have committed
before your justice and unerring judgment.
Ruler of creation, endless giver of mercy,
lawgiver and ruler of the heavenly host,
before whom the earth quakes and who overthrows
and shames the strength of the nefarious anti-God, you who
received the sacrifice of father Abraham as a great hecatomb,
you who threw down Baal and slew the dragon
and through your pious servant, Daniel,
taught the whole Persian race your divinity,
through the only-begotten Christ, your son,
you set everything right and established your light on earth
and after his death you led dead people back into the light.
I beg you, Lord, do not allow me to come upon evils
but guard my body, Lord, so that it may forever be unharmed
and provide for me the burning torch of virginity
that I might know the bridal chamber with my husband,
Christ, and I will honor the vows I made–
for His is the power and glory together with honor, amen."

While she prayed each of these things, the demon
with eyes cast down with shame fled because of her courage.
He returned to the magician, and Cyprian

asked him, "Tell me demon, where is she whom I bid you
lead here, the girl?" The demon answered,
"The sign (of the cross), which I saw, conquered me with its power–
it (the sign) is a thing entirely horrible to everyone, overwhelming and
unbearable."

Then Cyprian called another demon, more powerful still,
the one who ruled all the others and who was the father of dark-eyed (creatures).
He said to the demon, "Have you yielded, since you are a nobody, feeble one?"
And the demon bravely answered him, "In a moment, I will bring
that maiden to you–better be ready."
Cyprian retorted, "Give me a sign
that by doing so you are close to victory."
The demon said, "First I will confuse her members with fevers.
Then after the sixth day when I have terrified her once again,
at night I will bring her to you quite ready."

The insolent one went and stood before the holy maiden
taking the guise of another young woman, similar in dress.
He sat on her bed and deceptively said,
"I have arrived, from this very morning
enjoying with you lovely virginity, when indeed
Christ the Lord sent me forth in order to make me perfect.[517]
So, dear friend, tell me this: what sort of reward is there
for lovely virginity and what kind of payment is offered
–I see that you are similar to a corpse–
for a sun-scorched lifestyle and a table dry as a bone?"
The revered maiden replied, "The (immediate)
prize is negligible, but a greater reward follows."
The plotter of evil himself said, "Was not Eve a virgin

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[517] or "in order to initiate me."

in the plain of paradise with Adam?
But later when she had intercourse in the bed
of the first-born, Adam, she was proclaimed the mother of children.
As a result she begat the race of all mortals,
and she learned all good things." At that very moment Justa was about
to be persuaded by the demon and go outside,
and the insufferable (demon) went out in front of the child gleefully.
But when she perceived the crafty enemy's deceit,
she again turned her thoughts to prayer, immediately signed
her body with the cross, issued a call from her mouth,
and cast the blameworthy, weighty demon from the house.
Breathing a bit after the commotion, she said,
"I thank the immortal one: a fiery disease was extinguished."
She prayed, "Christ, controlling your gift,
hold together my body that fears you, o great one.
In your justice have pity upon me again and make
your name carry honor."

The enemy returned once again
to the magician, downcast, put to terrible grief.
And Cyprian struck him (the demon) with reproaches,
"Surely you did not fear the sight of a young quick-glancing woman,
did you? Since you have seen it, tell me how great is her strength."
The enemy said, "Neither ask nor inquire of me.
I am unable to relate what sort of sign I beheld.
Trembling terribly, I turned tail and fled forthwith.
If you wish to learn more, swear a great oath."
Cyprian answered and asked, "What sort of oath should I swear?"
The demon answered, "by all the powers
that I have and which I control." Cyprian heard it and immediate swore
that he would never abandon the arrogant one. Emboldened, the demon

said, "Having seen the sign of the cross of the crucified Christ
I turned and fled." Cyprian responded,
"Come now, tell me, is he far stronger than you?"
The adversary answered, "listen to me, and I will tell you the truth:
All the things we do here in shameful sin,
handing mortal men over to error,
is befitting for us all. But in yonder life
there is a curved instrument of bronze which
lies aflame in their midst; whoever sins,
mortal or angel, the heavenly beings with it
immediately bear him to the judgment seat of Christ who was crucified."

And Cyprian enjoined, "Come now, go away, for I am
quickly falling in love (with him); oblige me speedily. I
desire him who loved the cross so that I not suffer similar things."
The putrid demon replied, "After swearing a great oath
do you care to break it?" Cyprian answered, "Tell me, wretch,
what sort of oath have I now sworn to you?" The demon said,
"(An oath) by my strong powers." The magician responded,
"I am in fear neither of you nor your deeds, hostile one,
since on this night I have learned from you the whole truth
because of the maiden's prayers and holy entreaties
and because of the mighty cross.[518] You are very impotent.
For that reason, I will now place on my limbs the powerful sign
which you admit is indeed effectual.
I also reject your friendship thereby renouncing your counsels."
When he said these things, Cyprian immediately gave honor to Christ
and drove away the shameful demon saying, "Be gone.
I call upon Christ." The enemy left straightway.

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[518] For more on the role of the *signum crucis*, particularly against demons see Dölger, 1929, 28; and 1932, 167, 194, and 241.

Cyprian gathered his magical books and loaded
them on the stout arms of youths to carry to the house
of the immaculate God. He himself followed behind the books.
When he fell before the feet of the godly priest,
Anthimos, Cyprian approached him and said,
"Servant of the celestial God, I desire
to enlist my heart in the army and book of Christ." The priest grew angry
and answered him, "Away with your wickedness.
Is it not enough for you, going away from us, to do the things
you wish? Stay away from the Lord's things
because the power of the Almighty is unconquerable."

Cyprian responded, "I have gotten to know this in my heart too
that Christ's power is effective and mighty,
because on this night against a holy girl I sent forth
hostile demons to ensnare the strong-minded girl's
good sense in deception's bonds.
But when she recognized them in her mind, through prayer and the sign of Christ
she powerfully conquered them. So bear with me; have pity on me.
Respect your supplicant, o most blessed of men, receive
the books from which I, a sinner, accomplished a myriad of evils.
Destroy them in the fire and pity my soul."
When the priest was convinced, he took the books and destroyed them all.
Then he blessed Cyprian and sent him away with holy words
strongly encouraging him to enter the church of God.
And Cyprian returned home
and reduced to dust his images of useless idols
and all the gloomy night he whipped his body
saying, "How would I appear in the eyes of Christ
since I have done so many evils? How would I praise God

with my lips that I used to slight others,
even calling upon wretched demons?"
He scattered the fragments (of the idols) onto the ground and asked for God's
mercy near the ground in silence, since he was terribly afraid to raise his voice.

And when the bright, rosy-armed dawn
of the great Sabbath came, all the people were festive.
Then he came as an initiate of the mighty God to the august
gathering and humbly prayed,
"Lord, if I consider myself your worthy servant,
grant that I might enter your house and hear a word
from holy writ that bodes well (for me)."
And when he stepped into the threshold of the temple, David spoke,
the noble son of Jesse, "Behold, o Lord, do not cast me aside,
o Ruler, nor make it so that I am far from you."[519]
And immediately the great prophet Hosea said these things
under inspiration, "Therefore, make sure he is not a slave."[520] and again
David said, "My eyes are set
upon the shining dawn that drives away gloomy night,
so that I might always follow your divine words."[521]
In another passage Isaiah said, "May fear never trouble
your soul, my child and Jacob whom I love,
whom I selected to be the foremost of all the neighboring peoples."[522]
And Paul, speaking for God, said, "The Lord
Christ Himself has bought us out of the
turbulent curse coming from the previous law."[523] And again the prophet
David, best of lyre players, said, "Who could declare

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[519] *Ps*. 51:11. Ludwich suggests *Ps*. 35:22.

[520] *Hosea* 11:1? Ludwich, 1887, 43, points out that the prose version reads Ἠσαΐου not Ὠσηέ. If the citation comes from *Isaiah*, the proper reference is *Is*. 52:13.

[521] *Ps*. 119:148.

[522] *Is*. 44:1-2.

[523] *Gal*. 3:13.

the power of the immortal one and who could tell to every ear
the praises of the all-powerful one?"[524] Then the Lord's book
of divine words was read, then the priest's
address, and then the word of instruction to men was spoken,
"Exit the temple of God, o half-perfected ones."

But Cyprian remained in silence calmly in his seat,
and a certain deacon, Asterius, said to him,
"Exit the Lord's house." But Cyprian answered him,
"I am a servant of the crucified Christ; do you
drive me outside?" The deacon enjoined, "But you are
not yet a fully-initiated servant of the almighty God."
Cyprian in turn responded, "God is eternally alive,
who alone demonstrated wicked demons to be reproachful,
and saved the maiden, and had pity on my heart.
It is not lawful for me to leave this house
until I have come to faith in Christ."

When he learned these things, the attendant of God quickly went to the priest
to tell him the news. And next the priest summoned him and, as it was appropriate,
he told Cyprian many hard words
and asked him what he had done. And he (Anthimos) prayed so much that he
shook creation, which He had fashioned throughout the cosmos.
Finally, the priest purified him in the divine waters.
On the eighth day, he became a lector of the revered
books that speak of Christ. And on the twenty-fifth day,
he became a lesser deacon
and guarded the doors of the holy mystery.
Fifty days later, he was forthwith worthy

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[524] *Ps*. 106:2.

of the deaconship. With power he tamed
the ranks of the godless, the impudent, the lawless ones[525]
and healed the horrible diseases of men's limbs.
Indeed, he led into the flock of Christ many
who rejected the blinding faith of idols.
When a year was over, he came upon the equal chair
of priest, and for sixteen years
he waited for the seat of the then elder.[526]

Then the august bishop Antimus
summoned all the surrounding priests, i.e. from the nearby "seats."
When he had told them the will of Christ,
while still alive, he gave the see to Cyprian.
A little while later, Antimos went to heaven
and handed over the flock, which he led, to the glorious man (Cyprian).

While Cyprian was overseeing the glorious house of God,
he received the maiden, rewarding her with a deaconesship.
He no longer called her Justa, but he renamed
her Justina the blameless. He made her the mother of all
tender maidens, the servants of the great Christ.
And Cyprian saved many who had been led astray, the irreligious,
and persuaded them to long for Christ. He gathered (them) laboriously
into the flock of the leader who always has honor. Amen.

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[525] If the rank of the godless refers to demons, then the line suggests exorcisms and the like. On the other hand, if the rank of the godless refers to opponents of the church, perhaps it refers to heretics (pagans are mentioned in lines 304-305).

[526] Anthimos did not die yet, but associated Cyprian with his seat, which would be realized when the bishop died.

Chapter 4

The Homeric Christian as Narrator, Part II: The *Confession*

We have seen how the *Conversion* relies heavily upon and plays with the apocryphal *acta* of the second and third centuries; book two of the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian*, or the *Confession*, depends on entirely different sources. The narrative is so unique that the prose version has received some attention from scholars of the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*.[527] As we shall see, the *Confession* provides us with a wealth of information about how pagan (classical) cult was perceived and how magic and the occult were understood or, more commonly, misunderstood in late antiquity. As time went on and Christianity became a permanent fixture in the landscape of the empire, magic was increasingly associated with demonology, in the Christian sense, and as a result any description of sorcery could be elaborated upon with a description of the demons that made the rites effective. For this reason, parts of the *Confession* are similar to Milton's catalogue of demons in *Paradise Lost*. The prose *Confession* as well as Eudocia's poetic revision of it are not well known and addressed in few discussions of late antique religion.[528] Since Eudocia's version has often been relegated to footnotes or dismissive asides, a detailed summary of the narrative will be a use way to begin the discussion here.[529]

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[527] Nock, 1927; Nilsson, 1947; and Festugière, 1950.

[528] Note Graf's (1997) extended discussion of the *Confession*, which is as remarkable in its inclusion as other discussions are in their exclusion of the text. More recently, Martin, 2005, 126-129, has a good section on Cyprian.

[529] For a translation of the text, see the appendix at the end of this chapter.

The reader will remember that the *Conversion* ended with Cyprian taking up the bishopric of Antioch after the death of its previous holder, Antimus.[530] The narrative ends smoothly as Cyprian makes Justa, who has been renamed Justina, a deaconess in the church and "mother superior" for young Christian women, while he focuses his attention on conversions and apologetic manifestations among the Antiochene pagans.[531] The narrative, it seems, is already prepared to transition to the third part of the Cyprian legend, the *Martyrdom* proper. And yet when the second book opens with Cyprian's *Confession*, the narrative shifts abruptly. The introduction to his speech has either fallen out of the manuscript through scribal neglect or was left out by the narrator as unnecessary, perhaps even superfluous. This might not have been a problem for prose versions of the legend since they traveled in three independent accounts, *Conversion, Confession*, and *Martyrdom*, but for Eudocia's version which blends three accounts into one apparently unified narrative, the transition is awkward.[532] The reader expects Cyprian to continue as bishop of Antioch, since this is where the first book concluded. Yet from details in the *Confession* itself, it appears that Cyprian is a fresh convert and has yet to persuade the Antiochene Christians that a notorious magician is now a committed believer.[533] The *Confession* serves as a rhetorical *tour de force* as Cyprian attempts to convince his audience that he has left behind a life of sin, marked by demonic forces and attempts to control nature, for an eternal one of repentance and submission to Christ.

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[530] See the previous chapter on the *Conversion* for discussion on the historicity of Antimus (Anthimus).

[531] One gets a glimpse here of how later Christians imagined the transition from a pagan Antioch to a Christian one. Compare van Minnen, 2006.

[532] Not only is the transition between narratives awkward, but details in the various accounts will not agree with one another. To be clear, this is only an observation about Eudocia's version. This point will be discussed in greater detail below. That Eudocia intended for the three sections of the Cyprian account to be read as a unified whole can be deduced from the traditional division of epics into books. It stands to reason that the *Martyrdom* was an epic hagiography divided into three books, each with a contained narrative.

[533] Not unlike St. Paul who apparently had to persuade the first century Christians that a persecutor of the church was now a member of the same.

The *Confession* opens with the beginning of Cyprian's apology. His speech is addressed to two different groups which were presumably present: Christians, who were skeptical about the sincerity of Cyprian's conversion, and pagans, who were undoubtedly interested in hearing why a known pagan and magician would have become a Christian.[534] To the Christians (those who care about faith in Christ, II.1-2),[535] Cyprian points to his tears as a mark of his sincerity, while to the pagans (those who find pleasure in unseemly idols, II.5) he reveals the deceptions and worthlessness of idolatry. Although he describes himself as a man who had been entirely committed to the demonic cause, Cyprian's conversion influences every detail of his apology, and his Christian perspective is evident throughout the narrative: the demons are worthless (μαψιδίων), unseemly (ἀεικέσιν), brainless, and powerless (II.5 and 9-10).[536] That these adjectives reveal a post-conversion perspective is clear; indeed, the revelation that demonic *techne* is powerless before the *signum crucis* was the central motivation behind Cyprian's conversion.[537] Just as the Palestinian magician, Simon Magus, Cyprian's conversion is initially based on an experience of God's power.[538] On the other hand, unlike Simon Magus, whose attempt to misappropriate divine power led him to become an archetypal enemy of the apostles, particularly of St. Peter,[539] Cyprian reiterates how his conversion is not motivated by a desire to use the power of the cross selfishly.[540] These two themes, the genuineness of Cyprian's conversion and the impotence of Satan and his colleagues, run through the *Confession* and constitute the underlying force behind Cyprian's apology.

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[534] This opening is similar to the opening of the first recension of the Homeric centos; see Usher, 1999, 1. Perhaps this gives strength to the argument that the first recension of the cento has a discernable Eudocian hand. See chapter two, "The Homeric Christian at Play."

[535] I will use Roman numerals to distinguish between book one (the *Conversion*) and book two (the *Confession*).

[536] In fact, Cyprian, as secondary narrator in the *Confession* consistently characterizes demons with pejorative descriptors.

[537] The centrality of the *signum crucis* began quite early in the history of the church and among other things was the mark of becoming a Christian. See Cyr. of Jer. *Cat*. 13.36; Aug. *In Io. ed. tr.*118.5; and Dinkler, 1967.

Cyprian names himself in the eleventh line, where he sets off on his journey that lasts over thirty years and will take him from Greece proper through Asia Minor to the north of the Euxine Sea, as far south as Egyptian Memphis, and as far east as Babylon, and finally to Syrian Antioch where he will reside until his death in the early fourth century. The οὗτος ἐκεῖνος (II.11) implies notoriety; apparently Cyprian fashions himself as one who had a reputation for supernatural wonders.[541] To explicate how and where he learned the various skills needed to acquire a reputation as a magician, Cyprian begins with his childhood. When he was still a boy (κοῦρος), Cyprian's parents dedicated him to Apollo

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[538] *Acts of the Apostles* 8.9-25

[539] The incipient stages of the Simon Magus legend can be observed in the *Acts of the Apostles* (8:18-24) but the legend reaches its zenith in the *Acts of Peter* in which Simon Magus and St. Peter face off in battle of supernatural forces. Of course, Simon Magus' name was closely associated with early heresies, particularly Gnosticism. This tradition is absent in the *Acts of the Apostles*, which is to be expected from a first or second century narrative, as well as in the *Acts of Peter*, but it can be observed in Justin Martyr (*First Apology*, 26), Irenaeus (*Against the Heresies*, 1.23.1-4), Hippolytus (*The Refutation of all Heresies*, 6.11.1-19), and Clement (*Recognitions* 2.5.26-29). See Tuzlak, 2002, and Ferreiro, 2005.

[540] The theme of Cyprian's genuine conversion is observed also in the *Conversion,* most prominently in Cyprian's discussion with Antimos (I.321-339).

[541] While the majority of men and women who possessed magic arts, from binding and healing spells to the ability to divine the future through the inspection of entrails, the flight of birds, and an assortment of other means, are unknown to us, their notoriety was most likely limited to the village, town, or quarter of the city in which they practiced their trade. On the other hand, some magicians obtained considerable reputations.

(II.12).[542] Ostensibly, the young Cyprian learned sacred rites of the serpent, presumably Python, and the oracular responses associated with Pythian Apollo, but his words are quite ambiguous. The rites of the Beast[543] and the serpent are clear references to Satan; moreover, the serpent is described as one who travels on his stomach, a possible allusion to *Genesis* 3:14. The connection between Cyprian's early life and the fall is hardly accidental–Cyprian's involvement in demonic activity parallels the spiritual and moral trajectory of humanity since *Genesis* 3, and the deceptions of Satan and his demons, so prevalent in the *Martyrdom*, parallel the deceptions from the fall episode itself.[544] Cyprian equates pagan rites with demonic activity throughout the *Confession*, which accords with the *Confession*'s broader agenda. Apollo and his cult are the first of many traditional cults in which Cyprian was initiated; priority was give to Apollo perhaps because of his role in oracles and, by association, divination, a *techne* Cyprian will emphasize later.[545]

While in Athens, the seven year old Cyprian is initiated into the cult of Phaethon Mithras,[546] the first in a series of mystery cults in which Cyprian took part. That a magician would begin his training in the mystery cults might seem strange, but mystery cult and magic were commonly associated in the Greco-Roman tradition.[547] In fact, initiation in the occult is often described with language believed to be used by mystery religions.[548] At this time, Cyprian became an Athenian citizen, since it was pleasing to his parents (II.17) for him to do so. Before we examine the various cults in which Cyprian was active during his residency in Athens, we should address the role his parents played during the incipient stages of his education. In his early years, Cyprian's parents took the initiative to enroll him in various cults, or at least Cyprian made decisions based on their enthusiastic support. That boys were often accepted as apprentices to learn religious rites in general and magic arts in particular is well known[549] but the role of their parents is typically obscure.[550] Whether this has any bearing on actual practice is unclear. Regardless, Cyprian never uses his parents' involvement or enthusiasm to exculpate him; rather, his observations reiterate the importance of strong parental values.

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[542] Typically, *kouros* is used for adolescents, but there are examples of its use for children *in utero* (*Il.* 6.59). The context of the passage demands that *kouros* be taken as a boy younger than seven years.

[543] The enjambment between lines 13 and 14 makes the ambiguity more pronounced.

[544] We have observed this parallel between the *Martyrdom* and the fall account in the previous chapter; Satan's attempted deception of Justa also alluded heavily to *Genesis* 3.

[545] Nock, 1927, 411, suggests that the dedication to Apollo borrows from the tradition of Apollonius of Tyana. Interestingly, devotees of Mithras hypothesized that Apollo would eventually destroy the earth. On the other hand, it is equally likely that Apollo was the default god for talking about the pagan pantheon, i.e. when one does not know of any specific god.

[546] That it was a well known practice to dedicate children to Mithras is suggested by a fourth century inscription, see CIL 6.751b; Cumont, 1899, 2.93.9; and Nock, 1929, 411. Phaethon was commonly conflated with Mithras and should not, I think, be associated with Apollo here. See Cumont, 1927, 122-126, and Claus, 1990, 160-162. On the other hand, the Greek is a little strange; it reads Μιϑραίῳ Φαέϑοντι. The form Μιϑραῖος is not unknown in antiquity (see

During his time in Athens the adolescent Cyprian was initiated into a series of cults, which, despite their connection with the Olympian gods, have deep roots in the mysteries. The first was as torch bearer, δᾳδοῦχος, of Zeus[551] and soon afterwards as one of the

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P.Gurob. 22.10 and Callander, 1927, 239). Here Cyprian refers to the Mithraic Sun, a sanctuary to Mithras Phaethon, or, more likely the form was an error on the part of Eudocia and just refers to Mithras Phaethon. On the role of the Mithras cult in the Roman East, see Liebeschuetz, 1994, 197-198.

[547] Dickie, 2001, 116-117, 140.

[548] Dickie, 2001, 28-28, 73-74, and 116-117.

[549] Lucian *Alexander* 5. Dickie, 2001, 220-222.

[550] For example we know that parents could enroll their children to be eligible for the office of ὁ παῖς ἀφ᾽ ἐστίας; Clinton, 1974, 113.

[551] For more on the role of the δᾳδοῦχος in the cult of Zeus, see IG 1413, 1414; Toepffer, 1889, 49 and 87 n.4; and Lalonde, 2006, 118 (citing *Suda* Διὸς κῴδιον). The δᾳδοῦχος was most likely a role primarily fulfilled by an adult. From what little evidence we can gather about known

epheboi in the Eleusinian mysteries.[552] Cyprian also performed the serpentine initiations of the Acropolis Athena, a role that most likely consisted of feeding honey cakes to the sacred snake. In sum, during the first few years of his life, Cyprian held significant posts in the cults of Apollo, Mithras, Zeus, Persephone, and Athena, and his main responsibilities were associated with or similar to rituals pertaining to mystery cults.

Cyprian leaves Athens[553] as a temple servant (ζάκορος)[554] for Olympus (II.22),[555] where, he sees, hears, and learns a variety of supernatural activities. First, Cyprian hears the sound of many, perhaps divine, songs; second, he observes plants and roots[556] used by

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δᾳδοῦχοι, all of them were installed as adults. In fact, since the office typically alternated between one or two of the most aristocratic families in Athens, the honor was probably limited to the most senior eligible family member (Clinton, 1974, 67). If we are to take Cyprian at his word, and perhaps we should not, then he claims to have come from one of the most aristocratic families in Athens. This is further corroborated at the end of the *Confession* when Cyprian accuses Satan of having wasted all his parent's money (431-432). On the other hand, if an adolescent were to be involved in the cult of Zeus, it would be as ὁ παῖς ἀφ᾽ ἑστίας, the role of hearth initiate (Nock, 1927). The office was filled by lot, and it appears that all Athenian adolescents were eligible for the position. From the surviving literary and archaeological evidence, most hearth initiates fell between the ages of eight and fourteen. Unfortunately, since the lion's share of the evidence for hearth initiates comes from statue bases, and since every known example (59) comes from the Eumolpidae and Kerykes families (Clinton, 1974, 113), the clearly skewed data contributes to the picture that the office was maintained exclusively by Athenian "upper crust" families. Therefore, Clinton correctly suggests that the majority of Athenian hearth initiates, a group that included but was not comprised exclusively of the Athenian aristocracy, would not have had the resources to commemorate their service. See Esdaile, 1909, 3; Foucart, 1914, 277-281; and Clinton, 1974, 98-114.

[552] This is what is meant by Κόρης δ᾽ ἀργεννὸν ὑπέστην πένθος. On the white robe worn by the *Epheboi* in the procession which was reinstated by Herodas Atticus, see Münscher, 1912, 942.

[553] It should be kept in mind that for the most part, Eudocia follows the prose version for the *Confession*; in fact, Ludwich's edition of Eudocia's text uses the prose version to clarify some of the more difficult sections.

[554] A ζάκορος was more prestigious than a νεωκόρος.

[555] The prose version confuses Olympus and Olympia. The latter is commonly associated with a νάπος or a νάπη.

[556] See Scarborough, 1990.

demons, presumably toward odious ends.[557] The seasons, winds, and days that were useful for nefarious acts, did not escape his notice, and Cyprian claims to have seen cultic songs and a group engaged in violent rites.[558] During his first forty days in Olympus, Cyprian perceived an army of demons, which were sent forth throughout the earth to perform all sorts of evils. To symbolize his preparation, Cyprian takes up a torch[559] during a nocturnal rite and at the age of fifteen moves from primarily observing rituals to setting his hand to them. The responsibility of imparting knowledge to *neophytes* fell under the auspices of seven hierophants,[560] priests initially associated with the Eleusinian mysteries,[561] but eventually any expounder of mystical rites.[562] The hierophants taught Cyprian about demons, spirits, as well as divination, a skill we know hierophants from late antiquity were especially adept at.[563] Cyprian insists that his parents were very eager for him to learn everything on the earth, in the sky, and in the sea, a list which included "things" (the Greek is vague) pertaining to the destruction of men, things made from herbs and other plants,[564] things that oppress humans, and finally things that Satan discovered.[565] This final category appears to be used as a "catch-all;" anything and everything nefarious and diabolical is hence attributed to Satan.

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[557] At this point in his education, the youth just sees what plants are used, he does not engage in any magical practice. Practice is typically relegated to the later sections of his education, particularly in Egypt and Babylon.

[558] The rites of Ares are rather elusive and probably refer to acts of violence, generally, rather than a particular cult. Indeed, temple cults to Ares were rare until the Roman cult of Mars Ultor encouraged Athens to build a temple to Ares which was located in the Agora. For a complete discussion, see Farnell, 1909-1971, 5.396-414.

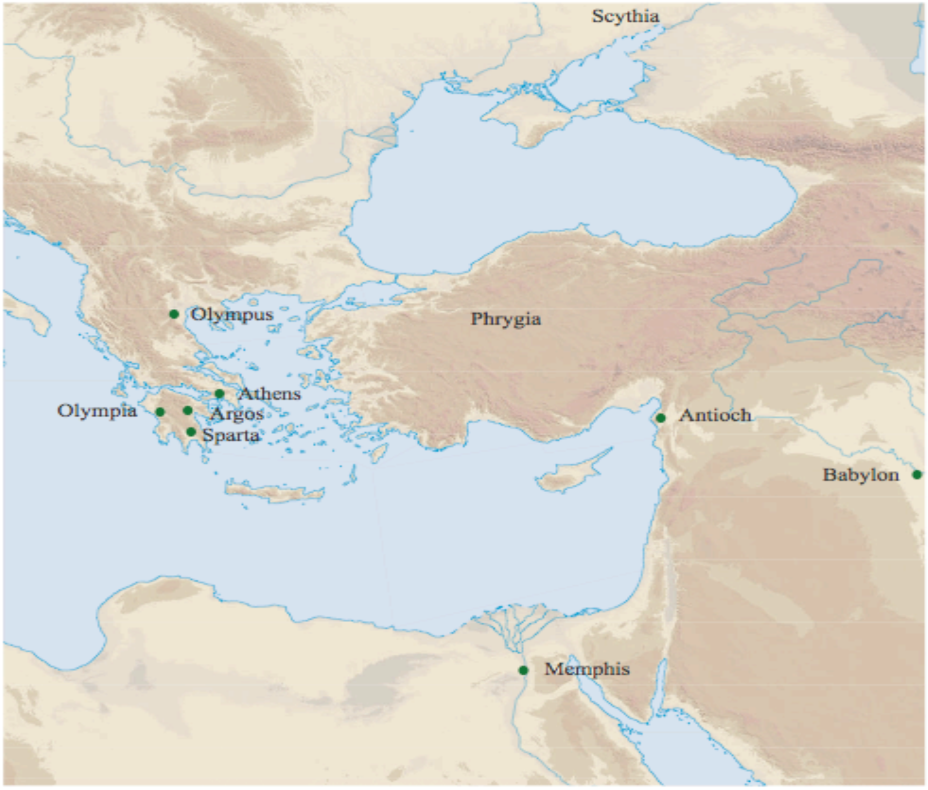
[559] Most likely an anachronistic type of βάχροι, a torch-like staff made of myrtle branches bound together. The term βάχροι comes from the Aristophanic scholia (*Knights*, 408), where it refers to the Dionysiac Mysteries. Examples of the βάχροι can be seen in Clinton, 1974, 102, and Mylonas, 1961, 88.

[560] There is no evidence that any cult had more than one hierophant at any given time. In fact, one of the best ways to date the entry of a new hierophant into office is from the death of his predecessor, if that date is available. Nock suggests that the number is used allegorically (Nock, 1927, 413).

[561] IG I.^{2} 76.24; Lys. 6.1; Is 7.9; Plu. *Alc*. 33. The office of hierophant was typically reserved for older Athenian men of the Eumolpidae and Kerykes families and lasted for life. Clinton, 1974, 8-47, has gathered all the extant evidence concerning hierophants.

[562] Hierocles Platonicus *Carmen Aureum*. 20 (Mullach ed.).

[563] In fact, the last legitimate hierophant, Nestorius (second half of the fourth century AD) was purported to be able to divine the future. See Clinton, 1974; and Kaldellis, 2005. There is no evidence that the office of hierophant was ever used at Olympus.



Cyprian's travels, in order, are as follows:
1. Athens
2. Olympus
3. Argos
4. Olympia
5. Sparta
6. Phrygia
7. Scythia
8. Memphis
9. Babylon
10. Antioch

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[564] See Macrobius, *Sat*. 5.19.10; Theocritus, *Idyll* 2.

[565] Unfortunately, Cyprian does not expound on what these things actually are, and his vagueness might be part of the ideological force of such lists. Some are clearly references to actual magic praxis, such as rudimentary botany; others appear to suggest the egregious activity described, such as "things Satan discovered." Regardless of what fell under this "catch-all" category, it was bad, to say the very least, and should have been avoided.

From Olympus Cyprian traveled to the Peloponnese (II.52) where at a festival of Dawn (Ἠώς) he was made an initiate of the air, water, and earth.[566] He eventually made his way to Sparta and saw the cult image[567] of Tauropolos[568] Keladeine.[569] While there Cyprian began to learn some substantial parts of a magician's trade: harmful practices, the use of engraved stones, strange symbols, and finally strange songs and stories, perhaps incantations and the legends behind them. Such items are well attested in the surviving evidence; magical stones, for example, appear frequently in the extant magical papyri.[570] They were used to elicit visions,[571] the so-called "god's arrival spells."[572] Precious stones were also used for various magical operations and to guarantee good health; one of the Greek magical papyri[573] calls for jasper to be inscribed, consecrated, and fitted into a gold ring. The result would be general success for the wearer of the ring (although success in the practice of magic is also implied). In both cases, the consecration of a magical ring and in the "god's arrival spell," the stone used for the ritual was to be inscribed.[574] The instruments used to inscribe stones and other materials would undoubtedly have been a stylus, which was the typical instrument for ritualized engravings.[575] Since the characters (χαρακτῆρας)[576] that the necromancer was expected to know were arcane and highly specialized, it is safe to assume that it typically took an apprentice years to memorize the various, complex names and spells that were required for his/her trade, despite Cyprian's assertion that he learned all these characters during his brief visit to Sparta, which must be hyperbole. [577]

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[566] The text is corrupt here, making a definitive interpretation of the actual rites that took place during the festival of Dawn rather difficult.

[567] Artemis Orthia. The temple and the image within served an important cultic function into late antiquity. In fact, as late as the fourth century the family of Tisamenus earned such a reputation for their mantic ability, despite the fact that they were actually pagan philosophers, that the city awarded them a honorific statue next to the cult image of Artemis Orthia (Julian, *Or*. 2.119b-c). See Cartledge and Spawforth, 2002, 183, and 190-211, and Whitby, 2002, 23-24.

[568] A common nickname of Artemis; Hesychios glosses ταυροπόλαι as ἡ Ἄρτεμις καὶ ἡ Ἀθηνᾶ, but he also glosses ταυροπόλια as ἃ εἰς ἑορτὴν ἄγουσιν Ἀρτέμιδι. See also the scholion for Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, νὴ τὴν Ταυροπόλον· οὕτω τὴν Ἄρτεμιν ἐκάλουν. The epithet is most commonly attested in tragedy (Eur. *IT* 1457; Soph. *Ajax* 172).

[569] This is a common epic epithet for Artemis. cf. *Il*. 16.183; 20.70; 21.511; *Hymn Aphr*. 118; *Hymn Art.* 1.

[570] Ogden, 2002, 261-274, has a section on amulets a number of which contain gemstones.

[571] PGM 4.937; see the article for ψῆφος in Muñoz, 2001.

[572] For some equivalents in Demotic, see Betz, 1992, 58 n.126.

[573] PGM 12.201-69.

[574] There is an amulet now housed in the Bibliothèque nationale de France that contains a green jasper intaglio on which are preserved the combination of inscribed words and erotic images. See Delatte and Derchain, 1964, no. 329; and Ogden, 2002, 262-263.

From the Peloponnese, Cyprian traveled to Phrygia (II.62) in central Asia Minor where he became inspired and learned the beginning of haruspicy. Without a doubt, the most important cult of Phrygia was that of Magna Mater, the Phrygian goddess, Cybele.[578] That the author has neglected to mention Cybele is interesting, but this section as a whole contains nothing specific about Phrygia at all. What little evidence we have comes from the adjective Eudocia chose to use in this context, μαντιπόλος, "frenzied or inspired."[579] Interestingly, the term is more commonly associated with Bacchus than with Cybele,[580] but in antiquity Dionysus and the Phrygian mother were closely associated.[581] Cyprian does not explain what he actually learned in Phrygia, an omission most likely from the author's ignorance of cultic practice in the region, not an indication of Phrygia's role in the mysteries.

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[575] Eudocia uses the word γραφίς rather than the more common γραφεῖον. For the latter there are numerous attestations in the Greek magical papyri, while there is only a single use of the former. See Muñoz, 25-26.

[576] That the χαρακτῆρας refer to the signs, symbols, words, or general utterances that the magician was to inscribe is clear from the Greek magical papyri. See PGM 3.303; 7.391; and 7.927 (just a few examples).

[577] See Dickie, 2001, 221-223, for a discussion on apprenticeships and magic.

[578] Following Roller, 1999, 108-109.

[579] The term implies mania, which is not mere intoxication, but as Burkert suggests, a process of "intensified mental power" (Burkert, 1985, 162). In late antiquity, μαντιπόλος will be used substantively as a diviner (see Manetho Astrologus 6.306).

[580] Eur. *Hec*. 121.

[581] Burkert, 1985, 163. For Dionysus' Phrygian orgins see the opening of Euripides' *Bacchae* which became one of the most influential accounts of the Dionysus legend.

Having visited Attica, the Peloponnese, and Asia Minor, the now adult Cyprian traveled to an ill-defined people, the Scythians (II.65). Since the Scythians were located at, if not beyond, the very borders of the empire, they were susceptible to a myriad of misunderstandings and simplifications, particularly with regard to their religion.[582] The worship of the Great Mother was prevalent throughout the region, but it was their superstitions that presumably attracted Cyprian to the ends of the civilized world–during his stay with the Scythians Cyprian begins to ply the trade of a young magician. First he learns about birds, presumably for oeonomancy, or bird divination;[583] in fact, the "echoing signs" most likely refer to the oeonomant's ability to divine the future from the sounds or shrieks of animals, birds in particular.[584] Added to the young man's skill set was the knowledge about living creatures as well as arcane utterances, which included real appellations, presumably those of demons and lower divinities, and nonsensical utterances, a central component of the sorcerer's repertoire.[585] These utterances, regardless of their form, revealed the future to the listener; this skill, divination, obtains throughout Cyprian's description of Scythia. To advance his ability to see the future, Cyprian learned how to perceive sounds[586] emitted from wood,[587] stone,[588] as well as the voices of the dead (II.68-69).[589] The first two sounds, those from wood and stone, most likely refer to the use of divine images (idols) in divination, whereas the latter certainly refers to the practice of necromancy. As one might expect, the voices of the dead were heard at their tombs, since cemeteries were the place to engage in necromancy[590] as well as various other rites that involved the dead.[591] A series of skills follows, whose particular functions are unclear: sounds from doors, palpitations of mortals, bloody masses that pollute human bodies, and man-eating worms.[592] Scythia was also the place to learn myth-based songs, as well as their corresponding number of verses.[593] That verse was the preferred form of incantations is clear from the Greek magical papyri, but what type of verse Cyprian refers to here is rather vague. Cyprian mentions the use and learning of verse on multiple occasions in the *Confession*, but this is the only example of verse qualified as *mythoi*. These songs might differ from the verses attested in the Greek magical papyri and refer instead to the classical *mythoi* (our epics) commonly used as divinatory media.[594]

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[582] See Rice, 1957.

[583] Cicero (*De divinatione* 1.92) attributes the skill of the *oionistes*, or the practitioner of oeonomancy, to various peoples of the east (Phrygians, Pisidians, Cilicians, and Arabians), but unfortunately does not mention the Scythians. The mention of the Phrygians, Pisidians, and Cilicians might be more rhetorical effect and bear little to no cultural reality. See *De divinatione* 2.80 where Cicero repeats the list of three in a more pejorative and dismissive context. For more on the practice of the oeonomancy, see Pease, 1920-1923, and Luck, 2006, 308-309, but note 311-315 for a complete list of the various types of divination.

[584] Luck, 2006, 308.

[585] The former fall under the category of the *nomina barbara* while the latter included a variety of noises, such as hissing sounds (in Latin the *susurrus magicus, susurramen, murmur, stridor, sigmos*), clucking, signing, groaning, and smacking of lips, that the magician made to make his craft effective. See PGM 7.786ff; 13.946; Luck, 2006, 6 and 55.

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[586] βόμβος were thought to undermine the efficacy of spells. See PGM 36.134-160.

[587] II. 68: δουρατέων σανίδων, literally "wooden planks." The meaning of this is unclear. In the Homeric epics a σανίς refers most commonly to wooden doors (*Il*. 12.453, 461; *Od*. 22.128), but is once used for a platform (*Od*. 21.51). There are no references in the magical papyri that illumine the use of wooden planks or the significance of doors. Spells and other incantations were written on wooden tablets (*tabella*, δέλτος; see Muñoz, 2001, 30). If Eudocia is referring to them, her word choice is unclear–Cyprian will explicitly mention the noise from doors two lines later (II.70). On the other hand, the σανίς might refer to the doors of the underworld which creak in Aeneas' journey through the underworld (*Aen*. 6. 573). To connect the βόμβους δουρατέων σανίδων with the sorcerer's journey into the underworld and his conversations with the dead (II.69) might be appealing, but such an interpretation leaves the sound of the stones unexplained. A third option comes from Plato *Laws* 933a-e, which mentions visions of the dead at doorways, crossroads, and tombs.

[588] Could this be a veiled reference to communication with idols, made of stone and wood? The association with idols made of wood and stone begins in Jewish writings (see *Jeremiah* 2:27; 3:9; *Exekiel* 20:32) and continues into the Hellenistic period when idols of precious metals are included in religious invectives (*Daniel* 5:4; 5:23). Some passages in early Christian writings follow the Hellenistic models or more accurately intentionally echo passages from the book of *Daniel*. See *Revelation* 9:20.

[589] The combination of wood, stone, and the deceased seems to be intentional. If it does refer to idols and the deceased, then the line balances two well-known methods of divination. Sorcerers frequently used images of gods to manipulate or foretell future events. Magicians were known to torture the images until the god obeyed his injunction. There are examples of non-specialists who punished cult objects for events attributed to the god.

[590] See Ogden, 2001, 3-16. Of particular interest for the later discussion on the influence of Apollonius of Tyana and Pythagoras on the *Confession*, compare some of the narratives involving these philosophers and necromancy, particularly those located in cemeteries (Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius* 4.16; Plutarch, *Moralia* 585e-f; Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 148).

[591] The numerous curse tablets that survive from ancient cemeteries indicate that people used the spaces around the deceased for a variety of functions. Invoking the dead as witness of a spell brought with it a chthonic efficacy, typically to the disadvantage of the spell/curse's target. See Plato, *Laws* 933a-e.

Cyprian also learned about the sufferings of the flesh and the limits of nature (στήλας φύσιος); while the former most likely refers to the use of somatic spells and the like, the latter, is vage and forces us to explore the ancient conception of φύσις.[595] The role of φύσις in ancient magic is complicated, particularly since some scholars interpret magic as inherently liminal and transgressive, therefore the very antithesis of φύσις.[596] Accordingly, one might well expect religion to fall on the side of φύσις, i.e. to respect the boundaries between gods and humans, and to obey cosmic laws,[597] whereas magic, which intrinsically transgressed those same boundaries and laws, should be its opposite. Although Cyprian admits he was taught activities not appropriate for mortals, this argument comes from the mouth of the converted Cyprian, not from the magician whose religious perspective would have been decidedly different. This distinction should always be kept in mind when reading the *Confession*; we do not have a pagan perspective on magic, but a decidedly Christian one that implied a different understanding about φύσις.[598]

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[592] In the list of skills learned in Scythia there seem to be a number that pertain to corporal harm, which range from palpitations to bloody masses. Bodily harm was part of the sorcerer's repertoire, but whether such malevolent *technai* are referred to here is not at all clear.

[593] Numbers and numerology were integral to magic from at least the Hellenistic period and most likely centuries earlier. PGM 1.262-347 is an example of a spell which contains an elaborate song or incantation as well as a repetition of essential numbers, in this case the number seven. Numbers and the anthropomorphic and chthonic figures in the magical papyri are symbols of supernatural power and authority. By mastering the heterogeneous and multiform permutations of these symbols, the magician both made his *techne* more efficacious and increased his own prestige.

[594] See PGM 1.328-331 and the recent discussion by Schwendner, 2002, and Struck, 2002.

[595] See Heinimann, 1945; Naddaf, 1992; Patzer, 1993; Vergnières, 1995; Naddaf, 2005; and Müller, 2006.

[596] Magic was transgressive in the sense that its practitioners intentionally attempted to undermine the socially accepted norms of the religious or, more accurately, spiritual domain. See the relevant sections in Frazer, 1913; Luck, 1962; Aune, 1980; Thomassen, 1999; and Luck, 2006. As a result of its transgressive qualities, magic alienates its practitioners from the community (Graf, 1991a and 1997, and Ogden, 2001, xviii-xix).

A useful comparison with the *Astronomica* of Manilius can be made here.[599] Manilius is thought to have been an Augustan, or at the latest Tiberian, Stoic whose writings were a counter-perspective to Lucretius' *De Natura Rerum*.[600] His *Astronomica* provides us with a variety of astrological minutiae on the constitution, order, and boundaries of the cosmos. A longish passage from the *Astronomica* is worth quoting in full:

> First cause and guardian of all things hidden, nature erected mighty structures along the ramparts of the universe and so surrounded Earth, poised squarely in the center, with a sphere of stars; and by fixed laws she united separate limbs into a single body, ordaining that air and earth and fire and flowing water should each for the other provide mutual

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[597] Naddaf, 2005, 86-87.

[598] See Hexter, 1995, 39-48.

[599] All passages are cited from the last edition on the *Astronomica* (Goold, 1998). See also Housman's 1903 five-volume magnum opus. Interestingly, Manilius is conspicuously absent from the discussions on physis cited above.

[600] See Pohlenz, 1978, 1.281 and 2.176.

> sustenance, in order that harmony might prevail over so many elements at variance and the universe stand firm in the bonds of reciprocal federation. Now in order that nothing should be excluded from the total scheme, and that what was born of heaven should be by heaven's own self controlled, nature also made men's lives and destinies dependent on the stars, so that in their unwearied revolution they should claim charge of the success of human activity, the boon of life, and fame. And to those stars which deployed about the central region, occupy the heart of the universe, at it were, and which outfly the Sun and Moon and planets and are also themselves outflown, to these nature gave dominion: to each sign she devoted individual associations, and fixed in the zodiac for ever the total distribution, so that the influences upon destiny might be drawn from all quarters and concentrated on a single whole. (3.47-66)[601]

According to Manilius, nature is responsible for a variety of cosmic factors: the geocentric universe, the constitution of all matter out of the four elements, and the general dependence and symbiosis of everything in the cosmos. To be sure, Manilius' Stoic tendencies are clear, specifically the degree of cosmic organization, stability, and perhaps even the notion that a dominant force permeates everything.[602] At the core of the passage lies the assumption that the organization and even the divine ordination of astrology, a *techne* Manilius attributes to Babylonians and Egyptians,[603] was part of nature.[604] Moreover, in his discussion of the origins of astrology,[605] Manilius mentions various activities, which constitute the most conspicuous praxeis of the *magus* (*haruspicina*, *oionoscopia*, the incineration of snakes,[606] necromancy, and the ability to turn day into night and vice versa) and which Manilius suggests are the incipient endeavors by eastern peoples to explore cosmic order. All these activities, from primordial even barbaric divinations and incantations to the erudite study of meteorology, astronomy, and astrology, originated in and were organized by nature.[607] According to the *Astronomica* and the *Confession*, the laws of nature were central to supernatural inquiry; rather than transgressing divine boundaries, the magician, through his inquiry into the limits of nature–which we associate with reason–obtained knowledge of a higher reality where future events are discernible and the miraculous (*thaumata*) is commonplace.

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[601] Translation is Goold's.

[602] This corresponds to the *logos*.

[603] I will not speak here of the eastern origins of astrology or other magic practices. I will discuss them in detail below.

Additionally, Cyprian learned the use of various vows, some true and others false. Oaths appear a few times in the *Martyrdom*: in the *Conversion* Cyprian is required to swear an oath before Satan will relate to him the details of his defeat by Justa;[608] in the *Confession*

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[604] *Astronomica* 1.44 (a line omitted by Richard Bentley).
[605] *Astronomica* 1.91-112.
[606] Lucian mentions in the *Philopseudes* (11-12) that a Babylonian of the Chaldaeans (the distinction between the two ethnicities was becoming increasingly muddied from the Hellenistic period onward), among other *thaumata*, incinerated every reptile on a farm. This seems to have been a conspicuous part of a sorcerer's repertoire.
[607] *Astronomica* 1.40. This is further evidenced in other texts relating to magic. In particular compare pseudo-Thessalus of Tralles' account of his adventures in Egypt (*De virtutibus herbarum* 28): "For everything waxes and wanes in due season under the influence of the stars. The divine spirit is composed of the smallest of particles and pervades all existence and in particular those places in which the stellar influences fall upon the structure of the universe." Translation is Ogden's.
[608] I. 187.

Cyprian mentions oaths during his stay in Babylon,[609] and he sees a legion of demons who were bound by oath to Justa's destruction.[610] The examples of the term ὅρκοι from the Greek magical papyri correspond with the types of oaths in the *Martyrdom*: ὅρκοι are used to bind a demon to one's cause[611] and to prepare for the reading of a book.[612] Within a Christian context, the taking of vows are expressly forbidden first by Jesus and then by his brother and founder of the Jerusalem church, James.[613] Although the *Martyrdom* uses vows in a manner consistent with the magical papyri, the ideological presentation of those vows are influenced by the biblical perspective.

Cyprian next (II.76) mentions that he learned arts that were "hostile to mankind,"[614] an assertion so vague it falls in the "catch-all" category, as did the "things that Satan discovered."[615] In other words, whatever activities work against people, Cyprian learned them. Finally, he affirms his thoroughness; he learned every praxis–certainly a reference to spells[616]–of the earth, sky, and underworld, as well as the apparition[617] that has traveled long distances, and the hidden mind, which was crafty, cunning, and deceitful. Cyprian summarizes this again with an all-inclusive assertion that he learned everything there was on the earth.

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[609] II. 207.
[610] II. 317.
[611] PGM 1.80.
[612] PGM 13.740.
[613] *Matt*. 5:37; *James* 5:12.
[614] II.76.
[615] Compare II.49-51. In other words, the text's vagueness makes it difficult to remove the obvious anti-Christian spin and evaluate this reference in light of known magical praxeis.
[616] Compare P.Mag.Par.1.1227; P.Mag.Lond.125.40.
[617] Compare PGM 62.29.

At the age of twenty, Cyprian traveled from the lands north of the Black Sea to the deserts of Egypt, which, as early as the first century BCE, had replaced Persia and Babylon as the hub for all serious supernatural activity and training.[618] Unlike the previously mentioned locations of Phrygia and Scythia, where we cannot reconstruct cultic activity in detail, Egypt presents the opposite problem, an overwhelming amount of information. There are many books devoted to the religious and magical practices in ancient Egypt.[619] Rather than attempt to summarize the contributions of so many scholars, we are best served by comparing the material from the *Confession* with the information that survives from or about the land of the pharaohs.

Cyprian specifically asserts that he did not learn cultic arts just anywhere in Egypt; his education centered in Memphis (II.84), which, along with Thebes,[620] was one of the standard Egyptian hot spots for learning magic.[621] The youthful, and therefore naïve, student in Alexandria who was lured to the wilds up the Nile and the supernatural powers available in the south of Egypt was a topos in antiquity.[622] Unfortunately, the *Confession* is especially vague regarding what a magician would learn in Egypt; Cyprian merely attempts (πειρήϑην) things that were not appropriate for men to do. Moreover, a clear

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[618] Ogden, 2001, 203.

[619] Hornung, 2001; Lopez, 2001; Taylor, 2001; Ciraolo and Seidel, 2002; David, 2002; Mirecki and Meyer eds, 2002; Ogden, 2002; Kaper, 2003; Maravelia, 2003; Noegel et al., 2003; Dieleman, 2005; Martin, 2005; Szpakowska, 2006; and Bricault et al., 2007.

[620] Thessalus of Tralles, *De virtutibus herbarum* 12.

[621] There is a fascinating and not unentertaining passage in Lucian's *Philopseudes* which takes place in Memphis (*Philopseudes* 33-36).

[622] Lucian, *Philopseudes* 33-34 and Thessalus of Tralles, *De virtutibus herbarum* 1-12. See Ogden, 2006, 123-127. This will become more relevant in the discussion on the ultimate sources for the *Confession*. Although Nock, 1927, suggested quite matter of factly that the narrative was dependent upon the legends of Pythagoras, Apollonius of Tyana, and Apuleius, there is good evidence that some details of the narrative are so convoluted that they resist a specific identification with one particular tradition.

"order of operations" pertaining to supernatural education obtains throughout the *Confession*.[623] Initially, while in Olympus, the juvenile magician simply observes with visual and auditory perception: II.24 (ἦχον καὶ ἄκουον), II.25 (λεῦσα), II.27 (κάτιδον), II.30 (εἰσιδόμην), and II.32 (εἶδον). At the age of fifteen (II.40-41), Cyprian transitions from seeing and hearing to learning: II.42 (ἦα διδασκόμενος), II.44 (μάϑοιμι), II.59[624] (δαείην), and II.64 (ἐδάην),[625] and when he turns twenty Cyprian graduates from learning various *technai* to practicing (πειρήϑην) them.

The majority of Cyprian's studies pertain to what we would call demonology (II.86-97), a study that includes the origins, names,[626] and astrological position of demons,[627] ways to put them to flight, as well as the things they protect. Additionally, Cyprian learns which spirits are their opposites–perhaps a reference to the angelic host–which demons rule the underworld, and finally which activities are associated with them:[628] swift movement,[629] knowledge, memory,[630] terror, deception, footprints, and forgetfulness. The catalogue is capped off with the now obligatory catch-all, "and everything similar to these things." Moreover, Cyprian masters skills related to earthquakes, rainstorms, and the flux of earth and sea (II.97-99),[631] all of which he tells us are mere imitations of God's power.[632]

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[623] This in no way implies that this order of operations is in any way correct or historically verifiable.

[624] The verb ἔσιδον is used in line 59, but in reference to the magician seeing a cult image. This does not invalidate my reconstruction of an order of operations because the cult image is a tourist attraction, albeit a religious one, while the other items in the list above are praxeis or clearly supernatural phenomena. I make a distinction between tourist attractions and *thaumata*. Cyprian would have "seen" many sights during his journies; my point is that the curriculum of an apprentice magician was first to observe, next learn, and finally to attempt *thaumata*.

[625] This predicate governs no fewer than sixteen objects, which rhetorically overwhelm the reader with the shear volume that the magician was taught.

[626] For more on the denomination of spirits, see the section covering line 67. The efficacy of magic was thought to lie at least partially in the magician's knowledge of, and ability to pronounce and evoke, the names of various foreign gods, demons, spirits, and what appears to us as nonsensical appellations. Compare PGM 61.24-31 which reads, ἔχω τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ μεγάλου ϑεοῦ, οὗ οὐκ ἔξεστιν ὄνομα οὐδενὶ ὀνομάζειν, *I have the power of the great god whose name it is impossible to speak to anyone*. Part of the efficacy behind the spell lies in the speaker first knowing the god's name, and second, maintaining a monopoly on that knowledge. For more on the relationship between the spell's efficacy and the proper invocation of the god's name see PDM 61.28, despite its fragmentary and highly conjectural state.

[627] This is the way I have taken the phrase, "of which stars they long for." There is an interesting incantation in the Greek magical papyri in which Typhon is invoked in relation to his position in the heavens (PGM 4.261-274).

While in Memphis Cyprian experiences a series of visions the first of which is of the Giants (II.102), who were eternally imprisoned under the earth.[633] The mention of the underworld directs the Cyprian's gaze to the various chthonic powers with whom he had conversation. Some appear as winds that traverse the earth and bring death to mankind, while others roam about incessantly in their campaign against mortals. The activity of the demonic multitude was effective but not disastrous; the earth suffers but remains on its foundation. That the natural foundation of the earth was solid perhaps deviates from Thales' theory that the earth naturally rests on water (II.111). In his *De Caelo*, Aristotle presents this tradition as follows:[634]

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[628] This seems to be the best way to resolve the syntax here. One wonders why Eudocia lists everything in the nominative while the list fits best as an elaboration on the ὅσα in line 94.

[629] The speed of a demon, and occasionally of the practitioner, relates to the efficacy of the spell. To be sure, there is also a sense of completion implied in certain contexts. In particular see PGM 1.42-195.

[630] μνημοσύνη. That memory was a key component of the sorcerer's trade is implied in the handful of memory spells that survive in the Greek magical papyri. See PGM 1.232; 3.424 and 467. To be sure, the spell is not intended exclusively for magicians, but since the spell could invoke the demons to aid in memory it implies that memory proper was under their auspices or at least something which the demons could affect.

[631] The manipulation and control of the elements is commonly attributed to holy men in general and magicians in particular. Herodotus (7.191) attributes the power of controlling the elements to the Persian magi, but the results that seemed so miraculous might have been the product of nature taking her course. Pythagoras was said to have been able to predict earthquakes, avert storms (hail storms are particularly remarkable), as well as the ability to calm rough waters. This tradition continues into the gospel accounts of Jesus and continues well into late antiquity. See Porphyry's *Life of Pythagoras* 28-29. In the Latin poets, magicians and *lenae* commonly reverse the course of rivers, which is a specific and often repeated application of controlling the elements. See Tibullus 1.2; Ovid *Heroides* 6, and *Amores* 1.8. Apuleius preserves a variant on this motif, as his witch is able to make running water freeze (1.9).

[632] This is particularly associated with idols, which are physical representations of some higher power. See IG.3.1403 and compare LXX *Wis*. 17:3.

[633] A mistake on the part of the original author. The Giants were occasionally confused with the Titans, with many Titans listed as participants in the battle between the Olympians and the Giants. Some other prodigious creatures were included as well, including Typhon, Briareus, and Aloadae. The language here borrows heavily from Hesiod's *Theogony*, especially 711-745.

> Others say that [the earth] rests on water. This is the most ancient explanation which has come down to us, and it is attributed to Thales of Miletus. It supposes that the earth is at rest because it can float like wood and similar substances, whose nature it is to rest upon water, though none of them could rest on air. But this is to forget that the same thing may be said of the water supporting the earth as was said of the earth itself. It is not the nature of water, any more than of earth, to remain suspended: it rests upon something.[635]

The scene quickly shifts first to Hades (II.113-117), the sanctuary where Satan rejoices in man's sorrows, and, presumably, back to Memphis (II.118), where Cyprian sees a demon-possessed man attacking a Christian. The wicked man is described as mad (μάργος), completely removed from God. At this point, Cyprian presents a catalogue of demons, most of which are personifications of vices (II.122-164): Falsehood, joyless, full of embellishment, covered in blood and singed by fire; Insanity, a winged feral creature; Deceit, unremitting, secretive, and full of trickery; Hatred, gruesome, blind in the front, but with four eyes on the back of his head; his eyes prefer the darkness over light; he has multiple feet which stick out over his head and has no stomach since he is entirely devoid of emotion. Jealousy and Envy are next; they are nearly identical except for Envy's mouth which was shaped like a spade. Emaciated to the point of death is Rage whose many eyes are set on revenge. Five lines are reserved for Greed, of whom Cyprian paints a marvelous image. His head is narrow and apparently mouthless, but he has two mouths, one in his midriff and the second on his back. What is more, Greed's diet consists entirely of rocks and solid earth, which he consumes insatiably. Akin to Greed is Love for Wealth, attractive and keen–indeed his eyes are always open. Likewise, Commerce is present, ever on the move, and bearing on his shoulders the hope for wealth. Next comes Vanity, noble and attractive, but whose beauty is skin deep. With his four wings follows high-soaring Idolatry who appears to be able to protect others but in fact is unable to protect himself. Cyprian next espies Hypocrisy, full of terror, yet powerless and with a hollow chest. Half man and half woman is Delirium, nude and guileless in his evil, followed by Blabbermouth with a tongue larger than that of any other part of his body. The final named demon in Cyprian's list is Crazy recognizable by his nut-shaped head and his propensity for every kind of evil.

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[634] *De Caelo* 294a: οἱ δ᾽ ἐφ᾽ ὕδατος κεῖσθαι. τοῦτο γὰρ ἀρχαιότατον παρειλήφαμεν τὸν λόγον, ὅν φασιν εἰπεῖν Θαλῆν τὸν Μιλήσιον, ὡς διὰ τὸ πλωτὴν εἶναι μένουσαν ὥσπερ ξύλον ἤ τι τοιοῦτον ἕτερον (καὶ γὰρ τούτων ἐπ᾽ ἀέρος μὲν οὐθὲν πέφυκε μένειν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐφ᾽ ὕδατος), ὥσπερ οὐ τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον ὄντα περὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ τοῦ ὕδατος τοῦ ὀχοῦντος τὴν γῆν· οὐδὲ γὰρ τὸ ὕδωρ πέφυκε μένειν μετέωρον, ἀλλ᾽ ἐπί τινός ἐστιν.

[635] Translation is Guthrie's.

To close this section, Cyprian asserts that he saw many more demons than listed above, three hundred and sixty-five of them (II.165-170).[636] Not only were they in Hades and on the earth, they were also "spread throughout the cosmos," which resulted in the disgrace of virtue, wisdom, and justice. Despite their extensive pursuits, demons were powerless, and their actions were to no avail. Nonetheless, Truth was absent in their presence, and many humans were led astray. The magician implies that although he could expound upon these bizarre observations, he feels compelled to omit many details and to not write many books. His speech, he assures us, has completed its intended goal, an accurate account of his impiety (II.177-178). Oddly enough, he then continues where he left off, with his journey from the banks of the Nile to those of the Euphrates.

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[636] Or one for every day of the year.

The magician's stay in the land of the pharaohs lasted ten years, Cyprian's longest stay in one location to date. At the age of thirty, Cyprian left Memphis and traveled to Babylon. This section might promise to be some of the most fruitful in the *Confession*, were the text not corrupt, unclear or entirely nonsensical. Cyprian opens by emphasizing the antiquity of the Babylonians, as well as their expertise in cosmological inquiries, in particular the relationship between the aether[637] and fire.[638] According to some Babylonians, the aether rests upon a flaming fire, ἐπὶ φλογεροῦ πυρός,[639] while the most perceptive of them suspect that it rests on light, ἐπὶ φάεος.[640] The magician also learns the nature of the stars and their constellations (II.185-193), followed by a rudimentary investigation into the elements, the positions of the stars, and finally the effects of the zodiac on individual temperaments: affiliations, loves, nourishment, and a spiritual desire for light. Like the 365 demons, each day of the year had a corresponding fate, and the magician became familiar with all of them.

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[637] More accurately, Cyprian speaks of the course/movement of the aether (δρόμον αἰθέρος). Aether was the fifth element of which the celestial bodies (those at the furthest issue in the cosmos) were comprised (see Guthrie, 1981, 1.270).

[638] Interestingly, water is absent in Cyprian's presentation of Babylonian cosmology. From the earliest records in the Near East, water played a central role. See in particular the Enuma Elish and its tripartite division of the waters.

[639] This is certainly the best reading of the line. Compare Aristotle's observation on the position of water in *De caelo* 2.7: οὐδὲ γὰρ τὸ ὕδωρ πέφυκε μένειν μετέωρον, ἀλλ᾽ ἐπί τινός ἐστιν. When Aristotle speaks of the second element, he uses πῦρ exclusively.

[640] By the imperial period, the various philosophical schools had take up and dissected Aristotle's physics, each using whatever bits were most useful to their own theories. One strand of philosophers examined the movement of corporeal bodies (σώματα), in which light (φάος) played a central role. See Plotinus, *Enn.* 4.5.7; cf. Sambursky, 1958.

What follows is one of the most confused sections of the *Confession*. In addition to a general investigation into astronomy, Cyprian learned that each star follows a natural course and is governed, perhaps, by a particular demon. Moreover, some of these demons (or stars) are appeased solely through sacrifices, while others care nothing for such things and only want light, which is described as mixed with darkness, presumably a reference to the underworld.[641] Cyprian trusts in the Babylonian pedagogical system and admires their diviners, code of conduct and oaths so much that he attempts to receive a share in the light (of Hades). Moreover, the picture Cyprian presents of Babylon is not entirely negative: it was a place of piety, love, swiftness, and skill, all of which come together when the leader, presumably Satan, teaches the initiates everything concerning his trade. This results in the deception of humanity, which forgets their natural state and God. Cyprian was quickly caught in this web of deceit, and, after he does homage to the demon, he quickly rises to one of Satan's favorites,[642] on a par with the Egyptian magician Jambres.[643] What is more, Satan makes Cyprian a leader of the cosmos, a coworker in every evil deed, and grants the sorcerer a veritable army of demons. From that time on, those who witness Cyprian's promotion honor him as Satan's favorite.

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[641] Or the φάεος εὐρώεντος. If this were to refer to nocturnal lights, this would be a new and rather peculiar use of the adjective.

[642] This is rhetorical hyperbole to emphasize Cyprian's success as a magician so that an opponent not attempt to discredit his conversion on grounds that he was an ill-accomplished sorcerer.

[643] Jambres, along with Jannes, was one of Pharaoh's magicians (not mentioned by name in the Exodus account). The tradition for Jambres and Jannes, which included a book on the two magicians that was written sometime before the third century CE, is a rather complex one but was known by both the Elder Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* 20.2.11) and Apuleius (*Apol.* 90). One of the more interesting aspects of the legend holds Jambres and Jannes responsible for Moses' education while the latter grew up at Pharaoh's court. For a thorough treatment of the Jambres and Jannes legend, see Pietersma, 1994.

Either a section that belongs elsewhere in the text has been transposed or the transition between Cyprian's advancement and the description of Satan (II.231) has become confused. As the text stands, the newly initiated Cyprian is sent by Satan to wreak havoc upon the earth, but from lines 231-241 there is a description of Satan, and with line 242 the text returns to Cyprian's newly sanctioned occupation. What follows the description of Satan was either not fully understood by Eudocia (possibly) or was misunderstood by subsequent copyists (likely).

Cyprian's Satan appears as a testimony to the notion that demons, as fallen angels, did not always take on an inimical mien, but could on occasion appear as angels of light[644] or as a Christian maiden, as we have observed in the *Conversion*. Indeed, Lucifer's appearance is compared to gold with ornate and perhaps precious stones. On his head he wore a diadem made of braided jewels. Even though we receive no detail about his clothing, the magician assures us that it was as opulent as his crown. His stature must be considerable because with his every step the earth trembles. All about him is a shielded entourage, which, although their gaze is fixed to the ground, is always ready for battle. Like Zeus, Satan emanates a radiance that lights the earth before him and makes plants blossom and sprout. The description concludes, "He does everything that God does and he contends with the sovereign Immortal and His saints."[645]

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[644] Compare *2 Cor*. 11:14.

[645] This line resonates well with those well-versed in Milton.

Not only is Satan magnificent in appearance, he is singularly set on deceiving humanity who, according to Cyprian, is unable to withstand the demon's presence.[646] This deception is manifest in humanity's attempt to perform power according to the flesh (μετὰ σαρκός), an activity of shameful people (II.245-246). For those who do not seek power (sc. practice magic), the scent of sacrifices and libations are sufficient (II.246-247). Cyprian here contrasts traditional cult offerings and libations, with the practice of supernatural *technai*. Although the intended goal of magic and religion is different,[647] they share one central fact, the presence of demons. In traditional religion, demons take up and clothe themselves with the smoke from the burning victims; the temples themselves are filled with demonic apparitions and those who engage in the sacrifices exchange truth for air, i.e. nothingness. Humanity's deception perpetuates the need for animal sacrifice as well as sacrifices of fruits, water, and rinds, and it leads humans to seek conversations with the dead. The cultic activities of traditional religion lead to magical practice since they are all governed by the presence and direction of demons. All of these praxeis lack substance and are compared to a burning fire that is really cold, or the promise of food, a fish, but one that cannot be eaten. Cyprian sums up the extent of demonic influence; they are responsible for activities of the forest as well as those of the city, ones pertaining to the bedchamber, forested plains, shaded glens, fatherlands, as well as decorated coverings. Any who engage in these activities are in cahoots with devilish forces and are described as hostile and irreligious men, holders of shameful beliefs.

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[646] The Christianized rhetoric here is laid on thick. Although the man is unable to withstand the demon, the enemy is described as empty (κενός)

[647] This section reveals a late antique Christian perspective on the difference between magic and religion.

At line 274, the *Confession* transitions from the account of Cyprian's education to the events that transpired in Antioch and eventually led to his conversion. For this reason, the final 200 lines of the *Confession* for the most part duplicate the sequence of events from the *Conversion*, but from Cyprian's perspective. Because he was afraid of Satan's power and courage, Cyprian hid in the enemy's shadow, until he learned from Justa that demons[648] had no substantive power. At Justa's house Cyprian saw an immense demon, a scaled serpent being cast down powerless and fleeing before the maiden. With rhetorical aplomb, Cyprian recounts the battle between Satan and Justa: the leader of demons was incapable of knocking on Justa's door, the aspiring ruler of all was subdued by a girl, the potential confounder of the earth staggered before the maiden, the one with a heart full of mischief was unable to conquer a child, and the terrifying lion was made Justa's plaything.

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[648] Without a doubt, Cyprian knew before his encounter with Justa that the forces he compelled through his *techne* were terminologically demons (δαίμονες). The Greek magical papyri are full of the word δαίμων. What Justa taught him rather was the semiotic range of the term, i.e. the actual connotation of the symbol "δαίμων." In the Greek magical papyri demons can be and often are inimical to man; they hold a place between the gods and mortals, are powerful, yet can also be controlled and put to flight. While Christian tenets maintained that angels and, by association, demons held an intermediate place between God and man, their role was more accurately defined. Angels, who through time came to be associated with the heavenly host, vis-à-vis the horde of Hell, were primarily the messengers of God. Demons, on the other hand, were fallen angels, bound by oath to their leader, Lucifer, and were eternally adverse to the plan and people of God. I take Cyprian here to refer to a shift in the semantic range of the word δαίμων to refer pejoratively to fallen and, therefore, evil angels.

After Cyprian summarizes the events surrounding his conversion, he turns to the point in his life when he first resided in Antioch. From the time that he left Babylon for Syrian Antioch, Cyprian seems to have experienced some degree of success. He claims to have performed many deeds, including the cure[649] for love, jealousy, bitter rivalry, and wickedness. As in the *Conversion*, Cyprian recounts how he was asked to seduce a young maiden for a certain man, Aglaidas. To bring this about, the magician plans two inimical encounters between a demon[650] and Justa, with each encounter ending with the demon's expulsion from Justa's house. After the second contest Cyprian and the demons apply a joint attack for ten weeks; Cyprian with his magical *technai* and the demons with continual assaults. At the end of that time, Satan himself with a company of his colleagues comes to do battle with Justa. That the expedition was unsuccessful is implied in the line, "Beliar[651] was not able to whet our appetite although he was shaking very many terrible things on our behalf." Cyprian responds to the third failure with a request that Satan, rather than continue the futile abduction/seduction of Justa, remove the desire to possess her.

What follows–the text might be corrupt–are two conflicts, the first between two demons which results in blows, and the second between Cyprian and Aglaidas on the one hand and Satan on the other. Satan first responds by charging a demonic eagle to help Cyprian and Aglaidas, but when the eagle fails to seduce Justa, it becomes apparent to Cyprian that Satan's power is on the wane and, like a debilitated warrior on a mighty steed, the demon appears powerful but is actually impotent (II.331-334). This result of Cyprian's realization is a prolonged battle between the demonic horde and himself. The encounter comes to a close when Cyprian casts the demons away with strong words. Rather than retire, Satan first attempts to deceive Aglaidas by passing off a different maiden as Justa–who is called Justina for the first time in the *Confession* (II.344-353). But this girl looks nothing like Justa, and Satan's ruse is quickly foiled. Next Satan transforms Cyprian to look like Justa. When Satan introduces the disguised magician to Aglaidas, Aglaidas calls her name, which terrifies Satan and he flees the scene. This is the final act of the *Confession* in which Satan works against Justa, although he will make an attempt on Cyprian's life near the end of the account.

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[649] ἄκος could also be taken as a means of obtaining love (see Euripides *Helen* 1055).
[650] Although it might be worth noting that the first encounter is between an army of demons and the maiden.
[651] Variant of Belial. See *Leviticus* 19:1.

Although Satan has proven to be an untrustworthy companion, Cyprian and Aglaidas continue their pursuit of Justa. They next encounter the maiden at her house where Cyprian turns Aglaidas into a bird (II.362-371)[652] which comes to rest on Justa's roof where she espies him; with a glance, she casts him from his perch. Cyprian insists that Aglaidas would have died on the spot had Justa not spoken kindly to her suitor; with compassion she sends him politely from the house and tells him to return to his own home. This is the last we hear of the amorous adventures of Aglaidas, although he is shortly mentioned as a pretext for Cyprian's continued assault.

Apparently the magician does not let go so quickly of his quarry; despite being abandoned by Satan and Aglaidas, Cyprian carries out a series of attacks against Justa, her parents' possessions, their neighbors, and eventually against the city of Antioch (II.372-403). First, Cyprian conjures up a demon to attack her with some unnamed evil, which is described as an illness. When the doctors predict Justa's imminent death and her parents nearly lose hope, Justa reassures them that since she cannot rush death, some unseen force must be behind her affliction.[653] With the *signum crucis* she avails herself against the arrows of the enemy. Next Cyprian and his infernal colleagues fall upon Justa's parents, specifically against their possessions. After the demons kill her family's flocks, herds, and mules,[654] Justa encourages her parents not to lose heart over the loss since the follower of Christ has many possessions.[655] When this fails, Cyprian sends Justa's neighbors to insist that she marry Aglaidas, which the maiden counters with the *signum crucis*. As a final act of desperation Cyprian sends a final demon to bring a plague upon the Antiochenes and to issue an oracle that the plague would not pass until Justa had been handed over to Aglaidas. The maiden responds to the city's cries and abates the plague by boasting in God's deeds.[656] As a result, the entire city as well as those in the surrounding area praise God and cast scorn upon Cyprian who, despite his insistence to the contrary, was afterwards known as a bane to the city.

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[652] A practice apparently commonly performed by a witch, see Tupet, 1986, 2647-2652, and Luck 2006, 20.

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[653] This stratagem has a clear parallel in the *Conversion*. Satan's initial plan against Justa (I.146-148) made use of some attack against Justa's health, which Satan calls a fever. Because Satan never follows up on this strategy, this is most likely an inclusion from a variant Cyprian tradition that has awkwardly entered the narrative. I will elaborate on the full contents of this tradition along with its biblical sources below.

[654] The attacks upon Justa's health and her family's wealth recall Satan's strategy against Job (*Job* 1-2).

[655] Justa's encouragement is odd and likely has a biblical source. If Satan's attacks are patterned after Job, it is tempting to look for a parallel there. At the end of the narrative, Job remains pure by not cursing God and as a result is given the flocks and possessions that he lost. On the other hand, Justa's words perhaps echo Jesus' Sermon on the mount (e.g., *Matt*. 5:12) including the famous "store up for yourselves treasures in Heaven" passage (*Matt*. 6:19-20).

[656] This is an interesting strategy to use against demons, particularly for Justa who typically uses the *signum crucis*. Moreover, Justa is credited here with the incipient mass conversions in Antioch, an event attributed to Cyprian in the *Conversion*.

Whereas in the *Conversion* Satan explains the gospel to Cyprian, directly leading to the latter's conversion, the *Confession* is remarkably silent concerning Cyprian's transformation into a Christian. Furthermore, the final encounter between magician and master (Satan) differs significantly from the episode in the *Conversion* and is well worth our attention. When Cyprian sees the power of the cross and its efficacy against the demons, he first thinks about what he experiences and eventually confronts Satan. The confrontation takes the form of a "speech within a speech" which lasts forty lines (II.406-447) and is the longest disquisition in the *Confession*. Invectives against Satan and his colleagues obtain throughout, the former being described as a destructive breed, the giver of lawless deeds, a vessel of impiety. Cyprian looks for answers by asking Satan a series of questions: why did Satan choose to deceive him; what will Satan will do when Christ returns since he is powerless before God; because even the mention of Christ's name causes Satan to flee, what will he do when Christ seeks vengeance for the demon's actions; where will Satan go when Christ returns; and, since the *signum crucis* forces him to turn tail, how will Lucifer attempt to save himself? As if these questions were insufficient, Cyprian reminds Satan that his army is hardly strong enough to resist God. Satan's gift, probably referring to magic *techne*, lasts only a moment; his counsel is inferior to God's; and his skill is second rate. Moreover, Satan cannot do anything genuine but is all smoke and mirrors, and to compensate for his lack of substance, the prince of darkness must resort to deception and destruction, which he directs exclusively against mankind, Cyprian in particular. As a result of Satan's deceptions, Cyprian has sinned, become senseless and impious, learned wisdom and the ancient texts[657] in vain, and has squandered his paternal wealth. He elaborates on this final point: had he been able to use his wealth for the feeding of the poor, he might be able to obtain salvation, but he chose to follow Satan and engaged in activities that defy mortal limits. Cyprian is left with only one option–to seek the pious followers of Christ and beg them for pity and compassion. Moreover, he wishes for the opportunity to beg for forgiveness at Justa's feet. With a final word, he commands Satan to be gone.

But rather than admit defeat, Satan attempts to kill him (II.448-450); he grabs the magician by the throat and chokes him. There was no one to help Cyprian nor did it seem possible or fitting for him to give ground, but suddenly the *signum crucis* came to mind. With a prayer Cyprian signs himself (II.454-456), and as swift as an arrow Satan leaps off the magician and flees. In his retreat, Satan attempts one final deception: he claims that Cyprian is too impious to obtain forgiveness and that, although God has come to his aid just recently, in time he will soon abandon Cyprian (II.461-470). These words unnerve Cyprian, but do not lead to his despair.

With Satan defeated, Justa's honor preserved, and Cyprian on the path to repentance, the magician's account ends. Recalling the opening of the *Confession*, Cyprian addresses his audience and asks them to judge whether his conversion is genuine and whether he can receive salvation.[658] The crowd is silent for some time, but eventually someone breaks the silence. The manuscript ends before we hear the audience's reaction to the *Confession*, but the rest of the story has come down to us through church tradition and in other accounts: Cyprian is made deacon, then priest, and eventually rises to the position of bishop. During the Diocletianic persecutions both the bishop and Justa, who has taken the name Justina, are tortured and martyred in the imperial capital at Nicomedia.[659]

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[657] i.e. the magic texts that Cyprian brought to the priest as proof that his conversion was genuine.

[658] The *Confession* takes place when Cyprian was still an outsider, so the narrative cannot take place where the *Conversion* left off, but should be placed sometime after his conversion but before he was baptized and made priest.

Origins and Influences

Now that we have completed our analysis of the *Confession*, let us turn to the sources that the initial prose author used in the creation of the Cyprian legend. Since a discussion of the sources behind the *Confession* belongs properly to an analysis of the prose version, not Eudocia's verse rendition, this topic will be dealt with briefly.[660] In the early twentieth century, Nock among others pointed out the dependence of the Cyprian legend upon the lives of Pythagoras and Apollonius of Tyana.[661] This dependence must have been self-evident to Nock, for he did not elaborate or qualify this assertion. The following section explores how the *Confession* borrows from the *vitae* and broader traditions surrounding Pythagoras and the ever-elusive Apollonius of Tyana, yet by doing so it will make clear that the text diverges in some remarkable ways from those same traditions, making a simple assertion of dependency inaccurate. Finally, this section entertains the possibility that the historical Cyprian of Antioch, the man behind the legend, was nothing more than a Neo-Pythagorean "holy man," such as Apollonius, whose life was greatly exaggerated subsequently by authors with panegyric or theological, rather than historical, concerns. Although this reconstruction might be appealing, there are some significant reasons why it might not stand. Let us begin with the life and legend of one of the most controversial and influential Pythagoreans from Late Antiquity, Apollonius of Tyana.

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[659] See the epilogue at the end of this chapter for a translation of Photius' summary of book three of Eudocia's *Martyrdom*.

[660] I hope to return elsewhere to the prose versions of the *Conversion* and *Confession* and provide a more thorough analysis of the sources behind the legends and a comparison between the prose and verse renditions. Here is not the proper venue for an elaborate discussion, so an abbreviated summary will have to suffice.

[661] Nock, 1927.

The majority of what we know about the first century CE Neo-Pythagorean, Apollonius, comes through his *vita* first written by Philostratus in the third century.[662] The historic value of Apollonius' account is of little concern here since our primary objective is with the Apollonius legend, not the historical figure.[663] For that reason, the particular details concerning the Apollonius legend's influence on Iamblichus' *Life of Pythagoras* and the *Alexander* of Lucian do not concern us here.[664] If we follow the legend as Philostratus relates it, Apollonius lived a typical aristocratic childhood. He was born in Tyana and educated there until the age of fourteen when, as was common, he traveled to one of the urban centers of the region, Tarsus, for training in rhetoric. Oratory did not suit him and he soon moved on to Aegae where he devoted himself to various schools of philosophy.[665] At the age of twenty, he returned to Tyana to oversee the affairs of his paternal estate, which for the most part he gave away. No longer encumbered by physical possessions, Apollonius traveled through Cilicia, Pamphylia, Syria,[666] and Arabia where he sought initiation in the various cult centers along the way. This practice was to be a recurring theme when Apollonius broadened the scope of his travels. The list of his later travels, in rough chronological order,[667] is as follows: Ninus (Nineveh), Babylon, India, Babylon, Ninus, Antioch, Seleucia, Cyprus, Asia Minor, Lesbos, Athens, Crete, Rome, Spain, Africa, Sicily, Greece, Chios, Rhodes, Alexandria, Ethiopia, Alexandria, Tarsus, Egypt, Corinth, Rome, Greece, Ionia, and Rome. Some of these locations warranted extended stays, such as India, Ethiopia, and Egypt, while others served as layovers on the way to more important destinations. Be that as it may, the Apollonius of legend never missed the opportunity to visit local cult centers where he would at least be initiated or, as in the case of Athens, would take steps to revitalize traditional mysteries. Some locations of interest include the Asclepieia at Aegae and Pergamon, the shrine of Aphrodite at Paphos on Cyprus, the tomb of Achilles at Troy, and the center of the Orphic mysteries on Lesbos. Of particular interest for us is Apollonius' activity in Athens, Eleusis, and Sparta, not to mention Egypt.

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[662] For more on Apollonius in late antiquity, see Jones, 2006.

[663] For a summary of the "historical Apollonius," with its clear parallel to the historical Jesus, see Harris, 1969, and Dzielska, 1986.

[664] See Gorman, 1985.

[665] Philostratus follows the classical topos in which the student tries each philosophic school until he finds the one that best suits him. This topos was influential enough to be found in Hellenized Jewish authors, for example in the *Vita* of Josephus.

[666] We know for example that Antioch was one of the cities which claimed a special affection for Apollonius. See Dzielska, 1986, 51-84.

Let us begin with Athens, which by association will include Apollonius' initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries. On his first visit to Athens,[668] the hierophant attempted to exclude Apollonius from the mysteries on the pretext of the sanctuary's potential defilement by a sorcerer (γόης) or an associate of demons. Apollonius insisted that he was, regarding the mysteries, more knowledgeable than the hierophant and therefore had a place in the ritual. Although this answer placated the hierophant, it did not lead to Apollonius' initiation, which was to be delayed until a subsequent visit to Athens;[669] the remainder of his first visit was spent delivering lectures on religious subjects. Eventually Apollonius was invited to visit Sparta,[670] where he perceived that the traditional or, more appropriately, legendary Spartan lifestyle had long been neglected. Under his supervision, the ephors purged effeminizing influences from the community and returned Sparta to their austere lifestyle. In sum, Apollonius' activities in Athens and Sparta pertain to his initiation into and preservation of *religio maiorum*. This is in keeping with the philosopher's wider vocation as an eastern (Babylonian and Egyptian) figure whose pan-hellenism preserved the classical cults.

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[667] As preserved in Philostratus.

[668] Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 4.17-19.

[669] Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 5.19.

Of Apollonius' stay in Egypt we know next to nothing besides his interaction with the Gymnosophists, who were located in Upper Egypt and Ethiopia. This is particularly frustrating since Apollonius remained in the region for over twenty years and information about the cults there could provide us with some comparisons between the philosopher Apollonius and Cyprian. Despite Philostratus' attempt to smooth over Apollonius' magic *technai* by emphasizing the wisdom and ascetic praxeis of the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Brahmans, his text still evidences an Apollonius who was part philosopher and part wonder worker. The partially pseudepigraphic epistles[671] which claim to be from the hand of Apollonius, indicate this fact as well. In these epistles the "author" claims to have a special relationship with gods and demons,[672] to be the gods' equal, or to have been declared "special" by the gods.[673] Furthermore, despite Philostratus' best efforts to portray a philosophical "do-gooder," the magician in Apollonius is always lurking beneath the surface. Apollonius manifests power over disease/death,[674] demons,[675] nature,[676] necromancy,[677] incantations,[678] the interpretation of visions,[679] and, most especially, foreknowledge and prophecy.[680]

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[670] Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 4.27. See also 4.31-34 for Apollonius' visit to Sparta where he met a youth who had abandoned Spartan mores for mercantile investments and who, after a conversation with the philosopher, saw the error of his ways and returned to the fold, as it were.

[671] While some letters are taken as more or less genuine, many were most likely composed by followers of Apollonius and reveal one of the earliest stages of his legend. See Penella, 1979.

[672] *Ep*. 52. One wonders how this relates to Apollonius' assertion (Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 4.44) that he has nothing to do with low level entities, which was the source of efficacy for magicians and sorcerers.

Although this list appears similar to the skills Cyprian learned during his extended travels particularly in Egypt and Babylon, one significant difference sets the *Vita Apollonii* apart from the *Confession*. The *Vita* relates narratives in episodic form, which is to say that the reader experiences the *thaumata* of Apollonius *in situ*, i.e. the places where and the times when the wonders were performed. Any indication of where and when Apollonius learned these skills must be inferred or reconstructed from other passages within the *Vita* or from other Pythagorean narratives, especially those relating to Pythagoras himself. The *Confession* on the other hand attempts to relate not the *in situ* demonstrations of power, which Cyprian admits he performed while in Antioch, but rather its main concern lies in the when's and where's of his education in the occult.

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[673] *Ep*. 44 and 48.

[674] Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 4.45.

[675] Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 4.20, 25, 43; 5.42; 6.27, 29, 43.

[676] Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 2.4, 14, 15, 33; 3.27; 4.13; 5.11, 35; 6.32.

[677] Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 4.11.

[678] Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 4.4.

[679] Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 1.23; 4.34.

[680] Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 1.22, 34; 4.4, 6, 18, 24, 43; 5.7, 11, 13, 30, 37; 6.32, 8.26. For discussions of Apollonius and his wonder-working see Mead, 1980, 110-118, and Dzielska, 1986, 85-127.

What then can we conclude concerning the *Confession*'s dependence on the legend of Apollonius of Tyana? Cyprian traveled to some of the same places that Apollonius, one of the most well-traveled individuals in antiquity, visited in his tour of ancient cult centers. But the order of their travels, first of all, is entirely different; Cyprian begins in Greece proper, travels through the major cult centers there, first in Attica, then in the Peloponnese. Only after the traditional Hellenic sites are mentioned does Cyprian travel to Asia Minor, Scythia, Egypt, Babylon, and finally Syrian Antioch. Although Apollonius begins his travels in his native provinces of Cilicia and Pamphylia, he turns from there to the east (going as far as India), and only afterwards does he travel to Attica and the Peloponnese on his way to the west and finally Egypt. Moreover, there are some conspicuous additions in the Cyprian account, particularly Scythia, and one significant omission, India. Cyprian's stay in Scythia certainly does not preclude a dependence on the Apollonius legend, but the fact that he never visits one of the first and most important destinations of Apollonius should give us pause. For Philostratus' pedagogical tour, the Indian Brahmans were a *sine qua non* of the Pythagorean experience. Furthermore, it is unclear whether Cyprian's stay in Memphis had anything to do with the Gymnosophists.[681] The omission of India and the ambiguity of Egypt hinders a definitive connection between the two narratives, and one is left to conclude that any similarities between the lives of Cyprian and Apollonius, although tempting, are principally ambiguous and occasionally mere happenstance.

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[681] The only possible reference to his teachers in Memphis is at II.118-120 where Cyprian mentions the possessed man he saw.

One discovers more substantial connections in a comparison with Pythagoras.[682] According to his biographers, Pythagoras was born in Samos through the oracular intervention of Apollo. Indeed, Apollo's aid was so significant that the philosopher's father renames his wife Pythais and calls him Pythagoras.[683] We have little reliable evidence of his earliest teachers and conflicting reports from his adolescent years,[684] but during his early life, he traveled to Memphis, perhaps at the suggestion of Thales, and studied under the priests there.[685] According to Diogenes Laertius, before Pythagoras traveled to Egypt he was initiated in the Greek and barbaric mystery. During his stay in Memphis, Pythagoras learned astronomy, geometry, and various other rituals. This was followed by a perforce excursion to Babylon where he studied under the Chaldaeans and Magi, and, after twelve years in the east, Pythagoras returned to Samos whence he traveled to all the oracles, including the one in Sparta. So far this list contains nearly all the geographical references mentioned in the *Confession*, save one, Scythia.[686] There is an interesting account in which Aberis, a Scythian, described as a Hyperborean, gave Pythagoras an arrow (οἰστός) with which the latter was able to fly and perform purificatory rites.[687] One of the skills that Iamblichus associates with the Hyperborean Scythian was *hieroskopia*, divination through an examination of entrails.[688] Iamblichus portrays the Scythian as a practitioner of magic, but one who lacked Greek culture, παιδεία (19.90), which Pythagoras taught him. Although Pythagoras never traveled to Scythia, he was able to relate to Aberis details of the Scythian countryside. In other words, Pythagoras knew the secrets of Scythia without having to travel there. In sum, Cyprian follows a similar itinerary as Pythagoras: Greece, Egypt, specifically Memphis, then Babylon. The legend also contains information about Scythia and occult activity that was practiced at the ends of the earth. It is entirely possible therefore that the original author of the *Confession* constructed his/her narrative upon a Pythagorean foundation.

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[682] As with Apollonius, it is not the place of this chapter to untangle the legendary from the historical Pythagoras. Indeed, the more pervasive the legend, the more useful it is here. See Carcopino, 1968.

[683] I wonder whether the centrality of Apollo in the early life of Pythagoras might have influenced the early life of Cyprian who was dedicated at birth to Apollo.

[684] Iamblichus says that Pythagoras' early teachers were Anaximander and Thales while Diogenes Laertius mentions Pherecydes and Hermadamas.

[685] Iamblichus says that Pythagoras first stopped in Syria to learn from the priest of Moses and other "Phoenician Mysteries."

[686] By geographical regions, this means Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, Persia, and Egypt.

[687] Iamblichus De *Vita Pythagorica* 19.

[688] τῆς διὰ τῶν ϑυσιῶν ἱεροσκοπίας (19.93).

But what about the details of what Pythagoras learned in Egypt and Babylon–can his biographies provide us with any substantial information? Unfortunately, there is little evidence for sorcery, in contrast to prophecy and foreknowledge, in Pythagoras' *vita*. In fact, the greatest concentration of magic elements comes from the Aberis episode, where the magic arrow allows Pythagoras to fly and ritually cleanse cities. Any supernatural trait of the philosopher is typically explained through his detailed knowledge of the stars, science, numbers, and nature. Such knowledge allows him to perform inexplicable wonders, such as his ability to control wild animals,[689] but there is nothing comparable to the *thaumata* found in Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius* or in the *Confession*.

That being said, there might be some credibility to the theory that Cyprian, or someone after him, styled him(self) a Pythagorean philosopher, who, like the school's namesake and Apollonius of Tyana, was ambiguously associated with magic. Cyprian did learn basic astronomy, biology, numbers, as well as the overarching effects of nature–in other words, all essential skills of the Pythagorean philosopher. These details are in the *Confession* permeated with arcane references to spirits, demons, magic stones and other paraphernalia, occult powers, incantations, and the like. If Philostratus attempted to suppress the wonder-worker's *thaumata*, then Cyprian's initial prose biographer underscores them. The issue is whether one can observe a remnant, perhaps a mere glimpse of Pythagorean philosophy latent in a sea of sorcery, divination, and demonism. I would suggest that if one were to take out the traveling motif, which is perhaps one of the only details of the prose *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian* that is Pythagorean, there would be only scant references to Pythagoreanism.

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[689] Iamblichus De *Vita Pythagorica* 13.

Moreover, without a clear reference to Pythagoras or the Pythagorean lifestyle (their peculiar diet, appearance, and attire), it is more likely that the *Confession* was construcuted from non-Pythagorean narratives or a combination of unconnected references. That one began with mystery cults as a first introduction to deeper knowledge was not isolated to traditions regarding Pythagoras. By the time Philostratus wrote his biography of Apollonius, he could begin in the east with Ninus, Babylon, and India, and only later return to the traditional cults of Greece proper. Furthermore, Egypt and Babylon were *the* two places whence any bona fide sorcery came. Their presence in a journey-man's catalogue of places he learned magic should cause no concern; indeed, their absence would warrant notice. Furthermore, the influence of the biblical narrative in the *Confession* should not be overlooked. Egypt and Babylon are central locations in the Old Testament, and their involvement in astrology and magic are commonly associated with those regions. That the original narrator had the Bible in mind is evident when

Cyprian is compared with Jambres, the famous Egyptian magician, rather than the many wonder-workers from the classical tradition. Although the *Confession* doubtless blends the classical and the biblical, its many vague and often confused references hardly allow us to separate the text's various sources with certainty. Unfortunately, this might be the extent to which we can ascertain definitive answers regarding the sources behind the *Confession*.

A Twice-Told Tale

We turn from possible sources behind Cyprian's *magike paideia* to a problem that is unique to Eudocia's version of the story: contradictions, additions, or omissions between the *Conversion* and *Confession*.[690] This was mentioned above, but now that we have worked our way through the entire *Confession*, the differences between the two descriptions of Cyprian's conversion should be more evident. As has been suggested, from lines 301-319, the *Confession* parallels the core of Cyprian's conversion as related in the *Conversion*. There are a series of three attacks, each of which fail and eventually lead to the magician's loss of confidence in Satan and his demonic powers. According to the *Conversion*, Cyprian inquired into the power of God and the demon told him about God's power and its superiority. Cyprian then confessed his belief in God and with the *signum crucis*, sent the demon away. This is rather straightforward and simple; indeed, one imagines that Eudocia had in hand a simple prose version of the account, perhaps as I have suggested, one loosely based upon the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*.

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[690] Eudocia united and versified the tripartite division in the Cyprian legend, *Conversion*, *Confession*, and *Martyrdom*, which previously traveled in separate accounts. Accordingly, the account of Cyprian's conversion in the *Conversion* would not be open to scrutiny and comparison vis-à-vis the conversion in the *Confession*. Disparate sources and contradictory sources were not as apparent as they are in Eudocia's narrative.

The *Confession* is not nearly so simple; after three defeats, there ensued, despite the apparent corruption of the text, a battle between demonic factions. Cyprian was about to give a rousing speech against the serpent, but this is delayed or ignored as the narrative shifts to describe, first, Satan's attempted deception of Aglaidas with an imposture and, second, Cyprian's attempt to attack Justa by either turning Aglaidas into a bird or giving him the ability to fly. Even though they were defeated, Cyprian next engaged in another series of attacks, against Justa's health, her family's property, their lives, and finally the entire city. There follows no "conversion" proper. Cyprian eventually realized the power of the cross, addressed Satan with an extended invective, and was forced to perform the *signum crucis* to ward off an inimical Satan.

I would suggest that there are at least three distinct sources present in the *Confession*. The first was most likely the prose version of the *Conversion*, which contained three demonic attacks against Justa and Cyprian's conversion as a result of their failure. The second consisted of, at least, Satan's treachery and use of a pseudo-Justa, as well as Cyprian and Aglaidas' attempt against Justa that involved a winged or flying Aglaidas. I would include in this source lines 320-338, the battle between the demonic factions. Thirdly there was, I suggest, an account that contained a series of attacks similar to the trials of Job: first against Justa's physical health, second against her parent's property, third against their lives, and finally a plague against the city. A trace of this account even made its way into the *Conversion*, in Satan's plan to weaken Justa with a fever. The heroine faced each of these trials with resolve, and (we can assume) her courage led to Cyprian's conversion. That Eudocia's source was unclear and the account awkward is clear from the difficulty that the copyists had in preserving the integrity of the manuscript.

Appendix: The *Confession*

"As many as care about the mysterious faith in
the greatly glorified Christ, look upon my fresh tears
so that you might know whence I have such pain–
I know very well that you know, for I speak the truth.
As many (of you) as find pleasure in unseemly idols,
learn, for I set out their deceptions.
There was no person like myself
(who) was so impious and in cahoots with demons
or a follower of worthless idols
that he learned what they are or what strength they have.

I am that famous Cyprian, whom as a boy
my parents dedicated to Apollo.
When I was still a child, I learned the sacred rites of the Beast,
the stomach-traveling serpent. In my seventh year,
I was initiated to Phaethon Mithras
and I dwelt in the high city of the well-born Athenians.
I became a citizen since this was pleasing to my
parents who raised me. In my tenth year
I lit the torch for Zeus and I committed myself to the white
suffering of Kore. I also accomplished the serpentine initiations
of Athena, who lives on the Acropolis. Being initiated as a temple servant,
I went to the glen[691] of Olympus, which the ignorant claim

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[691] The prose author confuses here Olympus and Olympia; the latter commonly associated with a νάπος or νάπη.

to be the abode of the powerless gods.
In that place, I heard the echo and sound of certain words.
I beheld herbs and roots–an amazing sight it was–
things which shameless, evil demons hold office over, to no effect.
In that place, I perceived the seasons and changing winds.
Likewise (I learned about) many days which certain wretches,
those harsh adversaries, use as they fabricate false images.
I beheld the choir shamelessly singing
and I saw others in a crowd, performing the deeds of Ares.[692]
I also saw groups of others and their erratic habits
and (I saw them) distraught with fear. I also saw there a vast
array of goddesses and demons, because I remained there
for forty days and another eight after that.
From there, as if from mighty realms,
spirits, those who travel the air to the earth, are sent forth
to make all nations do whatever evil they wish, as bad as possible.
And I held a torch[693] with leaves still at the end of the twigs made from trees in blossom
once Phaethon had set. Going into my fifteenth year
I was thoroughly taught about spirits and gods
by seven hierophants,
and about empty deeds, the works of lawless demons.
My parents were exceedingly eager that I would learn
everything on the earth, in the sky and in the sea,
not only things used for the destruction of men
but also things (made from) lush grass and well-stemmed
plants, and things that oppress the rather feeble body of man,
and things that the evil-minded enemy,

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[692] A Phyrric dance?

[693] Salveneschi, 1982, 37, takes the δαίς as a meal, but how this reading fits in with the broader context is unclear. In my opinion, the line refers to a branch, newly cut (it is still budding), which Cyprian uses as a torch. The fact that is the branch burns is somewhat mysterious.

the ruler of this earth, discovered, the swift-minded serpent
who out of spite does not care about the plan of the immortal Ruler.

From there, I went to horse-grazed, lush Argos.
There was a festival of Dawn, the wife of Tithonus, clad in white.
There too I became an initiate of the air
and of the heaven with its many spheres – – –
and of the harmony of the waters and the well-fed earth
and in turn of the dewy streams to the divine air.[694]
I went as far as Elis (Olympia) and
in Sparta I saw the stout figure of Tauropolos Keladeine, so that I might learn
accursed things: volatile nature and destruction,
written stones and the characters (symbols) of the cosmos
and old wive's tales. But when I went to the land of Phrygia
I became very wise and inspired. I
learned from entrails in the middle of the liver.
From the Scythians I learned about birds and echoing (resounding) signs
as well as the erratic journeys of animals
and the utterances of the men who see the future.
I also learned (about) the sounds of wooden planks and likewise of stones
as well as the voices from the tombs of those long dead.
I learned about the thud from doors and the palpitations of the cares of mortals.
I also learned about the masses of blood which defile one's limbs
and when worms eat away at the joints.
I learned the ditties of myth, the metre of verses,
and the visible sufferings of the flesh and the limits of nature.
I also learned vows, both true and untrue ones,
and schemes that were hostile to men.
No art escaped my notice–neither chthonic, celestial
nor underworldly, neither the versatile apparition, nor the hidden mind,

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[694] i.e. rain and evaporation.

the crafty, the cunning or the skillful,
(and I learned everything) as far as weak deception, impious deeds
and everything of this sort on this earth.

After these things, when I entered my 20th year,
I arrived in the land of dark men,
Egypt, and went to Memphis.
There I attempted whatever is not fitting for mortals:
how (apotropaic) spirits are kindred to chthonic ones and how they
are called and what stars they long for,
both as a rule and in fact, and how they are put to flight
and how they (the same spirits) keep the murky darkness.
And I learned which spirits are their opponents
and how many rulers of dreaded Erebus (Hell) there are, including the anti-God.
And I learned how these (beings) are similar in soul and body
to cattle and fish, as well as what things they care about
and what things they do: swift movement and knowledge,
memory, terror, the skill of deception, the tracks of feet,
the hidden forgetfulness of the many and the deeds of the people,
as well as things similar to these. I also learned there the trembling of the earth
as well as the origin and roar of rain storms (i.e. thunder),
the swell of earth and sea–things which are in reality imitations,
illusions of the immortal's wisdom.
In that place, I perceived the souls of strong and long-lived
mortals, the shameful monsters, the Giants,
whose souls are dreadfully pressed in the murky darkness,
and just as in a vision, I saw how they bear the earth on their backs,
just like a man bears a heavy burden of wood upon his shoulders.
I saw demons have intercourse with crooked serpents,
and I perceived the biting winds which bring death for those on earth.

I also learned from where roaming demons, in their rush on matter (the material world), cast upon men 'numerous' woes.

I saw the earth suffering at the hands of a demon
but the earth was not sitting on unstable water
because of its base and foundation, which are the earth's lot.
I came to a place where the enemy change their form, which
the serpent, through his conflict with the divine strength, created
so that all of man's life is distorted by sorrow.
From there, many spirits begin to
bring impiety to equally rooted men who traverse the earth.
I also saw there a man possessed by evils
come suddenly against a pious man out of spite.
Again, (I saw come) a crazy man against a wise man, the rotten against the upright. There was nothing holy there, nor any discriminate activity.

I saw there the gruesome, artificial appearance of Falsehood.
It had the triple appearance of ugly Lewdness
bloody, (utterly) burnt, similar to froth and bile.
After that I saw the image of Wrath, winged, wretched,
savage, like a wild animal. Then I saw Deceit,
unremitting, secretive, adorned with mendacious words.
I saw the disgusting image of Hatred, blind,
who had four eyes on the back of his head
that shun the glorious sight of the bright light.
Many feet stuck out from his head–
they alone were terrifying to behold; it had no stomach,
for he was ruthless and proceeded without emotion.
Jealousy and dreaded Envy were similar to one another,
but baneful Envy had a mouth similar to a spade.
I beheld Morosity, emaciated, nearly a corpse

who had many eyes, and pupils as arrows
and always has his mind set on instant revenge. And
I saw the appearance of the demon Greed. Starting from the top, he had a head
that was narrow and long, and he had two mouths,
one in his midriff and the other on his back.
He feasts on solid earth and heavy rocks–
hungry for flesh to satisfaction and consumed with (his) evil.
I saw Love for Wealth;
he had a greedy and sharp appearance–you would say that you saw a scythe.
His pupils were always rolled back (in his eyelids).
Likewise, I saw Commerce, down in the dumps and quick roving,
who bears on his shoulders the burden of every hope for wealth.
I beheld the appearance of Vanity, who had a good spirit
and rich flesh and did not have white bones (i.e. was not skinny).
I saw Idolatry soaring high.
At the back of her head she has two thick wings
with which she seemed to protect everyone but with which she was
not able to protect her own limbs.
I beheld there the deceitful, heavy terror of Hypocrisy,
who was entirely delicate and had a hollow breast,
putrified in secret, blasted by the winds, whenever they raged.
I also saw the appearance of Delirium who had
at the same time two natures, that of a young man and woman.
It was nude, full of shamelessness on the inside but without power.
I saw the wretched demon Blabbermouth who had a shameless
tongue that is by far bigger than all the other parts of his body.
I also saw Crazy who had a head like a nut,
a completely empty soul that accomplishes everything under the sun.
I noticed there of all the terrible deeds one thing:
the appearance which they shamelessly carry about when they come down
through the cosmos, those accursed, evil, monstrous, terrible

three hundred sixty-five (one for each day)
demons of grievous passions who preside over
vain glory. I saw the mighty disgrace of Virtue
and also of wisdom and justice, done in vain,
by which they lead pagan men astray from wisdom.
For someone sees an image (statue), and truth is completely gone.
Everything is as a shadow and useless dust always.
For among them every vice works
toward the deceit of many. But I myself am not 'supposed'
to write endless books. I have told you the tip of an iceberg and
I have related to all of you my impiety.

But I will say this in addition: when I was
thirty years old, I left behind the land of dark men
and I arrived at the city of the Chaldeans, an ancient people,
in a hurry to learn the course of the air
which they say rests upon the flaming fire,
but which learned men think rests upon light.
There I learned the reoccurring nature of the stars–
just as if someone plucks an endless herb from mere buds–
and the celestial ranks which are similar to battle formations.
They showed to me the kinship and homes of each star,
also their affection, their food and drink,
and the intellectual love they offer to the light.
They showed me the layers of the silvery heaven,
three hundred and sixty-five of them (one for each day).
There was among them a 'demiurge' of visible nature.
And they made an investigation; they too obeyed a leader.
They revealed to me their plan, what their course is,
the ones who hide the command that is always anxious about hidden things,
and who are only appeased by sacrifices.

Others do not listen at all, nor do they care for libations,
but they only care for the vast expanse of light.[695]
Thus I saw why they went on
trusting in the will of darkness so they might give a share of the light
to the stars that do not shine by mixing them with it little by little.
Awe completely held me when I saw the mediators
because they, etherish and dark, care about happiness.
I was amazed when I understood their laws
which they establish among themselves
while in their hearts they guard the most faithful oaths.
There was piety, love, swiftness (energy)
as well as vehement design, which
their leader, in search of wickedness, chose so that they might co-mingle together.
He made them wise by drawing (their) breath from the air
and (their) tongue of eloquence from the fruitful earth.
With his infernal powers he teaches all the "tricks of the trade."
There he blocked the whole line of the cosmos, trusting in the fact that
they would forget their nature and God who cares.
Cajoling, he put everything up for sale
and that evil-doer rules the earth by throwing everything away.
Believe me that I saw the demon himself
once I had supplicated him with many libations and sacrifices.
Believe me, when I saw him, I addressed him with words and
I heard him speak kindly. Among other things
he called me a youth, beautiful in appearance, a mighty initiate,
and just like Jambres, in deeds his very equal.
He granted me to become a leader of the cosmos
by working with him, because he saw the deeds of my life.
Then he honored me and granted me a grievous array
of wicked demons and said to me on my way out,

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[695] Literally, "the dark light."

"Cyprian, you are a strong mortal." Rising from his chair,
he sent me forth and he caused the onlookers to be in awe.
From that time on, all his priests began to honor me equally to him.
In appearance, he seemed similar to richly-worked gold
with a flash of his eyes and his long hair. On his head
he had a diadem made of braids of precious stones
whose brilliance illuminated that place with splendor.
His clothing had a similar embellishment. When he turned, he shook the earth.
Around his chair stood many shield-bearers
holding their gaze to the ground ready just like an army formation.
He illuminated that earth, as a god in Olympus,
gleaming with the stars and making plants grow.
He does everything that God does
and contends with the sovereign Immortal and his saints.
That is how he seemed to deceive the mind of men,
he who, a feeble demon, produces an empty shadow instead (of the real thing),
from whom the demonic show stems entirely unnoticed.
This activity concerns those who are shameful: to be seen
and to bring about solid power through the flesh. For those who
need it, libation and the scent of sacrifice provide everything.
The dark shades sitting there draw forth
from sacrifices much smoke that rises to the heavens.
This smoke they put on like decorated cloaks,
(like beautiful wool or delicate linen ware)
numerous shadowy apparitions from the lofty temples,
and instead of the truth they wear this air.
For this reason he even needs the sacrifice of an ant
and asks for water, rinds, fruits
and everything that the nourishing earth produces,
that he might reveal to mortals a mere image.
Just as we see in our mind the appearance of the dead

and we seem to converse with those not present,
in the same way, the adversary plants his image
in his initiates. He places this image around their faces
and the bodies of idols in which there is no strength.
Pouring forth a great storm sure enough, but not really,
accomplishing a fire that is similar to icy snow–
like producing a fish one can see but not eat–
and radiant gold, the partner of wretched poverty.
What is more, the imitator accomplishes material works,
cities, bedchambers, forested plains,
shaded glens, the man-nourishing fatherland,
decorated bedcoverings, which mortals make,
things that bring all sorts of shadowy things to blood-lusty demons.
In the same way, even sleep-walkers see clearly when they are fast asleep.
These are the activities of the sinful demon, this is the activity
of godless and irreligious men, of those with impure religions.
What then do I suffer? Because, although I want to fear
the heavenly God, scared of the icy demon's
most deadly power and of the emptiness of his brag
I am hidden in the shadowy vale. For from a holy girl,
the most august maiden Justa, I learned about
demons, that they are entirely feeble.
For at her house I saw one eccentric in thought, clothed in scales,
vaunting unspeakable things, gigantic, a shameful serpent,
but yet he did not have the strength of a mere fly.
I learned from the most honorable maiden that my lord
was one who claims a lot, but does nothing true ever.
A sole maiden trampled so great a serpent with her feet.
Oh my, the ruler of the deceitful demons
was repelled from entering the maiden's chamber,
trembling terribly. He, who commanded such great demons,

did not have the power to barge in the maiden's door.
He thought he rules everything but was mastered by a girl;
he wanted to confound the earth but fled before a woman;
he had a mischievous heart but could not overthrow a girl;
he thought he could call upon a consuming lion for help and
scare everyone but as a fly in the foyer of a girl
he was ridiculed. When I left the land of the Persians
and headed to the great city of Syrian Antioch,
I accomplished many wonders through my terrible supernatural skills;
for some I provided the cure for love, and for others the cure for jealousy,
bitter rivalry, and evil (poison?) which is a concern of the flesh.

In that city there was a certain lover, Aglaidas, who begged me,
as did many others, on his knees for the sake of a girl,
Justina by name, that he might have intercourse with her.
That is when the demon first appeared unreliable to me.
Of the many legions he commanded, they were gathered
around the maiden, but returned ineffectually.
The virgin's faith rendered Aglaidas' helper invisible,
and made him powerless.
After Aglaidas had many sleepless nights
and (after) my magic skills and the enemy's attacks
for seven weeks and another three after that,
the leader of the demonic horde along with his servants
came to battle against the virgin.
For not only had love taken hold of the youth Aglaidas
but in his eagerness he also touched my heart.
It was amazing to see the array of so many demons
who were held in check by the girl's prayers with the serpent and all.
But Beliar was not able to whet our appetite
although he was shaking very many terrible things on our behalf.

I said to him, "If you have such great power,
would that desire abate from our hearts
that we no longer suffer such pains to no end."
As I was listening, he ordered the eagle that rules
wantonness to do whatever I said. And he accomplished
many things, but he did not manage anything more than that.
The lord merely proved that human nature
is stronger than all the abominable demonic hordes,
but when he discovers a human nature at its zenith,
then he thinks highly of himself and swaggers and,
no longer looking at the life-giving flower of men, but
he places the credit for it in his own power,
just as a weak and lame fighter,
sitting on a horse that knows well the battle charge,
greatly rejoices since he bestows great honor upon himself.
For whenever love increases in budding youth,
then a steam more furious than a blazing fire is raised.
There was between me and the demons, a great battle
and they fought with one another for some time.
At last I addressed the serpent with baneful words
and said that his honor had suddenly fallen.
The one who perceived his inadequacy remained silent.
Routing him, I shouted many great things, and he went quickly
since he knew that his power was inferior and that he was ineffectual.
Then the demon did something amazing to trick Aglaidas:
he led in a virgin, but his trick was immediately evident
since she was nothing similar to the august Justina's body.
When I learned all these things, I hated the serpent.
And he (the serpent) turned the leader of guilty men (me) into one
who had beauty similar to that of sagacious Justina.
And when he approached Aglaidas, Aglaidas gleefully said,

"The golden beauty of the renowned Justina has arrived."
And when Aglaidas spoke of the girl, the demon heard her name and fled,
and Aglaidas was so scared, his courage failed.

Friends, I myself was present at these wicked
happenings. I saw the girl's desire
for God, the lord most high, as well as the serpent's impotence.
Along with the serpent, I was shamed, and I never slept,
since I stood by him when he was present. I was formed a woman from a man
and a winged bird. But when I went into the vestibule,
that apparition was gone, but I returned to being just
Cyprian, the one who trusted in worthless magic arts.
I know that I made Aglaidas able to fly and
from on high he sat down on the girl's roof.
When the august virgin cast her gaze from the light-bearing window,
she struck down the beautifully-winged bird.
Aglaidas was about to come upon the gates of death,
that wretch who stood as a bird so high up,
had the noble, wise girl not pitied him
and had she not addressed him kindly.
saying that he should remain silently at home, fearing God.
She then bid him quickly to leave the vestibule.

Not a sickness nor a disease, nor any other distressing thing
overcame the virgin, even if the evil-working demon sent forth
a myriad of evils against her. And her parents,
when the doctors predicted that her life was coming to an end,
wasted away with grief. But she said to them, "My dear parents,
it is not destined for me to reach the end, i.e. death, yet
an affliction of the heart is upon me, not of my limbs,
a kind of fiery steam that came from the sky

smolders within my body." Many other things, in addition to these
we poured upon the young maiden's limbs,
but with the cross of Christ she destroyed
the arrows of the evil spirit, the one who leads others astray, the enemy.

When I brought about evil deeds against her parents,
killing their flocks, herds, and mules,
the maiden immediately prevailed upon their thoughts,
"Do not be vexed by such things, but rejoice in the little things
because they will be innumerable for the pure one who speaks blessings."
Nor did the girl's terrible fix escape the neighbors.
They ordered to unite the maiden in all speed
in lawful matrimony, but the young woman
sent strength into the mind of her parents through the sign of the cross.
At another time, the demon sent a destructive plague upon the people
and issued an oracle to those in the area
saying that he would not stop the irrepressible vengeance until
Aglaidas led Justa to the bed, as is the custom.
The handmaid of Christ put an end to the people's cry
with holy prayers and drove the plague from the city.
Then those who lived near the city and had been put to the test
gave honor to Christ and heaped dishonor upon me.
Saying that I was the bane of the city.
they vehemently loathed me, but I
left out of fear for her parents and neighbors alike.

But later, when I saw the power of the cross and its great works,
I thought as follows and said to the evil demon,
"Woe you destructive brood, bestower of all sorts of lawless things,
vessel of impiety: why have you deceived my soul in this way,
you who are worthless and powerless, as you yourself know?

If just the thought of the immortal God dominates you with such power,
what will you do when He comes (in His own person)?
If you tremble before the name of Christ, what will you do
when he seeks vengeance for your deeds and destructive actions?
If the mighty force of the divine cross overwhelms you so much,
where will you place your footsteps when He returns?
If the *signum crucis* has warded you off,
how will you be able to save humans from His hand, the force of his power?
For surely you do not have an army so great as to ward Him off.
Even now I am well acquainted with your misleading skill
and I know your appearance well–I see that you are stupid.
Your gift is but useless and lasts a moment.
Your counsel is not solid nor is your savviness the best.
There is not a single thing you can do against God;
they are only appearances and all are similar to smoke.
You completely destroyed my heart and my hope
and you drove the anxious swarm of rational thoughts.
With your terrible evil you devoured my life
and my nature, which I have been allotted, you destroyed with your counterfeits.
I have exceedingly sinned since my mind was deceived at your hand.
I have become senseless and impious and have yielded everything to you.
I have learned wisdom in vain as well as the texts of the ancients.
By trusting in you I was deprived of my property and wealth,
and along with my parent's riches you made me as one robbed of my very breath.
If beggars and paupers had eaten as much
as you wasted, lawless one,
I would have God as the blesser of my hopes, maybe a little bit.
Why did you disrespect me so deeply, you worker of evil?
I am terribly wearied, insufferable one–I see the incurable end.
Indeed I was a corpse and among those who are alive (only) in appearance.
Having procured a tomb for much riches,

I have thus crossed the threshold of death – – –
But it is fitting for me to entreat the illustrious servants of God
who are also very pious men
that I might receive pity and compassion. Would that I
could kiss the footsteps of the august child, the most faithful Justina,
so that she thinks good thoughts about my life.
Be gone, Satan, deceiver, lawless one, despot,
you who abhors the truth and makes light of piety."

But he grew angry and rushed upon me to kill my by force.
With all the strength he had, he attempted to kill me at once
by grabbing me by the throat. Since there was no one nearby (to help) me
and it did not seem possible to escape and run from death,
the sign of the most holy girl came to my mind,
that of the bright-shining cross, through which she had obtained victory.
I said in a prayer, "Lord God of the glorious girl,
come, help me." I immediately stretched out my hand
and placed on my limbs the sign of the scaffold (cross).
Satan fled, like an arrow in flight,
and he threatened me seriously by waving his spear at me.
Then I was greatly emboldened, since I had taken up the *signum crucis*,
and I shouted repeatedly God himself (i.e His name).
But the beast, that planner of evil, grew angry and said
in its retreat, "Christ, the one sought in your prayer, will in no way save you
from my hand because he despises the impious.
For now, he helps a little in order that afterwards with a trick
he leads you astray and destroys you with a wretched fate.
When he will leave you, you will know what I will do to you–
you have despised my power. Christ does not kindly receive
my servants. You have destroyed two (things), wretch,
first our friendship and (yourself, for) the savior himself

will in no way help you." When I heard these words,
I was terribly scared because he
had idly addressed me with such threatening words.

Therefore, to you, dear men, who know my lamentation,
I declare my wretched life so that as you look upon me
you will have pity: and tell me whether it is possible for me
to placate Christ, whether He will listen to my conversion
and lend me aid so that I might flee the shameful path
which I previously knew so well." The crowd held silent for a long time,
and finally someone shouting piercingly said to me…

Chapter 5

The Martyrdom of Cyprian

Although Eudocia's third book, which recounted the martyrdom of Cyprian and Justina under Diocletian, is lost, the ninth century bibliophile Photius had in his possession a copy of the entire poem. His summary of the third book (Cod. 184) is all that remains of Eudocia's *Martyrdom* of St. Cyprian:[696]

ὁ δὲ τρίτος τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ ἁγίου Κυπριανοῦ καὶ Ἰουστίνης τῆς καλλιπαρθένου μετρεῖ, οἳ ἐμαρτύρησαν Διοκλητιανοῦ καὶ Μαξιμιανοῦ τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἀρχὴν ἐχόντων. συνελήφθησαν δ᾽ ἐπὶ τὸ μαρτύριον ὁ μὲν ἐξ Ἀντιοχείας, ἧς καὶ μετὰ Ἄνθιμον τὸν ἀρχιερατικὸν ἴθυνε θεσμόν, τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ πατρίδα λαχών, ἡ δὲ ἐκ Δαμασκοῦ· ἐκεῖ γὰρ τῆς Ἀντιόχου μεταστᾶσα (αὕτη δὲ καὶ τῇ παρθένῳ ἐχρημάτιζε πατρίς) τὸν Χριστὸν ἐκήρυσσε λαμπρῶς. συλληφθέντες δέ, ὁ μὲν μὴ πειθόμενος τοῖς τοῦ δυσσεβοῦντος λόγοις μετέωρος δεσμοῖς αἴρεται καὶ τὰς πλευρὰς ξύεται, ἡ δὲ βουνεύροις τύπτεται. ὡς δὲ οὐδεμία ἔνδοσις ἐν αὐτοῖς ὑπὸ τοῦ τυραννοῦντος ἐνωρᾶτο, φυλακαῖς μὲν τότε κεχωρισμένους καθειργνύει, εἶτα μετακαλεσάμενος, ἐπεὶ λόγοις πειρῶν πάλιν ἀπετύγχανεν, ἐν χαλκῷ τηγάνῳ πίσσης καὶ στέατος καὶ κηροῦ βληθέντων καὶ φλογὸς πολλῆς ἀναφθείσης ἐμβάλλει τοὺς μάρτυρας Κυρίου. ἐγκαρτερούντων δὲ τῶν ἀθλητῶν τῇ βασάνῳ, μᾶλλον δ᾽ ὡς ἐν δρόσῳ φαιδρῶς Θεὸν ὑπὲρ ὧν κρείσσους ὀδυνῶν ἐγίνοντο δοξαζόντων, Ἀθανάσιός τις ἄθλιος δαιμόνων ἱερεὺς καὶ τοῦ θείου πρότερον συνήθης Κυπριανοῦ, σύνεδρός τε τηνικάδε τοῦ κολάζοντος χρηματίζων, ἀπονοίᾳ ληφθεὶς ἐτόλμα βαίνειν ἐπὶ τοῦ πυρός, τοὺς οἰκείους ἐπικαλούμενος θεούς, σμικρύνειν τὸ θαῦμα ἐν τῷ μηδ᾽αὐτὸν τι παθεῖν διατεινόμενος· τὸ δὲ πλέον ηὔξετο· αὐτίκα γὰρ οὗτος πυρὸς δαπάνη καὶ τέφρα ἐδείκνυτο.

ἐξαπορήσας δὲ ὁ κολάζων ἀναπέμπειν ἔγνω τοὺς μάρτυρας πρὸς Διοκλητιανὸν γράψας καὶ ἅτε πάθοιεν καὶ ὡς κρείττους πασῶν εἰσι βασάνων. ὁ δὲ ταῦτα ἐν τῇ

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[696] The Greek text comes from Henry's edition; the translation is from Wilson, 1994, 175-176.

Νικομήδους διαγνοὺς προστάσσει πρὸς τῷ παρακειμένῳ τῇ πόλει ποταμῷ (Γάλλος δ᾽ ὠνόμαστο) τὰς κεφαλὰς τοὺς μάρτυρας ἀποτμηθῆναι. σὺν οἷς καὶ Θεόκτιστος αὐθωρὸν ὤφθη μάρτυς, ἔλεγχον εὑρὼν τῆς εὐσεβείας τὸ προφθέγξασθαι τῷ μάρτυρι Κυρίου. τὰ δὲ λείψανα τῶν ἁγίων ναῦταί τινες ἀπὸ Ῥώμης ἐπιδεδημηκότες ἄρτι, ὧν ἦν ἑταῖρος καὶ ὁ μάρτυς Θεόκτιστος, οὗτοι λαθόντες τοὺς φύλακας ἀνείλοντο καὶ εἰς Ῥώμην ἀπεκόμισαν, ἐν ᾗ καὶ ναὸς αὐτοίς περικαλλής, ἐγγίζων τῷ Κλαυδίου φόρῳ, ἀνηγέρθη, ἔργον Ῥουφίνης εὐσεβόφρονος, ἧς τὸ γένος εἰς τὸ Κλαυδίου διέβαινεν αἷμα. ταῦτα καὶ ὁ τρίτος λόγος.

Book 3 recounts the martyrdom of St. Cyprian and the beautiful virgin Justina, who were martyred in the reign of the Roman emperors Diocletian and Maximian. Cyprian was arrested in Antioch, where he held office as bishop after Anthimos (it was his place of origin), Justina in Damascus. She moved there from Antioch (she too was a native of that city) and was vigorously proclaiming the Christian message. When they were arrested, he refused to yield to the arguments of the pagan and was hung up in the air in chains and flayed round the ribs, while she was beaten with a whip of oxhide. As they showed no sign of yielding to the inquisitor, he put them in separate cells. Later he summoned them and interrogated them once more without success. So he poured pitch, fat, and wax into a bronze cauldron, lit a powerful fire under it and threw in the martyrs of Christ. The champions of the faith stood to the test, indeed they glorified God for having made them superior to the pain, as if dew were falling on them. At this point a certain Athanasios, a miserable priest of the demons and former companion of the saintly Cyprian, was acting as assistant to the torturer. In a moment of madness he dared to walk into the fire, uttering an invocation to the gods, in an attempt to minimize the miracle by remaining unscathed himself. But the fire blazed up and he was seen reduced to ashes as once by the flames.

The inquisitor did not know what to do. He decided to send the martyrs to Diocletian with a letter explaining their ordeal and saying that they were impervious to all forms of torture. The emperor received the report at Nicomedia and ordered that the martyrs should be beheaded near the river by the city (it was called the Gallos). They were joined in martyrdom at the same moment by Theoktistos, whose faith was demonstrated when he addressed the Lord's martyr. The remains of the saints were secretely gathered and taken to Rome by some sailors who had recently come from Rome–they were companions of the martyr Theoktistos–and there a splendid church was built in their honour near the Forum of Claudius. It was the work of the pious Rufina, who traced her family back to Claudius. That is the content of Book 3.

Chapter 6

A Homeric Christian in Retrospect

How should one conclude a project that has covered these seemingly unrelated poems about seemingly unrelated themes? More importantly, what picture have we created of Eudocia and her poetry and what are some directions for future research? First, let us summarize some of the more salient points from each chapter and then perhaps our perspective of Eudocia and her corpus will be more pragmatic.

The inscription from Hammat Gader, along with the surviving line from Eudocia's encomium of Antioch reveals the role that late antique imperial figures played in urban and rural euergetism. Although her stay in Antioch was brief, Eudocia spent her time there first praising the city and, after the city responded with two public memorials, overseeing and financing a series of building and food relief programs. As we have seen, Eudocia's activities were consistent with those of previous imperial figures, in particular Helena, the mother of Constantine, but unlike those before her, Eudocia communicates her role as *euergetes* in a decidedly Homeric way. The one surviving line from her encomium (ὑμετέρης γενεῆς τε καὶ αἵματος εὔχομαι εἶναι) modifies *Iliad* 6.211, which contextually centers around the dialogue between Glaucus and Diomedes. If we are to understand and reconstruct Eudocia's conclusion from the allusion that she herself made, then her speech has less to do with the empress' ability to cite Homeric verse than it does with her relationship with Antioch. Whereas previous interpreters have explored the veracity of Eudocia's claim to be kin to the Antiochenes, I have focused on how the

Homeric allusion created a euergetistic relationship between Eudocia and Antioch, a relationship the Antiochenes responded to with honorific statues and Eudocia with building and food programs.

Eudocia's presence at Hammat Gader is no less informative: her seventeen-line inscription provides us with a picture of how Eudocia interacted with and reacted to a healing sanctuary that for centuries had been frequented by patrons of various ideological backgrounds (pagan, Jewish, Christian, and, perhaps, Hindu). Furthermore, her inscription, which through its ecphrastic form takes the reader on a sensory tour of the bath complex, highlights the various pools and furnaces as well as at least three centuries of patrons, healing divinities, or religious figures, such as Antoninus Pius, an unnamed patriarch, a nun, Elijah, Galatea, and Hygieia. Each of these figures reveal a world in which natural springs and their therapeutic means were associated with various healing divinities and, in Jewish and Christian circles, holy men (patriarchs and saints). Eudocia's poem, while mentioning the role that each of these patrons had played in the history of Hammat Gader, concludes by praising God who alone acts for the benefit of humanity. This type of ideological competition was common in the late fourth and fifth centuries when Christianity began to substitute, in slow but steady increments, saints for traditional (i.e. pagan) healing divinities, and the poem gives us a snapshot of this process.

Moreover, although only a single inscription can be attributed with any certainty to the hand of Eudocia, there are a good number from the very areas the empress traveled that reveal how common Homeric Christians were in the Greek east. Within ten years of

Eudocia's visit to Hammat Gader, another patron sponsored an extensive rebuilding program that turned a section of the complex previous used for bathing into a palaestra. The poem, written to commemorate his generosity, is so similar to Eudocia's poem, especially in its dependence upon Homeric constructions, that at least one scholar attributed it to Eudocia. While this attribution is unlikely, the second Hammat Gader poem shows us how prominent hyper-Homeric poets were in the fifth century. The two other so-called "copycat Eudociana," Eukhaita I and SEG 51.1735, one perhaps a modern forgery and the other a mediocre Homeric cento, indicate, in the case of the former, how influential Eudocia's legacy, both poetic and political, actually was, and, in the case of the latter, how common it was for Christians to adapt Homer's very words for their own ideological and (here) commemorative needs.

The poetry that Eudocia wrote while on pilgrimage (exile) corresponds well with the first of her longer literary pieces that we explored, the Homeric cento. If Eudocia's pilgrimage evidences activities typical of the late antique aristocracy, especially of the imperial family, then the Homeric cento reveals a Eudocia whose literary output is also representative of her day. Eudocia's Christian cento is merely one of nearly twenty Greek and Latin centos that survive from the period, including the Christian Latin cento of Faltonia Proba, which certainly influenced the later Greek productions. Although many of the ancient centos survive piecemeal or with little verifiable historical context, this is not the case with the *Cento Nuptialis* of Ausonius of Bordeaux or Eudocia's Homeric cento. The former contains so much contextual information, that a comparison between the introductions to the *Cento Nuptialis* and the Homeric cento, written by Ausonius and

Eudocia respectively, facilitates a reconstruction of the cultural and literary world that encouraged the creation of so many centos.

Since Ausonius' *Cento Nuptialis* is one of the best-preserved and contextually rich centos, it opened our discussion of Eudocia's cento, influenced by Scott McGill's recent work on the secular Latin centos from North Africa. Whereas McGill emphasized the ludic qualities of Ausonius' cento, I have argued that his production came about as a result of a serious literary challenge from the emperor Valentinian, and since Ausonius is so eager to preserve the poem, his self-deprecating comments about the value of centos in general warrant further attention. Not only does Ausonius' introduction provide us with the most detailed rulebook of what constitutes a good cento, he also compares the process of writing a cento to a common childhood game, an ostomachion, which positioned fourteen bones into picutres and images that varied depending on the player's skill. Based on this image of bones made to look like an elephant, a bear, or a cantharus, I suggest that a cento was intrinsically ludic only in the ways that a reader responded to the narrative set before him. Despite Ausonius' assertion that a good cento should hide its literary borrowings, we have seen how this was as impossible as a viewer seeing only an elephant composed of the fourteen bones while not seeing the bones. Readers would inevitably recognize the *ludus*, and how they responded to the new image created by the centoist was part of the game, as it were. In this sense, the Homeric Centos are, perforce, ludic.

How the cento was viewed in antiquity, as just a game or as a serious activity, depends on how the cento was experienced in antiquity. Ausonius' *Cento Nuptialis* was experienced differently at different stages in its history, from its initial performance, where it was to be judged by Valentinian and his entourage, to its dissemination from Ausonius to his literary friends. It is not impossible that the cento was to be read in small groups of learned gentlemen/women after Ausonius published the poem, but this is not implied anywhere in his preface. The picture of how literary figures experienced other centos became much clearer when we turned to Eudocia's preface. Through a series of contradictory images: seeing, reading, books, and pages, on the one hand, and hearing, singing, songs, and verses, on the other, Eudocia's preface indicates that she experienced centos as both read and performed pieces. Following William Johnson, we observed how the cento fitted different but complementary reading events.

Whereas Ausonius describes the *Cento Nuptialis* as entirely ridiculous, an exaggerated view that we have attempted to question, Eudocia characterizes the Christian centos as sacred and holy. At the same time, the product that Eudocia found was ill-suited to her tastes and required extensive editing, a process which the empress describes and justifies. Yet her revision still had substantial flaws, which Eudocia vindicates through a comparison with Tatian's cento, a work of some notoriety in its day. Altogether, Eudocia provides us with four main concerns for a good Christian cento: truth, harmony, adherence to Homer, and the avoidance of double lines. While the first refers to the content of the finished cento, namely that it tells the intended story completely and without error–a concern understandable when one is rewriting the Bible–the others pertain to the process of stitching Homer together. Harmony, as we have seen, pertains to a poet's ability to engage in mimesis and, following Aristotle, the process of joining opposites, both essential skills for a centoist. Akin to harmony was the poet's ability to limit herself just to Homer's words, but not too many in a row. Eudocia justifies the presence of double lines taken from Homer as a product of a difficult narrative, unrelated to epic, such as the life of Jesus. Tatian's cento, which picked up where the *Iliad* left off, could understandably avoid double lines since its content was also heroic. Despite her editorial hand, Eudocia credits the previous author, Patricius, for laying a solid foundation, and insists that he deserves the credit for spreading the gospel.

Finally, we explored the ways in which Eudocia rewrote the biblical account, specifically how and why she modified a canonical narrative. This was accomplished by focusing on a single episode, the Samaritan women at the well pericope from the gospel of John 4. Eudocia's version omitted from the episode both key characters, such as the disciples, and central themes, such as the inclusion of Samaritans in Christianity. The latter change can most likely be explained as an attempt to make the biblical message relevant to a now almost entirely Christianized society, in which the distinction between Jew and Samaritan was different than in the first century. In her attempts to make the story more relevant, Eudocia emphasizes the woman's sexuality, a topic of some interest in late antiquity. We explored how the narrative creates two viable options for women, the celibate life or a Christian marriage. The woman in the story was initially outside the parameters of this ethic and subject to Jesus' rebuke.

When it comes to the lines that Eudocia used to recreate the Samaritan narrative and to the context of these lines that lurked just below the surface of the story, some interpretative difficulties arise. In particular, a significant number of the key lines come from episodes involving Nausicaa and Penelope. We have seen how these lines have the potential to undermine or reinforce Eudocia's ethical message. Following the theoretical approach of Joseph Pucci, Eudocia would have had no control over how her audience interpreted the Homeric context of her story, or whether they recognized the context at all. This interpretational latitude, I argue, is one of the central and consistently ludic aspects of Eudocia's cento–readers are expected, even obligated, to play along with the poet's game.

The most interesting and fruitful of the surviving poems of Eudocia is the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian*. Although only two of the poem's three books survive, what remains has been so understudied that two chapters were dedicated here to the work, one for each book. Book one, or the *Conversion*, recounts the events immediately before, during, and after Cyprian's conversion. Cyprian, hired by Aglaidas, an Antiochene aristocrat, helps the enamored Aglaidas seduce the newly converted maiden, Justa, who, despite Aglaidas' best efforts, had rejected his proposal for marriage and fought off his attempt to rape her. The magician calls on three demons in succession, each more powerful than the last, but they find themselves powerless against Justa's prayers and the *signum crucis*, the sign of the cross. After the defeat of the final demon, Satan himself, Cyprian realizes that his magical *techne* is no match for the power of Christ and decides to convert. The local church, however, is not too eager to receive the city's most notorious *magos* into the fold, so Cyprian must first demonstrate his conversion's genuineness by handing over his magical books. Once he has been initiated, Cyprian demonstrates a proclivity for preaching, healing the sick, and converting the lost, and as a result quickly advances to the rank of deacon, eventually becoming bishop of Antioch.

Although the *Conversion* reveals many interesting qualities about Eudocia's poetry, the chapter dedicated to that section of the *Martyrdom* focused on a single aspect of the poem, the development and role of Justa's character. By incorporating Victor Turner's social drama theory along with some recent investigations into early Christian narratives, I have presented a Eudocia who turns a traditional Christian martyrology into a story–despite the presence of a violent paramour, an experienced magician, and three bloodthirsty demons–in which "nothing really happens." This absence of social drama is made more pronounced through an intertextual web connecting the *Conversion* with other early Christian narratives, for example the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas*, stories which contain some of the most discussed motifs of social drama, such as the female character's relationship with parent and spouse as well as acts of sexual ambiguity, such as transvestism. Such intertextual references in Eudocia's *Conversion of St. Cyprian* create a Justa who, while explicitly emulating Thecla, is nothing like her. Unlike Thecla, Justa remains within her father's *oikos* and under his authority. His presence protects Justa from Aglaidas' first attack–his request to marry Justa was handled by her family. But Justa's habit of leaving her house to attend church services makes her vulnerable to Aglaidas' gaze and schemes, and she is compelled to physically rebuff her assailant when he finds her alone between her *oikos* and that of God. The various trials brought on by Cyprian's demons must first take account of Justa's presence at home: the first demon is required to spread a herb around the *oikos*, the second to bind the *oikos* with a potion, and the third attempts to seduce Justa away from the *oikos*, presumably to make her more vulnerable. Their failure to separate Justa from the safety of her father's house leads directly to their inability to seduce the maiden for Aglaidas.

Whereas the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* contain multiple references to covert sexual ambiguity (Thecla cuts her hair like a man and wears masculine clothing) and overt sexual transmogrification (Perpetua dreams that she is a male), Eudocia never describes Justa as sexually ambiguous, even when she reacts violently to Aglaidas' assault and effeminates her assailant. On the other hand, the *Conversion* contains motifs commonly used in early Christian narratives to describe the transition from one identity to another. For example, Aedesius cuts his hair and beard to symbolize his change from pagan priest to pious Christian, and during her violent reaction to Aglaidas' attack, Justa rips his clothing and tears out his beard. We have seen how these motifs functioned in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* to move female characters to the fringe of society, to alienate them from their families, and to necessitate some resolution by the story's end. Unlike the authors of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas*, Eudocia includes these common elements, but she never uses them to develop Justa into a marginal character.

This approach toward the *Conversion* has not focused primarily on the historical Cyprian or the historical concerns that Eudocia had in telling the story of his life and death.

Rather, the goal of chapter three has been to elucidate how Eudocia differed from other Christian narrators from late antiquity, in particular how social drama theory, while adequate for many narratives written from a male perspective, does not advance our understanding of Eudocia's role as narrator. That being said, by using Turner's theory and comparing the *Conversion* with the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas*, I hope to have contributed to our understanding of Eudocia's narrative technique and how it relates to and diverges from the Christian fictions she used as models.

The *Confession*, or book two of Eudocia's *Martyrdom*, evidences different concerns and sources, and for that reason, the methodology employed here differs from that used for the *Conversion*. Much of the *Confession* is seriously understudied, partly due to the text's generally corrupt state, and a detailed discussion of the various references took up the lion's share of chapter four. The *Confession* takes the form of a speech given by the newly converted Cyprian to the Antiochene Christians, who presumably are to judge whether the magician's conversion was genuine. Cyprian's account begins when he was a child dedicated to Apollo and initiated into the various Greek cults. After stays in Phrygia and Scythia, Cyprian turns to the serious centers for magic studies, Egypt and Babylon.

Each stop along Cyprian's magical itinerary is full of details of various accuracy and value, but taken as a whole, the first half of the *Confession* illustrates how late antique Christians understood the pagan past and the rhetoric they used to suppress interest in paganism. This rhetoric takes two recurring forms. First, in catalogues of pagan rituals, skills, or practices, Cyprian, as narrator, often concludes with generalized statements about the occult, which conflate actual pagan praxeis and beliefs with generally negative behavior and ally the practitioner with Satan or the demonic horde. Second, Cyprian paints his previous life and the spirits with which he had been allied in decidedly Christian colors. The examples we have reviewed were the repetition of negative adjectives when speaking to or about demons. They are repeatedly called wicked, powerless, inimical to God, and in certain sections of the narrative, the demons themselves admit their own ineptitude. Therefore, Eudocia is less concerned with presenting her reader with an accurate picture of late antique paganism–although many of the details present in the narrative substantiate and augment that picture–than she is with reinforcing a Christian ideology to readers interested in learning how the world in general and Antioch in particular became Christian.

Whereas the *Confession* tells a decidedly Christian story through a decidedly Christian lens, it was not created out of whole cloth; there appear to have been various traditions and layers that went into the product that comes to us. Even Eudocia's prose source was likely a loose compilation of various Cyprian legends. The first layer was the motif of the itinerant wonder-worker which, it appears, influenced at least the first half of the *Confession*. Although Nock and Nilsson asserted with certitude that Cyprian's life was based on the *vitae* of Pythagoras and Apollonius, both popular figures in late antiquity, this theory had not been investigated in detail, nor was it clear how the *Confession* borrowed from these traditions and how it was unique. When it comes to Apollonius, the closest in time to Cyprian, any intentional or systematic borrowing was negligible.

Cyprian's travel itinerary does not follow that of Apollonius, nor does the narrative presentation of the former's *thaumata* mimic those of the latter–the *Confession* is concerned with how and where Cyprian learned the magic *techne*, whereas the *vita* of Apollonius is more concerned with telling what *thaumata* the wonder-worker performed. Our investigation of Pythagoras was slightly more productive. Cyprian's journeys are more similar, albeit not exactly modeled upon, the travels of Pythagoras. Both held close association with Apollo in the early years of their lives, and both began their initiation in the mysteries with the cults of Greece before turning to the secrets of Egypt and Bablyon. Moreover, Scythia, entirely absent in the legends of Apollonius, is central to some of the more detailed *thaumata* of Pythagoras. Although the journeys of Cyprian are similar to those of Pythagoras, problems arise when it comes to their actions. Cyprian's journeys have a clear focus, to learn magic in all its various permutations and to ally oneself with demonic forces, but Pythagoras' life has considerably fewer "juicy bits." The legends are more concerned with the development of the philosopher, not a presentation of his fabulous deeds. Pythagoras was said to be able to communicate with animals, fly, and divine the future, but these fantastic elements do not receive the same attention in Pythagoras' legend as they do in Cyprian's. This might tell us more about the concerns of the authors of these texts than about the legends behind them.

The various Cyprian legends, on the other hand, are more apparent in the text. I have suggested that there were at least three layers to the legend that survives. The first contained the episode that forms the bulk of the *Conversion*: a series, most likely three, of demonic attacks initiated by Cyprian against Justa, which the latter repulsed with the *signum crucis*. The second contained the episode of Satan's attempted deceptions of Aglaidas with another woman and with Cyprian disguised as Justa and perhaps an episode in which Cyprian and Aglaidas attack Justa's house. The text here is heavily corrupt, so we do not have a clear picture of this part of the legend. Finally, there was a layer dependent upon the biblical character Job which consisted of an attack against Justa's health and possessions. The actual development of these layers require a reappraisal of the prose versions of the *Conversion, Confession*, and *Martyrdom*, and promises to be a fruitful line of future inquiry.

This investigation into the extant works by Eudocia, although hardly comprehensive, does contain some broad and persistent themes. First, Eudocia's oeuvre contained a clear performative function. The line that survives from her speech at Antioch reveals that Eudocia, unlike many women of her day, was a public figure whose could address the citizens of even large cities such as Antioch. On a less grandiose scale, her poem at Hammat Gader presents an encomium, no longer of a city, but of a bath complex. As the reader experiences some of the bath's illustrious components, through Eudocia's literary tour of the building, the poem reorients the structure into a Christian place. The Homeric cento, as evidenced in Eudocia's preface, was both a written and performed piece; while Eudocia read and rewrote Patricius' revision of the Gospels, her preface suggests that those who were familiar with centos had heard and read them. This is consistent with Ausonius' preface to the *Cento Nuptialis* in which the poet was challenged to a performative contest by the emperor Valentinian. Finally, the *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian* like many lives of the saints in Late Antiquity could be part of the annual service commemorating the life and death of the martyr. Such performative events were sacred–it was not uncommon for miracles to occur during the actual reading of the *vita*. Moreover, a reading of Eudocia's *Martyrdom* would have been particularly appealing since she combined the three disparate episodes of Cyprian's life, and the *Confession* in particular provided a poignant sermon that elucidated the dangers of demonic activity as well as the supremacy of the cross.

Second, Eudocia's poetry by and large demonstrates the various techniques employed during the late fourth and early fifth centuries in rewriting previous narratives. Eudocia's two longest extant poems retell narratives with different agendas and techniques. The cento literally retells the biblical story in Homer's words, a process which required Eudocia to interpret the story she was retelling (the Bible) as well as her source text (Homer). The interpretational latitude provided by the cento makes for an interesting product; it can be read with various lenses and leads to various conclusions. The *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian*, on the other hand, is more straightforward in that Eudocia uses her own words, however Homeric her vocabulary might be, but the text permeates with biblical allusions, albeit in poetic idiom, and reacts to Christian narratives popular in Eudocia's day. The *Acts of Paul and Thecla* serve as a model for the feminine character in such narratives, and Eudocia's manipulation of that model makes for a story in which Justa, despite her encounters with inimical powers, both demonic or human, experiences little social drama. Since understanding the *Confession* is already a formidable task, identifying Eudocia's editorial hand is even more arduous. Nonetheless, the story presents many fascinating tidbits into the pagan world of yesteryear, a subject of great interest to

Christians from the early fifth century onwards for whom their pagan heritage was increasingly more remote. Although Eudocia does not always present the *Confession* in the clearest light, her attempt to versify a pre-existingly corrupt and diffuse narrative reveals the extent to which the paraphrastic habit had permeated literary circles of late antiquity.

It has not been my goal either to identify or answer all the questions concerning the poetry of Aelia Eudocia. Rather, I hope that by scratching the surface, I have made her poetry at least slightly more accessible to future readers. If that readership will consist exclusively of those interested in Homeric centos, the Cyprian legend, or epigraphic poems from baths, it will be a select group indeed. But I hope to have demonstrated how versatile her poetry can be and how relevant it is for a variety of subjects currently receiving much attention from classicists and biblical scholars alike. The Homeric centos are of value to those interested in the reception of Homer in late antiquity as well as those whose research focuses on biblical interpretation during this period. The *Martyrdom of St. Cyprian*, on the other hand, should be used by scholars of the cult of the saints, particularly those interested in the development of the *vitae* of early Christian martyrs. Furthermore, I hope feminist scholars of early Christianity will incorporate Justa as a significant female character in early Christian narratives, especially since she differs from some of those more commonly examined, such as Thecla or Perpetua. In general, I hope that this project has advanced a woman and poet whose contribution and influence both in her own day and in the history of Christian literature should not be underestimated. Henceforth, Eudocia will be the archetypical Homeric Christian.

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