

Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna

**DOTTORATO DI RICERCA IN
STORIA**

Ciclo XXVII

Settore Concorsuale di afferenza: 11/A4

Settore Scientifico disciplinare: 11 – STO/06

TITOLO TESI

The Polemic Construction of Judaism at the origins of Christianity: from Paul to Justin Martyr

Presentata da: Juan Pablo Sena Pera

Coordinatore Dottorato

Relatore

Prof. Massimo Montanari

Prof. Lorenzo Perrone

Esame finale anno: 2015

**To my beloved Barbara
and Agatha for completing my life,
and to my father Carlo, *in memoriam*.**

One of the most difficult tasks at the end of an academic course is to weave thanks to the various persons who helped us on this journey. The difficulty is not on to demonstrate gratitude, but on the impossibility to list all the people who contributed to this moment. Therefore, I would like to state my sincere gratitude to Prof. Lorenzo Perrone, who very kindly volunteered to guide a foreigner who was then unknown. Prof. Perrone and Prof. Antonio Cacciari received me and my wife Barbara with sincere esteem and friendship. Prof. Perrone, besides having faithfully performed his work as advisor correcting my musings and suggesting readings, was a very humane and understanding person about the difficulty of health order I have faced. I also thank Prof. Antonio Cacciari for his friendliness and provinding books difficult to find in libraries. Special thanks also due to Prof. Claudio Gianotto which has been following my research and giving his precious cooments since the first Summer School and now is a member of this commission. I would like to thank also Professors Stefano Boni, Lorenzo Speranza, Angelo Varni and John Kloppenborg for their willingness to compose this comission and their valuable comments and corrections. Finally, I thank the people who helped me to come to Italy attend this PhD: Professor Gilvan Ventura da Silva, who very kindly volunteered to endorse my research project before Capes and Professors Sergio Alberto Feldman and José Pedro Luchi for their essential academic support. I also thank Capes for financing my stay and research here in Italy, without its support, it would not have been possible to come here. Very special thanks are due to my family: first of all, to my father Carlo, who always believed in me, greatly helped us to come here, and also always said would like to see me "taking off". Unfortunately his health did not resist and he needed to depart from last year. My heartfelt thanks are due also to my wife Barbara, who was the one who from the beginning believed in this project, and helped me through the most difficult times. Finally, to our daughter Agatha, who came to us as a gift at the beginning of this journey and fills our hearts with joy.

Abstract

This doctoral research aims to contribute to a new understanding of the Christian emancipation process from its Jewish matrix. In order to accomplish this, we reviewed the historiographical understanding of the Jewish – Christian separation process and reconstructed the probable way by which the Christian faith arrived in Rome in the mid-first century. We further analyzed the ethnic and social profile of the early Roman Christians and the internal constitution of the first Christian communities in the capital of the Empire. We identified the relations between the Christian and Jewish communities, and between those and the imperial power, highlighting the acts of the government indicating awareness by the civil authorities of the existence of the Christian social phenomenon and the disassociation of it of the local Jewish circles. We discussed the *status quaestionis* of the studies on the Christian teachers of the first two centuries and presented to the reader a picture of Justin Martyr. We set the social profile of Justin and his disciples. Then, we reconstructed the probable environment of his philosophical school and identified the contents of Justin's teachings. We also critically analyzed the *Apology*, identifying and explaining its main themes and arguments, as well as the situation of social and legal anomie experienced by Christians in the face of state power. Continuing with our research, we recapitulate the process of acceptance of Gentile converts in the Jewish – Christian community of Jerusalem, the first conflicts arised, based on the issue of the non observance of the the Mosaic Law by Gentile Christians. We then explained the Pauline theology of justification by faith in Christ and pointed out how Justin based himself on Pauline theology and drew its logical conclusion, *ie*, the Christian are the *Verus Israel*, that is, the true seed promised by God to Abraham in the Hebrew Scriptures. Finally, we critically analyzed the *Dialogue with Trypho* having as theoretical tool the sociological theories of Norbert Elias in order to identify the relations of symbolic power implicit in the representation of Jews and Judaism in the pages of the *Dialogue*.

Keywords: Judaism; Christianity; Identity; Polemic; Paul of Tarsus; Justin Martyr.

Contents

General Introduction and Methodological Tools.....	9
The <i>Status Quaestionis</i> of the Jewish – Christian Separation.....	13
Chapter 1 - The Socio – religious background of Justin Martyr	
Introduction	23
The Roman Jewish Community.....	25
The First Century: The arrival of Christianity in Rome.....	28
The "Edict of Claudius": the beginning of the autonomy of Roman Christianity.....	31
The First generation of Roman Christians: the background of the	
<i>Letter of Paul to the Romans</i>.....	34
<i>The Letter to the Romans</i>.....	39
The Second Generation: <i>The First Epistle of Peter</i> and the <i>Epistle to the Hebrews</i>.....	44
The Third Generation: <i>The First Epistle of Clement</i>.....	50
The Second Century: the Jewish Heritage and the Development of	
Hierarchical Ecclesiastical Structures.....	51
<i>The Epistle of Ignatius to the Romans</i>.....	51
<i>The Shepherd of Hermas</i>.....	53
<i>The Second Epistle of Peter</i>.....	57
The Works of Justin Martyr.....	58
The Internal Organization of the Roman Church from its Formation	
To Mid Second Century.....	61
Christian Heterodox movements and the formation of Catholic Orthodoxy.....	65
 ī : from the Hellenistic “choice” to the Christian “heresy”.....	65

Gnosticism: A Historical Survey of its Origins and its Importance to Catholic Orthodoxy.....	70
The Challenge of Marcionism and the Catholic reaction.....	77
Conclusion.....	83

Chapter 2 – Justin: Teacher, Philosopher and Martyr

Introduction.....	85
Christian Teachers in the First Two Centuries.....	86
The <i>Status Quaestionis</i> of the Studies About the Christian Teachers.....	86
Teachers in Graeco – Roman and Jewish Sources.....	102
Justin: Teacher, Philosopher and Martyr.....	106
Biographical Elements.....	106
The conversion to Christianity.....	109
Justin as a philosopher.....	111
Justin’s philosophical school at Rome.....	112
Justin’s Christian Philosophy.....	116
The works attributed to Justin: authentic and unauthentic.....	116
Justin’s <i>Apology</i>.....	118
The Literary Structure of the <i>Apology</i>.....	120
The Literary Traditions.....	120
The Structure of Justin’s <i>Apology</i>.....	122
Justin’s Apologetic Procedure.....	125
The Religious Policy of Antoninus Pius.....	125
The Legal Situation of the Christians.....	127

The <i>Nomen Christianum</i>.....	129
Political Accusations.....	129
The Charge of Impiety and Atheism.....	131
Christianity and Philosophy.....	134
Human Reason and Divine Logos.....	134
The Seminal Logos (μ) Concept.....	135
The Origins of the Concept.....	136
True Philosophy.....	137
The Theory of Plagiarism.....	137
The Only Christian Truth.....	138
The Prophetic Argument.....	139
 Chapter 3 – The <i>Verus Israel</i> from Paul to Justin	
Paul of Tarsus and the conversion of the Gentiles.....	140
The First Jewish - Christian Conflict and the Council of Jerusalem.....	143
The Historical Context of the <i>Dialogue with Trypho</i>.....	149
The Historicity of the <i>Dialogue</i> and its Addressees.....	154
The Manuscript Tradition.....	166
The literary Structure of the <i>Dialogue with Trypho</i>.....	167
A Brief Stylistic Analysis of the <i>Dialogue with Trypho</i>.....	168
Accusations made by Justin in his works against the Jews.....	171
General Characteristics of the Above Related Passages.....	172
The Law in Justin, Christian Identity Factor.....	176
Reshaping the <i>Verus Israel</i>: from the inclusion of the Gentiles	
to the Exclusion of the Jews.....	189
Paul and the lineage of Abraham.....	191
Abraham as the Father of Christians Only.....	206

Reshaping the <i>Verus Israel</i>.....	212
A Sociological Analysis of the Symbolic Power Relations	
Between Jews and Christians.....	216
General Conclusion.....	229
Bibliography.....	233

General Introduction and Methodological Tools

The theoretical and methodological tools proposed are those from the *New Cultural History* particularly the concept of *social representation* as defined by Roger Chartier, *i.e.*, intellectual constructions produced by a specific social group, starting with their provisions and experiences, so to assign a meaning to the present time.¹ Social representations, far from being innocent discourses, produce the necessary framework to impose an opinion on another, for the domain of a social group upon another one. By observing the fight of the representations one can understand the mechanisms that allow a group to impose its world vision and its social values. It is therefore necessary to identify and locate the points of friction between the groups.²

The theoretical tools are justified, since, according to the guidelines of the *New Cultural History*, also called *Socio Cultural History*; the first step towards the construction of a social group's identity is the representation of the group by the differentiation from other groups. The differentiation is necessary to highlight and enhance the common features of a particular human group.³ According to Simon Harrison,⁴ ethnic and religious groups differentiate themselves, often due to mutual affinity, considered unacceptable for all the parts involved. A practical example is the controversy over the Abrahamic progeny and the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Hebrew Bible between Jews, Christians and Muslims.

The process of identity formation proceeds with the social stigma, which is the attribution of labels, flattering or offensive. Through these stereotypes, social groupings represent themselves as owners of the moral norm to follow, while other groups are considered as socially inferior. Labeling is a powerful tool that performs a symbolic practice very effective, both to assert the hegemony of a

¹ 1991, p. 83.

² Chartier, 1988, p. 17.

³ Tadeu da Silva, 2000, p. 76.

⁴ 1999, p. 239.

group, or to reduce the power of discrimination.⁵ For all that has been said, there is a relationship between the concept of social representation and identity, since the concept of identity should be understood as the way social groups represent and interpret the reality that surrounds them. Faced with a reality of constant change, it is necessary to address the apparent chaos by giving the communities a guideline, both for the present and for the future. This is due to the fact that, as far as social groups want to tie their identity to a remote past, these are just creations of the present time and of the geographical space of who processes the identity discourse. It is therefore the duty of the historians to define the circumstances that allow the articulation of a discourse of this kind, as proposed by the followers of non-essentialist understanding of identity.⁶

Our thesis also benefited from the concept of *anomie*. Created by Emile Durkheim and developed by Norbert Elias and John L. Scotson. In his work, Durkheim teaches that man cannot live if it is not in harmony with the surrounding environment, and society is the one who imposes limits to human behavior. Anomie is therefore the crisis, the debauchery of individual behavior in relation to the general social norms.⁷ Elias and Scotson, in turn, teach that ancient and cohesive groups tend to develop their own values and norms of behavior. This allows them to establish themselves as the "good society" and to require the submission of its members to officially approved norms of conduct. It is adherence to this set of social norms that characterizes the nomic status. In addition, the social groups of recent origin often do not provide the degree of internal cohesion necessary to create a body of values and social norms accepted by the whole group, and, by not complying with the rules of the old groups, do not fall well within them either. This lack of conformity to socially accepted norms makes possible the stigmatization of individuals and non conformist groups by the old groups, since these

⁵ Elias & Scotson, 2000, p. 20 - 27.

⁶ Woodward In Tadeu da Silva, 2000, p. 12.

⁷ Durkheim, 2002, p. 7.

consider those anomic.⁸ The concepts of *nomie* and *anomie* adapt well to the transformations undergone by Christianity and Judaism between the second and fourth centuries C.E. , due to, among other factors , the existence of troubled relations between the Jewish and Christian communities , especially because of groups of frontier as the so-called Jewish - Christians.

Judaism was a complex phenomenon in the first century. There was no uniformity in all aspects of religious doctrines and practices. There were many different factions that were considered Jewish by virtue of the fact of sharing in minimal form the same religious tradition, such as the acceptance of the Hebrew Bible , in particular the Law of Moses , and the recognition of a common ethnic origin.⁹ This situation of relative *anomie* has allowed the emergence of “heterodox ” (anomic) messianic movements who rejected the official religious and moral values . Particular attention should be paid to the fact that the Jewish stream who should represent the “orthodox” point of view, because of its control of the Temple and the priesthood, i.e., the Saduceism, never could enforce its values to the mass of the Jewish people. Among the internal groups of first century Judaism was the incipient Christianity.

When Christianity reached a sufficient level of internal cohesion to form its own hierarchy in the second century , it stigmatized as anomic those internal groups that were not fully compliant with the theology and devotional practices established by the nascent episcopate . At first , in the middle of the first century , the Jews who did not believe in Jesus , despite being divided into several groups with large internal differences , for their general agreement about the observance of the Law and keeping of other traditions , are the *established, ie*, those belonging to the religious establishment.

The Jews considered themselves the recipients of the revelation of God in their own history, as expressed in the Hebrew Bible. Christians, when viewed against this background, are the *outsiders*, strangers, not part of the religious "good society", recognized and respected, even by the Empire.

⁸ Elias & Scotson , 2000, p . 25.

⁹ Zetterholm , 2005, p . 55-56.

Christians seemed to gravitate around Judaism through worshipping the same God and using the same Scriptures. This behavior is depicted as more serious because, at that time, there wasn't yet the Christian canon of the New Testament. The books that would eventually be canonized still had a non uniform distribution through the various communities, alongside with those which would later be considered "apocryphal" and an oral tradition about Jesus still strong.¹⁰ In other words, still in mid second century, the scriptural base unanimously accepted by almost all the Christian communities were only the Hebrew Scriptures. The exceptions were the Gnostics schools and the Marcionite Church, who rejected the Jewish heritage of Christianity. In our study, the difference between the outsiders of the city of Winston Parva described in the work of Elias and Scotson, and those of the second-century Christianity is that, unlike the inhabitants of the settlement of the search for Elias and Scotson, the Christians in the time of Justin had already begun a process of progressive development of their own internal cohesion, in which Christians of Gentile origin became prominent in Christian communities assuming the positions of ecclesiastical governance. Thus, from a certain point onwards, the Christian communities began to develop a formal and cohesive hierarchy, with the objective of consolidating its own identity by distinguishing themselves from the Jewish communities. In order to achieve this goal, the Christian hierarchy and their theologians have expelled from their communities the Judeo-Christians and others who did not agree with the emerging orthodoxy. At this stage, Christians were also able to counter-stigmatize the Jews who did not accept Jesus as the Messiah.

To make a correct exposure of the ideological discourse contained in the pages of Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho*, we developed the analysis of keywords contained in the work studied by categorizing the concepts of nomic and anomic. Furthermore, the analysis of such words in the speech was mediated by understanding the context of their production in the Jewish sacred texts, and the use made by Justin in his *Dialogue*. Then, based on this analysis, we explicitated the power

¹⁰ Cf. Papias fragments cited by Eusebius in *Historia Ecclesiastica*, III,39,3 - 4.

relations implied in the text that define the paradigm considered nomic by Justin, what automatically cast the Jews in a situation of anomie . These tensions, which are reflected in the characterization of the average Jew made by Justin, were analyzed to determine the importance of the *Dialogue with Trypho* in the construction of Christian identity.

The *Status Quaestionis* of the Jewish – Christian Separation

In the late nineteenth century, Adolf von Harnack had created a social representation of the Judaism in the Roman Empire as a religion in progressive depletion, without any attractiveness for the pagan population. As a consequence, Judaism would become increasingly an ethno-cultural ghetto while Gentile Christianity expanded and made new converts. This hypothesis became known in historiography as the *Spätjudentum*, *id est*, the "late Judaism." According to this view, the Jewish religion, would be naturally replaced by the Christian message, considered to be the true bearer of spiritual renewal in the Empire. This brings us to the understanding that Judaism and Christianity became very soon, opposing and incommunicable religions. The only possible dialogue between Jews and Christians would be when the later would use the Holy Scriptures of the former to affirm their own theological concepts.

The *Spätjudentum* paradigm has begun to lose ground only from 1948 onwards with the publication of *Verus Israel*, the fruit of the doctoral research of Marcel Simon. The author challenges the reading of the "late Judaism" proposed by Harnack by highlighting the sermons and anti-Jewish actions of the Christian clergy. The fact of the Church leaders worry attacking the Jewish religion shows that Judaism in the early Common Era was far from being a decadent and unattractive religion.¹¹ The work of Simon has brought a new understanding to the study of Jewish-Christian relations. It was formed an understanding according to which the process of separation between Judaism and Christianity was much more complex than previously assumed.

¹¹ Jacobs, 2007 p. 101.

The research on the Jewish – Christian separation received a new breath from the Seventies onwards, as a result of the so-called *Third Quest of the Historical Jesus*. The scholars, after having fully re-inserted the figure of Jesus in the Judaism of his time, have reconsidered the socio-religious situation of his followers. The traditional understanding, according to which Christianity was born immediately after the death of Jesus, having its causes in the belief of the disciples of Jesus in his resurrection and imminent return to establish the Kingdom of God, was rejected. After re-judaizing Jesus, the historians felt the need to do the same with his disciples, seeking for a better understanding of the relationship between Judaism and Christianity in Antiquity. Among the theoretical models proposed, the one that had a great following among scholars was *The Parting of the Ways*, by James D.G. Dunn.

This theoretical model establishes the need to expand the *corpus* of documents used to study the Christian origins. In addition to the canonical and "orthodox" literature, it must also add the contributions of those writings called "heterodox". Similarly, to the traditional categories of historical and philological – literary criticisms, must be added the possibilities of analysis available from Anthropology and the Social Sciences. As a result of this new approach, it was understood that Judaism in the first century was a much more complex and multi-faceted phenomenon than previously hypothesized. Christianity was also redesigned in a similar fashion a consensus was settled concerning the fact that, at least during the second century, the Christianities, as scholars started to say, were also a fluid and plural phenomenon.¹²

Deepening the research, scholars devoted themselves to determine what would have been the *Turning Point*, that is, the turning point in the High Roman Empire, from which on the exchanges between Jews and Christians came to end completely, and thus realized the *parting of the ways*, the separation of the paths of both expressions of faith. Usually, the alternatives pointed to, are the

¹² Gianotto, 2012, p. 35 – 37.

destruction of the Temple in the year 70, and the end of the Bar Kokhba Revolt in 135. By considering that Judaism and Christianity would be separated completely still in the High Empire, Simon and his followers have surpassed only partially the hypothesis of the *Spätjudentum*.¹³

The latest development of the historiography on the Jewish – Christian separation is the model that claims that *The Ways that Never Parted*. Among its proponents, there is Daniel Boyarin with his "wave" hypothesis. Boyarin proposes to think Ancient Judaism and Christianity as points on a continuous line. This ideal line, which he called *Judaeo - Christianity*, would be essentially an undifferentiated continuum, to varying degrees, depending on the shift in the spectrum of the socio-religious phenomenon. According to Boyarin, we find opposite extremes, represented on the one hand, by Marcionism, with its radical negation of any Jewish roots for the Christian faith, and, on the other hand, the Jews who did not believe in Jesus, and had no interest in the Christian message. Between these extremities, different Christian and Jewish Christian groups are found.¹⁴

The author proposes, therefore, to reverse the traditional explanation, according to which Christianity, as a “differentiated” social movement, would have been detached from Judaism, seen as a “uniform” phenomenon. What would really had happened, would be the opposite: from a “differentiated” phenomenon, the aforementioned *Judaeo - Christianity*, would had emerged two new movements, both "uniform": Judaism and Christianity. The Boyarin’s hypothesis is called "ondulatory" because he explains this process by borrowing an image from the linguistic metaphor of pebbles thrown into a lake, creating waves that collide and interfere with each other. The Linguists use this metaphor to explain the birth of languages and dialects. Boyarin had adapted it to explain how Christianity was born, not from a parting of the ways in a precise and identifiable historical moment, but from the choices of identity of different heterogeneous groups. The resulting confluence of these groups created a new "dialect cluster ", in the vast "linguistic universe" of the *Judaeo - Christianity*.

¹³ Silva, 2008 p. 166.

¹⁴ Gianotto, 2012, p. 37.

This process, according to Boyarin, was not concluded until the fourth century, when the apparatus of Imperial power has made possible to make the boundaries between Jews and Christians well defined, through determining the precise conditions of membership and making the exclusion tools effective. This process created two true religions: Judaism and Christianity.¹⁵ This means that the concepts of "Judaism" and "Christianity", when used to express socio - religious phenomena prior to the fourth century, are artificial constructs designed to make understandable in retrospect, the two phenomena being studied.

It is believed that the communities of believers in Jesus, not only those with Jewish predominance but also those predominantly composed by heathens, were subgroups of a disparate set of religious associations, in some way connected to Judaism. According to this historical understanding, the complete and final separation will proceed only from the fourth century onwards, when the full support of Constantine to Christianity will allow the bishops to turn effective in the lives of the faithful, the Church law that established the limits of social relations between Jews and Christians, and to impose definitions of orthodoxy and heterodoxy.

Only from this point on, we can speak of "Judaism" and "Christianity" *stricto sensu*.¹⁶ That does not mean that it was not possible to distinguish between Christians or non-Christians, Jewish or non-Jewish social groups. But, it means that, in the cultural universe of the time, there was not a group of cultural semantics characteristics that allowed distinguishing clearly between Jews and Christians.¹⁷

On this regard, as back as 1991, Wolfram Kinzig, in his essay "*Non separation" closeness and cooperation between Jews and Christians in the fourth century*", argued that the Jewish – Christian separation would had been done on four successive levels. Kinzig groups the levels two by two. The first two, the doctrinal and theological division, are called *theoretical level*. These events are related to

¹⁵ Gianotto, 2012, p. 38 - 39.

¹⁶ Skarsaune, 2007, p. 747.

¹⁷ Gianotto, 2012, p. 39.

the creation and development of the first kerygmatic formulas and early hymns. The theoretical level, then, is connected to a primitive Christology. Probably this phase had place shortly after the death of Jesus, or perhaps even before his execution.¹⁸ These theoretical developments by early Christian groups would have brought to the level of religious practice, characterized by the separation of popular piety and institutional. The first phase is marked by authoritarian declarations of excommunication from the Jewish and Christian religious authorities, giving rise to two distinct groups, in possession of its own institutional leaders. We believe that the *Birkat ha-Minim* in the first decades of the second century corresponds to that mark.¹⁹ Finally, we have the phase of the practice of popular piety in both groups. It is here that Kinzig marks the continuity of close contacts between Jews and Christians until about the fourth century, with the existence of different groups that overlapped and intertwined, making it difficult to correctly classify within the categories of Judaism or Christianity. For example, the Ebionites, and the Nazarenes, all branded as heretics by both, Christians and Jews.²⁰

In addition to these groups, anomic concerning the regulations of the orthodoxies of Judaism and Christianity, we still have individuals considered Judaizers who had exercised a syncretistic influence within the Orthodox Christian community, as it appears from the famous *Adversus Judaeos* homilies of John Chrysostom, also from the fourth century. Kinzig still believes that this situation would had last much beyond the end of the century in question.²¹ Other elements that indicate the existence of contacts at the level of popular devotion are also perceived by the anti-Jewish legislation of Christian inspiration, derived from the conversion of Constantine. In order to define the acceptable limits of interpersonal contact between Jews and Christians, the Christian clergy had enacted harsh

¹⁸ Mark 8,29, cf. Kinzig, 1991, p. 28.

¹⁹ Parkes, 1974, p. 91.

²⁰ Johnson, 2001, p. 57.

²¹ Kinzig, 1991 p. 29.

Ecclesiastical laws. This legislation is particularly present in the canons published by the Councils of Elvira (300-306), Nicaea (325), Antioch (341) and Laodicea (363-364).²²

First, however, we need to make a quick discussion on the theme of *Jewish - Christianity* and the *Judaizers*, the two motives discussed by the before mentioned ancient testimonies. The so-called *Jewish - Christianity* is another classification created by modern scholars that present particular difficulties. Its problem lies in the criterion for classifying a group as *Jewish - Christian*. Some scholars have tried to define Jewish - Christianity on an exclusively ethnical basis. According to this criterion, the early community of Jerusalem and all the other Jewish believers in Jesus were Jewish - Christians, regardless the maintenance or not of a typically Jewish way of life and religious practice. This criterion is particularly problematic because it considers as Jewish - Christian the so-called "apostolic period", which is the fundamental reference for the identity of all Christian groups, including those who, from the beginning, have not observed the rituals of the Law. For subsequent periods, however, the ethnic criterion has a certain utility to identify the Jewish ethnic groups within Christianity.²³

Another criterion which was proposed by scholars, particularly by Marcel Simon, to define the Jewish - Christianity was the legal observances. This criterion has the advantage of coinciding with the descriptions of Jewish believers in Jesus, present in the Christian heresiological and apologetic literatures. Its main difficulty lies in determining what would be the "dose" measure, in the words of Simon, of observances to be observed, in order to classify a group as *Jewish - Christian*. The solution proposed by Simon would consider any compliance beyond the "apostolic decree" in Acts 15,28-29, as an indication of Jewish - Christianity.²⁴

A third criterion consisted of the theological content. It is based on the presupposition that Jewish - Christianity was a movement relatively consistent and therefore had produced a theology of its

²² cf. Silva, 2008, p. 173 – 182.

²³ Gianotto, 2012, p. 40 - 41.

²⁴ Gianotto, 2012, p. 42.

own, and thus was able to theologically identify itself among the different early Christian groups. The best-known defenders of theological criterion were Hans Joachim Schoeps and Jean Daniélou. The great difficulty with the theological criterion lies in finding the absence of a consistent form of theological thought supposedly common to all groups nowadays classified as *Jewish - Christian*.²⁵

Because we set part of our thesis argumentation on Roman Christianity of the mid-second century; we also consider very relevant the classification of types of Christianity in Rome and Antioch existing between the first and second centuries, proposed by Raymond E. Brown and John P. Meier in their already classic work *Antioch and Rome: cradles of ancient catholicity*.

Brown and Meier point out that since the time of Alexander the Great at the end of the IV century BCE, the major Jewish populations known lived under Hellenistic kings, then under puppet kings and Roman prefects. While some Jewish groups resisted the acculturation, others embraced it. Due to this situation, at the rise of Christianity, Jewish and Hellenistic cultures were already interrelated. As a natural consequence of such a situation, there was not a single Christian attitude in regarding the conversion of the heathen. Thus, Brown and Meier renounced the traditional *Jewish Christianity* and *Heathen Christianity* designations by considering them excessively simplistic. They claim there is no sense of speaking about Jewish or Pagan matrix Christianity without specifying what type of Christianity is intended, and without questioning the assumption taken by many, according to which the Pauline Christianity was dominant among the heathen converted (Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 19). Both authors preferred to speak in types of *Jewish - Pagan Christianity*. The extent of how Jewish or how Pagan each type had to be is determined by the *quantum* of Jewish liturgical traditions and purity laws observed. According to the authors, the New Testament shows us at least the following types of Jewish – Gentile Christianity:

²⁵ Gianotto, 2012, p. 42 - 43.

- Group 1: An ultraconservative type of Jewish – Pagan Christianity. It insisted that all its adherents, including the converted Gentiles, had to observe the Law in its entirety, including circumcision. They are mentioned in biblical passages such as: *the circumcised*,²⁶ *those from the sect of the Pharisees*²⁷ and *false brethren*.²⁸ Brown and Meier agree that there was a Jewish - Pagan mission type of strict observance of the Law directed to the gentiles, characteristically anti-Pauline.²⁹
- Group 2: A Jewish – Pagan Christianity who did not insist on circumcision for Gentiles, but insisted on the issues of purity laws food (*kosher*) and Jewish sexual ethics. This is the group to which would have belonged James, the brother of the Lord.³⁰ This group is also associated with the Twelve in Jerusalem. The Gospel of Matthew speaks of a Church founded on Peter and dedicated under the Twelve to a mission to all nations.³¹ Moreover, the *Didaché*, which has a theology close to Matthew, is entitled "The Teaching of the Lord to the Gentiles by the Twelve Apostles".³²
- Group 3: This group included Jewish believers in Jesus and their proselites who did not insist on circumcision, nor on the *kosher* rules. This is the group to which Paul belonged. Notwithstanding the waiver of circumcision and food purity to the Gentiles, Paul continued to celebrate the Jewish feasts.³³ Brown and Meier also highlight the fact that Paul circumcised Timothy, the son of a Jewish mother.^{34,35}

²⁶ Acts 11,2.

²⁷ Acts 15,5.

²⁸ Gal. 2,4.

²⁹ Phil. 1,15 - 17, 3.

³⁰ Acts 15,20; Gal. 2,12; 1Cor 8.

³¹ Mt. 28,16 - 20; At.1, 2.8.

³² Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 11-14.

³³ Acts 20,6.16; 21,26.

³⁴ Acts 16, 1-3.

³⁵ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 14 – 16.

- Group 4: a type of Christianity composed by Jewish believers in Jesus and their proselytes, totally liberal regarding the Law. Brown and Meier identify it with the *Greek* of Acts of 6, 1 - 6, who were missionaries among the heathen.³⁶ Paul's opponents tried to associate him with this group in Acts 21,20 - 21. This group would have belonged to the Johannine circles that produced the Gospel of John: *Law as something that relates only to the Jews;*³⁷ *Sabbath, Passover and Tabernacles celebrations such as the Jews.*³⁸ The anti-Jewish theme manifests itself even in the figure of the Temple destroyed and replaced by the temple of the body of Jesus³⁹ and the assertion that God would no longer be worshipped in Jerusalem⁴⁰ and the Jews as sons of the Devil.⁴¹ The missionary character of this kind of Jewish – Pagan Christianity is shown on its admission of proselytes among the pagans.⁴² Also according to the authors of *Antioch and Rome*, this group would have totally broken with Judaism and become, in a certain sense, a new religion.⁴³

Although the concept of Jewish - Christianity is subject of criticism and there are scholars who propose their abandonment, for the purposes of this research, and for the sake of simplicity and standardization of terminology, when referring to "Jewish - Christianity" or "Jewish - Christian," we are implying social groups and/or individuals characterized by compliance with the requirements of the Mosaic Law beyond the stipulated in the aforementioned " apostolic decree " of Acts 15,28-29, regardless their ethnicity. Similarly, whenever necessary to highlight the difference between the various Christians groups and/or individuals of the first and second centuries, we shall refer to Christians from not Jewish

³⁶ Ac. 11,19 - 20.

³⁷ Jo. 10,34; 15,25.

³⁸ Jo.5,1.9 b; 6,4; 7.2.

³⁹ Jo. 2,19 – 21.

⁴⁰ Jo. 4,21.

⁴¹ Jo. 8,44.

⁴² Jo. 12,20 – 24.

⁴³ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 16 - 18.

peoples as "Gentile Christians". When the reference is to the interrelationship between non-Christian Jews and Christians of any ethnic or ritual practice, we will simply say "Jews" and "Christians". Additionally, the ancient Christian authors studied, also give us testimony of individuals of Gentile provenance that observed in varying degrees the customs of the Mosaic rituals. These individuals, when anomic members of Gentile Christian communities, will be called "Judaizers", just as they were called by the ancient Christian writers.⁴⁴ Finally, any reference to "Pagans" will simply imply non Jewish, nor Christian Gentiles, not representing any value judgment.

Finally, another work we consider of fundamental importance in the study of the Jewish – Christian separation process is the work *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries*, by Peter Lampe. As the book title indicates, the author's research focuses on Roman Christianity between the first and second centuries. However, due to the undeniable centrality the Christian communities of Rome will assume very early, the work of Lampe reveals itself of great importance also for a deeper understanding of the process of formation of normative Christianity as a whole. The contribution offered by the German scholar exploits the data brought about by biblical and extra - biblical, Christian and Pagan literatures, in addition to the latest archaeological discoveries. According to the author, his work aims to accomplish three basic objectives: 1 - To understand the daily life of urban Roman Christians in the first two centuries, the realities of their social lives; 2 - Finding out which are, if they exist, the interrelations between the social theology of these groups and their social situation; 3 - Contribute at least with one element for a multidimensional interpretation of the texts and expressions of faith of early Christianity. Lampe believes, rightly, that this is the only way to avoid superficial monocausalities, such as they are produced by a unilateral socio-historical

⁴⁴ Gianotto, 2012, p. 42.

interpretation or occasionally suggested by a purely theological intra-textual history of the tradition analyzes.⁴⁵

Chapter 1 - The Socio – religious background of Justin Martyr

Introduction

At the closing of the I century, about thirty years after the martyrdom of Peter and Paul (c. 64), the two most prominent apostles of the New Testament, the Roman community presents itself to other Christian communities as heir of the theological work of Paul, and of the intra-ecclesiastical political power of Peter. We have a clear testimony of this self-comprehension of a privileged position of the Roman community in relation to other Christian groups, in the *First Epistle of Clement*.⁴⁶ Its author, writing on behalf of the entire Roman community, claims preeminence and interferes in the internal affairs of another Christian community (Corinth), takes sides between the warring factions and determines disciplinary sanctions for the discordant.⁴⁷

Some decades later, at the beginnings of the II century, another Christian author, Ignatius, bishop of Antioch,⁴⁸ mentions that Roman preeminence as something normal. In the second half of that century, the bishop of Lyons, Irenaeus, in his famous work *Adversus Haereses*,⁴⁹ recapitulating the history of the Roman community, simplifies and amalgamates the histories of the two main apostles and makes Peter and Paul the founders of the Church of Rome, regarded by him as the guardian of Christian orthodoxy.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Lampe, 2003 p. 2.

⁴⁶ 5,3-5 etc.

⁴⁷⁴⁷ Vielhauer, 2005, p. 566.

⁴⁸ *InRom.* 4,3.

⁴⁹ III,3,3.

⁵⁰ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 112.

In order to simplify the understanding of the reasons that gave such preeminence to Rome, and in order to prepare the ground for a historical analysis of the anti-Jewish discourse of Justin, we adopted the classification proposed by Raymond E. Brown and John P. Meier in their work *Antioch and Rome: New Testament Cradles of Catholic Christianity*. Thus, we have the following phases:

- First generation, between the years 40 and 60 of I century. This is a period in which Roman Christianity is closely related to the Jewish Christianity practiced at Jerusalem. The literary work representative of this period is Paul's *Epistle to the Romans*, composed between 56 and 59.⁵¹
- Second generation, between 60 and 70 to the mid 90s. It is an obscure period. The few details known are available in *1 Peter* and *Hebrews*. The first letter, probably written at Rome, and the second, sent to there.
- Third generation, started around 96 and into the next century. In our study is represented by *1 Clement*, *Ignatius to the Romans* and *The Shepherd of Hermas*. At this stage we have evidence at Rome of a Judeo-Pagan Christianity more conservative on the observance of the Law and the Jewish worship than the Pauline Christianity described in Galatians. We believe that the more "domesticated" (sic.) Paul of *Romans* was associated with a more developed Petrine Christianity, as the mention of both apostles, in this order, as the "pillars" of the developing Catholic Church⁵²⁵³

Finally, for the study of Roman Christianity around the mid-second century, we selected *2 Peter* and the works of Justin himself.

⁵¹ Vielhauer, 2005, p. 206.

⁵² *1 Clem.* 5, 2.

⁵³ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 113.

The Roman Jewish Community

The study of the historical reality of Rome is of great importance to understand the political and cultural phenomena that led to the formation of ancient Judaism and Christianity. Besides being the capital of the Empire in the period studied here and certainly because of this, Rome was the first European city in which is documented an organized Jewish presence. The earliest mention of the Jews in Rome is dated around 139 B.C., when the Praetor Gnaeus Cornelius Hispanus "forced the Jews to return to their homeland".⁵⁴ Despite the order of the Praetor Hispanus, the Jewish community flourished at Rome. Historians disagree about the numbers of Jewish individuals dwelling in Rome in the first century A.D. However, it can be considered credible the statistics that supposes the Roman Jewish population as being somewhere between 40,000 to 50,000 individuals.

The Roman Jewish community was divided in synagogues. Our primary sources to reconstruct the internal organization of these synagogues are sepulchral epigraphs from Roman Jewish catacombs. From these sources we know about the existence of twelve Roman synagogues in a period of about four centuries. In mid first century C.E. we have attested the following five synagogues: 1 – “of Hebrews”: four epigraphs. The oldest Jewish synagogue; 2 – “of the Vernaculars”: four epigraphs. Supposedly founded to group the Jews born in Rome; 3 – “of Augustenses”: six epigraphs. Contemporary of Augustus, to who is dedicated; 4 – “of Agrippenses”: three epigraphs. Probably contemporary of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, dead in 12 B.C.E. Maybe dedicated to Herod Agrippa, friend of emperor Claudius, dead in 44 C.E.; 5 – “of Volumnenses”: three epigraphs. Put under the patronage of Volumnius, legate in Syria in 8B.C.E. and friend of Herod, the Great.

Also from the catacombs we can discern the basic outlines of their internal organization. Archaeology has found the following, about the internal hierarchy and offices of the Roman Jewish

⁵⁴ Valerius Maximus - *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium* 1,3,2 *apud* Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 115.

synagogues: Γερουσιαρχης; 16 attestations. Chief of a council of elders. Responsible for the community's administration and tutor of all its interests; Πρεσβυτεροι: only once in the singular. Members of the council of elders; Αρχοντες; 5 times. "Chiefs in charge". Γερουσια's executive committee. Its members were elected for one year period, but could be reelected. Αρχοντες τιμες; four times. Responsible for fund raising for the common fund; Φροντιστης; twice. Common goods administrator; Γραμματευς; 25 times. Scribe, secretary. Maybe also doctor of the Law.⁵⁵ Προστατης; twice. Attorney, legal protector of the community; Πατηρ and Μετηρ: nine times and twice, respectively. Honorific title for the particularly generous benefactors; Αρχισυναγωγος; five times. Responsible for the worship building and "president of the assembly", an office also frequent among the Pagan associations; Υπερετης; only once. Who accomplished the humbler tasks in the community; Υερεϊς (masculine, three times), Υερισσα (feminine, once): honorific title given to descendants of the levites.⁵⁶

Another critical moment in the history of the Jewish community is the expulsion order, this time given by Emperor Tiberius in 19 A.D. It is believed that such attitude may have been motivated by the success of Jewish proselytism, which was capable of converting a matron from a senatorial family. However, also this time we realize that the banishment order was not fully accomplished, with fire and sword, as the Jewish community survived.

A high percentage of Roman Jews were emancipated slaves or their descendants (Philo - *Legatio ad Gaium* 155; Tacitus - *Annales* 2,85,4). This information is also epigraphically attested by the Roman synagogues *Augustenses*, *Agrippenses* and *Volumnenses*; all of them from I century C.E. Philo says the Jews brought to Rome as slaves by Pompey (63 B.C.E.) were liberated relatively fast.

⁵⁵ cf. Ac. 19,35.

⁵⁶ Penna, 2011, p. 95 - 96

This must have happened no later than the reign of Augustus (29 B.C.E. – 14 C.E.). The *Augustenses* synagogue documents the presence of freed persons shortly before 14 A.D. Until the reign of Augustus, manumission was one of the ways by which the Roman citizenship was acquired. Around 19A.D, the *Lex Iunia* reduced the amount of freedmen who automatically received Roman citizenship. Philo attests that Augustus had not withdrawn the Roman citizenship from Pompey's former slaves and their descendants.⁵⁷ Tacitus states that already in 19 A.D. Tiberius took measures against the Jews. Many of them were expelled from the city, but 4000 freedmen or their descendants, precisely because they had Roman citizenship, were sent to Sardinia to fight the bandits who acted there.⁵⁸

From the religious point of view, the Roman Jews remained in close contact with Jerusalem and kept a great exchange with the type of Judaism practiced in Palestine. Evidence of this can be seen in the New Testament, in Acts 28,21. In this passage, Paul, soon after his arrival at Rome, requests a meeting with the leaders of the Roman synagogues. These answered that they knew nothing about him, since they had not received any letters from Judea. The narrative suggests that the Roman synagogues were often informed of the main events of Judea.

This exchange between the Roman and Palestinian Judaism has not changed even after the defeat of the Jewish revolt of 66-70. Rabbinic literature hints at the famous Palestinian rabbis Gamaliel, Joshua ben Hananiah, Eleazar ben Azariah and Akiva, who went to Rome during the reign of Domitian (81-96) in order to strengthen the internal cohesion of the Roman Judaism through preaching at synagogues and disputing with Pagans and Christians. Later, in the first half of the second century, we see the recognition by the Palestinian masters of the Roman rabbinical school guided by the Palestinian rabbi Matthias ben Heresh.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ *Leg. ad Gaium* 157.

⁵⁸ Lampe, 2003, p. 83 - 84.

⁵⁹ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 116 - 119.

The elements presented, allow us to conclude that the first-century Roman Judaism was characterized by a deep rooting in its Jerusalemite cultural matrix, which certainly resulted in a conservative type of religious experience and social behavior. This characteristic of the Jewish community will be reflected in the Christian community, as we shall see.

The First Century: The arrival of Christianity in Rome

Christians authors from the second century onwards attributed the foundation of the church of Rome to the apostles Peter and Paul . The first news was that of Irenaeus⁶⁰ in circa 180. Then we have: Gaius⁶¹; Eusebius⁶²; Jerome.⁶³ Such works state that Peter would have been sent to Rome by Providence to face Simon Magus, in the second year of the reign of Claudius (January 42/43) and have Paul sent as a prisoner in the second year of Nero, when Festus succeeded Felix as procurator of Judea.

From the analysis of the letters of Paul, we are obliged to disregard the chronology of Eusebius and Jerome on Peter in Rome in the early '40s. Are worthy of note Paul's mentions about Peter's presence elsewhere⁶⁴ and the silence about Peter in Rome . It is also important to point to Ambrosiaster's prologue to his comment on Romans, which states that Roman Christians received the faith of Christ "even not seeing no signs or miracles , nor any of the Apostles ." We do not know when Peter arrived in Rome, but it is reasonable to assume that it was ten or fifteen years after the constitution of the local Christian community.⁶⁵

As far as we know, the arrival of the Christian faith at Rome either was not documented, or the actual records were lost. The historian's task is therefore to try to reconstruct the process of

⁶⁰ *Adv. Haer.* III,3,2.

⁶¹ Eusebius. *HE* 2,25,7.

⁶² *HE* II,14,6.

⁶³ *De Viris Illustribus* 1,1.

⁶⁴ 1Cor. 1,12; 9,5; 15,5; Gal. 1,18; 2,7 - 9.11 - 14.

⁶⁵ Penna, 2011, p. 83 - 84.

implementing the new faith in the capital of the Empire from reasonable assumptions, prepared with the use of the evidence provided by the ancient literature and epigraphy. Our oldest information about the Christian presence at Rome comes from the New Testament. From the *Epistle of Paul to the Romans*⁶⁶, we are informed of the existence of Christians established in the City, even before the arrival of the Apostle.

The Christian message must have come to Rome following the route of trade, which at that time passed through the port of Puteoli. This was the most important harbour city in Italy until the time of the Flavian dynasty, when it lost importance to Ostia, after the reform and expansion of the port of the latter by Claudius (42-54 C.E.).⁶⁷

At Puteoli landed merchants, sailors and migrants coming from different parts of the Roman Empire. The port was the point of entry not only for those who went directly to Rome, but also for those who sat in the very coastal city, living by peripheral maritime trade activities and the provision of various services. Such migrants and merchants tended to establish homogeneous cultural communities, according to their ethnic background, reproducing the way of life of their homelands. Thus, the merchants and migrants landed not only their material possessions, but also their cultural and spiritual values. This means that Puteoli was the gateway to many Eastern cults who would thrive in the capital. As examples, we can mention the cult of Serapis, which in Rome is attested since the mid-first century B.C., but it was already present in Puteoli since at least 105 B.C.E. We also have the case of the Nabataean deity Dusares, mentioned in an epigraphic inscription of 79 C.E. as an imported novelty.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ 1,6 - 10.

⁶⁷ Lampe, 2003, p. 7-10.

⁶⁸ Lampe, 2003, p. 10.

Similarly, we know by Josephus⁶⁹ and Philo⁷⁰ about the existence of a Jewish community in Puteoli from the time of Augustus. All this leads us to believe that Christians arrived at Rome via the trade route that landed at Puteoli.⁷¹ A confirmation of this hypothesis can be inferred indirectly from Acts 28,13-15, which chronicles the arrival of Paul at Puteoli, from where he traveled overland to his destination in Rome.

Brown & Meier⁷² believe the Christian faith arrived at Rome around the late 40s and early 50s. As evidence, they adduce the usual dating of *Romans*, around 58, implying that the Roman Christian community had existed for a considerable period of time.⁷³ Furthermore, Paul meets Priscilla and Aquila in Corinth around 49-50. They were among those expelled from Rome by Claudius, according to the Suetonius record.⁷⁴ Finally, it can be deduced that the main core of Roman Christians would have been of type 2, according to the definitions given by Brown and Meier. Only this kind of Christianity explains the first century Christian activities towards Rome and coming from it.

Regarding the social visibility of Christians in this period, Brown & Meier⁷⁵ basing on *Annales* 15,44 of Tacitus, the famous record of Nero's persecution of Christians, point out:

1) Back in 64 it was already possible for the authorities to distinguish between Christians and Jews, since there is no memory of a Nero's persecution of Jews in connection with the fire, even if their district beyond the Tiber had not been burnt; what could have been used to make them plausible scapegoats.

⁶⁹ *B.J.* 2,104, *A.J.* 17,138.

⁷⁰ *Leg. ad Gaium* 155.

⁷¹ Lampe, 2003, p. 9.

⁷² 1987, p.128.

⁷³ cf. *Rom.* 1,8;15,23.

⁷⁴ *Vita Claudii* 25,4.

⁷⁵ 1987, p.122.

2) There was a large number of Christians in the first century Rome. *1 Clement*⁷⁶ agrees with Tacitus in speaking of a great multitude of Christians.

3) The Pagans knew the historical connection between Christianity and Judea.

If this analysis is correct, as we believe it is, we can conclude that the Christian faith quickly became a phenomenon publicized in Rome's panorama, attracting many adherents, and also that the line of distinction between Jews and Christians became clear at Rome sooner than in other places, as we shall see below.

The "Edict of Claudius": The Beginning of the Autonomy of Roman Christianity

Many historians now recognize that the event known as the "Edict of Claudius" marks the separation of the Roman Christians from the synagogues present in the city. The events of this incident are attested in *Acts*⁷⁷; Suetonius⁷⁸; Orosius⁷⁹ and Dion Cassius.⁸⁰ The importance of the "Edict" is to be the first public appearance of Christians in the history of Rome.

Due to the importance of this event and also because not all scholars agree on the interpretation of *Chresto* as referring to Christ, or, at least consider it dubious⁸¹, some considerations are useful: Regarding the issue, we may consider that some Jewish believers in Jesus were involved in the conflict for the following reasons: the earliest attestation of the conflict, *Acts* 18,2, says that Claudius expelled all Jews from Rome, among whom there was a Jew named Aquila. Some observations suggest that Aquila and Priscilla were expelled from Rome as Christians and then immigrated to Corinth. The New Testament lists the following people baptized by Paul in Corinth: Gaius, Crispus, and the household of

⁷⁶ 5,1-2,6,1.

⁷⁷ 18,2.

⁷⁸ *Claud.* 25,4.

⁷⁹ *Hist.* 7,6,15 s.

⁸⁰ 60,6,6 s.

⁸¹ cf. Simonetti, 2010, p. 1441.

Stephanas.⁸² The first convert in Corinth was Stephanas, and Paul lived and worked with Aquila and Priscilla.⁸³

Regarding the couple, there is no tradition of their conversion in Corinth, although Luke strives to report such evangelization successes⁸⁴. Furthermore, in *Acts* 18,2, Ἰουδαῖος does not exclude Jewish believers in Jesus. The term is used in *Acts* as a designation of an ethnic origin of individuals, and not for a confession of faith. In *Acts* 13,43, along with "Jews" there are "proselytes." Differently, in 14,1b and 18,4, those are referred to as Ἰουδαῖοι. It can be seen that even though being "Jews" from the standpoint of confession of faith, Luke does not refer to proselytes as Ἰουδαῖοι. This term is also used to refer to Christians of Jewish origin in *Acts* 16,1 (Timothy's mother), 16,20 (Paul and Silas), 21,39; 22,3 (Paul), 22,12 (Ananias) and *Gal.* 2,13.

According to Suetonius, *Iudaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit*. Lampe⁸⁵ raises the question of how probably Aquila and Priscilla, who demonstrably preached Christ in Corinth, were involved in a riot incited by a heckler called Chresto? The author further argues with the fact that there is no attestation of a Jew named Chresto. The female version of this name, *Chreste*, is only attested in *CIJ* 1,683,5, but not as a proper name, instead, as a moral qualification.⁸⁶

Thus, the most likely interpretation of Suetonius is that the preaching of Christ in the Roman synagogues caused an uproar, similar to what had occurred in Jerusalem⁸⁷; Antioch of Pisidia⁸⁸; Iconium⁸⁹; Listra⁹⁰ and Corinth⁹¹. The fact Suetonius spelled Chrestus instead of Christus produces no

⁸² *ICor.* 1,14 – 16.

⁸³ *Acts* 18,3.

⁸⁴ *Acts* 18,8.

⁸⁵ 2003, p. 12.

⁸⁶ 2003, p.85.

⁸⁷ *Ac.* 6,9-15.

⁸⁸ *Ac.* 13,45.50.

⁸⁹ *Ac.* 14,2.5.

⁹⁰ *Ac.* 14,19.

difficulties. In reporting the trial of Christians by Nero, Tacitus⁹² wrote: “*Ergo abolendo rumori Nero subdidit reos et quaesitissimus poenis affecit, quos per flagitia invisos vulgus chrestianos appellabat. Auctor nominis eius Christus [...].*” Tertullian⁹³ attests that it was not uncommon having a Pagan misspelling Christianus as Chrestianus. Idem in *Ad Nationes* 1,3: “*Cum corrupti a vobis chrestiani pronuntiator a vobis.*”. Also in Lactantius⁹⁴: *Immutata littera Chrestum dicere solent.* The explanation of the scholar, with which we agree, is that such a mistake should be common since Chrestus was a common name in the ears of the Pagans, while Christus, taken as a proper name, was not.⁹⁵ Even Christian manuscript tradition attests the vowel exchange between *Christos*⁹⁶ and *Chrestos*⁹⁷ by the phenomenon of iotacism.⁹⁸

The date of the event is disputed. It depends on when the Christian community of Rome is presumed to have arisen: before 49 or even before 41. Basically, if the dating follows Orosius, who fixes the "Edict of Claudius" in 49, or the interpretation given by Ludemann⁹⁹, to Dion Cassius, in 41. Lampe disagrees with Ludemann. According to the author of *From Paul to Valentinus*, Dion Cassius is not correcting the sources used by him and Suetonius, he is just stating that in 41 Claudius forbade Jews of meeting. Penna¹⁰⁰ agrees with this opinion and remembers the absence of a memory of expulsion of Jews under Claudius in the works of Josephus. But Penna thinks Claudius had not expelled any Jew at all, or, at least expelled very few, what is compatible with the thesis espoused by us, that only the responsible for the disturbances were expelled. Anyway, even though Cassius was referring to the *Chresto* incident, his information was given about 100 years after *Acts* 18, which makes

⁹¹ Ac. 18,12-17.

⁹² *Annales* 15,44.

⁹³ *Apol.* 3.

⁹⁴ *Inst. Div.* 4,7.

⁹⁵ Lampe, 2003, p. 13.

⁹⁶ P72, III century.

⁹⁷ IV century codices, critical editions.

⁹⁸ Penna, 2011, p. 86.

⁹⁹ 1980, p. 183 n. 62.

¹⁰⁰ 2011, p. 88.

it even more uncertain. If the separation of Christianity from Roman synagogues have something to do with conflicts and disputes, the edict of Claudius is the only plausible incident known. The most probable solution is that by virtue of these events, Roman Christianity broke away from the Synagogue. As a support for this hypothesis we have Paul's *Letter to the Romans*, written no later than the second half of the 50s in which the urban Roman Christianity can be seen as separate from Roman synagogues. A little further in time, in 64, even Roman authorities could distinguish between Jews and Christians.¹⁰¹

Vielhauer¹⁰² states that the Edict of Claudius had no serious consequences against Jews and Christians, and agrees that the edict accelerated the inevitable separation of the Christian community from Roman synagogues. Vielhauer is also of the opinion that when Paul wrote *Romans*, the Christian community was already separated from the sinagogal league.

The First Generation of Roman Christians: the background of the *Letter of Paul to the Romans*

It has long been recognized that there is a proximity between *Galatians* and *Romans*. Much of the content written in the first letter in an aggressive way was later rewritten in the second with greater calm and balance. The position of Paul in *Romans* is an overhaul of its previous polemic position in *Galatians*.¹⁰³ To be able to better understand the background of *Romans*, it is therefore necessary to assess more accurately the impact of *Galatians*.

In *Gal. 2* Paul tells his own story to make it clear that James and Peter kept communion with him on the principle of not circumcising Gentile converts. Then brags of having opposed to Peter and the men from James on the issue of *kosher* purity laws for food, and says they were not sincere about the truth of the Gospel. Paul mentions those "regarded as the columns" in a somewhat derogatory way, showing that these people had no importance to him.

¹⁰¹ Tacitus, *Annales*, 15, 44; Simonetti, 2010, p. 1441.

¹⁰² 2005, p. 209 - 210.

¹⁰³ Sanders, 1985, p. 30 - 31.

In pursuing the Pauline story, we realize that the opponents that Paul faced in Galatia enforced a kind of Judeo – Christian practice more conservative than that of James and Peter, as such missionaries insisted on circumcision.¹⁰⁴ However, on the hardness of his attack, Paul makes no distinction between his opposition to these missionaries and the opposition before Peter and James.

The evidence listed in Galatians allow us to assume that these missionaries did not hide from the authorities of Jerusalem the despise Paul devoted to them, and even boasted themselves of being alongside with them against Paul. Additionally, Peter himself was at Antioch and participated in the discussion. Since there were Jewish believers in Jesus supporters of circumcision in Galatia and in Jerusalem, they certainly should have sent a full report with all the derogatory statements of Paul against the authorities of Jerusalem. Paul was right in fearing that even his money offer might not be well accepted.¹⁰⁵

What Paul condemned in Galatia was the insistence that Pagans might be circumcised so that their acceptance of Christ could be fully effective.¹⁰⁶ According to *Acts* 21, 21, it was rumored in Jerusalem that Paul taught the Jewish believers in Jesus to forsake Moses, not to circumcise their children and not observe other Jewish customs. A rumor put into circulation by the opponents of Paul, distorting the views of the apostle, is something perfectly plausible. It is just a matter of reading the Pauline statements against the Law in *Gal.* 3,19; 4,24; 5,2. Such statements, added with the sarcasm about Peter and James, could well disturb also the moderate at Jerusalem.¹⁰⁷

It is still quite possible that Paul has, as John P. Meier wrote, "learned the lesson" in the period between the two epistles (55-58). Paul must have gone defeated in the conflict in Antioch. The same

¹⁰⁴ *Gal.* 5,2-3.

¹⁰⁵ *Rom.* 15,30-31.

¹⁰⁶ *Gal.* 5,1-12.

¹⁰⁷ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 136-138.

should have happened in Galatia because of his excesses.¹⁰⁸ Perhaps a wiser Paul was now closer to Peter and James than when he was in Antioch or when he wrote *Galatians*.¹⁰⁹ This opinion can be supported by the following observations taken from the text of *Romans*: the letter is characterized by a tone of careful courtesy; when Paul mentions Judea and Jerusalem, he makes a careful distinction between Jews non-believers in Jesus and Christians of Jewish origin: the latter are called "saints" twice¹¹⁰ Jews believers in Jesus are a remnant chosen by God.¹¹¹ In *Galatians*¹¹², on the other hand, Paul emphasizes his independence from the apostles and attacks some Jewish – Christians of Jerusalem as "false brothers" and is also sarcastic about the most distinguished heads of the community of Jerusalem.¹¹³

Regarding the Roman community, it consists of saints beloved by God¹¹⁴, whose faith is proclaimed worldwide¹¹⁵. Paul fully recognizes the high quality of Roman Christianity, even if the community was not founded by him.¹¹⁶ His only fear is that opponents may cause divisions contrary to the doctrine they already have.¹¹⁷ In other words: Paul does not commit again the error of gathering all his opponents under the label of preachers of "another gospel"¹¹⁸, reaching to the point of even accusing Peter and the men of James (naming two characters who supported him) of not behaving according to "the gospel truth".¹¹⁹¹²⁰

¹⁰⁸ Siker, 1991, p. 48 – 49.

¹⁰⁹ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 139.

¹¹⁰ *Rom.* 15,26.31

¹¹¹ *Rom.* 11,5.

¹¹² 1,17.

¹¹³ 2,4.6.9.

¹¹⁴ *Rom.* 1,7.

¹¹⁵ *Rom.* 1,8.

¹¹⁶ *Rom.* 15,14.

¹¹⁷ *Rom.* 16,17.

¹¹⁸ *Gal.* 1,6-7.

¹¹⁹ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 140-141.

¹²⁰ *Gal.* 2,14.

Paul equates the Roman Christians to his own proselytes and himself in *Rom.* 3,24 - 25; 6,3-4. The apostle is even more accurate in describing his own role and defending his apostleship. There is a change in tone between *Gal.* 1,1 and *Rom.* 1,1. Paul declares not going to Rome to teach who are already Christian, but to fulfill his calling to convert the Gentiles.¹²¹¹²²

Paul reaffirms his "orthodoxy" through the use of a possible Jewish - Christian prayer, a kind of creed in *Rom.* 1,3-4, and a possible echo of the *Shemah* in *Rom.* 3,30. In *Rom.* 3,8, Paul contradicts a slander, probably a distortion of *Gal.* 3, where it says the Law gives place to transgressions, but Christ redeems us from the curse. So Paul reaffirms his adherence to the moral values espoused by the community.¹²³

The admonition to the "strong" in *Rom.* 14 - 15 may have been directed to more liberal Christians who could have claimed Paul to their side for his reputation to allow his converts eating all kinds of food and mock those who made it an important religious issue.¹²⁴ In Corinth, Paul learned at his own expenses that freedom can induce the "strong" to an attitude of insensitivity to the unenlightened.¹²⁵ It is therefore a most wise Paul, who writes to the Romans. Maybe, at Rome, most Christians would worry about food purity issues.

On writing *Romans*, Paul presents the Pagans as wild olive branches grafted in the good olive tree, which is Israel, insisting that God has not rejected his people, but he will have Israel converted.¹²⁶ Paul rejects, therefore, a radical version of Christianity which disinherited the Jews non believers in Jesus from the Abrahamic promises. The Apostle did so, not because this opinion was dominant at Rome, but because he was falsely accused of defending it. Such charges would make him *persona non*

¹²¹ *Rom.* 15,15.16.20.

¹²² Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 142 - 143.

¹²³ Brown & Meier, 1987, p.144 - 145.

¹²⁴ *Gal.* 2,12; *Phil.* 3,19.

¹²⁵ *1Cor.* 8,8 - 9.

¹²⁶ *Rom.* 11.

grata for most Roman Christians. The Jewish values defended by Paul in *Rom.* 9-11 does not represent an attack on Roman Christianity, but a confirmation of it.¹²⁷

It is possible that Paul has actually changed his mind in *Romans*, on the previous Paul of *Galatians*. While some of the charges made against him were slanderous, others may have actually been correct, and from which he now distances himself. If Paul, according to *Gal.* 2,11-12, fought against Peter and the men sent by James in Antioch; in *Rom.* 14,3 he takes a more conciliatory tone with those believers of strict *kosher* observance. In *Gal.* 5,2, Paul threatened with the fall from grace to those who allowed themselves being circumcised. *Romans* 3,1-2, instead, has a tone that seems to go beyond mere moderation. In *Galatians*, Paul distinguished himself from the "columns", while in *Rom.* 15,8, he says that Christ became the server of the circumcised. In *Gal.* 3,10.13.23.24 Paul removes all value from the Law. *Romans* 3 has some thoughts about it, but the chapter ends reaffirming the Law.¹²⁸ In *Rom.* 7,7.12.14.16, Paul denies that the Law is sin. No more claims, as he did with insistence on *Gal.* 3,19-20, that the Law was given by angels.

Perhaps the change can be summarized under the theme of the Pauline attitude about the history of salvation. In *Galatians*, Paul does not see God's relationship with humanity as a history of salvation, *id est*, as a salvation offered in what we call the "Old Testament economy" and that reaches its climax in Christ. In *Galatians* we have a set of bondage, sin and curse, with the impotence of the Law and a new kingdom introduced by Christ, marked by grace and freedom. In *Rom.* 5, 8, 10, all men, Jews and Gentiles, are sinners and enemies of God, and 5,13.20-21 states that the Law made the sin possible. But this negative view is tempered in other passages, especially *Rom.* 9-11, with at least a partial prospect of a history of salvation.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 146.

¹²⁸ 3,31.

¹²⁹ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 148-149.

The Letter to the Romans

The Letter to the Romans, is, undoubtedly, Paul's *magnum opus*. Its doctrinal part far outweighs the "correspondence" between the Apostle and his recipients. The probable moment of Paul's life in which the letter was written, would have been the end of the so-called third missionary journey.¹³⁰ Probably written in Corinth, in his third stay in that city¹³¹, between 56-59.¹³²

According to Vielhauer¹³³, there were already many Christians in Rome, since perhaps the mid-40s. The cited author also agrees that these Roman Christians participated in the synagogues of the city. He believes that Roman Christians were mostly ethnically Jewish, but obviously there were also some Gentile semi-proselytes and proselytes. Nonetheless, Paul addresses his readers as if they were all Christians coming from a Pagan origin.¹³⁴ However, by its origin, the community is necessarily mixed. Probably Paul wrote thus to justify his breach on the principle of not working where others had launched the seed of the Gospel. By characterizing their recipients as Gentile Christians, the Roman community would automatically be within Paul's area of responsibility.¹³⁵¹³⁶

Vielhauer¹³⁷ also agrees with the general view that Paul wrote Romans with a calmer tone than in Galatians. The scholar emphasizes, however, that even then, the tone of the letter is too concrete to suppose that the interest of the apostle was purely theoretical. The content of the letter should be grounded in the author's real experiences.

¹³⁰ cf. *Acts* 20,1-5.

¹³¹ Ac. 20,6.

¹³² Vielhauer, 2005, p. 206.

¹³³ 2005, p. 208-209.

¹³⁴ 1,5 cf. 15,15 s., 1,13 cf. 11,43, 9,3 ss.; 10,1 s.; 11,23; 28,31.

¹³⁵ 1,5 s.; 10-15; 15,13-19.

¹³⁶ Vielhauer, 2005, p. 210, 211, 212 - 213.

¹³⁷ 2005, p. 214.

Vielhauer¹³⁸ states that *Romans* was written to win the sympathy and support of the Roman Christians for Paul's project to evangelize in Spain. The "fruit" that Paul expected to reap between them, was their support.¹³⁹

The Roman Christians of Gentile origin may have been converted to Christianity while the new message was still active within the Roman synagogues. Such members shall have been recruited from the ranks of God - fearers (semi – proselytes, *id est*: uncircumcised Gentile sympathizers), which must have been interested in the Christian message because it promised them all the benefits of salvation from the Jewish God without requiring circumcision, and thus must have released them from the second class category of believers, that they surely must have been inserted in, by the synagogues leaders. Aquila and Priscilla must have interacted with Gentile Christians in one or more Roman synagogues. This would be a plausible explanation for their enthusiastic adherence to the Pauline mission to the Gentiles in Corinth.¹⁴⁰¹⁴¹

After separating from Judaism, the Gentile converts, mostly former God - fearers from the synagogues, quickly became majority in the Christian communities. In the *Letter to the Romans*, we see how Paul addresses his readers as coming from Paganism.¹⁴² An indication of the origin of Paul's readers can be seen in 7,1. From Pagan sources, we know by Juvenal¹⁴³ about the existence of Roman God-fearers who studied the Scriptures “*iudaicum ediscunt [...] ius*”¹⁴⁴, before being circumcised. Similarly, Luke¹⁴⁵ assumes that God fearers, know the Scriptures.¹⁴⁶

¹³⁸ 2005, p. 212.

¹³⁹ 1,3 cf. 15,28, *Phil.* 4,17.

¹⁴⁰ *Acts* 18; cf. *Rom.* 16,3s.

¹⁴¹ Lampe, 2003, p. 69 – 70.

¹⁴² *Rom* 1,5.18 ss., 6, 17 - 21; 9,3 ss., 13 - 15; 11,13; 15, 9ss. 15s.; 17,24; 28,30 s.

¹⁴³ 14, 96 - 106.

¹⁴⁴ 14,101.

¹⁴⁵ cf. *Ac.* 8, 27s., 13, 16ff., 17, 2.4.

¹⁴⁶ Lampe, 2003, p. 70.

If Paul's readers were mainly ex – God fearers from Judaism, then the subject "Law - Israel - no privilege of the Jew over the Gentile," becomes even more understandable: Paul challenged exactly the Jewish privilege they encountered at the synagogues, and that must have "pleased" them. It is possible to believe that was exactly what Paul wanted: to "please" them, gain them as allies.¹⁴⁷ The admission that most Roman Christians came from Paganism does not mean that there were not ethnic Jewish - Christians. The conflict between the "strong" and the "weak" in Rom. 14s. presupposes the observance of the Jewish Law. The conflict basically revolved around dietary rules¹⁴⁸ and the keeping of certain days.¹⁴⁹ According to Lampe, there is no way to infer that they were Jewish - Christians (in the ethnic sense of the expression). Otherwise, there is evidence of Roman God fearers who practiced such observances. Once again we have confirmation on Juvenal¹⁵⁰, who mentions Gentiles who rigidly observed the Sabbath and Jewish *kosher* rules, even not being circumcised. It is also well known the claim of Josephus¹⁵¹ according to which Jewish customs are kept by many Greeks. The proselytes to Judaism were usually recruited from the lower strata of society. The semi - proselytes, however, were socially better positioned, going up to the equestrian order. There were fewer slaves among the God-fearers than among proselytes.¹⁵² A remembrance of this Pauline concern is found in Ambrosiaster's prologue of his commentary of *Romans*, where he affirms that there were some Jews dwelling at Rome who taught Gentile Romans to have faith in Christ, though keeping the Law. According to Ambrosiaster, the kind of faith the Romans received was an *improbe sentientes de Christo*. Thus, still according to Ambrosiaster, Paul must have written *Romans* to announce the mystery of the cross, what was unknown

¹⁴⁷ *Rom.* 1,8.9-12,15;14.24.30s.

¹⁴⁸ *Rom.* 14,2.15.20s.

¹⁴⁹ *Rom.* 14,5.

¹⁵⁰ *Sat.* 14,96 - 106.

¹⁵¹ *Contra Apionem* 2, 10.39.

¹⁵² cf. Josephus *A.J.* 18,82 [Fulvia], 20, 195 [Poppaea], cf. Lampe, 2003, p. 72.

in Rome, and, this way, raise Christian faith above Judaism. In the author's words: *non destruens legem sed praeferens christianismum*.¹⁵³

Another question debated among scholars regarding the Letter of Paul to the Romans is the integrity of the Letter. Since the XIXth century, some authors believe that Romans would have originally been written with 14 or 15 chapters. This is because there are versions of the Letter with 14 and 15 chapters.¹⁵⁴ The scholars who question the authenticity of the 16th chapter claim that it would have been a letter of recommendation of Phoebe to the community of Ephesus. Thus, Romans would have had, since the beginning, two different versions: one with 15 chapters, sent by Paul to the Roman community, and the other, the canonical letter with 16 chapters, would have been the version, sent by Paul himself, to Ephesus. When sending a copy of Romans to Ephesus, then it would have been coupled with the recommendation letter.¹⁵⁵ However, we do not agree with this opinion because of the following reasons: There are a large number of people greeted by name in chapter 16. This is reasonably explicable as an attempt to make Paul recognized by several eminent Christians in a community that he had not yet visited.¹⁵⁶ Additionally, in *Rom.* 16, Paul designates three people as "my kinsmen" (ἱμ): Andronicus and Junia (v.7) and Herodian (v.11). In *Romans*, Paul emphasizes how Christians are related to the Jews, especially in 9,3. This certainly means that these three persons are Jewish - Christians. The other names, in contrast, are Christians of Pagan origin. This is another evidence that reinforces Rome as the destination of Chapter 16.¹⁵⁷

The question of the quantitative relationship between Jewish and Gentile Christians should be methodologically distinct of a "qualitative" relationship: what was the real theological and pastoral influence exerted by the Jewish - Christians? Priscilla and Aquila were leaders among the Roman

¹⁵³ Penna, 2011, p. 90.

¹⁵⁴ Papyrus Beatty 46, III century.

¹⁵⁵ Vielhauer, 2005, p. 220-221; Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 130-131.

¹⁵⁶ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 131.

¹⁵⁷ Lampe, 2003, p. 74.

Christianity: a community used to gather in their house.¹⁵⁸ Similarly, Andronicus and Junia are described as prominent among the apostles.¹⁵⁹

From a social standpoint, it is assumed that the Romans were Christians belonging to different strata of society because of the request of Paul to give assistance to the poor.¹⁶⁰ Similarly, the choice of Rome as a starting point for a mission in Spain¹⁶¹ indicates that he expected to receive a possible support from the Roman church.¹⁶² Paul maybe needed for travel companions speakers of Latin and / or material support such as money and supplies. Another passage that gives us an evidence of social stratification of the first generation of Roman Christians is 13,6, where the apostle assumes that at least some of his readers should pay fees beyond normal taxes, which would indicate their involvement in commercial activities. Finally, we cannot forget 12,3 ff., where Paul exhorts his readers to estimate and support each other. The four appearances of “each other” (ἄ ἑ) suggests a community comprised of individuals of varied economic conditions. Paul insists that not only the poor has to estimate the wealthy, but also these have to support those. According to Paul, the honor due to one another should be placed above the own honor, even if the other is less privileged in human terms.¹⁶³ The Christian should not seek an increase in its social position. Rather, it must be in solidarity with the humbler.¹⁶⁴ In *Acts* 28,30 s., Luke informs us of the tradition that Paul lived and taught in Rome for two years “in his own rented lodging”. Such affirmation cannot be interpreted in the sense that there were not Roman Christians with whom Paul could stay, but that he preferred to follow his custom to live at his own expenses.¹⁶⁵

¹⁵⁸ *Rom.* 16,3-5.

¹⁵⁹ *Rom.* 16,7.

¹⁶⁰ *Rom.* 12,13 - 18.

¹⁶¹ *Rom.* 15,24.28.

¹⁶² *Rom.* 15,24; *1Cor.* 16,6.11; *2 Cor.* 1,16.

¹⁶³ *Rom.* 12,10 cf. *1Cor.* 12,23 f.; *Phil.* 2,3.

¹⁶⁴ v.16.

¹⁶⁵ Lampe, 2003, p. 81.

The social differences between the Roman Christians seems to have led to a fragmentation of Christianity site in various groups. This conclusion was drawn from the analysis of the following evidences: 1) In *Rom.* 1,7, Paul does not address the Letter “to the Church” (ἡ ἐκκλησία), as he did in the other letters; 2) In *Rom.* 16,5, only the group of Aquila and Prisca is so designated; 3) The chapter 16 signals the existence of several Christian "islands": the brothers gathered around Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Hermas and Patrobas (v.14); The saints around Philologus, Junia, Nereus, his sister, and Olympas (v.15); The slaves and / or freedmen of the house of Aristobulus (v.10); The slaves and / or freedmen of the house of Narcissus (v.11).

Besides these clearly identifiable groups, the other 14 Christians mentioned in Romans 16 must belong to at least two other groups. With the establishment of Paul in Rome during his domiciliary arrest (cf. *Acts* 28,30 s.), We can count at least eight different groupings. Each of these groups must have conducted services of worship independently, in a house or apartment, so it can be called a domestic community.¹⁶⁶

The Second Generation: *The First Epistle of Peter and the Epistle to the Hebrews*

The *First Letter of Peter* was probably written in Rome. The dating is uncertain. Scholars cogitate between the 60s and early 90s. Around the year 80 is a very likely dating. The fact of the Empire capital be symbolically called Babylon indicates a post 70 composition. It is from this date onwards that Rome becomes associated with Babylon, because of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and its Temple.^{167 168}

There is a significant correspondence between *IPet.* and the moderate Paul from Romans, as it appears from the following observations: the mention of the two people associated with Peter, formerly

¹⁶⁶ Lampe, 2003, p. 359 - 360.

¹⁶⁷ cf. *Rev.* 14,8; 16,19; 17,5; 18,2; *II Baruch* 11,1; 67,7; *Sibylline Oracles* 5,143.159.

¹⁶⁸ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 158-159.

associated with Paul: Silvanus and [John] Mark.¹⁶⁹ Such characters may be the "link" between the acceptance of the moderate Paul of Romans by "Peter", a personification of moderately conservative position of the Roman Church, as the references to "Peter and Paul" in *IClem.*; and "our brother Paul , who is so dear to us "(*2Pet.* 3,15).¹⁷⁰

There are several similarities between *Romans* and *1Peter*: 1,21 – *Rom.* 4,24; *1Pet.* 3,21-22 – *Rom.* 8,34; *1Pet.* 2,24 – *Rom.* 6,11, and also the references to the "foundation stone" and the " stumble stone " (*1Pet.* 2,6 - 8 – *Rom.* 9,33). However, such similarities do not prove that the author of *1Peter* had access to the text of *Romans*, but do prove that such Pauline expressions had become platitudes and commonplaces in Rome.¹⁷¹ Three particular trends present in *Romans* and *1Peter* are especially useful to discern the trajectory of Roman Christianity in late 1st century:

1) Jewish liturgical language: *Romans* has a higher quantity of Jewish liturgical terms than any other authentic Pauline epistle: 3,25 - Christ as a expiatory instrument; 12,1 - offering of bodies of believers as a living and spiritual sacrifice; 15,16 - holy office of the gospel of God to the pagans become one accepted oblation. Similarly we also have in *1Peter*: 1,18-19 - blood of Christ as a redemption ransome; 2,9 - the titles of Israel are given to Christians (including ethno-Christians); 2,5 - spiritual sacrifices grateful to God through Jesus Christ; 2,12 – final illumination of Pagans; 2,5 - living stones for the construction of a spiritual building (cf. *2Cor.* 6,16);

2) The Roman civil government: Both in *Romans* 13,1-7 and in *1Peter* 2,13-17 we read have warnings that the Christians must submit to civil authorities. Such warnings should have been motivated because

¹⁶⁹ Silas - *1Pet.* 5,12; *Acts* 15,22.27; [John] Mark - *1Pet.* 5,13; *Ac.* 12,12.25.

¹⁷⁰ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 164.

¹⁷¹ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 165.

of the expulsion of the Jews under Claudius and the persecution and death of many Christians under Nero. Among them, Peter himself¹⁷²;

3) Ecclesiastical organization and offices: *Rom.* 12,6-8 - Paul presupposes various offices in the Roman Church and lists seven charismatic gifts: prophecy, service, teaching, exhortation, collaboration, presidency, works of mercy. The deutero - pauline Pastoral letters (*1-2 Timothy* and *Titus*) show that some Pauline churches were developing a more articulated structure during the 80's: episcopos - presbyters and deacons. Similarly, *1Pet.* 5,1-5 takes for granted the existence at Rome of a structure of elders and young men (deacons?). This is another reason for dating *1Peter* around 80 A.D. Also in this issue, it is worth noting the attention given to the families in the *Pastorals* and *1Peter* alike. At this time, when the Christian communities were household, the order established for the families concerned also the structure of the Church.¹⁷³

Regarding the persecution under Nero, the very first notice of *chrestianos* at Rome¹⁷⁴ both Tacitus¹⁷⁵, and Clement¹⁷⁶ refer to the martyrs as a "tremendous multitude"¹⁷⁷ This is hardly a coincidence that can be explained by attributing rhetorical overkill to both authors. Christians were tied in wild animal skins and torn by dogs, or crucified and burned for night lighting.¹⁷⁸ Many ancient authors testify to the existence of such modes of execution in Roman penal laws. This indicates that Christians executed under these forms were not Roman citizens.¹⁷⁹

The events under Nero assume that Christians existed in considerable numbers, which were publicly known and generally enjoyed a bad reputation among the population. Even believing in the

¹⁷² Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 166-167.

¹⁷³ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 168 - 169.

¹⁷⁴ Penna, 2011, p. 82.

¹⁷⁵ *Annales* 15,44,4.

¹⁷⁶ *1Clem.* 6,1.

¹⁷⁷ *ingens multitudo* for the first author, *πολυπληθος* for the second.

¹⁷⁸ *Annales* 15,44,4.

¹⁷⁹ Lampe, 2003, p. 82.

innocence of the Christians on the burning of Rome, yet, Tacitus believed the rumors about the abominations committed by Christians. The criminal measures of Nero raised further negative image of Christians. From Nero onwards, Christians were given the stigma of society's *outsiders*. From then on, they could be seen as potentially dangerous, and could face a possible punishment by the authorities.¹⁸⁰

The strength of the Synagogue tradition can also be found by some evidence present in the *Letter to the Hebrews*, written in the second half of the 1st century: on the destination of the Epistle, (Ἀ δὲ ἑμῶν ἰδὲ ὅτι Ἰσραηλῶν 13,24), if it is not a mere literary artifice, we can read: ἰδὲ instead of ἐκ designating the geographical origin of those, being absent from their homeland, greet their countrymen, addressees of the writing. We have examples of such use in *Mt.* 21,11; *Joh.* 12,21, *Ac.* 6,9; Sophocles *El* 701 etc. If Hebrews was directed to Rome, it was assumed the understanding of Jewish traditions by Roman Christians. Eg: *Heb.* 11 presents a series of rhetorical paradigms that illustrate the theme (v. 1: "Faith"). The typological interpretation and its contents put Hebrews near the Hellenistic Judaism, especially Philo.¹⁸¹

There is no evidence that the Jews of Rome have given assistance to the 66-70 Jewish revolt against Rome. However, the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple must have had an impact on them. The Roman Jews certainly have seen the triumphal procession of Titus showing the sacred containers looted from the Temple.¹⁸² Titus proclaimed his triumph also by putting into circulation commemorative coins (*Iudaea capta*), and by rising his triumphal arch, which was completed in 80. In addition, there was the imposition of the *fiscus iudaicus* for maintaining the temple dedicated to Jupiter Capitolinus.

¹⁸⁰ Wilken, 2007, p. 45.50.

¹⁸¹ Lampe, 2003, p. 77.

¹⁸² *B.J.* 7,5,3 - 6.

Nevertheless such a situation of humiliation, the Jewish apocalypses of the time fed the hope of a construction of a Third Temple, in analogy with the first fall of Jerusalem under Babylon. (*IV Ezra, II Baruch*). This hope must have influenced the composition, at the time, of the *Shemoneh Esreh*: "Be merciful, O Lord our God ... In relation to Jerusalem, your city, and Zion, the habitation of thy glory, and the temple, your house."

What influences such events have had on the Christians of Rome, regardless of ethnicity by birth, had been indoctrinated in a Christianity of the type of Jerusalem¹⁸³, where their spiritual ancestors combined faith in Jesus with fidelity to the Temple?¹⁸⁴ Unlike the speculations of many scholars, the vast majority of Christians should not have interpreted the destruction of the Temple as a divine judgment and denied the need for a sacred ground. A stance so radical is clearly attested only in some works of the New Testament, especially those characteristics of the Johannine circle.¹⁸⁵ More conservative Christians might have expected the Temple could be replaced by a specifically Christian sanctuary. The idea of a substitution of the visible temple, the sacrifices and the priesthood may have been especially tempting in Rome, with its pagan worship, the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus seemed the alternative after the Roman victory over Jerusalem. There are evidences of this possibility in some ambiguous statements about a Christian temple in the Gospels: *Mark* 14,58; *Matthew* 26,61; *John* 2,19-22. Thus, Brown & Meier¹⁸⁶ propose an interpretation of *Hebrews* as an attack on a possible way of thinking on the substitution of Jerusalem's Temple by a visible purified continuity by a more conservative Jewish – Pagan Christian group. These considerations are reasonable if we remember the deep roots Roman Christianity had in Jerusalem's Christianity.

¹⁸³ *Ac.* 2,46; 5,42; 21, 23 - 26.

¹⁸⁴ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 182 - 183.

¹⁸⁵ *John.* 10,34; 15,25; 5,1.9b; 6,4; 7,2.

¹⁸⁶ 1987, p. 184.

It is also very reasonable to interpret Pentecost¹⁸⁷ as a symbolic representation of the Christian self – understanding of a *Verus Israel*. According to Brown, Pentecost represents a new covenant from God to His people, through Christ, by making a direct parallel with the midrashic reflections of Philo¹⁸⁸ about the Covenant at Sinai, with tongues of fire transmuting into articulated voices.

The *Verus Israel* self – understanding is also present on the narratives of distribution of goods to the needy of the community of Jerusalem. This reflects the ideal of *Deut.* 15,4 according to which there would be no need in Israel. Also the term “church” echoes *Deut.* 23,3.8 (LXX) that uses that term for “congregation of the Lord” in the desert (“*ἐκκλησία κυρίου*”). So also the Qumran community considered itself to be the renewed Israel, on the model of the covenant of Sinai.

Having these Jewish elements as a background, the Roman Christian community could be attracted to a form of worship intermediate between the Leviticus type of the Temple and the option of the “extreme left” (*sic.*) Hellenistic group represented by John chapter 4, cf. v. 24: “[...] God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” (“*ὁ θεὸς πνεῦμα ἐστίν, καὶ οἱ προσκυνοῦντες αὐτὸν πνεύματι καὶ ἀλήθειᾳ προσκύνουσιν*”). Brown says¹⁸⁹ it has been advocated with intelligence that the attraction Hebrews is fighting is not the return to Judaism, but a trend to a more conservative Jewish - Christianity. The author of Hebrews structures his argument in this direction by introducing Jesus in an uninterrupted line of history of salvation, as the successor of Moses and the angels as revealers of the Law. Hebrews argues insistently from the Jewish Scriptures (making a clear appeal to those for whom the Scriptures are primary sources) that, as the Son of God, Jesus breaks the revelatory line by being superior to the angels and Moses, who proclaimed the Law.¹⁹⁰ The diplomacy of the author, and the possibility of the Epistle be directed to a particular group within the

¹⁸⁷ Ac. 2,1-12.

¹⁸⁸ *De Decalogo* 42.

¹⁸⁹ 1987, p. 186.

¹⁹⁰ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 185 – 188.

Roman Church who made itself absent on the common meetings (cf. 10,25), could explain the fate of the letter in Rome : it was never overweight, but also never been rejected . Such a group could be the type of ultra conservative Jewish heritage, who still insisted on circumcision, or even still attached to some Roman synagogue.

Finally, *1Peter* presents a spiritualized understanding of the Leviticus' worship, but not advocates a total abandonment of a visible temple priesthood and temple, as Hebrews does. We deduce, therefore, that *1Peter* was best suited to a church with a tradition strongly shaped by the Jewish heritage.¹⁹¹

The Third Generation: *The First Epistle of Clement*

1Clem. 55,2 mentions the case of Christians who voluntarily sold themselves as slaves and gave the value of the sale to feed the poor Christians. Nor was it uncommon for free Pagans to sell themselves as slave. Based on epigraphic evidence, manumission was normal when the slave was between 30 and 40 years old. Nor was it unusual that the contract provided for the duration of slavery. The manumission, by granting Roman citizenship, released the freed from paying the *per capita* tribute.¹⁹²

The fragment of prayer in *1Clem.* 59,4 comes from the Roman liturgy. Worshippers remember to pray for their fellow Christians who are weak and hungry. Even at the time of Clement, there was still the problem of Christians who were below the poverty line.¹⁹³

The Synagogue has exerted a wide influence on Roman Christian Theology during I century. For instance, *1Clem.* 23,3 s.; 46,2, bringing quotes from unknown Jewish apocryphal works. Also, in

¹⁹¹ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 190 – 191.

¹⁹² Lampe, 2003, p. 85.

¹⁹³ Lampe, 2003, p. 87.

1Clem. 17,6, there is an apocryphal quote of Moses. In *1Clem.* 7,6, we have a penitential sermon of Noah derived from non-biblical traditions. *1Clem.* 43,2 ss. Deals with *Numbers* 17 in a *hagadic*¹⁹⁴ way. *1Clem.* 31,3 exposes the unbiblical Jewish tradition of Isaac submitting voluntarily to sacrifice (cf. Josephus *JA* 1,232 ff.), In addition, there are numerous Jewish apocalyptic motives in *1Clem.* 24-30 (Lampe, 2003, p. 75). The long prayer of *1Clem.* 59,2 to 61,3 reveals a relationship with the liturgy of the Twelve Blessings, and other Jewish liturgical materials. We also found other Hebraisms in 12,5; 21,9; 28,3; 34,8, etc. From the foregoing, it can be assumed that many Roman Christians of the first century must have had contact with the synagogues present in the City, at least until their conversion to the Christian faith. This hypothesis explains the presence of part of the Jewish cultural heritage in the epistle under analysis.¹⁹⁵

The Second Century: the Jewish heritage and the development of hierarchical ecclesiastical structures

The Epistle of Ignatius to the Romans

From the series of letters written by Ignatius in his journey as a prisoner to Rome, *Romans* is the only one that does not speak of internal divisions and heresies. This is due, either because Ignatius was not aware of the particularities of the Roman Church, or because his only interest was to prevent the Roman Christians trying to free him from martyrdom, or maybe still, there were not heresies in the Roman community at the time.

In writing to the Roman Christians, Ignatius greets them with the most laudatory greetings of all his letters. Ignatius agrees with *1Clem.* In considering the Roman Christians as a true church,

¹⁹⁴ The *Aggadah* or *Haggadah* were Jewish narratives and commentaries, related or not to the Scriptures. *Haggadah* was told for the purpose of providing guidance, education, strengthening of faith or to incite courage on its listeners or readers. The *Haggadah* emerged in Palestinian Judaism by the time of the Second Temple and was developed until the end of the Talmudic period. Weisberg, Baskin, Barkhos, Wald, Hirschberg & Gutman *In* Berenbaum & Skolnik, 2007, p. 455.

¹⁹⁵ Lampe, 2003, p. 76.

notwithstanding not having apostolic foundation and being split in synagogues. For Ignatius, Rome is a church "prominent in Love"¹⁹⁶ never jealous, and who taught others.¹⁹⁷ Rome also has benefited from the teachings of Peter and Paul.¹⁹⁸ Contrary to his other letters, Ignatius did not make reference to a single bishop in Rome. Probably was still in force the episcopos - presbyters and deacons structure.¹⁹⁹

In his letter to the Roman Christians, Ignatius of Antioch begs repeatedly his recipients to not interfere with his destiny and not impede his execution. Ignatius would not have returned repeatedly to this point if he was not convinced of the real possibility of a successful intervention of Christians in his favor.²⁰⁰ Obviously, Ignatius assumes that at least some Christians would enjoy "connections", and that through these connections, could free him of martyrdom as they address the right people using "cajolery". Ignatius does not say specifically who would be the Christians with political connections. Perhaps he had in mind the imperial freedman Claudius Ephebus, the bearer of *IClem.* to Corinth. Anyway, Ignatius testifies of social stratification in the Roman Church of his time. Pliny says the same thing for the same period in Asia Minor.²⁰¹

Only at the end of second century we have the clear witness of a Christian with political connections: the Roman presbyter Jacinth, Imperial slave or freedman. Prompted by Bishop Victor, Jacinth interceded with Marcia, concubine of Commodus. She, in turn, succeeded the liberation of Christians who rendered forced labor in the mines of Sardinia.²⁰²

¹⁹⁶ *To the Romans* 2,2; 3,2.

¹⁹⁷ *To the Romans* 3,1.

¹⁹⁸ *To the Romans* 4,3.

¹⁹⁹ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 242.

²⁰⁰ Lampe, 2003, p. 88.

²⁰¹ Wilken, 2007, p. 51.

²⁰² Hippolytus, Ref. 9,12; Lampe, 2003, p. 89.

The Shepherd of Hermas

The work known as *The Shepherd of Hermas* has a complex textual history. There is no known complete manuscript, perhaps because its Christology was later suspected of Arianism. Meanwhile, the book enjoyed great prestige and dissemination in the Christian world of then. Irenaeus²⁰³ treated it as Scripture. Origen²⁰⁴ believed the work was divinely inspired. Eusebius²⁰⁵, by his turn indicates that *Hermas*, while rejected by some churches, was publicly read in others.

The book is usually divided chronologically into two parts: *Visions* 1-4 (where Clement is mentioned) principles that were written in the second century. *Similitudes* 9 may also be of this period. The second part covers the rest of the work, written around 135-145.

All scholars agree that Hermas was deeply influenced by Jewish traditions, even not mentioning the Jews and their customs, nor quoting the Old Testament. Some claim that he was a Jew converted to the Christian faith, others who belonged to a Jewish community of Rome. Audet²⁰⁶ came to think of a possible Essene influence because of similarities with the Manual of Discipline (1QS) from Qumran. Brown²⁰⁷ believes that the author of Hermas may have been ethnically a Gentile, but representative of the Jewish – Christian heritage faithful to Jerusalem and the Jewish tradition. There is no difficulty in finding the *locus* of *Hermas* within Roman Christianity. As *IClem.*, *Hermas* showed Roman tendencies by modifying the rejection of *Hebrews* to the Leviticus priesthood and worship. *Hermas* also proclaims a vision of God as the basis for the doctrine that modifies the position of *Hebrews* 6,4-6 declaring the forgiveness impossible after the "illumination". From *IClement* and *Hermas*, we conclude that the Roman Church was not sympathetic to extremist positions.

²⁰³ *Adv. Haer.* 4,20,2.

²⁰⁴ *InRom.* 16,14 (10,31).

²⁰⁵ *H.E.* 3,3,6.

²⁰⁶ Audet, 1953, p. 41 – 42.

²⁰⁷ Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 244 - 245.

From the socio - economic standpoint, *The Shepherd of Hermas* reveals many needy in the Roman Church: widows, orphans, persons destitute of goods, persons suffering needs and those who starved.²⁰⁸ *Hermas* also know many wealthy people in the community: people with good financial resources and properties.²⁰⁹ Some of these wealthy Christians owned lands, houses, apartments and expensive furniture.²¹⁰ ' ' is strongly emphasized in *Sim. 1. Hermas* always lists land properties before other real estate, mentioning them seven times in all, while the others are mentioned only once or twice.

Interestingly, some Christians became rich after their conversion to Christianity.²¹¹ According to *Hermas*, the rich became contaminated with deception²¹² and greed.²¹³ Their Christianity becomes superficial.²¹⁴

The rich had a "deficiency of piety," the poor must pray for them.²¹⁵ Some of these rich Christians "make their body sick by eating too much".²¹⁶ There are delicacies on their tables, they revel in luxury. They share the splendor and extravagance of the Pagans. This situation leads them to share Pagan environments and cultivate close contacts with the Heathen.²¹⁷ Becoming estimated by the world and showing a great pride for that²¹⁸, their ties with the Christian community are loosened. Such rich had not turned their backs to God, but they did it to the works of faith.²¹⁹ Some of them, however, fall

²⁰⁸ *Vis.* 3,9,2-6; *Mand.* 2,4 to 6; *Sim.* 1,8 – 11; 2.10.4.2-4 etc.

²⁰⁹ *Sim.* 1-2, 9,20 *Mand.* 10,4; *Vis.* 1,1,8; 3,6,5; 9,6.

²¹⁰ *Sim.* 1.

²¹¹ *Sim.* 8,9,1.

²¹² *Sim.* 1,11 cf. *Mand.* 3,3.

²¹³ *Sim.* 1,11; 6,5,5; *Vis.* 3,9,2.

²¹⁴ *Sim.* 2,5; 4,9,5; 9, 30, 34; *Mand.* 10, 4s.; *Sim.* 6 cf. Tertullian - *Adv. Marc.* 4,33: *Dominatorem totius saeculi nummum scimus omnes.*

²¹⁵ *Sim.* 2,5 - 8.

²¹⁶ *Vis.* 3,9,3.

²¹⁷ *Mand.* 10,4.

²¹⁸ *Sim.* 8,9,1 cf. *Vis.* 1,1,8; 3,9,6.

²¹⁹ *Sim.* 8,9,1.

away, and moved by κενοδοξία, moved fully to the Pagan field²²⁰. The rich are always in danger of apostasy, every time Christianity suffers persecution.²²¹ *Similitude* 10,4,2-4 tries to make the rich to take responsibility for the poor. And not just for the poor Christians, but for all the poor who should be helped in their need: “[...] I say moreover that every man ought to be rescued from misfortune; for he that hath need, and suffereth misfortune in his daily life, is in great torment and want.” (“*Dico autem, omnem hominem de incommodis eripi oportere. Et is enim, qui eget et in cotidiana vita patitur incommoda, in magno tormento est ac necessitate.*”).

Lampe²²² proposes to interpret *Hermas*' call to repentance as a way to reintegrate the secularized rich in order to make them take responsibility for the poor, once again. At the time of *Hermas*, the Roman Church faced a conflict about the post - baptismal penitence. In Rome prevailed the “laxist” position, according to which, it was always possible to repent of sins committed after baptism. However, some teachers, a minority among the Roman Christians, argued that, as the life of the Christian must be holy, it was not possible a second penance.²²³

Hermas recognizes that engaging in business makes impracticable the commandment to be true.²²⁴ Wealthy Christians remained outside or on the fringes of the community, both due to rigorists, and also due to the laxists. The first, actually hindered their reintegration. The second did not provide any real stimulus for a behavioral change. Lampe believes that only by connecting the two emphases of *Hermas*' work it is possible to clarify the socio-historic environment of the book. *Hermas* proposes an intermediate position between laxism and rigorism: a unique opportunity for post – baptismal repentance. He radicalized the laxist position by admitting only one chance, and yet, within certain time limits, which implies urgency in converting. At the same time, it liberalizes the rigorist position by

²²⁰ *Sim.* 8,9,3.

²²¹ *Vis.* 3,6,5; *Sim.* 8,8,2.

²²² *Vis.* 3,6,5; *Sim.* 8,8,2.

²²³ *Mand.* 4,3,1 s.

²²⁴ *Mand.* 3,1,5.

admitting that repentance after baptism is possible.²²⁵ However, he preaches that possibility only for those who have already been baptized and sinned, not for those who are to be baptized yet, in order to not allow them to use this chance as an excuse to sin.²²⁶

Hermas proposes that the rich, at doing penance, must give up almost all its businesses, except one, in order, on the one hand, not to engage too much with the world, on the other hand, does not stop the entry of financial resources, so that the poor could continue to be maintained.^{227 228}

We do not know what the practical result of Hermas' initiative was. What is known is that he tried to reduce the social inequality between the rich and the poor. The first would descend a few rungs of the social ladder by donating their fortunes and renouncing most of their business. The latter would rise slightly, because the Christian community would take responsibility for them. What Hermas intended was the integration of different social strata. This was already done, but on a limited scale, as shown by *Rom. 12* and *1Clement*.

The οἶκος was the environment in which both Christians and Pagans from different social strata approached each other, at the point to arise emotional ties between masters and slaves. It is no surprise that the Christian community called itself the "house of God"²²⁹

²²⁵ *Vis.* 2,2,4-5; *Mand.* 4.18 and 4,3,2.

²²⁶ *Mand.* 4,3,3.

²²⁷ *Sim.* 4,5 - 8.

²²⁸ Lampe, 2003, p.95 - 97.

²²⁹ *1 Tim.* 3,15; *Heb.* 3,6, *Tt.* 1,7, *Eph.* 2,19; *1Cor.* 4,1.

The Second Epistle of Peter

The Second Epistle of Peter, usually dated around the middle or the second half of the second century, presents characteristics of a farewell speech from the apostle Peter, very similar to the pseudo-Paul of *2Tim.* 3-4. Its style and its thoughts clearly shows its Hellenistic origins. There are no internal indications of a local of composition, but the reference to a previous letter (probably *1Peter*) makes one think of Rome, from where *1Pet.* came, or Asia Minor, its destination.

For the author of the epistle, Peter is the supreme authority, whose tradition, however, needs to be defended, because its being contrasted with false prophecies and false teachers.²³⁰ The Pauline epistles are treated as Scriptures²³¹ that has been distorted. Nevertheless, *2Pet.* Does not rest on *1Pet.* nor on Paul, but copies its arguments from the epistle of *Jude* "brother of James" (*Jd.*1). As a very likely historical context of *2Peter* in the middle of the second century, we have the impact of the novel known as *Pseudo - Clementines*, which vindicated James as their leader, respected Peter but hated Paul. Also in this same period was active Marcion, who considered Paul the Apostle par excellence and totally rejected the Jewish heritage of Christianity.

There is the probability that *2Peter* comes from Rome. The Roman Church could be using the figure of Peter (accepted by Paul and the followers of James), as a symbol of the Christian center, against the Marcionites and the Jewish - Christians behind the *Pseudo-Clementines*, who used James and Paul as opposing symbols for their claim to represent the true Christian theology.²³²

²³⁰ *2 Pet.*1,16 – 2,3.

²³¹ 3,16 - 17.

²³² Brown & Meier, 1987, p. 250 - 251; Vielhauer, 2005, p. 625 – 627.

The Works of Justin Martyr

The writings of Justin clearly demonstrate the existence of social stratification among Christians of the period: according to *ApologiaI* 60,11, there was illiterates among Christians (των ουδε τους χαρακτηρας των στοιχειων επισταμεν), simple people and not refined language (ιδιωτων και βαρβαρων το φθεγα [...]),crippled, blind and needy persons.²³³ To sustain the needy, as well the foreign Christians passing by Rome, there was a common monetary fund. On this regard, *ApollI* 13,1 speaks about a "president" (προεστως) in charge of this fund. This same person also headed the liturgy. According to *ApollI* 67, 6, the common fund was replenished every Sunday during worship. There were also ευρουντες who had sufficient means to help the needy.²³⁴ There were also those who before conversion loved their wealth and possessions (Χρηματων and κτηματων) foremost, but now contribute with their fortunes to take care of needy Christians.²³⁵

It seems that the monetary fund of the Roman Christians has grown significantly. About ten years before the writings of Justin, Marcion donated 200,000 sesterces to the Roman Church A few years later, Marcion was excommunicated. The "Great Church" refunded him such a sum very quickly.²³⁶ In about 170, Dionysius of Corinth²³⁷ praises the Roman Christians for their charity. In paragraph 9, Eusebius testifies about the constant aid sent by the Roman Christian community to the needy Christians of all parts of the Empire, up to the time of the persecution moved by Diocletian. In 7,5,2, Eusebius quotes a letter of Dionysius of Alexandria from mid-third century, which says that the Romans continued to send aid to Syria and Arabia. Eusebius cites no other community with such

²³³ *ApollI* 13,1; 14,2; 15,10; 67,1.

²³⁴ 67,1.6; 14,2; 15,10.

²³⁵ Lampe, 2003, p. 100.

²³⁶ Tertullian - *De praescr.* 30 cf. *Adv. Marc.* 4,4.

²³⁷ Eusebius - *HE* 4,23,10.

economic engagement not only for its own members, but also for Christians of other Mediterranean churches. Apparently, Rome had the largest budget among the Christian communities of the II century.

In 16,4, Justin mentions Christians who travel and manage business and trade, and at 17,1, he says that these same pay rights and taxes *φορους* and *εισφοραξ*. There are also Christian slave owners (*οικετοι των ημετερων*). Verse 3 mentions tortured slaves, but it's not possible to determine if such individuals were Christians.

In his *Apology II*²³⁸, Justin testifies the existence of an intellectual elite: "philosophers" and "scholars" in contrast to the uneducated. The passage illustrates social stratification: alongside *φιλοσοφοι* and *φιλολογοι* there are craftsmen (*χειροτεκνοι*) and people totally common (*παντελως ιδιωται*). *Dialogue with Trypho* 139,5 and 140,1, tells us about the existence of slaves and freemen in the Christian community.²³⁹

The social mixture corresponds to an ethnic mixture. *IApol.* 15,6 states that many elders of the community belong to "all kinds of men" (*γενοσ ανθρωπων*); in Justin, *γενοσ* means more "race" or "tribe" than a social stratum. In 14,3, Justin emphasizes that men from the most diverse backgrounds would not share the same table if they were not Christians. Roman Christians are not *ομοφιλοι* (14,3) but *απο παντος εθνους ανθρωπων* (53,3). The same at 31,7; 32,4; 39,3;42,4; cf. *Dial.* 117,5; 121,3; 139,5. Of course, Justin emphasizes the ethnic diversity, thinking not only of the Roman Christianity, but also assuming the missionary success everywhere. This does not exclude, however, the possibility of informations about the Roman Christians in these pages. For example: Justin wrote his *Dialogue* after spending years based in Rome, *id est*, he reports cases of Christians who are before him. It is

²³⁸ 10,8.

²³⁹ Lampe, 2003, p. 101 – 102.

reasonable to assume that general statements about Christianity were also made in the Roman Christian environment.²⁴⁰

Besides the ethnic multiplicity, there were also a multitude of religious backgrounds: former members of the mysteries of Dionysus, Apollo, Asclepius, Persephone, Aphrodite etc; former practitioners of magic²⁴¹, and many Christians who have been from his youth *ἐκ παιδῶν*²⁴²; an "innumerable" *ἀναριθμητῶν πλῆθος* came out of Paganism and came to Christianity.²⁴³ Finally, there were also those who were nominal Christians, without a corresponding conduct of life (*βιουοντες* cf. *1Apol.* 16, 8.14), a considerable number of urban Roman Christians.²⁴⁴

Some ways by which the Pagans were attracted to Christianity were: moral example of Christian merchants and conversations with their Christian neighbors.²⁴⁵ Unlike the Jews who tended to isolate themselves, creating relatively closed communities²⁴⁶, Christians lived in the same buildings with Pagans. This fact facilitated their proselytizing efforts. One Christian strategy was to try to bring their pagan neighbors back "to their senses" (*σωφρονιζειν*). If this, by one hand facilitated the missionary work, by the other hand, Christians exposed themselves to the risk of being reported to public authorities.²⁴⁷

Jews were also active in proselytizing. *Dialogue* 47,4 mentions Pagans who had become Christians, but later denied that Jesus was the Messiah promised to Israel and started to practice the Mosaic Law.²⁴⁸ There are also some evidences of the spread in Jewish circles of the distinctly Christian

²⁴⁰ Lampe, 2003, p. 102.

²⁴¹ *ApolI* 14,2.

²⁴² cf. *ApolI* 15,6.

²⁴³ *ApolI* 15,7; 16, 4.

²⁴⁴ Lampe, 2003, p. 102.

²⁴⁵ *ApolI*, 16,4; *ApolIII* 1,2.

²⁴⁶ cf. *ApolIII* 1,1.

²⁴⁷ *ApolIII* 1,2.

²⁴⁸ cf. Eusebius, *HE* 6,12.

name *Petrus*. This phenomenon can only be adequately explained by assuming that there were conversions of individuals from Christianity to Judaism²⁴⁹. Still on the subject of how Christians obtained their converts, we have the testimony of Celsus²⁵⁰, who tells us of Christian slaves who tried to evangelize the women and children of the families they served.²⁵¹

The Internal Organization of the Roman Church from its Formation to Mid Second Century

It is not possible to determine with exactitude the organization of the churches of Rome. Nevertheless, Pauline literature allow us to have some clues on how the Roman Church probably worked. In Rom. 12,4-5, Paul urges his readers to form a single body among themselves. However, there is recognition by the Apostle of the existence of a wide variety of ministries.²⁵² These ministries are mentioned in a generic form: prophecy, *diakonia*, teaching, exhortation, sharing of goods, presidency, works of mercy. In other Pauline letters it is found another ministerial reality:

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.”²⁵³

“ ἐ ἐ μά ί ί , ò è ú ò ũμ · ì ἐ ὦ ί , ì ó ú ò
 ú · ì ἐ ἐ μά ί ί , ò è ú ò ò ó ἐ ὦ à á ἐ ã .έ ά φ ἐ
 ί ἡ ἐ ũ úμ ò ò μ ἐ .ῶ μ ἐ à à ũ úμ ί ó
 ί , ᾗ φ ἐ ó ὦ à ò ú ò ũμ ,έ έ φ ί ἐ ῶ ú ῶ úμ , ᾗ φ ἐ
 ί μ ί μά ἐ ῶ ἐ ì úμ , ᾗ φ ἐ έ ἡμ άμ , ᾗ φ [ἐ] ί , ᾗ φ
 [ἐ] ί μά ,έ έ φ ἐ ὦ , ᾗ φ ἐ έ μ ί ὦ · ά ἐ ũ ἐ ἴ
 ò è ì ò ú ò ũμ ũ ί ί ά έ ά φ ὦ ú .”

²⁴⁹ Lampe, 1978, p. 229.

²⁵⁰ Origen, *Contra Celsus* 3,55.

²⁵¹ Lampe, 2003, p. 103.

²⁵² 12,6 - 8.

²⁵³ *1Cor.* 12,4 - 11.

And also a different treatment about the ministries here: “The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, [...]” (“ ἵ ὕ ὀ ἔ ὕ μὲ ἄ ὁ , ὕ ἔ ἦ , ὕ ἔ ὕ ἄ , ὕ ἔ μὲ ἰ ἄ , [...]”).²⁵⁴ Although Paul has quoted the ecclesiastical ministries generically, we can deduce something about the "presidency" from the comparison with analogous functions in other associations of time. The same can be said for the "functions of government" (ἦ) of *1Cor.12*, 28.

In Romans 12, 8, Paul speaks about “the one who presides” (ὁ ἄμ). Despite being mentioned in the singular, it is not the case of thinking about this figure as the only president of the entire Roman Christian Church. From *ITess. 5,12*, we should think in an analogous situation to the Jewish Γερουσιαρχης: one for each synagogue.²⁵⁵ There were proposed two ways to interpret this "president ":

1 - A kind of patronage exercised by a wealthy member in favor of the underprivileged. To support this proposal, it is commonly stated that the President is mentioned by Paul between two generic functions of social assistance: “[...] the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.” (“[...] ὁ μ ὕ ἔ ἄ ὁ , ὁ ἄμ ἔ ἦ, ὁ ἔ ὦ ἔ ἰ ὁ .”).²⁵⁶

2) Other scholars , including Romano Penna²⁵⁷ , emphasize the futility of the mention to the president if the latter is confused with the other two . Moreover, considering the parallel with other

²⁵⁴ *Eph. 4,11*.

²⁵⁵ Penna, 2011, p. 97.

²⁵⁶ *Rom. 12,8*.

²⁵⁷ 2011 , p . 98.

recurrences²⁵⁸, it is easy to conclude that the president was a specific leadership role in Christian communities. As for its placement between those responsible for social action, it is reasonable to think that Paul was just emphasizing that whoever holds the office of presiding, might also be solicit in doing charity.

Nevertheless, we do not know exactly what constituted this presidency, or what were the social, moral or ritual requirements for the investiture, nor the duration of its exercise. Since we have no other notices of other functions of government in the Church of Rome, it is not possible to identify in a direct and simple way the Christian *ἄμ* with Jewish *γεροῦρσιν*. That's because the Christian communities were much less numerous than the Jewish ones. The *ἄμ* could accumulate several duties: preaching, beneficence, deliberative and disciplinary measures; and is very likely that he also headed the Eucharistic celebration. In support of this hypothesis we can raise two evidences: first, the fact that Christians met in private homes. The responsible for the meeting certainly that would be the head of the family hostess. In this respect we have a parallel with the pagan cults of Antiquity. For example, the case of the group in Philadelphia, Lidia, who met at the house of a certain Dionysius. This householder subjected the members of his group to very strict moral rules. Nevertheless, certain cultic associations had the figure of a *quinquennalis*, ie, a president with a term of five years.²⁵⁹

The second evidence is the absence in the authentic Pauline letters of the figure of *ἐπίσκοπος*. Only in *Fil.1,2* we have *ἐπίσκοποι* (plural) in reference to this specific church. The triad *episkopos* - presbyters- deacons arises only in the deuteropaulines Pastorals. Everything suggests that the *ἄμ* was an elder, a real old man.

²⁵⁸ *1Thess.* 5,12 ; *1Tim.* 5,17 (presidents in the church) ; 3,4; 5,12 (president in households).

²⁵⁹ Penna, 2011, p. 98.

In the seven charisms of Rom. 12,6 - 8 there is nothing that makes one think on ceremonial or ritual roles. The charisms are divided into a scheme of 2+5. The first two are stated in an abstract form: "prophecy" and "diakonia". The former one refers to a function connected with an influence of the Spirit, which certainly has to do with Scripture and its interpretation. The second charism calls itself to a number of community services, which are detailed in a personal, not abstract way. The other five are noun participles: "the one who teaches" (ὁ διδάσκων) is the closest to the prophecy, "He who exhorts" (ὁ παρακαλῶν), can be interpreted as a specification of the prophecy, in the service of others, "the one who shares" (ὁ κοινῶν), certainly indicates wealthy people who share their possessions with others, "he who makes works of mercy" (ὁ ἐπιτιμῶν) is a further specification of "the one who shares" in a reference to alms.

In *1 Cor.* 16,15, Paul mentions the house of Stephanas, the first fruits of Achaia, and stresses that this family put itself into the service for the saints (ὁ οἶκος τοῦ ἁγίου). The noun in the singular, "house" goes to the plural verb, thus indicating the whole family. Paul calls the Corinthians to submit (ὁμολογεῖτε) to them and to those who labor and collaborate as they do (1Cor. 16,15-16). Romans, on the other hand, did not mention any individual responsible for the whole church, implying that each householder should be the responsible for the assembly that met in his home. About 150 years later, Tertullian would describe the functioning of the Roman Church in his *Apologeticum* 39. According to Tertullian, the Roman Church was presided by elders (*seniores*), showing that little changed in the meanwhile.²⁶⁰

From the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, which is now considered by most scholars as sent to Rome, we can withdraw some evidence about the internal hierarchy of the Roman Christian communities. *Hebrews'* author invites Roman Christians to consider the final success of their leaders (ὁ ἄρχιεπίσκοπος)

²⁶⁰ Penna, 2011, p. 99 – 101.

and imitate their faith. The plural suggests that the Roman Church still knew not a single “monarchic” leadership. The Epistle is the only New Testament writ which claims for the abrogation of the old Jewish covenant.²⁶¹ That can reasonable explain why it was not enthusiastically received by the Roman Church. Otherwise *Hebrews* would figure at the *Muratorii Canon* and wouldn’t be neglected up to IV century.

1Clement knew *Hebrews*, but diverges from it by presenting a positive evaluation of the Leviticus worship, what is contrary to *Hebrews* interpretation of it. This is explainable by the strong Jewish heritage of Roman Christian faith, as we already seen. Entering II century, there were little developments about the internal organization of Roman Christian communities. *The Shepherd of Hermas*, written c.140 still mentions the “chiefs of the church”²⁶², indicating a conciliar government with the possible presence of a presiding *episkopos*.²⁶³

Christian Heterodox movements and the formation of Catholic Orthodoxy

ī : from the Hellenistic “choice” to the Christian “heresy”

We do not accept the thesis of Walter Bauer who claims that Christian orthodoxy is the result of the imposition of the Roman interpretation over other churches, by the following reasons: According to Simonetti²⁶⁴, the distinction between orthodoxy and heresy assumes the existence of two elements: 1 - the awareness that some doctrines elaborated in the Church could be accepted, while others should be rejected and condemned; 2 - the existence of a body of doctrines which, although it certainly was far from complete, yet sufficiently broad and articulated, accepted and brought to fruition by the entire Great Church. The existence of the conscience that distinguishes between a doctrine considered true

²⁶¹ 7,18; 8,7.13.

²⁶² apostles, *episkopos*, masters, deacons cf. *Vis.* 2,2,6; 3,5,1.

²⁶³ Penna, 2011, p. 101 - 102.

²⁶⁴ 1994, p. 12 - 13.

from one regarded as false in the beginnings of the Roman Church can be proved from the evidence present in the New Testament and early Patristic literature.

The term "heresy" is derived from the Greek ἑρέσις, which means "choice," and, by extension, "division". In the Hellenistic context it possessed a neutral meaning, being used to designate the preference for a particular philosophical school. In the Jewish context, ἑρέσις was used to designate the various factions of the I century Palestinian Judaism.²⁶⁵ However, the Christian use of the word assumed a negative valence, even in its most primitive appearances: *Gal.* 5,20 brings ἑρέσις as part of a list of vices characterized as "works of the flesh." The deuteropauline *Epistle to Titus* mentions heretics as men who must be warned. If they refuse correction, they should be avoided. A very important step for the characterization of different Christian groups as "heretics", in the later Christian meaning of this word, was given by Ignatius of Antioch, in describing as ἑρέσις the doctrinal errors he found within Gentile Christian communities. However, this term still had the diversity of meanings (party, option, false doctrine) that characterized its use in the Hellenistic world. It was Justin who first used the word ἑρέσις as indicative of a system of representation in order to condemn and exclude individual or anomic groups. This happened when writing down his *Syntagma Against all Heresies*, around 150; previously, therefore, his surviving works. The Great Church, faced in the second century competition from Marcionism, Jewish - Christianity and Gnosticism.²⁶⁶ Basically, the most important questions that challenged Christian communities were: the observance or not of the Law, and the plurality of interpretations about Christ's nature.²⁶⁷

As we have argued, after the conflict in Antioch about the ritual separation between Jews and Gentiles, Paul, engaged in advocating a more conciliatory position between the two parties. *Pro bono*

²⁶⁵ cf. *Ac.* 5,17 (Sadducees), 15,5 (Pharisees).

²⁶⁶ Le Boulluec, 2000, p. 261.

²⁶⁷ *Eph.* 6,2; *Trall.* 6,1 cf. *2Pet.* 2,1 - Simonetti, 1994, p. 13 - 14.

pacis, Paul began to tolerate the diffusion of their different interpretations. After all, these were based on considerable authorities, like Peter's.²⁶⁸ On moral issues, however, Paul was more intolerant. The emblematic case is the famous incident of incestuous community of Corinth.²⁶⁹ The tolerance is also explicit in the environment of Antioch, from which Mat. 5,19 seems to be a reversal of 1Cor. 3,15.²⁷⁰ However, the Pastorals present a change in attitude with regard to theological divergence. A clear distinction between true and false teaching emerges. The preachers of false doctrines are characterized as being of demonic origin²⁷¹, and are attacked with a violent language never used by Paul against his opponents.²⁷²

This changing attitude also becomes evident in the use of excommunication against those who preach doctrines considered wrong.²⁷³ In the authentic letters, the extreme remedy appears only in cases of serious violation of Hebrew morals. The heresy fought by the Pastorals does not seem to be Christological. The Epistle's little evidence seem to be linked to the Jewish observance ("Jewish fables and genealogies") and elements of an incipient Encratism and Gnosticism.²⁷⁴

Following this same path, the letters of Ignatius, as well as those of John, fight against Docetism. Unlike the later, the former include Jewish observances in the polemic. Ignatius continually exhorts his readers to believe in the reality of the incarnation, passion and resurrection of Christ and to refrain from Judaizing.²⁷⁵ Ignatius qualifies the opinions of his opponents as "heterodox" and "heterodoxy".²⁷⁶ The Christian use of "orthodox" and "orthodoxy" is a later custom. However, the

²⁶⁸ Simonetti, 1994, p. 16 - 17.

²⁶⁹ cf. *1Cor.* 5,1 ff.; *2Cor.* 2,5 ff.

²⁷⁰ Simonetti, 1994, p. 18 - 19.

²⁷¹ *1Tim.* 4,1.

²⁷² *1Tim.* 1,19; 6,4; 6,21; *2Tim.* 2,18; 3,2 ff.

²⁷³ *Tit.* 3,10; *1Tim.* 1,20.

²⁷⁴ Simonetti, 1994, p. 18 - 20.

²⁷⁵ *Smyrn.* 1-3; *Magn.* 8-10; *InEph.* 7,1; 16,2; *Philad.* 6,1.

²⁷⁶ *Smirn.* 6,2; *Magn.* 8,1.

concept of orthodoxy was previously expressed by several other terms such as: straight faith, piety, doctrine etc.

As a natural consequence of the "choice" involved in the concept of heresy, there is an initial separation, which can lead to the process of creation of schismatic communities living in the same locality. *Smyrnenses* 7,1 indicates that heretics abstained from the Eucharistic celebration with the rest of the community. It is worthy to remember that Eucharist is the key moment of aggregation in the practice of Christian life.

Already in Ignatius' time, ecclesiastical authorities set in motion a process of doctrinal uniformity in order to safeguard the unity of the Church, even at the expense of the loss of a significant number of faithful. The speed with which this consciousness arose is due to the fact of Christianity was born in an hostile environment. This enabled the Christians to live in a climate of struggles and dangers. Therefore, it has become impossible for the Christians to tolerate in their own midst the coexistence of differing opinions (like Greek philosophical schools), or various theological streams as rabbinical schools in Judaism. Even more if the bickering was caused by issues experienced as *articuli stantis aut cadentis ecclesiae*. The semantic change of the word ἰέναι, from the neutral sense of common Greek to the negative meaning in Christian Greek emblematically summarizes the intolerance of what we now call ideological pluralism.

Also according to Simonetti²⁷⁷, for a concrete discourse about orthodoxy, it is not necessary only just a communitarian conscience on the incompatibility between true and false doctrines, expelling from its midst the proponents of a doctrine considered false. It is also necessary that the true doctrine shows a remarkable breadth of content and consistency, being accepted by all communities belonging to the Great Church. This is the issue that had a long road ahead itself in the beginnings of II century;

²⁷⁷ 1994, p. 23 – 25.

and one more time, the conservative Jewish – Gentile Christianity practiced at Rome show us the inadequacy of Bauer’s hypothesis on orthodoxy as the imposition of Roman theology.

The Christology espoused by Roman writers such as Clement and Hermas present a strong Jewish emphasis. Clement qualifies Jesus as *υἱ* of God. This is a more generic term than *υἱ*, which is used by Hermas to emphasize Christ’s preexistence.²⁷⁸

Hermas also presents Christ in an angelic dimension and distinguishes carefully between the Son of God and the man Jesus. The Jewish elements are the emphasis on the oneness of God, and a disinterest in the pre-existence of Christ (1Clem.) Even when the pre-existence is assumed (Hermas), this is done in a confused way, but so as not to jeopardize the unity of God. In this context, the absence of any mention of the Logos Christology is quite symptomatic. In the case of Clement such absence is chronologically explicable. In the case of Hermas it seems intentional, given the numerous disparate influences he could not harmonize.²⁷⁹

Ignatius, in contrast, works strongly on the Pauline and Johannine high Christology, out of any Jewish conditioning, which he considered heretical. According to Ignatius, Christ is divine and human²⁸⁰ and is also God (*ὁ* in *Smyrn.* 1,1) and not just as in John.²⁸¹

²⁷⁸ *1Clem.* 22,1 x *Sim.* 9,12,2 - 3.

²⁷⁹ Simonetti, 1994, p. 25 - 26.

²⁸⁰ *InEph.* 7,2.

²⁸¹ Simonetti, 1994, p. 26 – 27.

Gnosticism: a historical survey of its origins and its importance to Catholic Orthodoxy

Following the path that leads to the construction of Catholic Orthodoxy, a theme of fundamental importance is Gnosis. In order to reach a correct understanding of the importance the struggle against Gnosticism had for the construction of Christian Orthodoxy and to give a better background for Justin's Dialogue with Trypho, we will summarize the appreciation of some important researchers of the theme: R. Bultmann: " The Gnostic movement represents for Christian mission its most serious and more dangerous competitor, and this because of the deep affinity between the two phenomena."²⁸²; G. Kretschmar: "One of the most important assumptions (...) for a historical understanding of the New Testament and the early Church."²⁸³; P. Pokorný: "Gnosis is one of the most significant movements of Antiquity . It tried to act in time a syncretistic late- Antique religious synthesis at the highest level and with its intricate mythical speculations put the ancient religion to an end. One cannot really understand the successive European spiritual history without confrontation with Gnosticism. "²⁸⁴; W. C. Van Unnik considered in a more prudent way the shock between the announcement of the cross with the spiritual streams of the time, and especially the Christian struggle against Gnosticism, recognizing that in many cases this fight had a clarifying effect and created forms and formulations which were essential for the succeeding times²⁸⁵.

It is difficult to define what the gnosis is. It absorbed in the course of its evolution, the most disparate elements, Jewish and Christian philosophy, magic, Pagan religions, poetry, astrology and medicine. We will adopt the definition proposed by H.M. Schenke "Gnosis is a late antique redemption movement in which becomes possible a negative interpretation of the world and of existence, with peculiar and unmistakable characteristics, that crystallized into a coherent conception of rejection of the

²⁸² 1984, p. 168.

²⁸³ 1953, p. 426.

²⁸⁴ 1967, p. 749.

²⁸⁵ 1961, p. 477.

world, which in turn finds characteristic expression in its own terms, in figurative language and artful myths²⁸⁶.

The starting point to understand the Gnosis is a comparison between the Biblical view about the world and the human being, its counterpart in the Hellenistic culture of the time and the new understanding proposed by the Gnosis. In few words we can say that the Jewish culture retained the world as a good creation of God. Greek philosophy, despite being divided in several schools of thought, had a common ground in considering the world as a cosmos governed by a fixed order. Stoicism, in particular, taught its adherents that through solidarity and sympathy individuals are included in the communion of mankind. On the contrary, for Gnosis, the world is a threatening place to the spiritual man. He feels unable to fully accomplish himself, since the human condition, his own will and pulsing seem strange and hostile to him.

For the Gnostic, his true homeland is the bright divine realm from where he comes. By an evil fate, he was exiled in the world of darkness. He does not know what is his homeland and therefore needs to be awakened to this knowledge. Demonic powers seek to prevent it from happening in order to keep the man in the lower sphere of darkness. Redemption, or liberation occurs through *gnosis*, a special knowledge that explains the individual which is his true self and how to return to the divine realm of light. But this redemption is only reserved to those who have within them the spark of divine light.

It is relevant to Gnosis the concept of consubstantiality: pneumatic men possess divine nature. Redemption means the restoration of the divine life that was lost. That is not the case for psychic and hylic men, *i.e.*, the two other categories of human beings according to Gnosis. These have not divine nature and therefore, cannot be liberated from darkness. In every day life, men who have attained

²⁸⁶1967 p. 374.

liberation often acquired a feeling of great freedom and superiority over others, which could lead to moral liberalism.

The split of the self of man is closely related to the split of the image of God. The world in which the Gnostic dwells is not the work of a good God. The cosmos is a poorly planned creation, made by an ignorant demiurge, which is associated to the Jewish God.

The individual self is embedded in the history of the cosmos. It is only a part, a spark of light that was trapped in the entire world of darkness. The redemption of the individual is placed in the broader context of a cosmic eschatology. If all the sparks of light are aroused then the world would precipitate the world into chaos, as it were in principle.²⁸⁷

In the developed myth, the totality of light is related to an anthropomorphic figure of light. Sometimes this figure is presented as the *Anthropos*, the primordial man. This personage, won by powers is exiled to the dark world. A redeemer sent by the good God, descends to the world in order to bring the salvific gnosis to pneumatic men. The Redeemer does not descend in his divine form, but he disguises himself for avoiding being recognized by the malignant powers. He assumes a resemblance of a human body. Upon returning to the divine sphere carrying with him all the scattered sparks, the world would disintegrate and the primordial man is reinstated and becomes *salvator salvatus*. In general it is considered that the idea of *Anthropos* must have been derived from Genesis 1,26 s., Where it says God created man in his image. This creation is distinguished from the one from dust of the earth²⁸⁸, as this is linked to death. Here is the Demiurge who would be operating.²⁸⁹ Gnostic texts that

²⁸⁷ Gnllka, 2000, p. 417 - 718.

²⁸⁸ *Gen. 2,7.*

²⁸⁹ Gnllka, 2000, p. 418 - 419.

illustrate and clarify the conceptual framework: *The Chant of Pearl*²⁹⁰; *Evangelium Veritatis* (codice Jung)²⁹¹; *Hymn of Naasens*.²⁹²

There is a great disagreement about the origins of Gnosis. German scholars considered it a pre-Christian or Para-Christian movement. Anyway, Gnosis was seen in an osmotic relation with early Christianity and its incipient theology. It has been held that the Gnostic myth influenced Christian theology. Others argue that Christian theology is a reaction to the Gnostic influence. Particularly interesting for this issue are Pauline and Johannine writings. It is worthy to note that the controversy in the New Testament is not directed against something that is introduced from the outside, but against something that forms itself within the Christian community. This does not mean, however, that Gnosis originated in Christianity, but that upon contact with Christianity it firmed its particular characteristics. The Gnostic movement was not homogeneous and Catholic orthodoxy was not yet completely defined. However, the confrontation between these two systems led the Great Church to delimit and clarify its teachings.²⁹³

A primitive definition seems to have been put in *1Tim.* 6,20s. Some scholars holds that those in Corinth who denied the resurrection²⁹⁴ would have been Gnostics. P. Pokorný²⁹⁵ states that the antignostic fight was done on several levels:

1) Emphasized the sovereignty of God, the scope of Christ's work and outlined the ethical teachings were more clearly outlined;

²⁹⁰ *Acts of Thomas* 22,2.

²⁹¹ 29,18 - 21.

²⁹² Hippolyte in *Ref.* 5,10,2.

²⁹³ Gniska, 2000, p. 420 - 421.

²⁹⁴ *1Cor.* 15,12.

²⁹⁵ 1967, p. 765.

2) Later, the Johannine literature turns against a docetic Christology of Gnostic matrix, contrasting it with the concrete embodiment of the Redeemer.²⁹⁶ In the deuteropauline letters, the Gnostics are stigmatized as heretics.

H. Schlier stresses that the Gnostic Christian is convinced that Jesus has spoken essentially covertly, and his words, as well as those of Hebrew Bible, should be interpreted allegorically. In the Gospels, Jesus would have revealed only the minimum indispensable to his disciples. The best of his teaching would have been passed in secret to a few chosen disciples. This secret teaching would have been subsequently transmitted in secret writs as the *Evangelium Veritatis* and others like it.²⁹⁷

According to many scholars, the confrontation with Gnosticism led to assimilation and acceptance, knowingly or not, of various Gnostic elements by Catholic Christianity. According to K. Rudolph²⁹⁸ especially the letters of Paul and the Catholic Epistles are mines from which to draw the oldest Christianized Gnostic traditions, to which he attributes a Jewish content. Among those he points Pauline parallel between Adam and Christ, whereby entire human groups are included in the collective persons of Adam and Christ, or even the analogous idea of the body of Christ as a concrete metaphor of the Church. It is also listed among such elements the dualism light X darkness, and the appeal to spiritual awakening as in Eph. 5,14. It is also the Johannine dualism has been interpreted over a gnostic background . In this dualism, the world is a region of darkness, lies, death. Its Lord is the "prince of this world".

It should be recalled that according to the Gnostic myth, the redeemer is a being of the image of God who comes down from heaven to gather the sparks of light to be redeemed and go back up to the kingdom of light with them. The categories of descent and ascent features several proto - Christian

²⁹⁶ cf. *I Jn.* 4,2s; *Jn.* 1,14.

²⁹⁷ Gniska, 2000, p. 421.

²⁹⁸ 1967, p. 787.

Christological hymns²⁹⁹ and also the Christology of John.³⁰⁰ Christ is the way³⁰¹, the door³⁰², he knows where he comes from and where he goes to³⁰³ and wants to communicate this knowledge to those who belong to him.³⁰⁴ His sheep are in the world as foreigners, exposed to world's hatred.³⁰⁵ Christ's redemptive function focuses on communicating to men what he heard and saw from the Father. He is then characterized as a messenger coming from the divine world. The Son sent by the Father, recognized as the revealer.³⁰⁶

In addition to this school of thought that has become classical, there is another, more moderate, that is gradually gaining ground. This school establishes a distinction between the Gnostic elements that already existed and which were later organized in a system, and the system itself, which is what was described above. With regard to the Gnostic system, it defends it was formed at the time of Christianity, assimilating also Christians elements. So, it started distinguishing between Gnosis and Gnosticism. By Gnosis is meant the existing sparse elements; by Gnosticism, the organized Gnostic system. Others oppose the Gnostic system to the Gnostic myth. Gnilka thinks' preferable to use the terms proto- Gnosis and Gnosis.

Regarding the examples discussed above, this new moderate school explains the parallel between Adam and Christ by the Jewish notion of corporate personality. According to this conception, descendants of a head strain assume its destination, and, so to speak, are incorporated into its destiny. Thus, the descendants of Adam are destined to die, while the descendants of Christ to life. With relation to the dualism X light darkness, it was found in Qumran a dualism which also has cosmic

²⁹⁹ cf. *Phil.* 2,6 - 11.

³⁰⁰ *Jn.* 3,13; 6,62; 20,17.

³⁰¹ *Jn.* 14,6.

³⁰² *Jn.* 10,7.9.

³⁰³ *Jn.* 7,14.

³⁰⁴ *Jn.* 3,8.

³⁰⁵ *Jn.* 15,18 – 21.

³⁰⁶ Gnilka, 2000, p. 422 – 423.

characteristics, comparable to that of John. Neither of them are metaphysical dualisms as the Gnosis'. The Qumran community also attached great importance to knowledge. Finally, as for Eph. 5,14, it can be said that the awakening from sleep is attested in the Old Testament as an image of remission of sins. Also the symbolism of light is very present in the Old Testament.

The Gnostic movement was born independently, but contemporary to Christianity. Its development has led to several independent systems. However, it is extremely difficult to reconstruct its development. The School of History of Religions proposed a derivation from the ancient eastern religions (R. Reitzenstein, H.H. Schaeder and W. Bousset). This thesis is today surpassed. However, it is certain that there was a strong Jewish influence, though, as K. Berger says, from a "second hand" Judaism. According to Rudolph, Schencke and Koster the cradle of Gnosticism would be Syria. Van Unnik specifically points Antioch. Pokorny proposes Egypt.

Due to the enormous difficulties in determining Gnosis' place of origin. H. Jonas considered more productive to treat it as a "fact of life" and ask what would have been the socio - political conditions that made possible the emergence of a religion of rejection of the world. According to Jonas, Gnosis would have been the response of a intellectual elite in the face of a growing existential weariness caused by an excessive satisfaction of human needs. To this would be added to the exclusion of this privileged social strata from political power. The removal of these strata from political establishment could make it more understandable the aristocratic consciousness to be the group of the elect, which Gnosis manifests so strongly.

From Christian point of view, the two main characteristic of Gnosticism are the already mentioned divisions of God and of the individual self. Catholic Christianity not hosted any of these two principles. Christianity remained faithful to God's absolute sovereignty and also rejected the idea of a redemption by nature, according to which the elect could redeem himself through knowledgej.

Christianity considered redemption linked to the unique and historical work of Jesus of Nazareth. Thus, Christianity defended both the individual human existence and the oneness of God. The defense of the real humanity of Christ in the Johannine literature is an attack on a docetic conception, which was later developed in Gnosis.³⁰⁷

The Challenge of Marcionism and the Catholic reaction

Continuing our analysis of the key elements in the formation of Catholic orthodoxy, a key figure is Marcion of Sinope. Son of a wealthy shipowner, was excommunicated for heresy by the Christian community of Rome in 144. After exclusion of Catholic Christianity, founded his own Church. His doctrine was primarily marked by the Gnostic distinction between the God of the Hebrew Scriptures, and the God father of Jesus Christ. The first was characterized as the creator of the universe and humanity. However, it was considered cruel, fickle and petty, while not necessarily bad, since it ordered precepts of justice. The second God the father of Jesus, in turn, was characterized as exclusively benign. Even having no link with humanity, was willing to redeem men from their sins through the death of His Son, Jesus. As a corollary of this belief, Marcion repudiated the entire Hebrew Bible, as well as all Christian texts considered by him as "Judaizing" i.e . those texts who somehow bound Jesus , to the God of Jewish Scriptures. The only works considered by Marcion as Scriptures were: the Gospel according to Luke and the Pauline epistles (Galatians, 1 e 2 Corinthians, 1 e 2 Thessalonians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon and Philippians), nonetheless, properly edited from all "Judaizing" content.³⁰⁸

Marcion's initiative, creating for his Church an officially approved and unified literary corpus with the same value that Catholics gave to the Hebrew Scriptures, gave great advantages to Marcionites. Catholics basically depended on several works that circulated unevenly among the various

³⁰⁷ Gnllka, 2000, p. 424 - 426.

³⁰⁸ Aland in Di Berardino, 2002, p. 881 - 882.

communities. Such works were evaluated only by their content and by the endorsement given by some important community. Thus, the Great Church felt the need to face the challenge of Marcionism with a similar Scriptural instrument and also with an adequate ecclesiastical structure.

As for the organization of his Church, the novelty of Marcion was not organizing a Christian group outside the Great Church; it had already been done; it was being able to give his group a unitary structure that would permit wide dissemination. Even before Marcion already existed schisms with the organization of separate communities: Menander in Samaria, Cerinthus in Asia, Saturninus in Antioch. Such groups also emerged because of doctrinal disagreements and were technically called "heretics" by Catholics.³⁰⁹

However, these groups' spread was strictly local (isolated communities), or at most, in a circumscribed region. The organizational capacity of Marcion and his wealth enabled him to accomplish this endeavor. From the second half of second century to the beginnings of the III, period of maximum diffusion, we have Marcionites from Edessa to Carthage and from Alexandria to Lyons. In practice, it was established a Marcionite church where there was a Great Church's community.

Very soon Marcionism appeared to the Catholic Church as a greater threat than Gnosticism itself, precisely because of its organizational and doctrinal unity. The Valentinians were also present from Edessa to Carthage and from Alexandria to the Rhone Valley, passing, obviously by Rome.

Although the Valentinians and some other Gnostic sects, like, maybe the Basilidians, had a wide diffusion, they have always been divided among themselves on a large number of conventiclers that most often must have had a little relevance. It seems that the Gnostics never tried a common organization. Even within the same doctrine was common for teachers who felt able to try to qualify themselves by founding their own school. It is also note worthy that the more Christianized Gnostics

³⁰⁹ Simonetti, 1994, p. 30 - 31.

tried their best to avoid a direct confrontation with the Catholic Church. Their self-consciousness of being the spiritual among psychic Christians led them to remain in the community.³¹⁰

The Great Church faced Marcionism, Gnosticism and Montanism by a stiffening of ecclesiastical structures, which also facilitated the acceptance of an official orthodoxy to refute heretics. The Catholic response was basically structured on three fronts:

1 - The constitution of a catholic canon of the New Testament. Structured on the four Gospels, Acts and the Pauline letters, including the Pastorals, which were rejected by Marcion. For a long time there was uncertainty and oscillations about the Catholic Letters, Hebrews and Revelation. This proto - canon, however, is only attested from the end of the second century onwards.

Unfortunately, there are no documents regarding the criteria for the selection of the writings, as well as which people and communities took part in the process. Hypothesis was acceptable so the criteria of seniority and apostolicity. As for the communities involved, the more likely hypotheses speak of Rome, Asia Minor and Alexandria. It is possible that Irenaeus has participated in this process, as a man of link between Rome and Asia Minor. The four Gospels and the Pauline literature enjoyed authority also among the Gnostics, even before the first catholic attestations.

We have attestations of that primitive canon, this is evident in Irenaeus in his *Adversus Haereses* (3,1,2,2), written around the year 180, who has advocated limiting the accepted Gospels, to the four who would later be canonized: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John³¹¹, and also in the *Muratorian* canon. Shortly after, also in Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian. In another words, this proto - canon is attested in a wide area covering Rome, Alexandria, Asia Minor and Africa. In Alexandria there was a

³¹⁰ Simonetti, 1994, p. 32 – 33.

³¹¹ Allert, 2002, p. 18.

tendency to widen this proto - canon, attributing divine inspiration to Roman writings as *IClement* and *Hermas*, which was not done by Rome itself.³¹²

2 – The direct refutation of heretical statements. Refutation of the distinction between the God of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Father of Jesus; refutation of the distinction between humans (pneumatic, psychic and illic), so these would be predestined to various destinations regardless of the individual merits and demerits since denied free will and seemed to make vain the ascetic efforts made by Christians.

Catholic teachers, independent of each other as Irenaeus and Origen, addressed heresies with great freedom and originality. However, they acted with substantial identity in their way to contrast the opponents' arguments. Although Origen and Irenaeus have belonged to different cultural environments (Alexandrian and Asia, respectively), which translated into doctrinal differences of great weight, exactly because of this it is so significant the convergence in substance between the two apologists on the main themes of antignostic and antimarcionist polemic: to the unitary character of the opponents' proposal was opposed an unitary response by Catholic polemicists.³¹³

3 - The positive affirmation of a doctrine such to counter the opponents objections. The Catholic doctors have proposed positively, i.e., affirmatively, a global and unitary interpretation of the economy of revelation. For Gnostics and Marcionites there was a discontinuity between the economy of the Old Testament and the New Testament, as revelations of two deities. Justin, Irenaeus and Origen proposed a unitary interpretation of the two economies, which presents both Testaments as two successive moments of a single divine plan put into action by Logos shortly after the Adamic sin. The Hebrew Scriptures were presented as preparation for the central event of the incarnation of Christ who died for the redemption of men. After Christ, comes the time of the Church, which leads the man to perception

³¹² Simonetti , 1994, p. 35 - 37.

³¹³ Simonetti, 1994, p . 37-40.

until he will be able to contemplate God face to face.³¹⁴³¹⁵ Such economy of progressive revelation, or history of salvation, unifying in Christ the old and the new economy, satisfies a double requirement :

1 - demonstrated the continuity between the Old and New Testaments;

2 – Claimed a progress from the Old to the New Testament. The elaboration of this doctrine was founded on the interpretation of the Old Testament that highlights the presence of Christ as the Logos in this documentary corpus. Also in the exegetical activity, between the end of the first century and the beginning of II , we see the presence of different criteria of interpretation in Christians circles. Pseudo Barnabas expanded the typological interpretation inaugurated by Paul, who saw through the allegorical technique characters and events of the of the New Testament pre - figurate in Hebrew Bible. Clement of Rome did not use it extensively in his letter (12,7 - typology of Rahab), preferring to fill his epistle with numerous citations from the Old Testament interpreted literally. Ignatius, on the other hand, seems uninterested in the Old Testament. The Jewish believers in Jesus who wrote and circulated the Pseudo Clementines seem to advocate a strictly literal interpretation of Scripture.³¹⁶

The anti - Gnostic and anti - Marcionite polemicists wrote in an arch orf time of a few decades and were geographically spread so, they covered the whole Catholicity of then: Justin in Asia and Rome, Irenaeus in Gaul; Clement in Alexandria; Tertullian in Africa; Teophilus in Antioch; Pseudo - Hipollitus in Rome etc.

These teachers took forward the doctrinal reflection from that proto - canon of the New Testament. Such uniformity of procedures and arguments must be credited to the identity of the problems and also the reciprocal influence on each other: Irenaeus was influenced by Justin and Tertullian by them, which also Clement and Origen knew and used even with great freedom. As a

³¹⁴ Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 4,14,3 ; 4,20,6.11; 4,32,2; 5, 29,1.

³¹⁵ Origen, *Contra Celsum* 4,7-8; *Comm in Joah.* 13,305 - 306; *De principii* 4,2,8; Simonetti, 1994, p. 40 - 41.

³¹⁶ *Recognitiones* 10,42.

result, at the end of the II century the Catholic Church already possessed a doctrinal patrimony, even though it was not complete, it already wide acceptance and a thickness of content very significant in relation to key points of the apostolic tradition, and such doctrinal heritage was shared by all the communities that belonged to the Catholic Church. At this point, we can finally talk about orthodoxy in action, despite, inevitable margins oscillations.³¹⁷

Not by chance it is in this period that is attested the existence of the *Rule of Faith*, that is, a doctrinal symbol that a given community understood as an expression of a true orthodoxy. As a precursor of the later Christian creeds, the Rule of Faith was not yet a fixed creed with articles of faith expressed identically by all communities. However, it was the minimum doctrinal consensus to guide Gentile Christianity. Basically the Rule of Faith contained articles about God, considered the creator of all things; the incarnation of Jesus Christ; the Holy Spirit; the Catholic Church and the future judgment. Its importance lies in having been a forerunner of Christian orthodoxy then in formation.³¹⁸

This Rule of Faith is expressed in Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*³¹⁹ and in Tertullian.³²⁰ In Irenaeus, the Rule of Faith is called *the gift of truth*, which would be the apostolic faith transmitted the apostles and their successors to the Catholic Church. Thus the Church becomes the sole guardian and transmitter of truth. In Irenaeus' *Adversus Haereses* there is a strong emphasis on obedience to episkopos and presbyters, considered the successors of the apostles. Irenaeus also states that, where the Church is represented, the truth will be preserved and transmitted. Consequently, the Church becomes a mediator between God and men.³²¹

³¹⁷ Simonetti, 1994, p. 43 – 44.

³¹⁸ Allert, 2002, p. 203 - 205.

³¹⁹ 1,9,4;1,10,1; 5,20,1.

³²⁰ *Adversus Haereses* 20 - 29.

³²¹ Allert, 2002, p. 204 – 206.

Regarding the Roman community, by the end of the second century (Victor's pontificate), the Roman Church distinguished itself by a weak hierarchical structure that could hardly support an expansionary policy even if of an only doctrinal power. The installation of a concrete orthodoxy as described above is not the result of a preordained political hegemony carried forward by a specific seat and for that imposed on other from outside, but it was the result of the doctrinal activity of various communities and, more specifically, of several doctors. This doctrinal activity was the answer to a long term and coherent heretic challenge.³²²

Conclusion

In this chapter, we draw an overview of the Jewish community in Rome, raised the hypothesis about the most likely mode of arrival of the Christian faith in Rome, and also raised its socio-religious profile. We also discussed the origins and the importance of Gnosis and Marcionism to the construction of Catholic orthodoxy.

Regarding the Jewish - Christians, it is worth emphasizing the mention of Justin (*Dial.* 47,3), of a group trying to enforce the observance of the Law to other Christians. As for the other Jewish believers in Jesus, who did not try to enforce the Law, it seems that Justin was just hypothesizing.³²³

Be that as it may, it is certain that such theological and liturgical differences were not created in Rome. They were actually imported by immigrant groups. The fragmentation of Roman Christianity was due to the very strong attachment of these groups to the ecclesiastical leaders of their regions of origin. We can see this process in action clearly in the case of Quartodecimans: despite being Catholic Christians at Rome, they were far more obedient to their bishops of origin in Asia Minor than to the Roman bishop.

³²² Simonetti, 1994, p. 45.

³²³ Lampe, 2003, p. 381 - 382.

Another factor that favored the fragmentation of Roman Christianity was the existence of great socio educational differences, as this cultural gap favored theological fragmentation, and, in consequence, the pluralization of the Christian groups. Specific examples of Christian groups born because of cultural gaps, are the Theodocians, followers of the Galeno-Aristotelian logic, and the Valentinians, students of Platonic philosophy. The uneducated, in their turn, tended to Modalism. As a consequence, we have the case of Justin and his school, which, although defenders of orthodoxy, because they were also advocates of the Logos theology, were viewed with suspicion by illiterate Christians.

The victory of orthodoxy also had socio - historical causes. Orthodoxy was supported by the vast majority of Christians who did not need a refined school education to grasp the truths of their faith. As Tertullian said, "Any handyman can find God" (Apology 46,9). The victory of orthodoxy, was therefore a "majority decision". The heretics and their followers were clearly outnumbered. The Orthodox, on the other hand, constituted the "Great Church".³²⁴

³²⁴ *Contra Celsum* 5.59 cf. Lampe, 2003, p. 383 - 384.

Chapter 2 – Justin: Teacher, Philosopher and Martyr

Introduction

In this second chapter of our thesis, we will demonstrate how Justin Martyr is a key figure in the shaping of the Great Church by his position as a point of intersection between the already traditional Christian teachers mentioned in the New Testament and *Didache* and the Greco – Roman philosophical teachers of his time. As it is known, Justin was born in Flavia Neapolis in a Pagan family of Roman colons, studied Philosophy, especially the eclectic Middle Platonism characteristic of his time, and converted to the Christian faith, which he considered the true Philosophy, from whose Logos all philosophers and poets received their inspiration.

We believe that the cultural choices made by Justin not only gave a philosophic foundation to the incipient Christian theology, but also radically changed the Christian worldview, paving the way to the creation of a Christian Philosophy able to compete with the Pagan Hellenistic philosophical options of the time. Justin's choice for Philosophy as a comprehensive category to understand the whole of worldly and divine realities also made obsolete the traditional way by which Christian teachers previously taught.

Christian Teachers in the First Two Centuries

The *Status Quaestionis* of the Studies About the Christian Teachers

Although there is more than a century of research on the topic of Christian teachers, relatively little material has been published about them. From the analysis of the New Testament, we learn that teachers were the oldest known leaders of major Christian communities.³²⁵ Paul puts them together with the apostles and prophets as the category of the most important charisms.³²⁶ The author of the Epistle of James was a teacher.³²⁷ Teachers are mentioned in a vast area stretching from Syria (*James* and *Didache*) to Rome (*Hermas*). There are enough clues to suggest the vital role played by teachers in the construction of Christianity in the first two centuries.

However, these clues are few in number, which indicates the eclipse suffered by the teachers caused by the emergence of bishops, priests and deacons. Teachers formed a well-defined category in the minds of the first Christians. Their position in the community depended not of an appointment by other teachers. Their prestige depended only on their personal talent³²⁸.

As stated just above, there are very few works devoted exclusively to the early Christian teachers. Generic works, on the contrary, there is a real "legion" in which teachers are treated with the apostles and prophets. Typically, the discussion of Christian teachers is subject to the old academic debate of the relationship between charisma and office during the emergence of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Scholars tend to assign various tasks to teachers within Christian communities, despite the lack of information about their actual duties.³²⁹

³²⁵ cf. *Ac.* 13,1-3.

³²⁶ *1Cor.* 12,28 – 29.

³²⁷ *Jas.* 3,1.

³²⁸ Falcetta, 2006, p. 7 - 8.

³²⁹ Falcetta, 2006, p. 11.

Our interest in making this brief reconstruction of the figure of the typical Christian teacher of the first two centuries is to try to find the locus that likely have been occupied by Justin within the early Christian communities after his conversion.

The interest in studying the early Christian teachers came after 1883 with the publication of the text of the *Didache* rediscovered by Metropolitan Philoteos Bryennios. The following year, Adolf von Harnack published the Greek text accompanied by a German translation and extensive Prolegomena. Harnack welcomed the *Didache* as the text who would illuminate the biblical and other passages that mention apostles, prophets and teachers. Basically, Harnack's interpretation of these three important figures can be summarized as below:

1) Apostles: people of Jewish origin. Christian missionaries who would have disappeared in the beginning of the second century;

2) Prophets were not missionaries, but itinerant preachers visiting various communities. Its distinctive characteristic was "speaking in the Spirit" to build community. The prophets survived until the end of the second century, when confronted with the excesses of Montanism and impostors;

3) Teachers: their importance lays in the range of texts from the I to the IV century that attest their presence. When analyzing the report of Eusebius³³⁰ on the pastoral visit of Dionysius of Alexandria, who mentions the situation of Egyptian villages served by presbyters and teachers, Harnack concluded that the teachers were fixed in communities and those most prestigious started early to teach only those Christians with better education, paving the way for schools organized along the lines of the Greco – Roman philosophical schools. The absence of the "enthusiastic" element allowed teachers to survive until the beginning of the fourth century, when bishops took upon themselves the role of teaching, no longer accepting the permanence of offices outside their strict control.

³³⁰ HE 7, 24,6.

Always according to Harnack, bishops and deacons had only administrative tasks. Their authority was due to having taken upon themselves the "proclamation of the Word", the main function of apostles, prophets and teachers triad. When Did. 15,1-2 recommends not to disregard bishops and deacons because they carry out the service of prophets and teachers, it indicates for Harnack only that bishops and deacons have taken the teaching office for themselves at a later stage of development of Church hierarchy.³³¹

Falcetta correctly emphasizes that Harnack must be read within the historical context of the late nineteenth century. The German historian was one of the biggest promoters of liberal Protestantism. He actively supported a form of not institutionalized Christianity, through which he tried to give life to the recent findings of historical criticism. His main target was the Catholic Church and, secondarily, conservative Protestantism. However, Harnack determined the academic agenda for many years to follow with his descriptions of the charismatic character of the triad, the administrative role being assigned to the bishops and deacons and the passage of the triad apostles, prophets and teachers to the triad bishops, presbyters and deacons. Moreover, his anthology of passages of ancient Christian literature concerning teachers continues to be of fundamental importance for scholars. This list made possible for the first time the identification of the role played by Christians masters in the early communities.³³²

Academic research continued in almost strictly religious terms. A good example was the debate between Harnack and Rudolph Sohm. The latter, a lawyer and Lutheran theologian, wrote a work on ecclesiastical law that has become a classic in Germany: *Das Kirchenrecht stet mit dem Wesen der Kirche in Widerspruch*. Its first volume was published in 1893. The second volume was published posthumously in 1923. In this work, Sohm claimed that the essence of the "Ecclesia" is of a spiritual

³³¹ Falcetta, 2006, p. 11 – 13.

³³² Falcetta, 2006, p. 13 – 14.

entity, the reunion of all Christians and that laws and regulations should have no place in it. Therefore, the Church could not have any formal regulation, but should be conducted exclusively by charismatic leaders whose inspirational character would be freely recognized by the faithful.

Sohm developed the classical Protestant understanding whereby the Word of God is the foundation of the Church, by claiming that teaching is the key role of the same. "Teachers" have become an umbrella term, covering both apostles, prophets and teachers *strictu sensu*.

The apostles would be missionaries empowered with the three teaching charisms; the prophets, in turn, would have been preachers, legislators and heads of the community. Finally, the teachers in the strict sense, who were being gradually replaced by the bishops. Beside this triad was the administrative organization of the bishops and deacons. With respect to the teachers, Sohm agreed with Harnack.

Harnack and Sohm had opposing opinions about the origin of Catholicism. Though both defended a non-institutional Christianity, the first believed that the elements of the formal organization of the Church were already present in embryonic form since its inception, while the second considered them absolutely contrary to the spiritual essence of the Church.

The vagueness about the role of teachers, and especially the fact that the theme of the research has been the emergence of Catholicism, often with intentions of denominational controversy, determined disinterest of much subsequent scholarship.³³³

However, the issue of charismatic leadership inspired the reflections of Max Weber on authority. In his classic work *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie*, Weber theorized the existence of three types of authority: rational, traditional and charismatic.

³³³ Falcetta, 2006, p. 14 – 15.

The first type of authority is based on the acceptance of a preexisting legal, the second, on the acceptance of a tradition considered sacred, and the third, on the recognition given by a human group to the extraordinary talents of a leader, whom the group feels closely linked. With the passage of time, the charismatic authority inevitably undergoes a process of routine becoming traditional rational, or even both.

The theoretical model of Weber turned out to be overtly theoretical. He himself had difficulties to identify the interaction of these three types of authority in his study of the early centuries rabbinism. Weber believed that before the destruction of the Second Temple (70 AD), the authority of the rabbis was of a charismatic type, however, substantiate this rabbinic authority appealing to the exegetic training and broad intellectual knowledge of these Jewish teachers, who are the common basis for an authority of traditional type.

The weberian model of charismatic authority in many ways echoes the triad apostles, prophets, teachers of the *Didache*. The authority of these three categories of Christian leaders was based on personal talents recognized by the early Christian communities. Over time, these leadership roles so being replaced by an ecclesiastical model based on traditional and rational authority.

The first type of authority is based on the acceptance of a preexisting legal, the second, the acceptance of a tradition considered sacred, and the third, the recognition given by a human group to the extraordinary talents of a leader, whom the group feels closely linked. With the passage of time, the charismatic authority inevitably undergoes a process of routine becoming traditional rational, or even both.

The theoretical model of Weber turned out to be overly theoretical. He himself had difficulties to identify the interaction of these three types of authority in his study of the early centuries

rabbinism³³⁴. Weber believed that before the destruction of the Second Temple (70 AD), the authority of the rabbis was the charismatic type, however, substantiate this rabbinic authority appealing to the exegetic training and broad intellectual knowledge of these Jewish teachers, who are the common basis for an authority traditional type.

The Weberian model of charismatic authority in many ways echoes the triad apostles, prophets, teachers of the *Didache*. The authority of these three categories of Christian leaders was based on personal talents recognized by the early Christian communities. Over time, these leadership roles so being replaced by an ecclesiastical model based on traditional and rational authority. It is important to note that this correspondence between the Weberian theory and the development of the Christian hierarchy was not fortuitous. Weber himself informs his readers that he derived his idea of charismatic authority of early Christian literature and *Kirchenrecht* of Sohm³³⁵.

from the studies already mentioned Harnack, Sohm and Weber, the research was divided into three main lines: In the first, the teachers mentioned so bad, since the focus was on ecclesiology, especially in the contested relationship between charisma and office. The second line of research has put the teachers in the center of discussion with its literary references examined from different perspectives. The third line, meanwhile, was concerned with the transmission of Christian doctrine, which made the teachers to gain prominence incidentally. The second and third lines ended unified after the publication of the influential work of Alfred. F. Zimmermann, *Die Urchristlichen Lehrer* in 1984³³⁶

³³⁴ Weber, Max (1921). *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie III: Das Antike Judentum*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck. For a critique of the Weberian theory, see: Hezser, Catherine (1997). *The social structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Roman Palestine*. TSAJ 66 Tübingen. Mohr Siebeck, p. 450 - 452 and Holmberg, Bengt (1978). *Paul and Power: The Structure of Authority in the Primitive Church the Reflected in the Pauline Epistles*, p.139 - 148.

³³⁵ Falcetta, op. cit. p. 15-16.

³³⁶ Id. p. 17.

The first decades of the twentieth century saw a questioning of the consensus that charisma and office would be incompatible. Olof Linton³³⁷ denounced the Western and confessional conditioning of Protestant reconstructions of the early Church, even noting that the authority could have been expressed both ways in early Christianity: either by holding an office or by charismatic ways.

In 1953, Campenhausen reestablished the consensus with a complex reconstruction: in the first century, the apostles were at the top of the authority. His position was based solely on charisma. The first institutional element to emerge were the priests, by Jewish influence. The triad apostles, prophets and teachers was gradually disappearing. First apostles, then prophets and teachers, who were barely distinguishable from each other. The latter two served as catechists and transmitters of the oral and written traditions. His authority was based on the interpretation of the Christian tradition. The second century was marked by great changes. teachers left to work exclusively within the Christian communities, teaching at schools open to all, whether or not catechumens. In this new environment, the teachers began to transmit not only tradition, but also their own works. Justin was the protagonist of this transition. It is believed that these "free" masters were often themselves the office holders of the Church. Unfortunately, our sources do not tell us about what was specific to teachers, with the exception of Clement of Alexandria.³³⁸

Leonhard Goppelt argued that for Paul, charisma manifested in part as office, partly as functions without clear distinctions between them. The first office was the apostolate, given by Jesus. Although all believers are priests because the character of the Church, concomitantly historical and eschatological, it requires a number of offices, including the triad apostles, prophets and teachers. Also according Goppelt, the apostles disappeared after the first generation. The prophets were gradually replaced by local office holders until their complete disappearance at the end of the second century.

³³⁷Linton, Olof (1932). *Das Problem der Urkirche in der Neueren Forschung: Eine Kritische Darstellung*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell.

³³⁸Id. p. 18-19.

The teachers, in turn, remained until the mid - third century. This phenomenon is already present in the *First Letter of Clement* and Ignatius.

This new consensus continued not to be agreed by Roman Catholic scholars, for the obvious degradation of the ecclesiastical structure to a deviation from the original charismatic organization to a mere human institution.

However, the Council Vatican II opened the way for new directions of academic debate among Catholicism. A group of French scholars directed by Jean Delorme published a book on ecclesiastical offices.³³⁹ They rejected the distinction between charisma and institution. According to this new understanding, the investiture in an office was the way early Christians publicly recognized that certain individuals were gifted with divine charisms of leadership. Apostles and communities had the task of recognizing charisms and determining the functions to be performed by the officer.³⁴⁰

Jean Boudillon³⁴¹, in turn, recalled that the whole discussion about the organization of the early Church is nothing more than a discussion about the Corinthian community. Wasn't it Paul's intention to indicate to the Corinthians that they already had a pneumatic organization, but to remind them that the spiritual gifts are given for the common good. Boudillon also notes that theologians take as a model the early Pauline communities, ignoring the Pastorals, since these have gone through a process of institutionalization. However, we are closer to the existential situation of the Pastorals, written at the end of the first generation, than to the founding events. In addition, a young and troubled community such as Corinth should not be taken as a model.³⁴²

³³⁹ Delorme, Jean (1974). *Le ministère et les ministères selon le Nouveau Testament: dossier exégétique et réflexion théologique*. Paris: Seuil.

³⁴⁰ Falcetta, 2006, p. 20.

³⁴¹ Boudillon, Jean. "La première épître aux Corinthiens et la controverse sur le ministères". In: *Istina*, v. 16, p. 471 – 488.

³⁴² Falcetta, op. cit. p. 21.

The Seventies saw a fresh start with the application of sociological methods in order to bypass the theological bias. Ulrich Brockhaus exposed in a long bibliography, the scholarly division between Roman Catholic and Protestant specialists. The latter were still under the influence of Sohm, while the first, under his opponents. Basically, both positions can be briefly summarized as this: Protestants claim *1 Corinthians* 12 as evidence of a charismatic organization in the early churches, whereas Roman Catholics, and also Anglicans, emphasize the appointment of bishops by the apostles and the consequent principle of apostolic succession. Both agreed to recognize the importance played by the charisms in the election of leaders in early Christianity, but disagreed on how that would have worked.

Brockhaus then argues that it is necessary to distinguish between tasks that were actually operated in the Pauline communities and Paul's teaching on charisms. The Pauline communities were accustomed to titles, salaries and special positions. The profane concept of charisma, which originally meant "gift", without specification of its origin, human or divine, was re-signified by Paul creating the Christian technical sense of God's spiritual gifts. 1 Cor. 12 and Rom. 12. discussions about charisms appear to be parenthetical, not a description of an ideal church order.³⁴³

Some other researchers shared the same ideas. Siegfried Schulz believes that Paul joined his teaching on charisms in the preexisting functions in communities marked by authority and titles. Bengt Holmberg, in turn, followed Brockhaus and emphasized the dichotomy between the real and the ideal. Scholars who have taken the current situation in the Pauline communities as the theological basis of the situation, forgot the dialectical relationship between the real and the ideal. Holmberg stressed also that in Pauline communities, charisma worked within a well organized structure, where elements of

³⁴³ Falcetta, 2006, p. 21 - 22.

charismatic, traditional and rational authority were naturally amalgamated together. Holmberg also proposed that charisma "Actively seeks institutional manifestation", to ensure its survival.³⁴⁴

It was also during the Seventies that Gerd Theissen began his sociological researches about the birth of Christianity. He hypothesized that the origins of Christianity would have been a revolutionary movement preached by itinerant charismatics. These would have given up their family and property ties. These would then travel through Syria and Palestine proclaiming the kingdom of God and relaying the teaching of Jesus, both by word and by practice of life. The Hellenization of Christianity determined the disappearance of these itinerant teachers, replaced by communities served by local leaders. Theissen's thesis is a new version of the opposition office *versus* charisma of Sohm. It is based on a Weberian reading of *Didache* which, in turn, depends on the Harnackian reading of the same work.

In recent decades, research has not produced substantial novelties. Worth mentioning is the work of James T. Burtchaell.³⁴⁵ His study indicates the synagogue as the organizational model used by the early Christian communities. According to Burtchaell, the inheritance of the synagogue are worship and administration, while the real leadership was in the hands of charismatic leaders.

As one can see, after more than a century of research, scholarship has not yet arrived to a peaceful solution of the problem. The very concepts of "charisma" and "office" are questionable. "Charisma" was conceptualized from the use of this term as an adjective in *1Cor.12,28*. Moreover, much care needs to be taken not to extrapolate a concept drawn from a complex text, which is possibly based on lost sources, making it a descriptive category of the early Christians in general. Also, it is

³⁴⁴ Falcetta, 2006, p. 23; Holmberg, op. cit. p. 166.

³⁴⁵ Burtchaell, James T. (1992). *From Synagogue to Church: Public Services and Offices in the Earliest Christian Communities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

necessary to always remember that the idea of charismatic leadership was the interpretation given by Harnack to the then newly discovered *Didache*.³⁴⁶

The second line of research regarding Christian teachers is the one focusing specifically on them. Worthy of mention are the findings of Karl H. Rengstorf expressed in two entries for the *Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament Theologische*: *Didache* and *μ*.

Rengstorf has reviewed the entire history of the word *Didache*, covering its use in the Greek philosophical culture, and in the New Testament, which usually refers to Jesus as the only teacher. Just as the Jewish teachers of his time, Jesus taught from the Torah and had a group of disciples. His difference, however, was his special relationship with God. Accordingly, the New Testament presents Jesus as the only teacher and his teaching as the teaching par excellence. The only time *Didache* appears in the plural³⁴⁷, has a negative connotation.

Also according to Rengstorf, Christian teachers gave practical, not doctrinal teachings. A statistical analysis of the occurrence of *Didache* showed that teaching played a more important role in Palestine, as shown by the *Synoptics* and *Acts*, than in Pauline communities in Greece and Asia Minor. Teachers were referred after apostles and because these charismatic leaders were the founders of communities. The teachers, instead, as non charismatic elements, continued the work of building the church. Rengstorf also points out that the early teachers should be distinguished from teachers of later periods. In the The Egyptian church, where the title lasted longer, teachers went through a process of intellectualization that made them equivalent to the teachers of Greek philosophy. In the entry *μ* for the same dictionary, Rengstorf addresses the masters to discuss the issue of transmission of the content taught by the founders of the schools. He advocated a complete absence of the idea of transmitting a content from a master in the Hebrew Bible. Knowledge would come solely from God

³⁴⁶ Falcetta, 2006., p. 24 – 25.

³⁴⁷ *1Tim.* 4,1.

through revelation. The rabbinical schools would have arisen by Hellenistic influence, as well as the relationship between rabbis and *talmid* witnessed in rabbinic literature. These schools, as well as the Greek from which derived, did not disappear after the death of the founders because students became teachers and transmitted to new generations the teaching of the founder mixed with their own opinions. The disciples of Jesus, in contrast, did not have the prospect of becoming teachers. Their condition was of permanent students, not transient. In addition, the relationship of Christians with Jesus was not based on mere learning, but in a personal relationship with him. Also according to Rengstorf, the term "disciples" has subsequently been abandoned by Christians to avoid being confused with a philosophical school. Rengstorf apparently did not realize how the existence of Christian teachers called into question his reconstruction of the origins of Christian teaching.

Although Rengstorf's articles are useful to help the reader on the main characteristics of masters and disciples, his hypothesis on the absence of a transmission system in the Old Testament as well as his eagerness to trace a clear disjunction between the bonds of master and student in Jewish and Hellenistic worlds and ties of Christians with Jesus are questionable. Should also be mentioned his statement about the alleged qualitative difference between philosophical teaching and the teaching of Jesus. It is known that it was of crucial importance in the philosophical schools the theoretical discussion of ethics, mostly to inform a mode of moral life in society.³⁴⁸

We would also like to mention the contribution made by Heinz Schürmann about the Christian teachers to close this quick recapitulation of the line of research focused specifically on Christian teachers. Schürmann published in 1977 an essay³⁴⁹ that became influential in academic circles. This work was originally written to be used at the plenary meeting of the International Theological

³⁴⁸ Falcetta, 2006, p. 27 – 28.

³⁴⁹ "..... und Lehrer": die geistliche Eigenart des Lehrdienstes und sein Verhältnis zu anderen geistlichen Dienst im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter" In: Ernst, Wilhelm; Feiereis, Konrad; Hoffmann, Fritz. (eds.). *Dienst der Vermittlung: Festschrift zum 25 – jährigen Bestehen des philosophisch – theologischen Studiums im Priesterseminar Erfurt*. ETS 37. Leipzig: St. Benno – Verlag. p. 107 - 147.

Commission in 1975, whose theme was *magisterium* and theology. Schürmann's thesis is that the teachers mentioned in the New Testament must be understood in relation to the others mentioned roles. Schürmann starts from the assumption according to which the difference between Christian masters and their Jewish and Hellenistic equivalents would be the association between $\Upsilon\mu$ and $\Upsilon\mu$. By recovering a definition from Rengstorff, Schürmann considers that the rabbis were the transmitters of a "mnemotechnic legalism" and the philosophers of a "Greek speculative intellectualism". Christian teachers, in contrast, would have made the $\Upsilon\mu$ understandable through $\Upsilon\mu$. His sources' analysis is based on the assumption that even if the New Testament does not mention the masters, they were present in the communities that produced the texts. The *Gospel of Mark* and the literature attributed to John are his proofs. Regarding the relationship between teachers and bishops and presbyters, Schürmann argues that this varies according to the specific situation. The original model of this relationship would be the Group of the Seven in Jerusalem, which corresponds to the prophets and teachers of *Acts* 13,1 - 2. He also argues that in some cases teachers remained a distinct group before the episcopos - presbyters, may be under their authority; while in other places would be confused with them. *Luke* and the *Pastorals* would manifest a tendency to eliminate the teachers of the structure of the churches by entrusting $\Upsilon\mu$ to presbyters.

Some considerations should be made: the distinction traced by Schürmann among Jews, Pagans and Christian teachers is problematic. He says that Christians would have been the perfect synthesis of the first two because they can avoid Jewish legalism and Greek intellectualism. It is also worthy remembering the Stoic philosopher Chrysippus, who could attributed to Zeno, his own teaching, making use of a great freedom, which, in Christian circles, is assigned by Schürmann to the $\Upsilon\mu$. In addition, the Stoic teaching was not speculative, but was directed to a way of life. Schürmann's analyses of the New Testament did not clarify the distinction between a master *stricto sensu* and an

presbyter who also holds the teaching office. Finally, Schürmann did not analyze extra canonical Christian sources, which is a serious limitation.³⁵⁰

Finally, we come to the third line of research regarding the Christian teachers, inaugurated by the work *Die urchristlichen Lehrer* of Alfred F. Zimmermann. This line focuses on teachers as transmitters of paraenetic teaching, interpretation of Scripture and transmission of traditions about Jesus.

Zimmermann's work marked the beginning of a new phase in the research about the Christian teachers. The main point of this stage is the relationship between the masters of the first century and the following centuries. The thesis of the author, the discontinuity between the first century teachers and later philosophers has sometimes been accepted, sometimes objected.

As an example of the first attitude we can mention the book of Ulrich Neymeyr.³⁵¹ He agrees with Zimmermann that there is no historical continuity between first and second centuries Christian teachers. This conclusion was based on an analysis of the *Didache*, in which he identifies a decay of the masters of the first century, heavily influenced by Judaism. Besides the fact the masters of the second century onwards were characterized by a philosophical education and teaching. According to Neymeyr, the *Didache* presents itinerant teachers, catechists and second and third centuries type teachers, the object of analysis of his book.

Christian teachers were recognized on the basis of their charisma. Their students were of various kinds: pagans, catechumens and baptized Christians. Teaching could be both oral and written and the content was not only biblical, but also doctrinal and practical problems. We do not know how they obtained funding, but it is likely to have been by rich patrons. Those masters started to decline in

³⁵⁰ Falcetta, 2006, p. 31 – 33.

³⁵¹ Neymeyr, Ulrich (1989). *Die Christlichen Lehrer im zweiten Jahrhundert: Ihre Lehrtätigkeit, ihr Selbstverständnis und ihre Geschichte*. Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae, v. 4. Leiden: Brill.

the mid-third century, when, either their functions were absorbed by presbyters, or they became presbyters themselves. This change would have been motivated by a growing distrust on lay theologians caused by teachers perceived as false.

The work of Neymeyr has the merits of gathering information on the protagonists of Christian teaching in the second century and comparing their characteristics. Neymeyr shows in detail the similarities and differences between the various masters, how they understood their work, and yet, he divided the material by geographical areas in order to avoid misleading generalizations. The only problem worthy of note is a sharp distinction between the masters of the first and second centuries. It would be more appropriate to think of a gradual transformation process.

The second reaction to the research line proposed by Zimmermann is that of F. Stanley Jones.³⁵² In his study of the *Pseudo - Clementines*, Stanley Jones questioned the findings of Zimmermann and Neymeyr on the masters of the first two centuries. In *Adjuration* that prefaces the *Homilies*, there is an oath that should be done by those who receive the books of Peter. It is required to the person to keep and preach them. The witnesses invoked in the oath (heaven, earth, water and ether) lead to comparable listings in Epiphanius³⁵³ and Hippolytus³⁵⁴ that refer to the *Book of Elchasai* (written circa 116-117). Stanley Jones, contrary to the prevalent opinions of scholars, advocates that the Basic Writer of the *Pseudo - Clementines* (c. 220) appropriated the traditions of Elchasaite masters. Furthermore, he claims that the catechists mentioned in the *Pseudo - Clementines*³⁵⁵ were still active at the time of the Basic Writer, despite their absence in two similar passages³⁵⁶ and that they would be the heirs of the Elchasaite masters. Additionally, these teachers did not depend on an ordination, but only on the

³⁵² Stanley Jones, F. (2003). "The Ancient Christian Teacher in the Pseudo – Clementines" In: WARREN, David H. (ed.). *Early Christian Voices in Texts, Traditions, and Symbols: Essays in Honor of François Bovon*. Biblical Interpretation Series, v. 66. Leiden: Brill. p. 355 – 364.

³⁵³ *Panarion* 19,1,6a; 19,1,6 b.

³⁵⁴ *Haereses* 9,15,1,5.

³⁵⁵ *Epistula Clementis* 13-15; *Homilies* 3,71,5.

³⁵⁶ *Recognitiones* 3; *Homilies* 66; 3,66 – 67.

acknowledgment of their disciples. The conclusion of Stanley Jones, is this: because the *Pseudo - Clementines* are a literary body that had been growing with the passage of time, they indicate that the early Christian teachers offset the emergence of hierarchy for a longer period than is commonly supposed. Stanley Jones also suggests that the early Christian teachers have basically developed in two categories: one would be the teachers of the Syriac tradition, another, the philosophers who followed the example of Justin.³⁵⁷

After this brief history of academic research on Christian teachers, we can list the results the agreements, still very precarious, among the scholars:

1) Scholars agree that there was a teaching role in early Christianity which was played by certain leaders of the first communities. However, early scholars such as Harnack and Sohm felt difficult distinguishing the masters from the apostles and prophets;

2) It is also agreed that apostles, prophets and teachers were not assigned to these roles, but exercised them because they were recognized as having the appropriate divine charisms. It should be noted however, that there is a consciousness whereby a clear distinction between charisma and office is most likely a projection in Christian sources of typical ecclesiastical concerns of the twentieth century. However, no one denies that personal talents were decisive;

3) Antioch or Jerusalem was the place where the teachers probably arose, and Syria - Palestine is where there are more claims of their presence;

4) The masters originated from Christian Pharisees and were equivalent to the first rabbis;

5) Usually it is attributed to them the tasks of Biblical exegesis, exhortation and transmission of Jesus traditions, and teaching about practical daily questions;

³⁵⁷ Falcetta, 2006, p. 43 – 44.

6) A major issue discussed among scholars is whether there is or not historical continuity among first century teachers and those of following centuries, always remembering that teachers certainly were a multiform phenomenon;

7) Masters were the last members of the triad to disappear. Their functions were taken over by bishops and presbyters, or the teachers became themselves bishops and presbyters.³⁵⁸

Teachers in Graeco – Roman and Jewish Sources

In order to better understand the historical significance of Justin and avoid inaccuracies and anachronisms, we will make a brief summary of some scholarly contemporary contributions about the sense of talking about “teachers” and "schools" in Antiquity.

The first known attestation of the word *didaskalos* is in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes³⁵⁹, dating from the sixth century BCE. It is located in a sort of appendix (513-578), that was probably written by the same author of the rest of the hymn. Other attestations of the word are in Heraclitus³⁶⁰, Aeschylus³⁶¹ and many other later Greek documents. In the Septuagint there are only two occurrences.³⁶² In the first passage, *Didaskalos* was the translator option to designate the king’s lector. In the second, Aristobulus is called teacher of King Ptolemy, probably because he dedicated to the king a book about the Mosaic Law.³⁶³

Previously to the Alexandrian culture, *didaskalos* had the technical meaning of choir master. Zimmermann identified four meanings for the term *didaskalos*: 1) Counselor: usually with a pejorative sense, designating someone who instigates the masses, a traitor, or someone who somehow deceives

³⁵⁸ Falcetta, 2006, p. 45 – 46.

³⁵⁹ *Hymn. Merc.* 556.

³⁶⁰ c. 535-475 BC, fragments 57 and 104.

³⁶¹ c. 525-456; *Eum.* 279; 584 *Prom.* 109, 322, 373, *Sept. c. Theb.* 573.

³⁶² *Esther* 6,1 and *2Mac.* 1,10.

³⁶³ Falcetta, 2006, p. 47.

the people. This sense can be seen in the works of Heraclitus³⁶⁴, Aeschylus³⁶⁵, Lysias.³⁶⁶ Philo³⁶⁷ designates as _____ a woman who diverts an Israelite. Also on this issue, Philo calls _____ those who want to own other people's wives, for inciting others to commit the same ungodliness.³⁶⁸ Josephus³⁶⁹ says that Cain became instructor (_____) of perverted practices of all whom he met.

Besides the above mentioned negative sense, it is perceived a neutral significance on Aeschylus³⁷⁰ and Isocrates.³⁷¹ From Aristophanes onwards³⁷² we find the positive meaning of elementary teacher. Philo, also, employs this term for elementary teachers in several texts³⁷³; _____ is also used to designate the person who teaches a specific knowledge (_____), like music³⁷⁴, medicine³⁷⁵; rhetoric³⁷⁶ etc.. Also according to Philo³⁷⁷, Moses would have been educated in his youth by Egyptians, Greeks and neighboring countries _____ .

Finally, the term _____ designates a master of philosophy or religion.³⁷⁸ This is the meaning that matters in this research. Initially, the term _____ had an ambiguous meaning. On the one hand, Plato presents Socrates refusing to be identified as a teacher; On the other hand, this is just the way Aristophanes presents Socrates.³⁷⁹ Obviously, the refusal of Socrates to be called teacher derives from its peculiar philosophical conception, according to which its role would be to just make

³⁶⁴ Frag. 57.

³⁶⁵ *Sept.* 573

³⁶⁶ *Oratio* 12,47; 12,78;14,30.

³⁶⁷ *Spec.* 1,56 – 57; cf. *Num.* 25,1 – 8.

³⁶⁸ *Spec.* 3,11.

³⁶⁹ *A.J.* 1,61.

³⁷⁰ *Eum.* 279.

³⁷¹ *Antid.* 95.104.

³⁷² Aristophanes, *Equ.* 1235; Josephus, *A.J.* 15,373 etc.

³⁷³ *Id.* vol. 2 (1897); vol. 6 (1915). Repr., 1962. *Legat.* 27; 53; 54; *Migr.* 116; *Sacr.* 51.

³⁷⁴ Plato, *Lach.* 180d *Menex.* 236.

³⁷⁵ Plato, *Meno*, 93d.

³⁷⁶ Plato, *Menex.* 236a.

³⁷⁷ *Mos.* 1,21 – 24.

³⁷⁸ Zimmermann, op.cit. p. 76 – 86.

³⁷⁹ *Nub.* 871, 1147, 1467.

people aware of what they already know. Besides, of course, a controversy with the Sophists, who presented themselves as masters, willing to teach a knowledge unknown to the student, and that moreover, were paid for their classes.

Around the time of Jesus, Epictetus³⁸⁰ defined himself Among the Jews, Josephus presents Moses as master of Joshua,³⁸¹ and Ananias ... of Izates, on Jewish religion.³⁸² The Sadducees considered a virtue to dispute with the masters of the paths of wisdom.³⁸³ Whatever is the judgment that should be made about the *Testimonium Flavianum*, the fact is Jesus is also presented as ... and ...³⁸⁴ Moreover, we have the New Testament passages in which Jesus is designated as a master such as: Matthew 9,11; 10,24-25 and its parallel Luc. 6,40; Matthew 17,24; Marc. 14,14 and parallel Matt. 26,18; Luc. 22,11; Marc. 5,35; and parallel Luc. 8,49; Jo. 11,28; 13,13-14. We also have passages where John the Baptist is called master³⁸⁵, some Jews are so called³⁸⁶, not to mention Christian teachers.³⁸⁷

After this brief overview of the use of ... term and its various meanings in antiquity, it is necessary to try to trace the main features of the Ancient schools. R. Alan Culpepper³⁸⁸ defines a school as a group of disciples who usually emphasize the ... and This group has an identity that is different from society in general and also other similar groups by tracing its origin to a founder, considered wise and good. Members of this group see themselves as disciples of this founder and perform activities in common, such as: education; learning; study and production of books; meals in common, usually in memory of its founder. Moreover, in order to strengthen group identity, was the

³⁸⁰ 1,9,12 Diss. cf. 2,21,10.

³⁸¹ A.J. 3,49.

³⁸² A.J. 20,46.

³⁸³ A.J. 18,16.

³⁸⁴ 18,63,3.

³⁸⁵ Luke 3,12.

³⁸⁶ Rom. 2,20, Luke 2,26; John 3,10.

³⁸⁷ Falcetta, op.cit. p. 49.

³⁸⁸ Culpepper, 1975, p. 258 – 259.

creation of common rules for the admission of new members and standards of conduct to determine the maintenance status of the member, which inevitably created some distance, total or partial, the rest of society. Finally, the development of organizational means to ensure its perpetuation. C. Loveday Alexander, in turn, tried a broader definition, distinguishing four levels of relationship:

- 1) between the teacher and the individual student;
- 2) With more students of the same master, forming a community;
- 3) Among several masters, forming a "university";
- 4) Among schools, forming a movement.³⁸⁹

Finally, before closing this section, we would like to summarize the conclusions of Schmeller.³⁹⁰ He believes the basic features of the Hellenistic philosophical schools are:

- 1) Active participation of students;
- 2) A strong emotional bond between the teacher and his students, which translates into a strong authority exercised by the master;
- 3) The presence of a group of students;
- 4) Belonging, in most cases, to the privileged strata of society;
- 5) The tradition as the basis of the teaching authority;
- 6) Veneration with religious traits of the founder of the school or some other figure from the past;

³⁸⁹ Alexander, p. 1005 – 1011.

³⁹⁰ Falcetta, 2006, p. 50.

7) Teaching and learning as daily school activities;

8) In the case of the Stoics, Epicureans and Cynics, use of philosophy in view of .

Justin: Teacher, Philosopher and Martyr

After having presented the current understandings of the general characteristics of philosophical schools in Late Antiquity, we will expose the specific features of Justin and his school, according to our available sources.

Biographical Elements

Justin was born around the year 100, in *Flavia Neapolis*, near the ruins of the biblical *Shechem*, in Syria Palestine. The city was founded as a Roman colony in 72 CE by Emperor Vespasian. It is now known as Nablus and located in the Palestinian territories. Justin came from a family of pagan colonists. His grandfather carried a name of Greek origin, *Bacchius*, and his father, a Roman one, *Priscus*.

In the early chapters of his *Dialogue with Trypho*, Justin tells us that he looked for teachers of major Greek philosophical traditions of his time: Stoicism, Pythagoreanism, Platonism³⁹¹ and Aristotelianism.³⁹² He converted to Christianity, which he considered being the true philosophy, between 132 and 135. Continuing to use the cloak of philosopher and studying the Hellenistic philosophy.³⁹³ Justin dwelled in Rome at least twice. It is believed that he passed a period residing in the capital of the Empire, as evident from the account of his martyrdom known as *Acta Iustini* or *Martyrium Sancti Iustini et Sociorum*. During this period at Rome, Justin established a Christian philosophical school, having been prominent during the reign of Antoninus Pius (138 - 161), when he

³⁹¹ For a possible identification of Justin's platonic teacher in Ephesus as Numenius, see: Edwards, 1991, p. 21 – 33.

³⁹² Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 2,1- 6.

³⁹³ Simone, 2002, p. 798.

gathered around him a number of disciples, among whom Tatian, the Syrian.³⁹⁴ According to the already mentioned *Acta Iustini*, Justin was brought before Rusticus, the *praefectus urbi* of Rome, tried and beheaded along with six of his disciples. According to Eusebius³⁹⁵, this would have happened by instigation of the Cynic philosopher Crescens, between 163 and 167. The importance of Justin as one of the thinkers who contributed decisively to the development of thought and religious practices of Christianity can be inferred both by references of him made by Irenaeus, Tertullian and Eusebius³⁹⁶, and by the preservation of his memory as Saint Justin Martyr.

In the *Acta Iustini*³⁹⁷, Rusticus addresses Justin as a teacher in his discipline, and able to speak³⁹⁸ Rusticus also engages himself in a conversation on the immortality of the soul, philosophical theme stranger to criminal proceedings.³⁹⁹ It is normally admitted that 165 is the year of Justin's martyrdom. This is also the date indicated on *Chronicon Pascale*.⁴⁰⁰ We have no evidence about his relations with the Roman Christian communities. His statements to fight against all kinds of heresies and his detailed description of Eucharistic worship indicates that he was in agreement with the mainstream of the so called "Great Church", and shared the concern of their leaders regarding pastoral care, liturgy and orthodoxy of local communities.⁴⁰¹

We sought, in his theological and exegetical writings indications of authors belonging to schools of Palestine, Asia Minor and Egypt. However, nothing prevents that Justin has had contact with

³⁹⁴ Idem; Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, I,28,1.

³⁹⁵ Eusebius, *H. E.* IV,16,1.

³⁹⁶ Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, IV,6,2; Tertullian, *Adversus Valentinianus*, 5.

³⁹⁷ *A.I.* 2,3.

³⁹⁸ *A.I.* 5,1.

³⁹⁹ *A.I.* 2,3; 5,1.

⁴⁰⁰ *Patrologia Graeca* 92,629.

⁴⁰¹ Justin, *Apology*. I,26-27; 61-67; *Dialogue with Trypho* 35,6.

these ideas after his arrival in Rome. Justin did not just teach Christians. He was in dialogue with Jews and Pagans who showed themselves interested.⁴⁰²

Justin's attitude, presenting himself publicly as a philosopher and Christianity as a philosophy was of great audacity and courage. Munier⁴⁰³ confirms the bad public reputation of Christians after the persecution enforced by Nero blaming the Christians of being responsible for the great fire. On the Christian side, the term "philosophy" designated strictly Pagan systems of thought and had a pejorative meaning.

In the *Apologies*, Justin declares that he discussed publicly in Rome with a Cynic philosopher named Crescens. Justin claims of having proved the ignorance of his opponent about Christianity and the lie of the charges brought against Christians. Justin also asks the Emperor to arbitrate a new debate between them, or at least be aware of the content of the debate already occurred.⁴⁰⁴ According to Tatian⁴⁰⁵ and Eusebius⁴⁰⁶, Crescens was behind the denunciation and condemnation of Justin.

Anyway, the episode significantly shows the conditions in which the Christian message was preached in the second century: precarious, dangerous conditions, but this not intimidated Christian and apologists.

⁴⁰² Ulrich, 2014, p. 62 – 63; Munier, 2011, p. 21.; *Dial.* 8,1.

⁴⁰³ Munier, 2011, p. 21.

⁴⁰⁴ *Apol. II* 8 (3),1-6

⁴⁰⁵ *Oratio ad Graecos* 19,3.

⁴⁰⁶ *H. E.* IV,16,8 – 9.

The Conversion to Christianity

As already stated in this work, Justin is a privileged witness to the dialogue between Greek philosophy and Christianity. It is certainly the most important apologist of the second century and also the most studied, judging by the amount of secondary literature on him during the last century. Justin was, as far as we know, the first Hellenistic philosopher who converted to Christianity and remained acting as a philosopher.⁴⁰⁷

At the beginning of his *Dialogue with Trypho*, Justin tells us how he was meditating by the sea, in a not specified location, when he was approached by an elder. They started a conversation on current philosophical issues, such as the immortality of the soul, transmigration of the same in different incarnations and the possibility of knowing God. The elder questioned Justin about his opinions on each of these subjects, and, meanwhile answering the old man's questions, Justin had his certainties broken through the elder's counter-arguments. Finally, the old man convinced him to read the Biblical Prophets, presented as earlier than Greek philosophers, and as the only ones who spoke inspired by the divine Spirit. Justin reports this event as his starting point for converting to Christianity.⁴⁰⁸

Additionally, in his *Apology I*, Justin confesses that even when he was still enjoying in the teachings of Plato, he could not believe the charges of grave immorality against Christians because of their fearlessness in the face of death. Such an attitude was incompatible with a life dedicated to the fleeting pleasures and evil.⁴⁰⁹ According to Munier, the two accounts are complementary: on the one hand, the study of Scriptures and the conviction that biblical prophecies were being fulfilled in his day

⁴⁰⁷ Munier, 2011, p.11.

⁴⁰⁸ Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 3,1 – 8,2.

⁴⁰⁹ Justin, *Apology I*,12,1.

gave him the intellectual certainty of the truth of the Christian faith. Additionally, the courage showed by Christians in the face of persecution and death gave him the moral assurance of Christianity.

Much has been discussed about the literary and philosophical training of Justin. This has been done by discussing the information given by Justin himself in the prologue of the *Dialogue*. The goal was to determine if there was auto biographical information believable.

Munier classifies the spiritual journey of Justin as "so right, so bright." He suggests that the conversion of Justin was the natural result of Justin's intellectual itinerary. Munier points out, that even before conversion, Justin was already a philosopher concerned with religious issues. Although Justin claims being from Samaria, he did not know Hebrew or Aramaic, nor did he shows any knowledge of the Samaritan religion and exegesis. He knew, however, certain "rabbinic" exeges and certain beliefs associated with them.⁴¹⁰

Within its proper context, the extant writings of Justin demonstrate a good level of philosophical training that allowed him to engage effectively with the intellectual elite of his time. The acts of his martyrdom attest to his boldness in speaking with the prefect of Rome Quintus Junius Rusticus, who was a stoic philosopher and the teacher of Emperor Marcus Aurelius.⁴¹¹

Although the first chapters of the *Dialogue* present analogies with Plato's *Protagoras* and recall the literary *topos* of the "intellectual and/or spiritual journey"; It is not possible to deny all biographical value as it is stated by convergent analysis of many scholars such as N. Hyldahl, J.M.C. Van Winden, P. Lampe, M.J. Edwards and S. Heid.

⁴¹⁰ Munier, 2011, p. 13 – 15.

⁴¹¹ Munier, 2011, p. 15 – 17.

In conclusion, a thorough analysis of his writings has determined that his education was predominantly literary as the use of this time. Then Justin had a philosophical training following the eclectic scholastic tradition of the time.

Justin as a philosopher

Justin presents itself to the public as a philosopher. He wears a *pallium*, a distinctive garment of the philosophers of his time.⁴¹² Unfortunately, we have no further details about his appearance. For him, the title of philosopher is of great importance. Evidence of this is his account of how Tryphon would have addressed him as a philosopher⁴¹³, and for having assigned this title to Marcus Aurelius.⁴¹⁴ For Justin, the ideal of the philosopher is to know the being and truth. His expected reward is beatitude⁴¹⁵. Philosophy is strongly related to devotion and piety (*ὁσιότης*)⁴¹⁶. To be a philosopher, a person must show that it is worthy of pursuing philosophy⁴¹⁷. However, Justin is aware of the ambivalence of the philosophers' reputation, for example, when the companions of Trypho mock him⁴¹⁸; when he himself criticizes philosophers along side with poets narrators of myths⁴¹⁹, or when he accuses the philosophers of his time to teach contradictory doctrines⁴²⁰. Anyway, to Justin and the other philosophers of his time, being a philosopher means to seek the truth through reflection on theories and doctrines. This process occurred through dialogue between the one who knows (the master), and the one who wants to know (the disciple).⁴²¹ The characteristic activity of the philosopher's teaching. This brings us to the question concerning Justin's school.

⁴¹² Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 1,1.

⁴¹³ *Dial.* 1,2.

⁴¹⁴ Justin, *Apology* I,1.

⁴¹⁵ *Dial.*, 3,4.

⁴¹⁶ Justin, *Apology* I,3,2; 12,5.

⁴¹⁷ *Apol. I*, 2,2.

⁴¹⁸ *Dial.*, 9,3.

⁴¹⁹ *Apol. I*, 20, 3 – 4; 44,9.

⁴²⁰ *Apol. I*, I,44,10. G.A.A.;

⁴²¹ Ulrich, 2012, p. 65 – 66.

Justin's philosophical school at Rome

A document, in our view, essential to a characterization of the profile of Justin's school is the account of his martyrdom along with six companions, known as the *Acta Iustini*. Scholars are unanimous in dating the death of Justin around the year 165. The account of his trial before the Prefect of Rome, Rusticus, survives in three different versions, all showing varying degrees of editing. However, it is admitted that there is a historical core which originated the narrative, and the so-called *Recension A* is regarded as the oldest of all, having been written shortly after the events narrated, almost certainly in Rome itself.⁴²²

The *Acta Iustini* tells us that Justin and six companions, among them, a woman, Carito, were brought to the presence⁴²³ of Rusticus⁴²⁴, *praefectus urbi* of Rome and formally accused of being Christians. Justin is interrogated first. Rusticus asks him what kind of life he leads.⁴²⁵ A little later⁴²⁶ Rusticus specifies the question: "What kind of doctrines do you profess?" (μ);), becoming clear that Justin is presented in the text as a teacher. In *A.I.* 3,1 - 2, Rusticus asks Justin where they meet. Initially, Justin replies that they meet wherever possible. The Philosopher reaches the irony by asking the prefect if he thinks it would be a possible chance to gather all Christians in one place. Rusticus insists, and, finally⁴²⁷, Justin says he lives above the bath of Myrtinus, and there they meet, adding that if anyone wanted to come see him, he would inform that person about the Christian principles.

⁴²² Hilhorst *In: Bastiaensen, Hilhorst, Kortekaas, et alii*, 1987, p. 49.

⁴²³ , judicial technical term which means "were brought before". Id. p. 391.

⁴²⁴ Quintus Iunius Rusticus, Stoic philosopher and teacher of Emperor Marcus Aurelius. He held the consulate twice and urban mayor probably between 162 and 168. Id. p. 391.

⁴²⁵ *A.I.* 2,1, ;. Barnes suggests that, with this question, Rusticus maybe has intentionally offered Justin the opportunity to avoid conviction to proclaim philosopher. BARNES, T.D. "Pre – Decian Acta Martyrum". In: *Journal of Theological Studies.*, XIX, p. 516.

⁴²⁶ *A.I.* 2,3.

⁴²⁷ *A.I.* 3,3.

A crucial passage that reveals the relationship between Justin and his companions as a bond between a master and his disciples, is the question addressed to Justin's disciples: "Did Justin convert you to Christianity?" He seems to recognize a teacher - student relationship between Justin and his fellow Christians. The answer given by Evelpistus brings evidence of a "school", "I gladly listened to the teaching of Justin, but my Christianity I received from my parents.") This response allows us to speak of a Justin's school, albeit generic and imprecise, since it is very likely that the others were also listeners of Justin.⁴²⁸

So far, we have identified the following characteristic features of a school: Justin is presented as a master (*A. I.* 3,3), his companions are treated by the prefect as disciples of Justin (*A. I.* 4,5), and there is a place designated to meetings, the master's house. We do not know if these six people were the only disciples of Justin, but the small group coincides with the assumption that the house should not be able to contain many people. Most importantly, this group of Christians do not seem to have met the first time at Justin's home the day they were brought before Rusticus. In addition, as mentioned earlier, Justin made sure to clarify that he would teach anyone who is present at his home. This evidence shows a school open to accept new members, and that Christian baptism does not constitute a pre - requisite. Anyway, even though Justin had only these six disciples at the time of his death, the fact that they always met in the same place and welcomed another persons interested in learning about the Christian faith, allows us to characterize the group as a community of teaching and learning with social visibility.

Certainly, it is difficult to identify specific Christian educational structures in the second century, and even more difficult if we require the evidence of a succession of teachers as a sign of the

⁴²⁸ Georges, 2012, p. 77 – 78.

permanence of a school. The only way to deny completely the existence of Christian schools in the first two centuries is totally denying the value of tradition, as Marco Frenschkowski does.⁴²⁹

Another important aspect of Justin's school is showed by the answer provided by Paion, another disciple of Justin, to the prefect Rusticus. Speaking for the whole group, Paion says: "We received this (the Christian faith) from our fathers." (Ἄ ὁ ὦ μ) This statement allows us to deduce that the basic Christian education was a responsibility of Christian parents, and that Justin taught more complex matters. This presumed higher level of education is consistent with the picture of Justin as a philosopher and his remaining writings, which deal with philosophical doctrines current at the time.⁴³⁰

Other evidence about Justin's school are the mentions made by Tatian the Syrian. He also wrote an apologetic work, the *Oratio ad Graecos*. In his writing, Tatian refers to Justin twice. In *Or. ad Graec.* 18,2, Tatian mentions the "admirable Justin," (ἰ ὁ μ Ἰ) and in 19,1, he also mentions that the Cynic philosopher Crescent "set about involving Justin – as he did with me too - in the death penalty." (, ἰ ' , ἰ ' μἘ). The dispute between Crescent and Justin is mentioned by Justin himself in *Apology* 2,8(3). Although Justin does not mention Tatian, the fact that he put himself along side with Justin in this dispute with Crescent proves his discipleship with Justin. This information is confirmed by Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons about 30 years later.

Despite the extant works of Justin do not tell us about the school of the Christian Philosopher, the *Dialogue* presents an initial scene that no doubt can be placed in a school context: Justin, the philosopher, argues with an educated Jew, Trypho, which is accompanied by a group of men who can

⁴²⁹ Id. p. 78 – 79.

⁴³⁰ Id. p. 80.

be also interpreted as Trypho's students.⁴³¹ Although this scene is probably fictional, it's hard not to imagine it as a debate between two masters in a philosophical school horizon.⁴³²

What can we assume about the doctrinal contents discussed in Justin's school? In the *Apology*, Justin defends Christians against Pagan accusations of atheism by their refusal to worship the gods of the Empire. As a defence argument, Justin describes the Christian faith and morality according to the intellectuals' standards of the time, so that people educated in the Greek culture could understand. Thus, we can imagine that in his school, Justin promoted a dialectical discussion between Hellenistic culture and specifically Christian doctrinal contents. This assumption is confirmed by the acts of his martyrdom where Rusticus asks⁴³³ Justin what doctrines () he practices; to which Justin replied that he sought to know all doctrines, but is personally committed to follow the Christian ones, even though they were not recognized by followers of false doctrines.

This Christian self-definition through the confrontation with Pagan philosophers and their teaching determined a process of assimilation as much as rejection of Pagan culture. For Christians such as Justin, who received an education based on Greek culture before their conversion, it was necessary to take a position regarding the Hellenistic culture, adopting its philosophical education, but rejecting its myths and polytheistic cults. At the same time, one could not avoid to define the exact relationship of the Christian faith with its Jewish matrix. Thus, the *Dialogue with Trypho* can also be integrated with Justin's Christian philosophical school environment at Rome. The *Dialogue* transpires an accurate knowledge by Justin about the exegetical techniques practiced by the Jewish teachers of his time. We will discuss about it in the third chapter of this thesis. By now, we can only emphasize that, by confronting himself dialectically with both, Greco - Roman and Jewish cultural environments, Justin

⁴³¹ Heid, 2001, p. 820.

⁴³² Georges, 2012, p. 81 – 82.

⁴³³ A.I. 2,3.

gave a great contribution to the formation of Christian theological and cultural identity, which was in full boil, precisely in his days.⁴³⁴

Justin's Christian Philosophy

After having discoursed about the figure of Justin as a philosopher and the basic characteristics of his school in Rome, we will still make a quick description of the type of education practiced in the school of Justin before treating his Apology.

⁴³⁵ is the regular verb, found several times in the writings of Justin. The noun , however, is strictly reserved for Christ, considered the only true master.⁴³⁶ implies a high esteem of the doctrines that are taught, whose goal is to pass on the teaching of Christ, which was always transmitted in a traditional and authentic way.⁴³⁷ On some occasions Justin says "We were taught and now ourselves teach "⁴³⁸, which emphasizes the authenticity of Christian teaching transmitted. Christianity is a philosophical doctrine that dates back to Christ, the only true master. Justin does not claim originality; on the contrary, the Christian teacher should be seen in the continuity of transmission of the Christian tradition and the broader movement of Christian schools.

The Works Attributed to Justin: Authentic and Unauthentic

Eusebius presents a merely illustrative list of works attributed to Justin: "A great many other works of his are still in the hands of many of the brethren".⁴³⁹ Among the titles presented by Eusebius, we have a "Treatise (μ) Against All Heresies", also mentioned by Tertullian⁴⁴⁰, Photius⁴⁴¹.

⁴³⁴ Georges, 2012, p. 82 – 83.

⁴³⁵ Justin, *Apol.* I,8,3; 14,4; 45,5.

⁴³⁶ There is, however, one exception in *Apol.* I, 21,2, which is a subject of controversy over its literary authenticity (Minns, Dennis; Parvis, Paul (2009) (eds.) *Justin, Philosopher and Martyr: Apologies* Oxford: Oxford University Press p. 133 note 1.

⁴³⁷ Justin, *Apology* I,6,2; 8,3; 14,4.

⁴³⁸ Justin, *Apology* I,14,4; 8,3.

⁴³⁹ *Ecclesiastical History*, IV,18,8.

⁴⁴⁰ Tertullian, *Adversus Valentinianus*, 5,1.

And Jerome.⁴⁴² Pierre Prigent⁴⁴³ claims that Justin based *Apol.* I,39-50 and *Dial.* 16-17; 106-110 on the μ . This work was used by Irenaeus and Tertullian in their own anti – heresies treatises. Eusebius also mentions a “certain discourse of his in defense of our doctrine addressed to Antoninus surnamed the Pious, and to his sons, and to the Roman Senate”.

It is unanimous among scholars that this reference means the so called *First Apology*. The Ecclesiastical Historian⁴⁴⁴ also mentions a second apology (= our *II Apol.*); an *Address to the Greeks*; a work *Against the Greeks*; *On the Monarchy of God*; *The Psalter*; *On the Soul*; and *Dialogue with Trypho, the Jew*. Justin himself mentions his *Treatise Against All Heresies* in his *Apol.* I,26 and the *Dialogue with Trypho* mentions the *I Apology* in chapter 120. Finally, Eusebius⁴⁴⁵ reproduces a fragment of Irenaeus⁴⁴⁶ which erroneously attributed to him a treatise against Marcion:

[...] “And Justin well says in his work against Marcion, that he would not have believed the Lord himself if he had preached another God besides the Creator” [...]

It is more likely that the text originates from the *Treatise Against all Heresies* and the refutation of Marcion constituted an extensive section of the book. We still have a few fragments of doubtful authorship in CPG 1078 to 1089. John Damascene kept several very important strata of a treatise *On the Resurrection*, attributed to Justin whose authenticity was defended by A. Wartelle⁴⁴⁷ but denied by B. Pouderon⁴⁴⁸, and P. Bobichon⁴⁴⁹. The Bizantine manuscript tradition passed a dozen apologetical and polemical works on behalf of Justin which are certainly apocryphal. Although pseudepigraphical,

⁴⁴¹ Photius, *Bibliotheca*, Codex 125,1 – 3.

⁴⁴² Jerome, *De viris illustribus*, 23.

⁴⁴³ Prigent, 1964, p. 211.

⁴⁴⁴ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, IV,18,1 – 6.

⁴⁴⁵ *H.E.* IV,18,9.

⁴⁴⁶ *Adversus Haereses*, IV,6,2.

⁴⁴⁷ Wartelle, 1992). p. 3 – 10.

⁴⁴⁸ Pouderon, 1997, p. 143 – 166.

⁴⁴⁹ Bobichon, 2005, p. 60 – 61.

these works serve to attest to the good reputation of philosopher and theologian connected to the memory of Justin.⁴⁵⁰

Justin's Apology

The works of Justin which are considered authentic by critics, the so called *Apologies* and the *Dialogue with Trypho*, came to us in a single manuscript: the *Parisinus Graecus* 450 dated to September 11, 1364 which is preserved in the National Library in Paris. The other manuscript available, the *Codex Musaei Britannici* Loan 36/13, of April 2, 1541, also known as *Claremontanus* 82 is a direct copy of the *Parisinus*.⁴⁵¹ Although the manuscript presents two apologies, one long and one short, there are several indications, all converging, confirming the unity of composition, writing and publication of the work, prepared according to the set rules of ancient rhetoric.

Formally, the Apology of Justin is a *Libellus* (: *Apol.*II, 14.1); a request to the Emperor by a single private citizen. Such documents, unlike letters (*Epistulae*) sent by the magistrates, were deposited in the appropriate imperial office at Rome, the *Scrinium ad rescriptis*. After reading them, the emperor indicated his decision on the request and signed it. The imperial responses were made public by being displayed in tables (*libri libellorum rescriptorum et propositorum*) posted at regular intervals so that anyone could take science of them.⁴⁵²

From the point of view of ancient rhetoric, the Apology depends on the judiciary literary genre. The scholars identify five essential parts in these discourses which are easily identifiable in Justin's Apology: *exordium*; *narratio*; *probatio*; *confutatio*; *peroratio*. These will be discussed below.

⁴⁵⁰ Munier, 2011, p. 24 – 25.

⁴⁵¹ Marcovich, 1992, p. 323.

⁴⁵² Idem, p. 27 – 28.

Justin prudently limit himself to examine only the *rationalis generis status*. For the *legalis generis status*, Justin merely reproduces the rescript of Hadrian⁴⁵³ which he interprets with the technique of examining *scriptum et voluntas*.

The unity of the text of both Apologies results also evident from the arguments around the key themes of ὁ - . This theme incorporates the most important elements of imperial titration: the piety of Antoninus, and the love for philosophy and culture of his adopted sons. These elements recur seven times, wisely distributed in "strategic" discursive points: I,1 (address); I,2,1 (*captatio benevolentiae*); I,3,2 (the request: ἄ); I,12,5 (at the end of *refutatio*); II, 2, 16 (at the end of *narratio*); II, 15, 5 (at the end of *peroratio*).

The unity of the work is ultimately indicated by the deliberate procedure that puts face to face elements found in Apol. I and II, with the goal of extending the discourse from Apol. I,1,1 to II,15,5. The theme of compassion and philosophy puts face to face I,1,1 and II, 15,5. The same applies to the theme of the righteous judgment. On the topic of "Act in your interest" confronts I,8,1 and II,15,5, besides II,1,1. From all these observations, it appears that, notwithstanding the manuscript tradition has presented these texts as if they were two separate apologies, they are in reality a single work composed at once and presented at the imperial office of rescripts as a petition (*libellus*) with the objective of obtaining a radical change in the imperial policy towards the Christians.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵³ Justin, *Apol.* I,68,3 – 10.

⁴⁵⁴ Munier, op. cit. p. 29 – 30.

The Literary Structure of the *Apology*

Aimé Puech⁴⁵⁵, Johannes Geffcken⁴⁵⁶ and Miroslav Marcovich⁴⁵⁷ judged Justin harshly, claiming he was not a good writer and was therefore useless to look in his *Apology* for influences of classical rhetoric and /or general conformity of his work with the precepts taught in the schools of the time. However, one should not judge the *Apology* based on the canons of rhetoric. Justin himself said⁴⁵⁸ to have devoted his life to study philosophy since his youth, never having claimed to have studied classical rhetoric. Besides, the various philosophical traditions of his time proposed other rhetorical models.⁴⁵⁹ The discursive pattern of Justin should be judged in the light of philosophical models and also the judicial genre, since the *Apology* is a legal petition.⁴⁶⁰

The Literary Traditions

Thomas Wehofer⁴⁶¹ was the first to investigate the *Apology* trying to find in it reflexes of models. He proved that Justin was inspired by Plato's *Apology to Socrates*. In this work, Plato presented a rhetorical discourse placed at the service of justice and truth. Wehofer cites in his work the following agreements between Justin and Plato: *Apol.* I, 2,4 = *Ap.S.* 30c; 5,3=24b e 26c; 8,2=30d; 68,2=19a; II,10,2=24b.

Wehofer also recalls that in ancient times did not exist the current practice of quotations or the *scholia* typical of the Middle Ages. All comments of the author to the text itself were necessarily made as digressions in the text. These digressions were the normal way philosophers made the transition

⁴⁵⁵ Puech, 1928, p. 142.

⁴⁵⁶ Geffcken, 1907, p. 98.

⁴⁵⁷ Marcovich, p. 323 – 324.

⁴⁵⁸ Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 2,3 - 6

⁴⁵⁹ Marrou, 1965, p. 95, 243 - 264; 292 - 307.

⁴⁶⁰ Munier, op.cit. p. 37 – 38.

⁴⁶¹ Wehofer, 1897, p.56s.

between themes in writing. Thus, quotations, exempla, notes etc. that currently are relegated to the notes, in Antiquity were part of the text body.

H. Hubik⁴⁶² and U. Huntemann⁴⁶³ confirmed the study of Wehofer about the importance of the apparent digressions for the argumentation dynamics of Justin. Hubik demonstrated the apologist has several carefully written passages by its stylistic point of view, especially the prologue (I,1-4), *recapitulationes* (I,13; 23; 30; 67), and the warnings addressed to the sovereigns (I,2,1-3; 68; II,14-15).

Huntemann, in his turn, after a detailed analysis of *Apol. I* suggested that because the very fact of being a work so extensively researched, it prevented scholars to realize the logical development of it. Huntemann also stated that Justin used several procedures, whose techniques were not always noticeable: first, Justin explicitly announces the points he wanted to develop⁴⁶⁴, but instead of following the themes linearly, Justin developed them in an order reverse to that previously stated because he has predilection for chiasm structures. Moreover, Justin carefully prepared their developments through multiple transitions, ordered around keywords, which will serve as a reference. Finally, the Apologist devotes a large space to eschatological considerations repeated to infinity in the course of the entire work, as he tries to impress his readers with the prospect of punishment reserved for the enemies of the Logos in the future existence. To this end, the repetition has always been considered the first figure of an effective speech.⁴⁶⁵

More recently, H.H. Holfelder⁴⁶⁶ illustrated the technique of progressive thematic exhibition that Justin used in his Apology. This technique consists in guiding the reader from one theme to another proposing incessantly renewed ideas during the development of the argument. The progression

⁴⁶² Hubik, 1912, p.

⁴⁶³ Huntemann, 1933, p. 410 – 428.

⁴⁶⁴ Justin, *Apology*, I,23.

⁴⁶⁵ MUNIER, op. cit. p. 39 – 40.

⁴⁶⁶ HOLFELDER, H. H. (1977). “*ὁ λόγος*”. Literarische Einheit und politischer Kontext von Justin Apologie.” *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, vol. 68. Berlin. p. 48 – 66; 231 – 251.

is built mainly by the association of ideas or variations of the same idea through keywords, synonyms, and sometimes parts of phrases or whole sentences that covertly announce the new theme. Justin, however, always provides accurate indications so as to make clear the steps of his reasoning. Holfelder points out that this method of composition responds to essentially accurate pedagogical intentions, and was constantly practiced in classical antiquity, mainly by philosophers. For them, it was not so much to definitely expose a complete system, but to induce the reader or listener to discover a doctrine of life. To insinuate himself in the best way into the soul of the disciple, the master calls upon all the arts of psychology. What matters to him is reaching the most secret fibers with imperceptible touches and exciting the will and enthusiasm no less than intelligence, because it is the whole of the soul that should be open to the attraction of the True, the Good and the Beautiful.

The developments of the *Apology* of Justin fall into this philosophical tradition that derives from Plato's dialogues. Needless to say, the progressive thematic exposure is extremely delicate. The price to be paid is an apparent disorder, a writing style seemingly sloppy with an arbitrary succession of dogmatic and paraenetical passages that insatiably resume the subject, analyzing the same theme from different points of view through digressions of all kinds. But for those who strive to follow the author through the subtle intricacies of his demonstration, there is no doubt that a structuring preceded not only the overall composition of the *Apology*, but each of its sessions.⁴⁶⁷

The Structure of Justin's *Apology*

Since Wehofer, philologists identified in the *Apology* a literary model imitated by the Roman Apologist: refutation of all charges, both ancient and current (negative development); exhibition of his "mission" of Christian way of life, and "truths". However, despite the *Apology* of Justin also include these two sessions, it is infinitely more complex. It remains true, nonetheless, that the writing of Plato

⁴⁶⁷ MUNIER, op. cit. p. 40 – 42.

left a strong influence on the *Apology* of Justin. The example of Socrates, condemned as "atheist and impious" underlies the *peroratio*.

For Justin, the tragic fate of Socrates perfectly illustrates the fate of Christians. Only persons of corrupt customs, puppets of demonic powers can conspire to get them to death. In light of these assumptions, the diatribe against Crescens assumes a particular importance: at the end of the *Questioni incidentalii*, which clarifies the *narratio*, it is the exact replica of the mention of Socrates which has opened the debate. As well as Meletus had accused Socrates, Crescens accused the Christians of being "atheists and impious" in order to please the ignorant multitude. Like Socrates, Christians objected to their opponents with the indifference to "the talent of the word, and his only concern to tell the truth";⁴⁶⁸ so the challenge made by Justin to Crescens is inspired by the sentence of Plato: "Under no circumstances should honor a man more than the truth."⁴⁶⁹

However, the *Apology of Socrates* is not the only literary model that seems to have inspired Justin. There are also a number of amazing agreements with the *Protrepticus* of Aristotle. In this treatise, Aristotle tries to show that, despite the discredit cast upon the philosophers, philosophy retains all its value for life in society, and that a life without philosophy is not worth living. In fact, philosophy is related, first of all, to man's action and it is impossible to lead an honest life without having reflected on the purpose and meaning of existence. To these general considerations, Aristoteles added an argument of eschatological nature: he stated that in the "islands of the blessed", the only human activity left is philosophic contemplation. This means that philosophy leads to perfect life and ends up being identified with this.⁴⁷⁰

⁴⁶⁸ Plato, *ApS.* 17bc.

⁴⁶⁹ Plato, *Resp.* X,595c; 607c.

⁴⁷⁰ Munier, 2012, p. 51 – 52.

Once Justin had presented Christianity as the "divine philosophy"⁴⁷¹, he could take advantage of the tradition of protreptic treatises since Aristotle, Isocrates and his followers, all dedicated to philosophy. Justin does not hide his desire to win the Cesar Marcus Aurelius to the philosophy of Christ. In the wake of Aristotle, Justin emphasizes that philosophy is needed not only to behave in this life with justice and truth, but it is also the best preparation for "the future judgment of God."⁴⁷²

If Justin's request is met, there would be innumerable benefits spread throughout the Empire, due to the superior morality of Christians and their unceasing prayers. (I, 12, 1-2, 17, 1-4⁴⁷³). It is in this perspective that he takes up and extends the celebrated *dictum* of Plato: "If the sovereigns and their subjects are not philosophers, there cannot be happiness in the cities."⁴⁷⁴ Justin extended the practice of philosophy also to the subjects, because for him, even the simple and unlearned Christians profess the true philosophy through the teachings of Jesus, the Logos and Divine Master.⁴⁷⁵

Regarding the originality of the apologetics initiative of Justin, Jerome said that the Roman apologist would have imitated Aristides. However, Jerome does not tell us on what consisted this supposed imitation. B. Pouderon states that notwithstanding the fragmentary and problematic state of the manuscripts that testify the *Apology* of Aristides, the parallel elements that can be established between Aristides and Justin are few and relatively modest. There are no grounds for arguing with certainty the hypothesis of a direct dependence of Justin regarding Aristides, or to assert a clear intention of imitation.⁴⁷⁶

After reviewing about 20 parallel passages Pouderon concludes: "If, therefore, Justin read the *Apology* of Aristides - something that belongs to the scope as possible - it seems certain that he did not

⁴⁷¹ Justin, *Apology*, II, 12,5.

⁴⁷² *Apol.* I,68,2 cf. I,17,4; 19,8; II,15,3.

⁴⁷³ *Apol.* I,12,1-2; 17,1 - 4.

⁴⁷⁴ Plato, *Resp.* V, 473de.

⁴⁷⁵ Justin, *Apol.II*,10,8.

⁴⁷⁶ Pouderon, 2003, p. 100.

write his works with Aristide's text under the eyes and maybe even in the memory. There is nothing in his work to betray the will to pay tribute to its glorious predecessor making discreet references to it."⁴⁷⁷

Justin's Apologetic Procedure

According to Justin himself, the reason that prompted him to write the apology was the arrest, conviction and summary execution of the Christian teacher Ptolemy and his two companions, Lucius, and an anonymous other. Justin protested vigorously against this fact still claiming that not only in Rome, but everywhere, prejudiced and hostile judges pronounced judgments of this kind.⁴⁷⁸

This generalization is merely a rhetorical device, or actually corresponds to a real deterioration of the social and political situations of Christians, who had not been bothered during the reign of Hadrian? In other words, the reign of Antoninus Pius marks a noticeable shift of imperial policy towards the Christian issue?⁴⁷⁹

The Religious Policy of Antoninus Pius

The historians have only rarely to assessed the testimonies about the religious policy of Antoninus Pius. The emperor is considered "conservative of the old cults and scrupulously observant of the rites; hisf coins celebrating the ancient Roman legends; he favored Ilion, Palantion of Arcadia and the ancient sanctuaries of Latium."⁴⁸⁰

The zeal of the emperor for the archaic Roman piety earned him the title of "Numa" and the epithet of "Pius". Such attitudes of Antoninus were a reaction to the growing skepticism and influence of Eastern religions. Additionally, in 147 it was celebrated great pomp the "ninth anniversary of the

⁴⁷⁷ Pouderon, 2003, p. 101s.

⁴⁷⁸ Justin, *Apol.*, II,1,2.

⁴⁷⁹ A discussion on this matter is present in SIMON, Marcel (1986) *Verus Israel: a study of the relations between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire*, 135-425. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 128 – 131.

⁴⁸⁰ Piganiol, 1949, p. 295

foundation" of Rome, which had revived the Roman pride. This context was not at all favorable to Christians. These were already perceived as a reality independent of the Jews, which made them look to the Pagan Romans more and more as deserters of the Pagan Roman cults and despisers of the gods to whom the Empire, owed its welfare.⁴⁸¹

Several passages of the *Shepherd of Hermas* roughly contemporary with the *Apology* of Justin, allow reconstructing very accurately the Roman environment of the two writings. What characterizes Hermas is the proximity and living experience of the persecution which multiplied "apostates, traitors of the Church and of the servants of God."⁴⁸² In *The Shepherd of Hermas*, there is a strengthening of the traditional opposition between the earthly world and the heavenly one, between the stranger country and the true one. One feels a constant threat from the public power, ie, the blessing of the Prince: "Either obey my laws, or get out of my country," proclaims the lord of the city.⁴⁸³

Even admitting the hortatory component, designed to produce a resolute conversion to Christian ideal, it remains true that the danger does not cease to haunt the Christian Roman community, weakened by the defection of many members⁴⁸⁴ the vileness of drifters⁴⁸⁵ and also by the propaganda and spreading of Christian sects.⁴⁸⁶

In the provinces, the situation was not better, judging by the Asian testimonies. A series of earthquakes devastated these regions during the principality of Antoninus (144, 151-152 and 155). The quakes were attributed to the anger of the gods. Acts of collective violence outburst. The crowds demanded the punishment of the "atheists". Local authorities, in their turn, undoubtedly resorted to the

⁴⁸¹ Wilken, 2003, p. 92; 160 – 169.

⁴⁸² *The Shepherd of Hermas. Sim.* VIII,2,4; Cf. VI, 2,3 - 4. In *Vis.* II,2,2, Hermas tells about defections in his own home.

⁴⁸³ *The Sheperd of Hermas, Sim.* I,4.

⁴⁸⁴ *The Sheperd of Hermas. Sim.* XIX,25,3.

⁴⁸⁵ *The Sheperd of Hermas. Sim.* I,10; VIII,8,1-2; IX,20,1-2.

⁴⁸⁶ cf. Justin, *Apol.* I, 26, 2-4; 56, 1-2; *Dial.* 35, 6; 120,6.

usual method: to calm down the fury of the masses with some executions and then asked to the emperor for directions.

Antoninus maintained the same religious policy of his predecessor. In answering to the cities of Larissa, Thessalonica and Athens, who had consulted him between 147 and 161. Regarding the alleged rescript of Antoninus, which was supposedly addressed to the board of the senatorial province of Asia, it is commonly recognized as spurious.⁴⁸⁷ The Antonine rescripts were lost, but their general tenor can be found in the testimony of Melito of Sardis, quoted by Eusebius.⁴⁸⁸

The Legal Situation of the Christians

Once the principles of law regarding the Christians were not modified by Antoninus, the legal status of Christians continued to be governed by the rescripts of Trajan and Hadrian.

The rescript of Trajan was an imperial response to Pliny the Younger, then governor of Bithynia (ca. 112). Pliny asked the Emperor to specify what, when judging Christians, should be punished: the *nomen christianum* itself, even when it was not related to misdeeds or those, when related to this name (*nomen ipsum si flagitiis careat an flagitia nomini cohaerentia puniantur?*).⁴⁸⁹

Trajan did not directly answer that question, but determined the following: he forbade persecution *ex officio*; condemned anonymous complaints; demanded that a complaint should be in accordance with the normal criminal procedures; ordered the immediate release of all who declare themselves strangers to the Christian sect; and also ordered severe punishments for all who insisted in their commitment to Christ and rejected worship of the Roman gods.⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁸⁷ For a detailed analysis about the authenticity of the rescript, see: Grant, 1988, p. 44s.

⁴⁸⁸ Eusebius, *H. E.* IV,26,10.

⁴⁸⁹ Wilken, 2003, p. 44.

⁴⁹⁰ Wilken, 2003, p. 57 – 58.

Far from recognizing the legal existence of Christianity as some have claimed, the rescript of Hadrian to Minucius Fundanus does nothing else than to regulate certain forms of criminal procedure. On the one hand, Hadrian forbade magistrates to prosecute through petitions or by simple popular claims to apply the death penalty. The Emperor also demanded strict implementation of the rules of the criminal process: the charges should be done individually and sustained *pro tribunali, id est*, the formulation of the charge should be precise and pertaining to the laws in force. The proof of assertion was incumbent on the prosecution. If it would not be able to produce the proves, retaliatory severe penalties should be inflicted on the accusers, since it would have been proven to have acted out of meanness. Certainly the emperor intended to intimidate detractors. Hadrian restated that the Judiciary should be at the service of truth and public order. On the other hand, however, Hadrian confirmed the State's interest in punishing the Christian belief. The accused, when ordered by the magistrate, should perform an act of official worship⁴⁹¹ in honor of the gods of the Empire, or swear an oath to the genius or fortune of the Emperor. A refusal was sufficient to establish its guilt and to enforce the capital punishment.⁴⁹²

⁴⁹¹ Justin, *Apol*, I,24,2. To be free of charges, the person accused of Christianity should offer a libation, crown or sacrifice to the gods or the fortune of the Emperor.

⁴⁹² Munier, 2003, p. 59 – 61.

The *Nomen Christianum*

Justin knows that the *nomen christianum* is sufficient to cause prosecution and sentencing; but he carefully avoids to confront directly this crucial point. According to Lausberg⁴⁹³ this means that Justin limited himself in his peroration to develop arguments that belong to the *rationalis generis status*, without discussing what depends on the *generis status legalis*. Justin will face this point, without insistence, on *Apol.* I, 68,3 - 10.

Justin interprets the rescript of Hadrian in order to show that it demanded that Christians must be punished only if they committed common crimes regulated by criminal laws.⁴⁹⁴ In that regard, it is noteworthy that Justin does not linger thoroughly refuting the accusations which he defines as vulgar: (ritual murder, cannibalism and incest), whose enormity would make them improbable. Instead, Justin prefers to emphasize the dignity and courage of Christians led to torture and death.⁴⁹⁵⁴⁹⁶

Political Accusations

The reign of the Antonines had seen multiply manifestations to the glory of the Roman rulers and peace and the *temporum felicitas*. This ufanistic climate brought new accusations against the Christians about their social and political behavior. Some of these criticisms charged the Christians of being antisocial. Others argued that, by voluntarily remaining on the margins of urban life, the Christians would in reality be rebels against the Roman rule and would be plotting for its ruin. Justin points out that instead of inciting revolt, Christian religion invites its adherents to engage resolutely in building the society and to devote themselves to the common good without reservations.⁴⁹⁷ Justin also tries to undo the misunderstanding concerning the kingdom of God. The Christian philosopher argues

⁴⁹³ Lausberg, 1972, Paragraphs 149 – 197; 198 - 223.

⁴⁹⁴ Justin, *Apol.* I,68,10; II,2,16.

⁴⁹⁵ Justin, *Dial.* 10,2 and the comment of Bobichon in footnote 2.

⁴⁹⁶ Munier, 2003. p. 61 – 63.

⁴⁹⁷ Justin, *Apol.* I,12.

that if Christians wanted a human kingdom, they would deny being Christians when brought before the magistrates and would live hidden. By accepting torture and death instead of denying Christ, they demonstrated that God's kingdom is not of this earth.⁴⁹⁸ Justin takes up and develops the argument of moral transformation caused on Christians by the acceptance of Christian doctrines. The theme of moral transformation through philosophy was a traditional philosophic theme.⁴⁹⁹

Justin asserts that, contrarily to what their detractors say, the Christians would be the best citizens. The Christian excellent social behaviour would have been established by the will of God and fear of His judgment. Therefore, the loyalty of the Christians is without pretense. They pray for the health of the rulers and obey them in all, except on the worship, reserved to God alone.⁵⁰⁰

To support the Christian cause, Justin makes an appeal to the imperial ideology: Once the ruler is the architect and warrant of public peace, he will know how to evaluate the Christian contribution in this difficult task, since Christians are the most fervent allies for peace and the most ardent defenders of public morality.⁵⁰¹ Thus, Justin binds himself to a *topos* of the rhetoric of his time, according to which the true philosophy can be seen in its social utility. In fact, Justin claims for Christianity the title of "true philosophy".⁵⁰² As for Christians, they are not only "friends of wisdom" () but effectively "wise" ().⁵⁰³

Justin did not limit himself by making general statements, but actually proposes concrete measures against prostitution, magic and dissolution. He requires a strict engagement of the public

⁴⁹⁸ *Apol.*, I,11; 39.,5; 57,3; II,11,8.12.

⁴⁹⁹ Plato, *Gorgias*, 484.

⁵⁰⁰ Justin, *Apol.* I,17. Cf. Josephus, *Jewish War*, II,10,5.

⁵⁰¹ *Apol.*, I,12,1-4.

⁵⁰² *Apol.* II,12,5; 15,3.

⁵⁰³ *Apol.* I,7,3; 60,11.

power to stop the exposure of children.⁵⁰⁴ Henry Chadwick sees in these suggestions an anticipation of conception that ascribes to Church the role of the "conscience" of the State.⁵⁰⁵

Therefore, as a reaction to the licentiousness of manners, Justin outlines the ideal of self-control (ἑκαστοῦ) professed by the Christians as the rejection of exposure of children and divorce, both practices that were still very common, especially in the high society. The apologist then exalts the duty of loyalty between the spouses and the respect for the purposes of marriage, which are the basis of Christian family union's. As for prostitution, Justin does not limit himself to denounce it, but even accuses the imperial power to profit from this trade by charging taxes on it, rather than trying to eradicate it.⁵⁰⁶

The Charge of Impiety and Atheism

The refutation of the charge of atheism was written by Justin with great care, trying to favorably impress the emperor and his sons. However, as great as were his literary skill, this could not overcome the fact that, regarding the Pagan gods, the Christians were effectively "atheists". Firstly, the worship rendered to Christ *tamquam deo*⁵⁰⁷ is in itself an aggravated offense because, according to Cicero, no one could worship foreign or new gods, even privately before the deity in question being publicly included in the Roman pantheon by the Fathers (senators) through the rites laid down for it.⁵⁰⁸ Moreover, the fact that Christians refused to worship the gods of the city and to join the imperial cult was a rejection of all forms of polytheism. This attitude made them enemies of the Roman religion and also of the religions of other peoples of the Empire. Finally, the refusal to the imperial cult in *sede tribunalis*, made the Christians guilty of rebellious obstinacy (*obstinatio*) punishable by death.

⁵⁰⁴ *Apol.* I, 27;56; II,1 - 2.

⁵⁰⁵ Chadwick, 1964, p. 286.

⁵⁰⁶ Munier, 2003. p. 63 – 66.

⁵⁰⁷ Pliny, *Ep.* X,96 *apud* Wilken,2007, p. 50.

⁵⁰⁸ Cicero, *Leg.* II,7 *apud* Tertullian, *Apol.* 14,3.

When the Jews, long before, were accused of atheism, they defended themselves explaining that worshipped the one true God, creator of heaven and Earth. So, Justin adopts the same defensive line. He identifies two advantages in doing it: 1 - openly confessing the Christian faith in God, Creator and Father of all the Earth, he believes he can make comprehensible the worship of Christ as the true Son of God. Having thus set the Christian faith, Justin thinks he can accept, correctly understood, the charges of atheism and even plead guilty, thus making a radical critique of the official polytheism. The other apologists of the second century, in contrast, strongly rejected this accusation.⁵⁰⁹ By doing this, Justin can resume and appropriate the arguments in vindication of Socrates and put his own *peroratio* under the patronage of Plato.

Socrates asked his opponents to specify whether they considered him an atheist because he recognized other gods, different of those worshipped in the city, or because he recognized no god at all. This distinction allowed him to demonstrate to his opponents that they could individuate variations in atheism and that which was ascribed to him was perfectly compatible with a sincere piety.⁵¹⁰ Although these arguments resume the position of Justin, his real intention, however, is to retort the charge of atheism to the Heathen accusers. They are the real atheists.⁵¹¹ This type of complaint had already been made by the apologists of Hellenistic Judaism. As for the Jewish authors, the Pagan gods are demons and their worship is the product of demonic influence.⁵¹²

Other aspects of paganism criticized are: the sacrificial rites and mythology. To the traditional criticism of Plato, Xenocrates and Judaism, Justin adds as a counterpoint, the simplicity of the Christian religion and the charitable dimension of the Eucharistic assemblies.⁵¹³

⁵⁰⁹ Aristides, *Apol.* 4 and Athenagoras, *Leg.* 3 – 10.

⁵¹⁰ Plato, *ApS.* 26c; 27a.

⁵¹¹ Justin, *Apol.* I,6,13.

⁵¹² Cf. *Psalm* 96 (95),5 LXX; 106 (105) 36 LXX; *Isa.* 65,11 LXX; *Dial.* 79,4.

⁵¹³ Justin, *Apol.* I,10,1 cf. *Ps* 50 (49),7-15; *I Cron.* 29,11s; *Am.* 5,21s; *2Mac.* 14,35; *Ac.* 17,8h25; *Apol.* I, 13:1-2, 66.2, 67.1-2. See also the comments of Bobichon to *Dial.* 22,1, note 2 and *Apol.* I,13,1 – 2; 66,2; 67,1 – 2.

Mythology, on the other hand, offers a full plate to Justin: The apologist does not hide his contempt for the amorous adventures of Dionysus, Apollo and Zeus himself "parricide and the son of another parricide, slave of vile and vicious pleasures."⁵¹⁴ Justin considers obvious the diabolical origin of these fables "written to corrupt and pervert the youth."⁵¹⁵

As it turns out, Justin is not content to answer charges of impiety and atheism, but writes against his accusers. The procedure was common in the rhetoric of the time, but in this case, he gives a proof of a singular audacity. This retaliatory strikes not only the masses, whose blind hatred fosters slanders and prejudices, but reaches the very pagan religions as such and the emperor himself, since that, from Augustus' time onwards, the emperor was invested also at the office of *Pontifex Maximus*, consecrating the necessary conjunction between religion and politics. Besides, this accusation is especially offensive to Antoninus Pius, who performed his religious duties with great scruple and what understood himself as "the interpreter of the general laws, which do not feel the right to waive."⁵¹⁶

A commonplace of ancient philosophy is the one in which the custom (ἥθος), must submit to reason (λογος) and truth. It is this criterion that Justin refers when he states that traditional religion is not, in fact, nothing but costumes and transitional contingencies.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁴ Justin, *Apol.* I, 21,5; 25,1 - 3.

⁵¹⁵ Justin, *Apol.* I,21,6.

⁵¹⁶ Piganiol, 1949, p. 295.

⁵¹⁷ Munier, 2003, p. 66 – 71.

Christianity and Philosophy

Justin does not stop in proclaiming the innocence of the Christians and petitioning for their cause. What pressures him, because of his deep conviction, zeal of a converted and his dialectical temperament, was to convince his interlocutors about the truth of Christian doctrine and its superiority over other philosophies.

During the rule of the Antonines, philosophy had become widespread, especially among the upper classes, enjoying a real political power. Professional rhetoricians and philosophers disputed the favors of the sovereign. Especially under Marcus Aurelius, the Platonic ideal of a State governed by a philosopher prince seemed to be accomplished. The philosophers of the second century nurtured aversion to Christianity for several reasons: The major ones were the Christian faith in the Messiahship of Jesus, a crucified man, and in the doctrines of the incarnation and resurrection. Justin dedicates a large part of his *Apology* to refute the criticisms on Christian doctrines. Justin founded his defense on two pillars: on the one hand, he highlights the points of contact between philosophy and Christianity allying them in the struggle of reason and truth against polytheism; on the other hand, he strives to prove that Christian doctrine is superior to all Hellenistic philosophies.⁵¹⁸

Human Reason and Divine Logos

According to Justin, the mercilessly fight unleashed by the forces of evil against the true reason is exemplified by the death of Socrates. Such struggle is renewed every day in the persecutions of Christians instigated by demons. Demons are also instigating the pagan cults. It was exactly having denounced demonic maneuvers and intrigues, that Socrates was condemned as wicked and godless exactly as with Christians contemporary of Justin. Socrates was illuminated by the logos, the natural light of reason, Christians, in turn, are illuminated by the divine Logos incarnate in Jesus Christ.

⁵¹⁸ Munier, 2003, 72 – 73.

Justin says in *Apol.* I,46, 2-4 Socrates lived according to the Logos and in *Apol.* II,10,8 that Socrates "partially knew Christ."⁵¹⁹ For Justin, Socrates and the Christians are engaged in the same battle for truth and justice, but they have different weapons. The human reason that animates philosophy is capable of rousing the highest truths: reason was able to discover the notion of a creator God and His providence, as well as the notion of a universal moral law, of which he is the author and warrant. However, the inherent weakness of human nature leaves room for evil demons who hinder the truth. These are allied to the evil passions of men and drag them to error and vices. Christians, however, having received the teaching of the Incarnate Logos, have access to the full truth that the Son of God came to reveal to men. For Christians, Jesus Christ is the divine master (μ), whose teachings removed the Christians from to the power of demons, which gives Christians the duty to lead a blameless life. *Apol.* II, 13 is an exact replica of *Apol.* I, 5 and incorporates these two topics with which Justin, from the start had defined the relationship between philosophy and Christianity. This time, however, the apologist shows the limits of human reason in its search for the truth of the good and therefore the need of divine revelation made with fullness in the person of the incarnate Logos.⁵²⁰

The Seminal Logos (μ) Concept

Although Justin enjoys pointing out the similarities between the teachings of Plato and Christ, yet the apologist notes that both are not identical. The same applies to the doctrines taught by other thinkers as the Stoics, poets and prose writers.⁵²¹ Each of them taught good things because they participated in the divine Logos seminal (μ); but, as they contradicted each other even in the essential things, it is shown that they did not possess the infallible science and irrefutable knowledge ($\acute{\omega}$). These belong only to the Christians who, by sheer grace, have the proper object

⁵¹⁹ Puech, 1928, p. 55 used the terms "reason", "Reason" and "Word" to specify the various nuances of the term logos in Justin, but ends admitting that it is an almost impossible task to accomplish.

⁵²⁰ Munier, 2003. p. 73 – 75.

⁵²¹ *Apol.* II,7(8).

of perfect gnosis in the person of the divine Logos incarnate in Jesus. To the objections of the intellectuals for whom to profess Christianity cannot be anything worthy of a wise man, Justin responds with conviction that all philosophies have failed in one way or another in their quest for intellectual and moral truth, this search does not find a safe and permanent answer but in the Christian response.⁵²² Accordingly, the Christian doctrine is the only true philosophy. Certainly thanks to the seed of the Logos, planted on them, the philosophers and legislators of Antiquity could glimpse the "real" divine realities (δ ὄ), but it always happened partially.⁵²³

Justin was the first Christian writer to use the concept of spermatic Logos, developed by himself to get into dialogue with the philosophy of his time. By doing so, Justin opened to Christianity vast paths not only towards ancient philosophy, but in general toward different cultures.⁵²⁴

The Origins of the Concept

Aware of the enormous importance of this concept, historians have been searching for its origins. Basically, these are the following: the philosophical eclecticism of the time, especially Stoicism and Middle Platonism; the Hellenistic Judaism, especially Philo. Besides, One should not forget the Christian tradition, according to which there were two ways for the human mind to perceive God: the view of nature (natural theology) and the perception of the moral law imprinted in the human heart.⁵²⁵ Though not mentioned expressly, by Justin, the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13 probably stimulated his reflections concerning the development of the concept of the seminal logos, since the universal activity of the Sower implies the image of seeds of truth and virtue spread to all humanity since its origins.

⁵²² Munier, 2003, p. 75 – 76.

⁵²³ cf *Apol.* II, 13, 6.

⁵²⁴ Munier, 2003, p. 77 – 79.

⁵²⁵ Cf. Romans 1-2; Acts 17.

True Philosophy

Several historians emphasized that Justin is liable to the Hellenistic Jewish apologetics on the subject of true philosophy, the central axis of his apology. To establish the excellence of the religion of Israel, the Hellenistic Judaism held a systematic comparison between the Jewish doctrine and Greek philosophy. Justin inserts himself in this tradition when presenting Christianity as the true philosophy, above the achievements of Greek thought.

Justin also depends on Hellenistic Judaism for the theory of derivations, one of the key points of the Hellenistic Jewish apologetics. Already before 150 BCE, Aristobulus of Alexandria dared to say that the Aristotelian philosophy had been copied from the Law of Moses and the writings of the Prophets. He said that even before the Septuagint, there was a Greek translation of the Scriptures, through which Plato and Pythagoras were inspired. Philo, in turn, multiplies his efforts to prove that the Greeks are nothing more than skillful imitators of ancient Jewish wisdom. It was Heraclitus who have learned from Moses the doctrine of the opposites. It would also have been Moses who transmitted to the Stoics the principle of the primacy of virtue.⁵²⁶

The Theory of Plagiarism

Although it may appear paradoxical, these ideas found acceptance in the learned circles of the High Empire, sensitive to the wisdom of ancient civilizations.⁵²⁷ Plato's biographers mention a trip of his to Egypt; could not be in that occasion, he had come into contact with the writings of Moses? The neo-Pythagorean philosopher Numenius, a contemporary of Justin, admitted without difficulty, the theory of derivation developed by the Judeo-Christian apologetic literature. Clearly Justin found support on these ideas, but when developing his version of the theory of derivations, Justin radicalized

⁵²⁶ Munier, 2011, p. 79 - 80. Goodenough, op. cit. p. 109-122. Philo, *Quis rerum divinarum heres sit*, 2,14 and *Quaestiones in Genesim*, IV,167.

⁵²⁷ Celsus admits the possibility of the theory of plagiarism. See *Contra Celsum* IV,39.

the derivation of Plato and Stoa from Moses by claiming that Moses and the Prophets are the only source of the best achievements of Greek thought; because the revelation of the Logos was in the Scriptures, before its completion in Jesus Christ the incarnate Logos. Despite noting the similarities between the teachings of Plato and Moses, or between the Stoa and Deuteronomy, Justin does not accuse the Greeks of intellectual theft or lack of intelligence by the alleged plagiarism, as will numerous apologists after him will do. Although he stated categorically "not us who profess the same doctrines of others, but they are all others who continue to imitate and repeat ours"⁵²⁸; he continued to testify his respect for philosophy, especially Plato's.⁵²⁹ P. 82.

The Only Christian Truth

Taking up an image of the *Philebus*, Justin declares that "philosophy was sent to the men down here from the top of the divine regions"⁵³⁰. This philosophy is one and dates back from the more distant past, because men were taught by the son of God, which is His Logos, his Angel and Apostle. Justin gladly acknowledges that the Logos sower spread seeds of truth in the Greek philosophers and poets. However, this image suggests that the growth and maturation of these seeds still require much time. As seen, the apologist boldly uses the widespread belief of his time of a single primordial philosophy as sustenance for his demonstration of the unique truth possessed by the Christian doctrine. Heir of Moses, "older than all the Greek writers"⁵³¹ Christian truth can be worth the prestige that attaches to a venerable tradition.

⁵²⁸ *Apol.* I,60,10.

⁵²⁹ Munier, 2011, p. 80 – 82.

⁵³⁰ Allusion to *Philebus* 16C.

⁵³¹ *Apol.* I, 44,8.

The Prophetic Argument

For Justin, the certainty of the divine origin of Christianity, the guarantee of its truth, is based on tangible evidence entered in the achievements of history.⁵³² In other words, the prophetic argument reveals that existed among the Jews certain men who were prophets of God. Through them the prophetic Spirit announced future things before their completion.⁵³³ To support this argument, the apologist appeals to the Septuagint, indicating the traditional story of its creation: the prophecies were written in Hebrew and translated into Greek by the will of King Ptolemy.⁵³⁴ Justin bases his arguments on the prophetic Jewish scriptures but claims the right to read them according to his own Christian tradition that came from the apostles.⁵³⁵

According to Justin, the Christian tradition merely explains the teachings that the risen Christ sent his apostles.⁵³⁶ As for the Jews, who were the ancient possessors of the prophecies and always expected the Christ who was to come, these have failed to recognize him when he came. The Gentiles, on the contrary, who have never heard of Christ, when they heard the history and prophecies concerning the Christ, immediately obeyed him.⁵³⁷ Therefore, Justin says that, since all Christians have received from the apostles the true meaning of the Scriptures, it was Christ himself who taught their understanding of the Scriptures. This scheme outlined by Justin has established itself as the standard for the entire early Christian apologetic tradition.⁵³⁸

⁵³² *Dial.* 23,4.

⁵³³ *Apol.* I,31,1.

⁵³⁴ *Apol.*, I, 31.1 – 5.

⁵³⁵ *Dial.* 85,2.

⁵³⁶ *Apol.* I,50,12; *Dial.* 53,5; 76,6.

⁵³⁷ *Apol.* I,49,5.

⁵³⁸ MUNIER, op. cit. p. 90 – 92.

Chapter 3 – The *Verus Israel* from Paul to Justin

Paul of Tarsus and the conversion of the Gentiles

Paul was undoubtedly the first Christian theologian of history. His letters effectively laid the foundation of Christian theology, as would be developed by the Church for the next two millennia. We can see the clear influence of the ideas of Paul in patristic literature. Among the tributaries of Paul we can mention: Justin himself, whose work *Dialogue with Trypho* will be analyzed in this chapter; Clement of Alexandria, Ignatius of Antioch, Marcion, Irenaeus of Lyons, Origen, among many others. On the threshold of the Middle Ages we have Augustine, whose form of Paulinism largely dominated Western Christendom in the following *millenium*; at the end of the Medieval times, the renewal of interest on Paul by the Protestant and Roman Catholic Reformations; and in modern times, the neo-orthodox movement started by Karl Barth. More recently, the studies on Paul gained a new momentum with the so called “New Perspective on Paul”⁵³⁹. In this sense, Paul has remained unchallenged nor was substituted. He was, and in fact remains, a key player in the development of Christian religious identity. It was Paul who laid the premises to make Christianity a religion independent of Judaism.

According to an ancient tradition passed down by Jerome⁵⁴⁰ Paul, formerly called Saul, was a member of a family descendant of the tribe of Benjamin, born in the town of Giscalis in Judea. By the time of Roman invasion, his family moved to Tarsus in Cilicia. The young Saul was then sent to Jerusalem to study the Law, being a disciple of the famous rabbi Gamaliel. The Acts of the Apostles presents Paul as a witness of the execution of Stephen⁵⁴¹, and also as an agent sent by the Sanhedrin to Damascus in Syria in order to arrest the Christians among the Jewish community of that city⁵⁴². Also according to the Christian tradition, when reaching the outskirts of Damascus, Paul had a supernatural

⁵³⁹ Dunn, 2003, P. 27 – 30.

⁵⁴⁰ *De Viris Illustribus* V.

⁵⁴¹ Ac. 7,58.

⁵⁴² Ac.9,1.

vision of the resurrected Jesus who accused Paul of pursuing him. As a result of the vision, Paul was blinded and driven to town. After three days of fasting and prayer in isolation, he was baptized and retrieved the vision.⁵⁴³ Paul says that he spent about three years in the Arabian Desert in prayers and learning, after which he began his missionary apostolate, which he held until his death. According to an ancient Christian tradition recorded by Eusebius, Paul was beheaded in Rome in the year by order of Nero.⁵⁴⁴

According to the narrative of Acts, after his conversion to Christianity, Paul took part in the active evangelization of the Gentiles. In the meanwhile, some Hellenized Jewish - Christians who fled from Jerusalem to Antioch of Syria after the death of Stephen, started preaching there the Christian message both to the local Jewish community, and to the Greeks. Their success in obtaining conversions from the Gentiles attracted the attention of the apostles in Jerusalem, who sent Barnabas to them. After an initial stay in Antioch, Barnabas traveled to Tarsus in search of Paul. So Paul and Barnabas stayed at Antioch for one year, consolidating the local Christian community.⁵⁴⁵

Regarding how Paul came to consider himself as being appointed by God to be the "Apostle to the Gentiles", we find the answer in the accounts of Acts. Paul first preached at the synagogues and only after his presence had become a source of troubles and contrasts, he addressed the Gentiles. Negative experiences among the Jews and positive ones among the Gentiles forged his apostolic conviction. However, his universalist eschatological doctrine should not be underestimated. In Paul's mind, participation in the Messianic kingdom was a prerogative of the last generation of humanity, since his generation saw the advent of Christ. Apart from of faith in Christ, the elect ones cannot attain the eternal salvation at the end of times. Only in communion with the risen Christ, the Gentiles may enter with him in the messianic glory. For Paul this implies the absolute necessity for the Gentiles to

⁵⁴³ Ac. 9,1-18.

⁵⁴⁴ Historia Ecclesiastica II,25,5.8.

⁵⁴⁵ Ac. 11,19 – 26.

hear the preaching of the Gospel, without which their salvation is not possible.⁵⁴⁶ The second reason, and certainly the most important to Paul, has to do with the election of Israel. Dissatisfied with the Jewish refusal to recognize Jesus as its Messiah, and struggling within himself with the scriptural promises made to Abraham and his descendants, Paul comes to the conclusion that the "hardness of heart" from most of the Jews is something temporary that will last only in the meanwhile necessary for the salvation of the full number of Gentiles destined to be saved. Likewise, Paul says in his Letter to the Romans⁵⁴⁷ that his interest in evangelizing the Gentiles was to enable the salvation of Israel.

Another key point of Pauline theology inherently related to the above for understanding the process of creating a Christian identity is his conception of the relationship between Jewish law and faith in Christ. The distinctive character of Paul's doctrine regarding the Mosaic Law derives from his universalist eschatological hope. He believed that the Gentiles were called to enter the Messianic kingdom as Gentile Christians, not as Jews who believe in Christ. At first sight it seems to be a difference of little importance, but it is precisely this conviction that prevents Paul to allow Gentiles to be circumcised and observe the rituals of the Law.

Regarding the Law, Paul made paradoxical statements. On the one hand he clearly states that the Law is no longer in effect. On the other hand, he says that those who observe the Law, are subject to it, and die under it. Still: the converted Gentiles are prohibited from practicing the Law under penalty of eternal damnation, but the Jewish adherents of Christianity can continue living under the Law without exposing themselves to any danger.⁵⁴⁸ Basically, the Pauline theology comes down to explain in what sense the Law is no longer valid and how believers in Christ must behave on this regard, as we will see in the next section.

⁵⁴⁶ *Rom.* 10, 13 - 15.

⁵⁴⁷ 11, 13ff.

⁵⁴⁸ *Gal.* 5, 1-5

The First Jewish - Christian Conflict and the Council of Jerusalem

According to the account of Acts⁵⁴⁹, the initial conversions to faith in Christ of Hellenistic Jews and Gentile God Fearers, started soon after the Pentecost of 30 AD. These events introduced the Christians to the Gentile mission of Judaism, whose main characteristic was a greater freedom from the Law. Yet, most of the Jews of Jerusalem and Diaspora and also many Pharisees were unwilling to loosen the requirements of the Law even for new converts. Their fear was the loss of Jewish identity by exposure to Hellenistic culture by their cohabitation with the Gentiles.⁵⁵⁰ So, it is understandable that the first internal disagreement within the Jewish - Christian community of Jerusalem occurred because of divergencies between Jews of various shades of hellenization. The Jewish Christians of Hellenistic origin protested with the Apostles claiming that their widows, were not being properly assisted. Thus, the case of the widows of the Hellenists was a reflection of the cultural and doctrinal differences within Judaism, now reproduced in the incipient Jewish - Christian community in Jerusalem. The incident was solved by appointing a group, the "Seven", under the supervision of the "Twelve", in charge of the poor Hellenistic Jewish - Christians.⁵⁵¹

It did not take long for the Hellenistic to enter into conflict again, this time with the non-Christian Jews of the Diaspora synagogue in Jerusalem, who denounced the Hellenistic Jewish - Christian Stephen before the Sanhedrin on the charge of blasphemy against the Temple and the Law. From the speech attributed to Stephen before the Sanhedrin, we can see that this group of Hellenistic Jewish - Christians assumed a much more radical position than that of the Apostles regarding the Law and the Temple. This position is closer to that of Jesus in its final phase.⁵⁵²

⁵⁴⁹ Ac. 2,9 – 10.

⁵⁵⁰ Schröter, 2013, p. 156. For good examples of hellenization and syncretism, see: Williams, 2008, p. 65 – 69.

⁵⁵¹ Ac. 6,1-6.

⁵⁵² Ac. 6, 8 – 7,54; Dunn, 2006, p. 90.

Although this episode is reported by Luke in terms of persecution against the community of Jerusalem, his own observation about the permanence of the Apostles in the city (At.8,1) is an indication that the Sanhedrin actually tried to purge Jewish - Christianity from of its most radical elements and bring them back to the conformism of the normative Judaism about the Temple and the Law, *id est*, back to the relatively nomic limits of first century Judaism. This intervention of the Sanhedrin was repeated in 62, when James "the Just" was killed. Considering the "Judaizing" tendencies of the Jewish - Christian circles linked to the 12 Apostles⁵⁵³ we see that the Sanhedrin came very close to keeping the Jewish - Christian community of Jerusalem as one of the several existing branches of first century Judaism.

According to the report contained in chapter 15 of Acts, some Jewish - Christians from Judea went to visit the Christian community of Antioch and taught the gentile Christians that, if they do not allow being circumcised, they could not be saved. There was an immediate clash between them and Paul and Barnabas, who were in charge of that community. As none of the conflicting opinions prevailed, the local community decided to send Paul, Barnabas, and some of those Jewish - Christians to Jerusalem to seek advice from the Apostles. When they arrived, there were great discussions, and James, leader of the Jerusalem's community, proposed that the only injunctions to be imposed would be the "commandments of Noah,"⁵⁵⁴ which were nothing more than the conditions the synagogues already applied to the God fearer gentiles. At the end of the debates, the Apostles wrote a letter to be

⁵⁵³ Ac.15,6-11.

⁵⁵⁴ The seven laws considered by rabbinic tradition as the minimal moral duties enjoined by the Bible on all men (Sanh. 56-60; Yad, Melakhim, 8:10, 10:12). Jews are obligated to observe the whole Torah, while every non-Jew is a "son of the covenant of Noah" (see Gen. 9), and he who accepts its obligations is a *ger-toshav* ("resident-stranger" or even "semi-convert"; see Av. Zar. 64b; Maim. Yad, Melakhim 8:10). Maimonides equates the "righteous man (*asid*) of the [gentile] nations" who has a share in the world to come even without becoming a Jew with the gentile who keeps these laws. Such a man is entitled to full material support from the Jewish community (see ET, 6 (1954), col. 289 S.V. *ger toshav*) and to the highest earthly honors (*Sefer asidim* (1957), 358). The seven Noachide laws as traditionally enumerated are: the prohibitions of idolatry, blasphemy, bloodshed, sexual sins, theft, and eating from a living animal, as well as the injunction to establish a legal system (Tosef., Av. Zar. 8:4; Sanh. 56a). Except for the last, all are negative, and the last itself is usually interpreted as commanding the enforcement of the others (Maim. Yad, Melakhim, 9:1). They are derived exegetically from divine demands addressed to Adam (Gen. 2:16) and Noah (see Gen. R. 34; Sanh. 59b), i.e., the progenitors of all mankind, and are thus regarded as universal. Schwarzchild In: Berenbaum & Skolnik, 2007, p. 284 – 287.

read in the Christian communities of the Diaspora. If, on the one hand, the Apostles did not impose on the Gentiles the circumcision or other rites of Law, on the other hand, the apostles also not forbade the gentile Christians of voluntarily taking these ordinances. This was the interpretation the "Twelve" gave at the council. So much so, the famous episode of the disagreement between Paul and Peter at Antioch was because Peter, yielding to the scruples of a group of Jewish - Christians linked to James refused to eat with the gentile Christians because of their non-circumcision.⁵⁵⁵ Given this situation, Paul said in his *Epistle to the Galatians* that justification before God is attained solely through faith in Christ.⁵⁵⁶ Therefore, Paul's interpretation of the Council was that the precepts of Noah constituted the statute of the Gentile Christian. No additions were admissible.

This understanding of salvation through faith in Christ forbidding the Gentile Christians of performing Jewish ritual was an essential step to make Christianity a religion independent from Judaism. Although at no time Paul argued that Christianity constituted a different faith, it is clear that this was his historical role. He developed Christology and preached tirelessly against maintaining the Jewish way of life⁵⁵⁷. The Council of the Apostles did not put an end to the question of the Mosaic Law. The relationship between the Christian and the Law trailed throughout the first century and entered the next century as one of the main points of disagreement among Jews, Jewish Christians, and Gentile Christians. There are indications that in the post - conciliar years, Paul had lost much of his influence. This was due to the following factors: the Jewish - Christians had the advantage of being much closer ideologically to the Jewish communities of the Diaspora upon which Paul relied for his missionary activity and also had recognized leaders who had lived with Jesus, which confirmed their interpretation of the Gospel. Paul, on the other hand, could only use his mystical vision, which often

⁵⁵⁵ *Gal.* 2,12.

⁵⁵⁶ *Gal.* 2,16 - 21

⁵⁵⁷ Flusser, 2002, v.3, p. 177

sounded to his interlocutors as self-promotion, and therefore created among them a rejection of a non Law observant Christian faith version.⁵⁵⁸

Meanwhile, the province of Judea from the 50s and 60s witnessed the rise of insurrectionist activities against the Roman rule, with groups of zealots acting in rural areas and *sicarii* attacking their victims in large urban gatherings. An atmosphere of violence and xenophobia took over Judea.⁵⁵⁹

With the first Jewish War 66-70, the Jewish – Christian community of Jerusalem disappeared. A target for discussions among scholars is the tradition about the exodus of Jerusalem’s Jewish Christians to a town of Perea called Pella, what may have made possible the survival of that community.⁵⁶⁰ The end of Jerusalem’s Jewish Christian community paved the way to Rome and Antioch as the new main centers of Christianity, around which the other churches began to cluster. Consequently, all the understanding about the Christian way of life was changed. The Pauline understanding of justification by faith in Christ, apart from the works of the Law became more accepted. However, some groups of Jewish - Christians refused to accept the new paradigms and became stigmatized within Christianity as heretical sects. A classic example is that of the Ebionites, present in Syria and Palestine. They were considered heretics for not accepting the mainstream Christology and continuing following a Jewish life style.⁵⁶¹

The destruction of the Temple has imposed major changes not only to the Christians but also to the Jews. Once without the Temple, the Jews started reorganizing themselves exclusively around the Pharisaic movement and their synagogues. They also sought to exclude from their midst those religious groups who challenged the new standards. It did not take long in anathematizing the Jewish - Christians. At about 90, the Jewish Council at Jamnia reformulated the synagogue liturgy and rewrote

⁵⁵⁸ Johnson, 2001, p. 55-56.

⁵⁵⁹ Horsley & Hanson, 1995, p 173-175.

⁵⁶⁰ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, III,5,3.

⁵⁶¹ Flusser, 2001, v.2, p.15.

the *Birkat – ha -Minim*, () *i.e.*, the twelfth of the liturgical Eighteen Blessings, in a manner to include the “Nazarenes”, ie, the Jewish - Christians among the heretics cursed by the “blessing”. This new version of the “benediction” against heretics was written, according to Jewish tradition, by Shmuel ha - Katan, during the presidency of Nasi Rabban Gamliel II at Jamnia (c. 80 - 110), as follows:

For the apostates let there be no hope. And let the arrogant government be speedily uprooted in our days. Let the no erim and the minim be destroyed in a moment. And let them be blotted out of the Book of Life and not be inscribed together with the righteous. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who humblest the arrogant".⁵⁶²

Its goal was to detect the presence of Jewish - Christians in the synagogues. Certainly, a Jewish-Christian would try omitting the "Amen" for that part which relates to the "Nazarenes". This leads us to conclude that if there was the need to create a way to detect the Judeo-Christians, it is because they continued to attend synagogue as ordinary members. Moreover, if these Jewish - Christians were initially accepted in the synagogues, this indicates both that they considered themselves primarily Jews, as well as most of the Jews non believers in Jesus thought they did not need to cut any social relationship with the first group.^{563 564}

However, the actual separation between the two religious communities deepened from the following century, with the events that followed the Second Jewish War against the Roman rule, led by Simon bar Kokhba between 132 - 135. In the meantime, it seems that the Jewish Christians continued

⁵⁶² Ehrlich, 2007, p. 711.

⁵⁶³ Parkes, 1974, p.78

⁵⁶⁴ Despite the existence of a debate if the original version of the *Birkat ha - Minim* included or not the "Notzrim", most scholars still agree that the Jewish - Christian were included in the *berakhah* alongside the heretics (*minim*) in a very early stage of the Jewish – Christian separation. See for instance: Davies, W.D.; Finkelstein, L.; Katz, S.T. (Eds.) *The Cambridge History of Judaism: The late Roman-Rabbinic period* 2006, p. 291: "He (Gedaliah Alon) proposes that the original Yavnean version of the *Birkat ha-Minim*, following the medieval Genizah fragment, included both *minim* and 'Nazarenes,' and that 'in this³ liturgical fragment *minim* and *Notzrim* are synonymous, ie, that both refer to the Jewish Christians.' But Alon's 'assumption' about the form of the original version is unconvincing, and this not least because, if the terms *minim* and *Notzrim* are synonymous, there would be no need for both of them in the benediction. Thus, as already argued, it appears more reasonable to suspect that *Notzrim* was added to a pre-existing malediction after the period of Yavneh – and most likely after the Bar Kochba Revolt (or later)".

hoping that non Christian Jews would accept Jesus as their Messiah, but those hopes collapsed when the already famous rabbi Aqiba proclaimed Bar Kokhba as the King Messiah, under strong popular acclaim. At this point in time there was a deep split between the Judaism of Jerusalem and the Jewish - Christian community that had been reconstituted there. With the refusal of the Jewish - Christians in recognizing Bar Kokhba as their Messiah and taking arms against the Romans, the Jewish Christians were persecuted by Bar Kokhba and many were killed. After the failure of the revolt and destruction of the city, the Jews were forbidden by the emperor Hadrian of entering Jerusalem, which was rebuilt as a pagan city, *Aelia Capitolina*.⁵⁶⁵ A Gentile bishop was then assigned to assist the Gentile Christians of Jerusalem. This Gentile bishop symbolized the opening of a gulf between Jews and Christians.⁵⁶⁶

Importantly, even with official determinations made by the Christian clergy forbidding Gentile Christians to observe the Torah, and those of Jewish rabbis excluding the Jewish believers in Jesus from the synagogues, between the second and the fourth centuries there were several groups that were placed midway between the orthodoxies of the two religions, which also demonstrates that the faithful were much more tolerant and conciliatory than their leaders were willing to allow. This also leads us to the conclusion that although the official separation between the two religious associations began at the end of the first century, it would be historically incorrect to assume that all the Christians and Jews of the period would have experienced such a sharp distinction between themselves⁵⁶⁷.

⁵⁶⁵ Goodman, p. 556 – 560.

⁵⁶⁶ Parkes, 1974, p. 93; Goodman (2012, p. 552) prefers to reconstruct the history of the revolt led by Bar Kokhba as the Jewish response to the founding of *Aelia Capitolina* Roman colony in place of the Jerusalem devastated by Titus in 70, and the building of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus on the ruins of Herod's Temple; unlike, as is common among some modern historians, who follow the narrative of Eusebius. Goodman justifies his opinion by reporting the discovery of caches left by Jewish fighters containing Roman coins with the name of the pagan colony with coins minted by Bar Kokhba's followers. This finding would confirm the order of events narrated by Dion Cassius (69,12,1).

⁵⁶⁷ Parkes, 1974 p. 94-95

The Historical Context of the *Dialogue with Trypho*

The *Dialogue with Trypho* was written some years after the *Apology*, therefore, about the year 160. It is set in the years of the Second Jewish War led by Bar Kokhba (132 - 135).⁵⁶⁸ The work begins presenting Justin being approached by Trypho and his companions, a group of Jewish refugees from the war⁵⁶⁹; When Justin declared his Christian faith, immediately began a long debate on the Scriptures that lasted two days and takes up most of the work.⁵⁷⁰ The true “dialogue with Trypho”, however, is preceded by the important *Prologue*, in which Justin tells the reader his intellectual journey and how he approached Christianity. The *Prologue* contains the dialogue between Justin and the mysterious Christian elder. This one, after having deconstructed the convictions of the young Justin upon some philosophical doctrines such as *metempsychosis*, addresses Justin to the Hebrew Prophets, presented as witnesses of a truth that is not derived from rational speculation, but from divine revelation. These are the reasons why Justin presented himself as a philosopher.⁵⁷¹

From the content point of view, the *Dialogue* records the conflict between Gentile Christianity and Judaism, but also between that and the Hellenistic culture; the two fronts in which the Great Church had to battle during the second century.⁵⁷² Gentile Christianity was therefore taken to respond to questions and challenges ranging from the simple doctrinal objection to active persecution. Took part in this effort, not only church leaders, but also lay persons with the adequate intellectual preparation, such as the philosophers Aristides, Athenagoras, Justin himself, and rhetoricians such Miltiades.

⁵⁶⁸ Visonà, 2009, p. 19, cf. *Dial.* 1,3; 9,3; 16,2; 92,3; 110,6.

⁵⁶⁹ Visonà, 2009, p. 19.

⁵⁷⁰ *Dial.* 10 – 141.

⁵⁷¹ *Dial.* 8,2 – 3.

⁵⁷² Visonà, p. 20.

The geographical expansion of Christianity and its penetration in virtually all social strata⁵⁷³, together with its gradual detachment from the Jewish matrix, not mentioning the prolonging of the wait for the *parousia*, imposed to the Church a new understanding of the times and modes of its presence in the world. Additionally, the objections and questionings were originated not only from the outside, but also found resonance within the Christian communities, since Christians were from both, Pagan and Jewish origins; and all of them were inserted in the Hellenistic culture common to the Greco – Roman society of the day. Thus, Christianity was called to justify its existence, beliefs and practices, not only to the outsiders, but also to the insiders.⁵⁷⁴

From this struggle, both internal and external, the Great Church comes out with the self - consciousness as being the bearer of a tradition that mirrors the faith in Christ as transmitted by the Apostles; begins the process of canonization of the New Testament; develops the notion of apostolic succession, according to which the bishops are configured as successors of the Apostles, not only in their functional role, but also in their charisms. Consequently, the statements of the bishops were seen as a part of the Apostolic Tradition, guaranteed by the Scripture and the continuous Church teaching; finally, we have the most ancient crystallizations of the Tradition in the baptismal symbols of faith.⁵⁷⁵

We already have discussed at length about the emergence of orthodoxy from mid – second century onwards, as a result of the struggle against the movements considered heterodox by the Great church leaders. There is not need of repeating the same arguments here. We would like, however, just to highlight the fact that the Gnostic and Marcionite movements proposed a great challenge for the Great Church, among other reasons, also because their theories undermine the very structure of the salvation history. The Great Church, thus, developed its response as a *theology of history* in order to assert the unity of the Old and New Testaments. Such a response found a better structured statement in

⁵⁷³ Stark, 2007, p. 49 – 54.

⁵⁷⁴ Visonà, 2009, p. 21.

⁵⁷⁵ Visonà, 2009, p. 25 – 26.

the *Adversus Haeresis* of Irenaeus of Lyon, a work in five volumes, written around 180. Irenaeus had a formidable unitary vision of salvation history, *ie*, he inextricably linked the creation to the eschatology, having Christ as the second Adam as his theological axis. Irenaeus presented Christ as the one who recapitulates human history and relaunches it to its fulfillment. If in Gnosticism man's perfection was in the beginning and salvation is a return to the primal condition, in Irenaeus perfection is projected into the future, in the fulfillment of the divine project started in creation. This represents an appreciation of the human history through the notion of the progressive development of humanity.⁵⁷⁶

Notwithstanding, it is Justin the first theologian of history. He situated in Christ, both Pagan (through the *Logos* doctrine), and Jewish (the typological interpretation of the Old Testament) cultures. For Justin, the truth that the Greek philosophers have tried to seek and could only glimpse, as well as the prophecies and events of the Hebrew Scriptures, have their fulfillment in Christ and the Church.

Although Justin's specifically anti – Gnostic and anti - Marcionite writings have not come to us, the *Dialogue* itself constitutes a strong response to the doctrines of those, by establishing the only divine "economy" that dialectically links the Old and the New Testament, *ie*, the God "creator of all things ", the " God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob " to the " God Father of Jesus Christ ".⁵⁷⁷

Visonà agrees with the view predominant among the scholars that sees Justin as a patient and tolerant towards Trypho and his companions. However, it would be anachronistic to assign to Justin a dialogical attitude in the modern sense of the term. Dialogue, in Ancient times, is a well - defined literary genre, provided with precise rules. The author directs the argumentation using the dialogic method to make the reader discover a truth that he already has. Justin never departs from the certainty

⁵⁷⁶ Visonà, 2009, p. 26.

⁵⁷⁷ Visonà, 2009, p. 27 - 28. Cf. *Dial.* 35,4 - 6 (Marcionites and Gnostics) and *Apol.* I, 26.58 (Marcion).

that the truths about the issues under discussion are present in his opinions. The only thing that Jews can do to attain truth is to abandon their own convictions and become Christians.

Notwithstanding, scholars have always considered the *Dialogue* as having a different tone regarding the rest of the early Christian literature on Judaism, and having a different tone also in relation to the general environment of relations between Jews and Christians. The confrontation is portrayed as firm, but respectful, even friendly, never aimed at humiliating the counterpart. It significantly concludes without the conversion of the Jews, something that would be expected in such a literature.⁵⁷⁸

Trypho is always shown in a good mood, truly interested in putting his questions before Justin. Trypho even accepts some of the explanations of the Christian Philosopher.⁵⁷⁹ At the end of the debate, Trypho regrets not being able to extend the talks, and declares to have found more than he previously expected. He also asks Justin to remember them as friends. Justin, in turn, promises to pray for them embrace faith in Christ.⁵⁸⁰

However, in our times there were those who challenged this consolidated perception of a tolerant and irenic Justin. B.Z. Bokser said: "Justin has contributed not a little to the bitter legacy of violence, in words and deeds that the Church inflicted on the Jewish people." According to Bokser, the basic argument of the *Dialogue* would be the "denigration of the Jewish people".⁵⁸¹

In fact, Justin presented a slew of charges against the Jews, completely disproportionate with the behavior attributed to Trypho and his companions.⁵⁸² Justin attributes to the Jews a general tendency to idolatry and wickedness, accuses them of killing the righteous from biblical times including Jesus,

⁵⁷⁸ Visonà, 2009, p. 46 – 47.

⁵⁷⁹ *Dial.* 28,1; 63,1; 65,7; 67,7- 8; 89, 1.

⁵⁸⁰ *Dial.* 142.

⁵⁸¹ Bokser, 1973, p. 122.

⁵⁸² *Dial.* 28,1; 63,1; 65,7; 67,7 – 8; 89,1 etc.

and then of turning themselves against the Christians. The theme of the Jews' hardness of heart is one of the axes around which the arguments of Justin revolve through the *Dialogue*. The high point of the anti-Jewish discussion is the interpretation of circumcision as a sign for distinguishing the Jews from other peoples, in order to make them the target of the divine wrath, which came through the military defeat imposed by the Romans, and the prohibition to enter Jerusalem.⁵⁸³

Other authors who also considered Justin intolerant were Hoffmann⁵⁸⁴, Joly⁵⁸⁵ and Rokeah. The latter even wrote: “[...] I hope to fulfill my ambitions at least in part by publishing in a similar format Tertullian’s *Against the Jews*, which owes much to Justin, as well as the polemical work of John Chrysostom, who surpasses them both in the vehemence of his attacks upon the Jews and Judaism, and his hatred and malicious slander of Israel.”⁵⁸⁶ This is a simplistic interpretation that reads the *Dialogue* uncritically, by trying to draw a conclusion about Justin’s personal character. Such critics have not sought to understand the reasons for the textual anomalies for which sometimes we have a sincere and constructive debate, another times, an intolerant charge. To understand such discrepancies we should discuss the fundamental question of the historicity of the *Dialogue*, an inquiry that raises the question of what audience was intended by Justin to his *Dialogue*.

⁵⁸³ Visonà, 2009, p. 48 – 49, cf. *Dial.* 16,2.

⁵⁸⁴ 1966, p. 10 – 28.

⁵⁸⁵ 1973, p. 11 – 74.

⁵⁸⁶ 2002, p. VII – VIII.

The Historicity of the *Dialogue* and its Addressees

The historicity of the *Dialogue* sets on two levels: 1 – The relations between Jews and Christians in Justin times; 2 - The historical reality of the meeting between Justin and Trypho.⁵⁸⁷

Certainly the confrontation with Judaism was one of the main dynamics of growth of Christianity since its origins.⁵⁸⁸ In the first decades of the second century, the Pseudo - Barnabas inaugurates the *Adversus Iudaeos* literature that will last for the centuries to come. Additionally, the Christians also denounced a persecutory behavior from the Jews.⁵⁸⁹ The Jewish people would be "the cradle of our defamation."⁵⁹⁰ Justin also, through Trypho, mentions a ban imposed by the Jewish teachers to be in touch with Christians.⁵⁹¹

Justin speaks of curses cast against the Christians in the liturgical prayers of the synagogues, as well as persecution of Christians orchestrated by the Jews. Justin also accuses the Jews of instigating the Pagans to persecute the Christians.⁵⁹² Regarding the veracity of these accusations made by the Christians against the Jews, the scholarly opinions are divergent.

As we discussed in the Chapter I of this thesis, Adolf von Harnack theorized in the late nineteenth century, that the emancipation of Christianity from Judaism at the end of the first century would have led to a quick detachment between the two religious communities, interrupting any dialogue between them. As a result of this thesis, Harnack argued that all anti - Jewish literature produced by Christians was essentially fictitious. The Jews represented in such works would just be

⁵⁸⁷ Visonà, 2009, p. 49.

⁵⁸⁸ It is important to note that the dynamics of attraction that led many Jews to convert to Christianity were not restricted to the doctrinal controversy, which is what interests us in this research. Most likely, a greater number of Jews became Christians by force of more peaceful influences received in their family relationships and networks of friends, not mentioning the exercise of charity for the sick in times of pestilence and the better *status* accorded to women and children. However, for Justin, the courage of the Christian martyrs was decisive for his conversion. In this regard, see the important study by Rodney Stark (2007), especially pages 13 - 49; 75 - 104; 105 - 134 and 135 - 181.

⁵⁸⁹ *Epistle to Diognetus* 5,17; Tertullian, *De Scorpiace* 10,10.

⁵⁹⁰ Tertullian, *Ad Nationes* 1,14,2.

⁵⁹¹ *Dial.* 38,1; 112,4.

⁵⁹² *Dial.* 17,1; 95,4; 108,2; 133,6.

"straw men", literary constructions for the sole purpose of raising the objections that the Christians themselves made, in order to give answers to the Heathen, considered by Harnack the real audience of such works. This thesis has its main support in the fact that there is not a parallel Jewish literature of anti - Christian nature.

Among the recent advocates of this thesis, the most notables are H. Tränkle and D. Rokeah. The first scholar, in his introduction to the edition of Tertullian's *Adversus Iudaeos*, argued that the anti - Jewish polemic does not reflect any real friction between both religions, but only develops a theme begun by Paul and carried forward by Justin and the other Apologists. Tränkle also claims that most of that literature was directed to the Christians, not to the Jews. The Apologists' main objective would be to safeguard the Christians of Jewish propaganda and of the danger of conversion to Judaism.⁵⁹³ Rokeah, in his turn believes that, after 135, the true polemic occurred between Christians and Pagans, to whom was directed the anti - Jewish literature. The Jews would have maintained a neutral position toward Christians and Pagans.⁵⁹⁴ Regarding the *Dialogue*, Rokeah thought to be the last Christian writing in the tradition started by the Synoptics intended to win the "Jewish stubbornness".⁵⁹⁵

The opposite view was defended by M. Simon. After a detailed analysis of the anti - Jewish literature, Simon outlined a large and nuanced picture of the Jewish - Christian relations. He explains that the absence of an anti - Christian literature among Jewish circles does not imply a position of neutrality in relation to controversy, since many rabbinical argumentations only acquire their full meaning when read in the light of Christian objections.⁵⁹⁶ Besides, Tertullian and Origen give testimonies about the existence of direct discussions between members of the two groups.⁵⁹⁷ These

⁵⁹³ Tränkle, H. (1964). *Q.S.F. Tertulliani Adversus Iudaeos*. p. LXVIII – LXXVIII. Specifically on Justin: LXXIX – LXXXVIII. Cf. Visonà, 2009, p. 51.

⁵⁹⁴ 1982, p. 9 -10; 211; 216.

⁵⁹⁵ 1982, p. 47; 66.

⁵⁹⁶ Simon, 1964, p. 165 - 213.

⁵⁹⁷ Tertullian - *Adversus Iudaeos* 1,1; Origen – *Contra Celsum* I,45,55 and 1,2,31.

facts lead us to consider the possibility of the *Dialogue* had been originated from real debates between Justin and some Jews.

Dealing more directly with Justin's *Dialogue*, it is clear that the first line of interpretation totally excludes the possibility of any historical ballast for the work. The *Dialogue* is portrayed as a complete literary fiction and Trypho is therefore understood as a "straw man"⁵⁹⁸, a historically improbable literary construction, which only function is to be a "punching bag" for Justin. The logical consequence is that we would not be facing a real dialogue, but a monologue aimed at a unilateral imposition of the Christian doctrines, though enacted in surreptitiously way. Moreover, it would not be directed to the Jews, since its real goal would be the conversion of the Heathen.

Of the same opinion are those scholars who interpret the *Dialogue* from the dialogic literary genre, in order to understand the peculiarities of Justin's work through the literary canons of the Platonic dialogue tradition. According to Voss, Justin follows the model of *Protagoras* of Plato. The Socratic character of the Dialogue is revealed by the way Justin conducts his arguments. The goal is not to embarrass or crush the counterpart, but to break its certainties, putting it in crisis, in order to make it predisposed to accept the truth. This would be the reason why Justin does not have Trypho converted at the end of the debate. Justin assumes to Trypho (and also to his readers), the same role he assigned to the Christian elder in his own conversion, as narrated in the *Prologue*.⁵⁹⁹

On the other hand, it is considered that the *Dialogue* has been derived from a real dispute that Justin would have literarily reworked, also including later material. G. Otranto believes that some of the work sections retains the structure of a real debate (*eg Dial. 78 - 82*), while the most extensive and homogeneous portions would be later additions.⁶⁰⁰ This explains convincingly the various digressions

⁵⁹⁸ Goodenough, 1923, p. 90 – 93.

⁵⁹⁹ See Hoffmann, 1966, p. 23.

⁶⁰⁰ Otranto, 1979, p. 235 - 237.

within the text, and also the character Trypho, which raises real and substantive issues that were discussed within Jewish circles, not being merely pretexts to the presentation of the Christian indoctrination.⁶⁰¹

We are convinced that the *Dialogue* has arisen in an environment of real controversial clashes between Jews and Christians. In addition, we still believe that it reflects actual experiences of Justin. We cannot deny, however, that Trypho is very little reactive, denouncing himself as a carefully crafted Jewish interlocutor. His behavior does not match the tone with which Justin leads the *Dialogue*.

When Justin addresses the Jews as a historical people, he distills all the common objections to the Christian anti - Judaism of the first century. The large cast of charges certainly aimed to prevent Christians, especially the Jewish - Christians, of being absorbed by Judaism, consequently denying faith in Christ. By the way, Justin speaks explicitly about such occurrences in *Dial.* 47.

However, Justin's true personality is revealed in those passages in which he interacts directly with Trypho and his companions. At such times, it is possible to perceive how Justin overcomes the stereotypes and literary canons.⁶⁰² The moment of greatest tension between Justin and Trypho⁶⁰³ also seems to be governed by a sincere and passionate impulse.

Scholars of Early Christianity have always been divided about the audience aimed at by Justin with his the *Dialogue with Trypho*. Goodenough⁶⁰⁴ suggested that the *Dialogue* was addressed to Christians or Pagans, due to its initial emphasis on the superiority of Christian revelation over Hellenistic philosophy. Likewise, Hyldahl⁶⁰⁵ considers that Justin aimed to gentile Christians or

⁶⁰¹ Visonà, 2009, p. 54 - 55.

⁶⁰² For instance, *Dial.* 28,3; 38,2; 44,4; 58,1.

⁶⁰³ *Dial.* 67,1 - 3.

⁶⁰⁴ 1923, p. 96ss.

⁶⁰⁵ 1966, p. 20,294.

Pagans, most probably to Heathens interested in philosophy and religion. Stylianopoulos⁶⁰⁶ argues that Jews, pagans and Marcionites⁶⁰⁷ were the targets aimed by the author of the *Dialogue*. Rokeah, in his turn, analyzed Justin's *Dialogue* in two works: *Jews, Pagans and Christians in Conflict* of 1982, and *Justin Martyr and the Jews* of 2002. In the first book, Rokeah considers the *Dialogue with Trypho* as the last Christian writing intended to convince the Jews to abandon their "stubbornness" and admit the divinity of Jesus. At the same time, the *Dialogue* would also be a transitional writing, the precursor of the *Adversus Iudaeos* literature and the several *Altercationes* that arose between the second and fourth centuries, focused on the relationship between Jesus and the Law⁶⁰⁸. Rokeah weaves therefore interesting observations about the important role played by the *Adversus Iudaeos* literature and the apologetic *Altercationes* within the Christian circles. As stated by Rokeah, although these works have been presented as apologetic weapons to be used in the doctrinal debate with the Jews, this was not their real destination. Actually, the *Adversus Iudaeos* treatises were intended to enforce compliance of Christians of Pagan origin to the standards of doctrine and religious practice approved by the clergy, by the denying of all validity to the Jewish religious tradition, if not understood as foreshadowing to Christianity, and also through the stigmatization of the Jewish people.⁶⁰⁹ So Rokeah warns that, despite the genre of this Christian literature might be called *Adversus Iudaeos*, "Since the Christians used, in their polemic against heretics and chismatics, the same arguments found in the *Adversus Iudaeos*

⁶⁰⁶ Stylianopoulos, 1975, p. 10, 11, 22.

⁶⁰⁷ Followers of the theologian Marcion of Sinope expelled for heresy from the Christian community of Rome in 144. After being excluded from normative Christianity, he founded several communities. His doctrine was largely marked by a distinction between the God of the Hebrew Scriptures, God and the father of Jesus Christ. The first was characterized as the creator of the universe and humanity. However, it was considered cruel, capricious and petty, while not necessarily bad, since it ordered precepts of justice. The second God, the father of Jesus, in turn, was characterized as exclusively benign. Even having no link with mankind, was willing to redeem men from their sins through the death of His Son, Jesus. As a corollary of this belief, Marcion repudiated all Jewish scriptures as well as all Christian texts which he considered as "Judaizing", ie that somehow bound Jesus to the God of Jewish Scriptures. The only works considered Scripture by Marcion, were: the Gospel according to Luke and the Pauline epistles (Galatians, both to the Corinthians, both to the Thessalonians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon and Philipenses), even so, properly expurged of all "Judaizing" content. Aland in Di Berardino, 2002, p. 881 - 882.

⁶⁰⁸ Rokeah, 1982, p. 47, 66, 67.

⁶⁰⁹ Rokeah, 1982, p. 67.

treatises, and since we are aware of their catechetical role and of their value in the struggle against the ‘Judaizers’, their anti – Jewish weight is diminished *ipso facto* and their title must not mislead us.”⁶¹⁰

Nevertheless, in the book *Justin Martyr and the Jews*, published in 2002, the same Rokeah leaves open the question of the audience intended by Justin. Rokeah analyzes the arguments raised by L. Gaston at a seminar about Judaism and early Christianity.⁶¹¹ Gaston argues that the *Dialogue* would be intended only for Christians and pagans interested in Christianity. The assumption is based on the contradiction raised by Marcion between acceptance of Jewish sacred texts as sacred scripture by Christians and their rejection of ritual practices it sorted. Gaston believes that supporting the teaching that faith in Jesus replaces the ritualistic practice of the Law was the crucial issue of Christianity in the second century. Then Rokeah opposes a summary of arguments drawn from Stylianopoulos’ *Justin Martyr and the Law*, to Gaston’s hypothesis.⁶¹² Rokeah now seems to agree with Stylianopoulos on the audience and the purpose of the text: directed at Jews for purposes of proselytizing. However, because it is a work written in the Christian community, its readers would obviously be also the Christians. Another scholar who agrees with this opinion is Allert, who also supposes the Jewish – Christians as an additional aimed audience.⁶¹³

Visonà, in turn, argues that the *Dialogue* is not intended to only one category of recipients, but to all seekers of truth: Christians of any origin, pagan Gentiles and Jews. The Italian scholar argues that Justin has structured his work to show your readers that the truth would not be in Hellenistic

⁶¹⁰ Rokeah 1982, p. 68.

⁶¹¹ Gaston, L. “Retrospect” In: Wilson, S.G. (1986) (Ed.). *Anti – Judaism in Early Christianity*, Ontario. pp. 164 – 165, 167. *Apud* Rokeah, 2002, p. 6 – 11.

⁶¹² Rokeah 2002, p. 6 – 11.

⁶¹³ Allert, 2002, p. 61.

philosophy, but in the Scriptures (the dialogue with the old man, in the prologue); and that the correct interpretation is not Jewish but Christian.⁶¹⁴

Finally, Bobichon notes that of all the various interpretations that have been given to the *Dialogue*, the more credible are those that fall in more interpretative detail and are more in tune with the explicit intentions of its author. The cultural substrate of the *Dialogue*, the issues it raises and the widespread use of the Scriptures, point the Jews as the main target audience. Nevertheless, Bobichon also points to the existence in the *Dialogue* of a clear intention of a universal dissemination of the Christian message. This claim to universality is shown in the characterization of the characters, the language used and the topics covered. The *Dialogue with Trypho* is essentially a dialogue between a Jew and a Christian. Justin himself tells us of his concern to convert Jews to faith in Christ.^{615 616}

We agree with Visonà and Bobichon, but we think the *Dialogue* must have been mainly directed to Jews and Christians, especially Jewish – Christians. The other audience hypothesized by various scholars, *ie*, pagans interested in Philosophy and religion, and Marcionites, would be Justin's secondary preoccupations, in this specific work. One must not forget that Justin wrote works directed specifically to the Pagans about philosophical themes, and to Gentile Christians, against the Christian heretics; which, unfortunately, were lost.⁶¹⁷

We find useful, at this moment, to recall that Justin was inserted in an already established tradition of fighting the “heretics” among the Christians of his days. As we have seen, Paul was the one who laid the foundation for the separation of Christianity from Judaism, precisely because of the practice of the Law. Already in his letters we see the term ἑτεροδωξοὶ applied to opponents of Gentile

⁶¹⁴ Visonà, 2009, p. 56 – 57.

⁶¹⁵ cf. *Dial.* 64.2 *in fine*.

⁶¹⁶ Bobichon, 2003a, p. 164 – 165.

⁶¹⁷ Eusebius, HE, IV, 18, 3 – 5.

Christianity.⁶¹⁸ The Pastoral Epistles had already associated doctrinal deviation to deviant behavior, by listing the qualities of a good presbyter, guardian of morals and doctrine. The *Epistle to Titus*⁶¹⁹ represented the "circumcision party", *ie*, those more conservative Jewish - Christians who insisted in circumcision, as insubordinate towards Christian doctrines. A little bit further⁶²⁰, the author recommends its readers do not listen to "Jewish myths" (Ἰουδαϊκὰ μύθῳ), likely a reference to Jewish stories and doctrines contrary to its understanding of Christian faith. It is evident from the above said, that the stigmatized use the opposite, in the said letter, serves to define the doctrine and precepts to be observed by Christians.

A very important step for the characterization of different Christian groups as "heretics", in the later Christian meaning of this word, was given by Ignatius of Antioch, in describing as ἑρέσις the doctrinal errors he found within Gentile Christian communities. However, this term still had the diversity of meanings (party, option, false doctrine) that characterized its use in the Hellenistic world. It was Justin who first used the word ἑρέσις as indicative of a system of representation in order to condemn and exclude individual or anomic groups. This happened when writing down his *Syntagma Against all Heresies*, around 150; previously, therefore, his surviving works. The Great Church, as already noted, faced in the second century competition from Marcionism, Jewish - Christianity and Gnosticism.⁶²¹ At Justin's time there was a blurring of boundaries in many communities about what would be tolerable or not. Justin himself could be tolerant with the Jewish - Christians, provided they do not impose their views. However, we do not believe there is a reason to think that the Christian Philosopher, so concerned with Christian doctrinal purity, would passively accept the practice of the Jewish Law inside Christian communities.

⁶¹⁸ *1 Cor.* 11,19; *Gal.* 5,20, and also in Luke: *Ac.* 24,14.

⁶¹⁹ 1,10.

⁶²⁰ 1,14.

⁶²¹ Le Boulluec, 2000, p. 261.

It is a consensus among scholars that Justin was a teacher of the early Christian traditions that structured the normative Christianity from his days onwards.⁶²² Therefore, we consider that one of the primary concerns of the Christian Philosopher when writing the *Dialogue with Trypho* was to contribute to the standardization of ritual and liturgical Christian practices. In order to accomplish this, it was of fundamental importance to articulate a coherent theological justification of the abandonment of the ritual practices of the Mosaic Law that marked indelibly the Jewish identity. Justin's *Dialogue* points to this rivalry between Jews and Christians. It can be seen that since the end of the first century there was already a manifest interest among the leaders of the Christian communities of Gentile majority in distancing the followers of Jesus of the liturgical practices, characteristics of Jewish identity.

The *Dialogue with Trypho* is undoubtedly the best witness of the flexibility within the Great Church on the relationship between Jewish and Gentile Christians. Justin accuses the recitation of the *Birkat ha - Minim* in the synagogues, directed against Christians. On the other hand, he also accuses the divergence in the Great Church about the Jewish – Christian groups. There were Gentile Christians who denied them the salvation, considering the practice of the Mosaic Law as incompatible with faith in Christ. Others, and Justin was among these, had a more tolerant attitude. As we have just highlighted above, as long as the Jewish - Christian did not try to persuade Gentile Christians to observe the Law, he would consider them as fellow believers. Justin also notes that while the practice of Law was still an option within the Great Church, it was a dangerous option, as it could lead to apostasy from the faith in Christ. Justin himself tells us in *Dial.* 47,4, that there were cases of Gentiles who first confessed faith in Christ, then, by influence of Jewish – Christians, began to observe what they could of the rituals of the Law, and finally came to deny that Jesus is the Christ. These, alongside with the Jews who does not believe in Jesus and curse the Christians in the synagogues are, in Justin's opinion, incapable of

⁶²² Pauline, including *Luke - Acts*; Petrine (*Gospel of Mark*); Johannine and Matthean traditions, cf. Marguerat, 2000, p. 216.

reaching salvation.⁶²³ Justin certainly did not consider the Jewish - Christian as dangerous as the Marcionites, Valentinians or those who ate food sacrificed to the idols, but it is still possible to realize, by his dealings with the Law and the *Verus Israel* themes, that the Jewish – Christians, because of their border situation with Judaism, were still a very uncomfortable reality to Gentile Christians.

Because of the reasons set out above, we believe that the *Dialogue with Trypho* was Justin's contribution to the standardization of Christian rites through the denial of validity of the Jewish ritual prescribed in the Law, and the systematization of the Great Church's ecclesiology as the *Verus Israel*. This task was accomplished through the condemnation of the religious practices of the Law, which were the same of the Jewish - Christians.

Whereas the work of Justin presents the Law as obsolete following its fulfillment by Christ, any Christian groups - meaning: organized Jewish - Christians or individual Judaizing Christians among a gentile community – who observes the Law would represent a danger to the maintenance of doctrinal, ritual and identitarian cohesion of such communities. Among the various groups of believers in Jesus who challenged the doctrinal understanding of Catholic communities, there were the Nazarenes, a Jewish - Christian group located mainly in Coele-Syria⁶²⁴, to whom was directed the *Birkhat-ha-Minim*⁶²⁵ and similar groups, like the Ebionites, since they had developed a proper Christology, drawn from their own Gospels. Despite the lack of a closed canon of the New Testament in the second century, there is a consensus among historians that at the time of Justin there was already a strong trend underway towards regarding as "Scripture" the writings that would compose the New Testament. This

⁶²³ Marguerat, 2000, p. 218 – 219.

⁶²⁴ Vielhauer, 2005, p. 676.

⁶²⁵ Sante, 2004, p. 116

is evident in Irenaeus' *Adversus Haereses*⁶²⁶ written around the year 180, who has advocated limiting the accepted Gospels, to the four that would later be canonized: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John⁶²⁷.

Also according to Allert⁶²⁸, the role played by the Christian New Testament canon from the middle of the fourth century onwards, *ie*, to serve as the authoritative source of information for theological discussion, was played in the second century by the *Rule of Faith*. As a precursor of later Christian creeds, the *Rule of Faith* was not yet a fixed creed, with rigid articles of faith, expressed identically in all communities. However, it represented the minimal doctrinal consensus of Gentile Christianity.

Basically the *Rule of Faith* contained articles about God, the creator of all things, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Church and the future judgment. Its importance consisted in being a rudiment of the then incipient Christian orthodoxy. This Rule of Faith is expressed by Irenaeus⁶²⁹ and also by Tertullian.⁶³⁰ In Irenaeus, the Rule of Faith is called the gift of truth, which would be the apostolic faith transmitted by the Apostles to the Church and their successors. Thus, the Church becomes the sole guardian and transmitter of truth⁶³¹. Irenaeus strongly emphasizes on obedience to bishops and priests, considered the successors of the Apostles. Irenaeus also states that, where the Church is represented, the truth will be preserved and transmitted. Consequently, the Church becomes a mediator between God and men⁶³².

The need these early Christian writers felt to constantly remind their readers what was the Church's authorized interpretation of the person of Christ reveals that at the end of the second century, there was still considerable disagreement within the communities about the core of Christian identity.

⁶²⁶ 3,1,2.

⁶²⁷ Allert, 2002, p. 18

⁶²⁸ 2002, p. 203-205

⁶²⁹ *Adversus Haereses* (1,9,4; 1,10,1 and 5,20,1)

⁶³⁰ *Adversus Haereses* 20 - 29.

⁶³¹ *1Tim.* 3,15.

⁶³² Allert, 2002 p.204-206.

However, Justin could not appeal to a collection of Christian canonical writings, since non-existent, nor to an uncompromising affirmation of the *Rule of Faith*, which also would not solve the problem of the Law's rituals. Accordingly, the only written source recognized as inspired by God by almost all organized Christian groups were the Jewish Scriptures, particularly in the form of the Greek Septuagint. The task of Justin with the *Dialogue* would be to prove the truth of the Christian doctrines, especially the rejection of the normative Jewish practices contained in the Jewish Bible. To fight against the observance of Jewish ritual by Christians, and also to convert Jews non believers in Jesus, Justin presents to his readers a theological debate with a Hellenized Jew, in order to show the supposed fragility of Jewish interpretations of Scriptures as a means to demonstrate the foolishness of observing the Law after the advent of the Messia.

We understand that the *Dialogue* is the product of a literary construction in which Justin reworks his own debate experiences with educated Jews. It presents the encounter between the author and a group of men followed by a dialogue between Justin and one of those men, named Trypho. The figure of Trypho is traditionally associated to Rabbi Tarphon (), mentioned in the Talmud, who was a contemporary of Justin, died around 155, and taught in the province of Judea, at Lydda. However, this identification is only a speculation on an Eusebius record, who called Trypho "the most illustrious among the Jews of the time" (ὁ ἑμ).

⁶³³ It is not possible to consider that Justin has caught a debate with the historical Tarphon, because the later was an experienced debater and great opponent of the Jewish - Christians. Certainly, Rabbi Tarphon would not have been so inattentive and docile in a discussion with a Christian from a pagan origin about key features such as the Hebrew Scriptures and the Abrahamic affiliation⁶³⁴⁶³⁵. In the

⁶³³ HE, IV, 18, 6.

⁶³⁴ Ruiz Bueno, 1979, p. 286

⁶³⁵ Trypho has been the subject of very different assessments by Justin scholars. Since Harnack attested to the impossibility to identify Trypho with Rabbi Tarfon, there were many different hypotheses about Justin's party. There are scholars who

Dialogue, Justin interprets the Law typologically, finding in it prophetic symbols of Jesus Christ, and excluding the necessity of mandatory observance of the rituals prescribed in the Law. Trypho rejects Justin's exegesis, and considers that the rites of the Law must be fulfilled literally by all⁶³⁶. As a result of the clash of opinions, Justin, recovers the Pauline thesis of the justification by faith in Christ, apart from the works of the Law. The thesis of Justin is that the coming of Christ exempts those who believe in Him from fulfilling the ritualistic foreseen in the Law of Moses. Justin also believes that after the advent of Christ, the importance of the Mosaic Law is just on ethical issues. Its ritual observance, however, is not only unnecessary, but a sign of spiritual ignorance.⁶³⁷

The Manuscript Tradition

The *Dialogue with Trypho*, as well as both *Apologies*, and fragments of nine other texts attributed to Justin, are preserved in a single manuscript, the *Parisinus Graecus* 450, also known as "A". It is a common understanding between the scholars to consider authentic only the *Apologies* and the *Dialogue with Trypho* as well as four small fragments⁶³⁸. This manuscript was discovered in Venice by Guillaume Pélicier, bishop of Montpellier, who served as ambassador of the king of France, between between 1539 - 1542. Then was sent to the Royal Library at Fontainebleau. From there it was sent to Paris, by order of Charles IX. Currently it is being preserved at the National Library of Paris.

"A" is a *codex* made of paper that contains several works attributed to Justin. Its dimensions are 285 x 215 mm. It comprises 467 folios 22 or 23 lines. The binding features the letters D (Diane de Poitiers) and H (Henry II) intertwined. The text is well written, perfectly readable. The *Dialogue with*

consider Trypho a purely fictional character, others treat him as a literary idealization of a Jew with whom Justin in fact maintained a debate, or as the embodiment of what Justin understands as Judaism, still others, as a Pharisee rabbi. We think he can be a historical figure with whom Justin debated. For an interesting analysis of Trypho and the statements attributed to him, see Horner, T.J. (2002). *Listening to Trypho: Justin's 'Dialogue with Trypho' Reconsidered*. Contributions to Biblical Exegesis & Theology, Vol. 28. Leuven: Peeters Publishers.

⁶³⁶ Dial.10, 3 - 4.

⁶³⁷ Dial.11,4; 40s.

⁶³⁸ Allert, 2002, p. 32.

Trypho is transcribed from *folio* 50r to 193r.⁶³⁹ It then presents the so-called *II Apology* reproduced between *folio* 193, line 12 and *folio* 201, line 2. Soon after comes the *I Apology*, extending from *folio* 201, line 6 to *folio* 239, line 12, which concludes with the rescript of Hadrian to Minucius Fundanus. Soon after (*fol.* 239r – 241r); it presents the apocryphal works known as *Rescript of Antoninus Pius to the Council of Asia* and the *Epistle of Marcus Aurelius* on the miracle of the rain.⁶⁴⁰

The consensus is that the manuscript was purchased in Venice by Pélicier on behalf of the king of France. Before sending it to the Royal Library at Fontainebleau, Pélicier ordered its copy to Georges Kokolos () one of the eight copyists at his service. It was initially held by the Collège de Clermont in Paris. Nowadays it is in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, in Paris. Surely, this manuscript is the *Claromontanus* 82, or *Manuscript "B"*, now in the British Museum as the *codex Musaei Britannici*, Loan 36/13. This manuscript is a direct copy of "A", having no value for textual criticism of Justin. The few differences of "B" regarding "A" are due to scribal errors.⁶⁴¹

The Literary Structure of the *Dialogue with Trypho*

The *Dialogue* is usually divided into four parts, according to the themes discussed:

- 1) Chapters 1 - 9: Justin describes his personal search for the truth of God; his passage by teachers of different philosophical schools and his encounter with the Christian elder who persuaded him to study the Hebrew Prophets.
- 2) Chapters 10 - 30; 40 - 47; 67; 92 - 93 and 95: mainly dedicated to explain the Christian interpretation of the Mosaic Law. Justin aims to answer one of the main Jewish objections, which is the non-observance of the Jewish feasts, Saturdays, food purity laws and circumcision.⁶⁴² In response, Justin

⁶³⁹ Bobichon, 2003a, p. 7.

⁶⁴⁰ Munier, 2011, p. 106 – 107.

⁶⁴¹ Munier, 2011, p. 107 – 109.

⁶⁴² *Dial.* 10,3; 8,4 and 27,1.

argues from the Pauline exegesis about God's covenant with Abraham, in order to prove the obsolescence of the rites of the Mosaic Law for salvation, whose usefulness was temporary and limited to the Jews, only until the coming of the Messiah.

3) Chapters 31 - 108: these chapters are primarily focused in discussing the person of Jesus, his messianic role and divinity, and how his coming makes the Law obsolete. Justin calls into question the Scriptures and exposes his Christological interpretation.

4) Chapters 109 - 142: a long monologue in which Justin develops his thesis that the Gentiles who believe in Jesus are the new spiritual Israel.⁶⁴³ In the last chapter⁶⁴⁴, Trypho tells Justin how he was impressed with the debate, and declared he had found much more than expected. Trypho also asks Justin to remember them as friends. Justin promises to pray for Trypho and his companions so they can embrace faith in Christ, and they depart from each other amicably.⁶⁴⁵

A Brief Stylistic Analysis of the *Dialogue with Trypho*

Regarding the stylistic study of the *Dialogue*, Justin himself said he did not have rhetorical skills.⁶⁴⁶ Certainly, the Christian Philosopher cannot be considered a master of the style. However, are the aesthetic categories with which Justin is often judged, really appropriate? Would not it be more appropriate to take into account the specificities of the work when venturing a judgement?⁶⁴⁷

The first negative judgment about the literary characteristics of the *Dialogue* is already found in the *Bibliotheca* of Fotius. A similar judgment was issued by Dom Maran: "*Huc accedit stylus nec verborum electione concinnus nec constructione accuratus, praesertim in Dialogo S. Justini, qui dum studio fervet veritatis non modo projicit ornamenta dicendi, sed etiam sermonis perspicuitati parum*

⁶⁴³ *Dial.* 11,5; 119,5; 123,7 and 124,1.

⁶⁴⁴ *Dial.* 142.

⁶⁴⁵ Rokeah, 2002, p. 4 – 6.

⁶⁴⁶ cf. *Dial.* 58,1.

⁶⁴⁷ Bobichon, 2005a, p. 1 – 3.

consultit."⁶⁴⁸ Among the old editors of Justin, only Otto judged necessary to fill some pages with a stylistic analysis. He basically analyzed the lexicon and syntax, listing the mistakes or the composite nature of the work. The final verdict of Otto was not very different from that of his predecessors:

*"Dictionem scriptoris nostril non caelum tollo neque ad inferos relego. Traduxit Justinus adulescentiam in literarum studiis, ut mos erat: imprimis platoni operam dedit, cuius in scriptis volutatus erat, ut ex Apologiis patet et Dialogo. Sed rhetoricae artis non admodum studiosus fuit, si libros illos consideres. Plerumque a sermone vitae communis parum recedit: sententiae ordo saepe impeditus est, singularum enuntiationum structura interdum languida et intricata, phrases vocesque non semper diligenter lectae. Negat ipse facultatem sibi esse dicendi; neque orationis ornamentum putat opus esse ad christianam causam defendendam."*⁶⁴⁹ The judgment remains the same in recent authors.⁶⁵⁰

According to Bobichon, the aesthetic criticisms that are made to Justin has a fragmentary and conventional character (the argument has become standardized), equivocal (there would be a confusion of stylistic criticism and content criticism), and, finally, they are contradictory. Scholars tend to criticize Justin when he uses phrases next to the colloquial language, as well as when he uses long sentences. Such criticisms seem to rest on the assumption that Justin would have considered that the defense of truth would be in opposition to the stylistic care, or perhaps would supply its flaws. This is, in itself, i a not verified assumption.⁶⁵¹

The *Dialogue* is often criticized by its composite character of the sources, but not always the scholars perceive its characteristics: Justin's work is as much a meditation as a demonstration; its

⁶⁴⁸ *S.P.N. Iustini philosophi et martyris opera quae exstant omnia*. Paris: Ch. Osmont, 1742, Venice, 1742 (cf. *P.G.* VI,20) *apud* Bobichon, 2005a, p. 3.

⁶⁴⁹ *S. Iustini Philosophi et Martyris Dialogus cum Tryphone Iudaeo. Corpus Apologetarum Christianorum Saeculi II*. Jena, 1876. Prolegomena, p. LXIV *apud* Bobichon, 2005a, p. 4.

⁶⁵⁰ Hamman, 1992, p. 35 – 36; Marcovich, 1997, p. VIII.

⁶⁵¹ Bobichon, 2005a, p.4.

message is both rational and prophetic (double dimension of the *Logos*), which demands to its readers, at the same time, criticism and opening of mind. Justin did not completely neglect the language features, which are for him subordinate to the message being conveyed. The Justin's speech is of exegetical nature. This type of speech is not intended to project the image of its author, but the message that motivates him.

For this type of discourse, any kind of classification appears to be arbitrary and reductionist. Thus, the less artificial way to judge the aesthetics of the *Dialogue*, it is judging the work from its different reading levels. It is possible to identify an internal coherence that guides all the themes discussed in the *Dialogue*. By studying the different components, it can be put in evidence the triple dimension of the writing: pedagogical, intellectual and spiritual, which gives to the work its own aesthetics.⁶⁵²

The stylistic analysis of the *Dialogue* justifies only in part the modesty of the author and the traditional judgments of scholars. If, on the one hand, Justin does not stand out by presenting a work in accordance with the rhetorical canons of his time, this may well be a strategy for convincing the readers, since for him the message is more urgent than aesthetic concerns. On the other hand, however, Justin got acquainted, at the same time, with the rational and spiritual dimensions of the Christian message, leading his readers to an analogical and analytical interpretation of the Jewish sacred texts in order to understand the Christian faith, not losing of sight the urgency of the call to conversion. The apparent disorganization is actually a result of the multiple fronts fought by the Philosopher and Apologist, which require a firm and dense posture.⁶⁵³

⁶⁵² Bobichon, 2005a, p. 5.

⁶⁵³ Bobichon, 2005a, p. 60.

Accusations made by Justin in his works against the Jews

As we have already commented, a feature of the *Dialogue with Trypho*⁶⁵⁴ that immediately draws the reader's attention is the huge amount of charges that Justin throws against the Jews, from biblical times to his days. We also mentioned the disagreement that emerged among scholars in the twentieth century about the true character of Justin, if he would be really tolerant with the Jews, or, conversely, intolerant. As already mentioned, we believe that the alternations between those moments of the debate that inspire tolerance, with other when it is boiling a contrary attitude, are most likely due by the reuse by Justin of other controversial works produced in other contexts. Anyway, we cannot avoid analyzing the text as it stands, in order to try to understand the possible effects produced on the readers of the second century.

It is important to note that Justin accuses the Jews of inciting persecutions against the Christians. This persecutory behavior would include casting curses, insults, deaths, etc. These charges present confusions about the occurrence times and an inaccurate vocabulary. They are always made upon scriptural foundations, always marking the difference in behavior between Jews and Christians.⁶⁵⁵ So, Bobichon considers that the testimony of Justin is entirely doubtful, or, at least, must be received with reservations.⁶⁵⁶

According to Justin, the Jews reject all those who hope in Christ, and one who sent him: God himself. They make imprecations in the synagogues against the believers in Christ. They cannot legally kill the Christians, but do whatsoever they can to pursue them. The most important passages about the alleged persecutions moved by the Jews are: *Dial.* 17,1; 17,1; 17,3; 26,1; 38,1; 39,1; 47,4; 93,4; 95,4;

⁶⁵⁴ Though not being one of the major themes of the *Apology*, Justin makes some accusations against the Jews also in this work, as we will see.

⁶⁵⁵ For example, *Dial.* 16.4 cf. *Isa.* 57,1; *Jer.* 5,6 etc. where Justin accuses the Jews of killing the Prophets and also Jesus, cf. *Matt.* 23,51 and *Luke* 13,34.

⁶⁵⁶ Bobichon, 2003, p. 403.

96,2; 102,6; 108,2-3; 110,5; 112,4; 117,3; 120,4; 122,2; 123,6; 131,2; 133,6; 134,6; 136,2; 137,2; *Apol.* I, 31,5; 36,3; 49,5.

General Characteristics of the Above Related Passages

- 1- The accusations are constant throughout the work, and often linked with each other;
- 2- Justin seems to believe in continuity between the charges brought by the biblical Prophets and the Jewish attitudes of his day;
- 3- The Prophets, Christ, his disciples and Justin's fellow Christians are victims of Jewish plots. The charges even seem to be confused by the "killing of the Just", theme;
- 4- The biblical references are ubiquitous and serve as grounds to Justin charges. The persecutions are presented as the fulfillment of Bible prophecy which would be the witnesses of the Christian message;⁶⁵⁷
- 5- The Jewish persecutions are presented in several ways: rejection⁶⁵⁸; Prohibition to attend the Christians⁶⁵⁹; hatred⁶⁶⁰; oaths and curses⁶⁶¹; anathema⁶⁶²; sending emissaries to spread slander⁶⁶³; profanities and blasphemies against the Christian name⁶⁶⁴; insults and taunts⁶⁶⁵; dishonors⁶⁶⁶; physical hits⁶⁶⁷; persecutions⁶⁶⁸; evictions⁶⁶⁹; torments and tortures⁶⁷⁰; killings.⁶⁷¹

⁶⁵⁷ Bobichon, 2003b, p. 410.

⁶⁵⁸ *Dial.* 16,4.

⁶⁵⁹ *Dial.* 38,1; 112,4.

⁶⁶⁰ *Dial.* 39,1; 133,6; 134,6; 136,2; *Apol.* I, 36,3.

⁶⁶¹ *Dial.* 16,4; 93,4; 96,2; 108,3; 123,6; 133,6.

⁶⁶² *Dial.* 47,4.

⁶⁶³ *Dial.* 17,1; 17,3; 108,2; *Apol.* I, 49,6.

⁶⁶⁴ *Dial.* 117,3; 120,4; 122,2.

⁶⁶⁵ *Dial.* 137,2.

⁶⁶⁶ *Dial.* 16,4.

⁶⁶⁷ *Dial.* 16,4; 93,4; 95,4.

⁶⁶⁸ *Dial.* 26,1; *Apol.* I, 31,5.

⁶⁶⁹ *Dial.* 110,5.

6- The authors of these persecution are: a) the Jews^{672,673} b) The Jewish teachers, essentially by the prohibition of having social contacts with Christians and the casting of in the synagogues;⁶⁷⁴

c) The proselytes;⁶⁷⁵

d) The men of Bar Kokhba;⁶⁷⁶

e) The Romans or other Gentiles peoples impelled by the Jews;⁶⁷⁷

f) "The authorities under the influence of evil spirits and error, the serpent";⁶⁷⁸

d) The Demons and the "army of the Devil" with the Jews as their agents;⁶⁷⁹

h) To Rome is assigned a protective role;⁶⁸⁰

7- The anathemas are delivered in the synagogues;⁶⁸¹

7.1- The field of slander and persecution extends to "all the earth";⁶⁸²

7.2 - The persecutions of Bar Kokhba were circumscribed Judea;⁶⁸³

⁶⁷⁰ *Dial.* 122,2; *Apol.* I, 31,6.

⁶⁷¹ *Dial.* 16, 4; 93,4; 122,2; 133,6; 136,2; *Apol.* I, 31,5.

⁶⁷² *Dial.* 16,4; 17,1,3; 26,1; 39,1; 47,4; 93,4; 95,4; 96,2; 102,6 ; 108,2 - 3; 120,4; 123,6; 133,6; 136,2; *Apol.* I, 36,3.

⁶⁷³ Note: In the *Dialogue*, Justin often uses the second person plural (ὅμοι), and the third person singular in the *Apology*. The pronoun ὅμοι is used indiscriminately. It designates Trypho and his companions, as well as the contemporaries of Christ, sometimes the Jews and their teachers. In many passages of dialogue these different meanings are inseparable. In short, ὅμοι identify the whole Jewish people, from the biblical times to the age of Justin. Bobichon, 2003b, p. 411.

⁶⁷⁴ *Dial.* 38,1; 112,4; 117,3 ("high priests and teachers"); 137,2 (the "Masters Pharisees" and the "Archisynagogos").

⁶⁷⁵ *Dial.* 122,2.

⁶⁷⁶ *Apol.* I, 31,5.

⁶⁷⁷ *Dial.* 17,1; 96,2; 108,3; 134,6.

⁶⁷⁸ *Dial.* 39,6, means, most likely (as well as in 52,3; 73,5 and 82,4) Jewish religious authorities, cf. Bobichon, 2003b, p. 411.

⁶⁷⁹ *Dial.* 131,2.

⁶⁸⁰ *Dial.* 16,4.

⁶⁸¹ *Dial.* 16,4; 47,4; 96,2 and 137,2.

⁶⁸² *Dial.* 17,1,3; 108,2; 117,3; 120,4.

Bobichon highlights that the reasons because Justin accuses the Jews of being participants on the persecutions against the Christians are based on their rejection of Jesus and his teaching, considered by the Jews as wicked and against the Mosaic Law, as well as more recent historical factors such as the Jewish proselytism and their uprisings against the Roman rule.⁶⁸⁴

Additionally, the alleged Jewish persecutions are also used for antithetical comparisons: the willingness of Christians to face martyrdom is opposed to the Jewish rejection of doing penance for the death of Jesus⁶⁸⁵, threats against the Christians and the persecutions by other nations⁶⁸⁶; as opposed to the fraternal feeling of the Christians.⁶⁸⁷

Justin, therefore, considers that the Jews have a dual responsibility: for themselves and for those they put in guard against the Christians.⁶⁸⁸ It is the misunderstanding of Scripture that explains the denial of Christ and the rejection of Christians.⁶⁸⁹

Concluding, we can say that Justin's charges are presented as an amalgam of widespread complaints, according to which, the Jews of mid second century were seen by Justin under the same light projected by the biblical Prophets on their own contemporaries.

Regarding the historicity of this persecutorial behavior imputed to the Jews, by one hand, it is attested the existence of friendly relations between Jews, Jewish - Christians and Gentile Christians in the early centuries; on the other hand, it is undeniable that there were real antagonisms and acts of violence perpetrated by the Jews against the Christians. These confrontations, more or less intense, were linked to specific circumstances (rise of Christianity and Jewish defeats against the Roman in 70

⁶⁸³ *Apol.* I,31,5.

⁶⁸⁴ Bobichon, 2003b, p. 412.

⁶⁸⁵ *Dial.* 96,2; 131,2; 17,1; 26,1; 108,2-3; 123,6; 133,6.

⁶⁸⁶ *Dial.* 17,1.

⁶⁸⁷ *Dial.* 93,3 - 4; 96,2; 108,3; 133,6; 134,6.

⁶⁸⁸ *Dial.* 17,1; 95,4.

⁶⁸⁹ *Dial.* 39,1; 95,4; *Apol.* I, 31,5; 36,3; 49,5.

and 135); local (Palestine and the Diaspora) and the relationship of specific communities with the Roman government. Justin's testimony, however, does not accuse these particularities.

The sending of Jewish emissaries to deal with the "Christian problem" is something already attested in the New Testament⁶⁹⁰ but doubtful for a later period. There are not rabbinic sources attesting such missions. The order of not to have social contacts the Jewish - Christians is attested.⁶⁹¹

Regarding the *Birkat ha-Minim*, it is well known the article by R. Kimelman⁶⁹², who challenged the consensus of scholars in recognizing in Justin's words an allusion to the twelfth blessing of the synagogue liturgy. According Kimelman, $\mu \delta \eta$ ⁶⁹³ should be understood as meaning "after the prayer." In this way, Justin's complaint would be unrelated to the standard liturgy. However, we consider that M. Mach was right in saying that there is no plausible reason to interpret too literally the words of Justin.⁶⁹⁴

In Bobichon's opinion, Justin's allegations must be viewed with reservations, most likely as a literary effort to trace a historical continuity between the Passion of Christ, the Apostolic tradition and the death of the martyrs, assimilated to the sacrifice of Christ. Bobichon further alleges the following: it is not improbable that Justin has witnessed acts of violence against Christians perpetrated by Jews. It is also plausible that he has heard anti – Christian rumors told by the Jews. However, due to the fact that the *Dialogue* is an apologetic work, the theological considerations may have distorted and exaggerated the actual events.⁶⁹⁵

Although Bobichon is correct in his interpretation of the literary use by Justin of the alleged Jewish persecution to assimilate the Christian martyrs to Christ's sacrifice, and in highlighting the

⁶⁹⁰ *Ac.* 9,1s.; 22,5; 26,12.28 and 28,21.

⁶⁹¹ *Dial.* 38,1; 112,4; *Babylonian Talmud AZ*, 17a *apud* Bobichon, 2003b, p. 417 – 418.

⁶⁹² Kimelman *In* Sanders, Baumgarten & Mendelson, 1981, p. 235.

⁶⁹³ *Dial.* 137,2.

⁶⁹⁴ Mach *In* Limor & Stroumsa, 1996, p. 31, note 19.

⁶⁹⁵ Bobichon, 2003b, p. 419.

inaccuracies of the charges, always made on a scriptural background; we do not believe that the real situation was much better than the one described by Justin. Literary elaborations aside, Justin, as well as the other Christian authors who have made these same charges, were also writing to other Christians, their contemporaries. It is unlikely that other Christians did not perceive their environment in a situation similar to that described by the Apologists. Besides, the acts of the martyrs attest to the participation of Jews in some persecutions promoted by local Roman Authorities, as in the case of Polycarp.⁶⁹⁶

The Law in Justin, Christian Identity Factor

Before starting the analysis of the *Dialogue with Trypho*, we consider important to clarify that in this study we examined the scriptural exegesis of Justin from a sociological understanding. To accomplish this, we seek to read the Scriptures cited by Justin from the social - religious imaginary of his days. We took into account that Justin read the biblical text as a factual and linear historical narrative, which is how the Scriptures were read before biblical criticism. At the same time, we tried to show how the ahistorical interpretation⁶⁹⁷ of Justin led him to take certain conclusions, that became the foundation of his religious anti - Judaism. Far from wanting to take sides in the Jewish – Christian discussion, or judge the consciousness of the Apologist; we solely intended to discover the argumentative strategies behind the *Dialogue* and the psychological effect probably desired by the author in order to lead his readers to embrace faith in Christ, as he understood it.

⁶⁹⁶ *Martyrium Polycarpi* 13,1.

⁶⁹⁷ The historical decontextualization of a text and its typological and allegorical interpretation was an accepted common procedure in Antiquity. The allegorical interpretation had a purpose of updating the sense of an ancient text, applying it to entirely new existential situations. A common result was the attribution of multiple meanings, many times discordant from the historical meaning. The early Greek philosophers interpreted symbolically the writings of Homer to find philosophical content. The same was done by the Jewish teachers (eg Philo of Alexandria) using allegory in order to apply the Law and the Prophets to the needs of their days, then, the custom coming up to the early Christians. Simonetti in Di Berardino, Fedalto & Simonetti, 2010, p. 711.

The starting point of the actual examination of the content of the *Dialogue with Trypho* is the treatment given by Justin Martyr to the first topic of discussion in the cited work: the Law of Moses. It is worth noting, in this case, what the author of the Dialogue understands as the Law. For Justin, it was the set of Jewish sacred writings, commonly used by Christians; the Septuagint as a whole, and not just the Pentateuch⁶⁹⁸. In the debate with Trypho, Justin sets out to explain to his interlocutor, why Gentile Christians do not fulfill the ritual precepts of the Law. As a Gentile Christian, Justin regarded the Law as abrogated by Christ⁶⁹⁹. However, he made use of it as a body of oracles of the Messiahship and divinity of Jesus, as well as a repository of ethical precepts to be followed.

In order to justify his position against the charge of contradiction raised by Trypho⁷⁰⁰, that Christians would be deluding themselves while waiting for the blessings of God without fulfilling the rituals revealed in the Law; Justin makes an apology of the non observance of rituals by the Gentile Christians, through the differential use of certain parts of Scripture. This has led scholars trying to understand the use made by Justin of Scripture through the assumption that the author of the Dialogue has divided Scriptures into a few categories. Stylianopoulos⁷⁰¹ suggests the division of the Scriptures into three parts; others, two⁷⁰². In this work we will use Stylianopoulos division. The first two divisions are: *ethical Law*, a set of ethical precepts to be obeyed by all peoples indistinctively, *prophetic Law*, which is the allegoric interpretation of the Mosaic rituals and the prophetic and apocalyptic eschatologies present in the Jewish Septuagint, with the objective to demonstrate that Jesus is the Christ foretold by Scriptures. The third division, proposed by Stylianopoulos and discarded by Skarsaune, is another prophetic meaning attributed to the Scriptures, which is the *historical dispensation*. For historical dispensation Stylianopoulos nominates Justin's opinions that the ritual of the Law was

⁶⁹⁸ Shotwell, 1965, p. 6.7.

⁶⁹⁹ *Dial.* 11,2.

⁷⁰⁰ *Dial.* 10,3.

⁷⁰¹ Stylianopoulos, 1975, p 51.

⁷⁰² Skarsaune *apud* Rokéah, 2002, p. 45 - 46.

ordained by God to be fulfilled only by the Jews, and yet, on a temporary basis, only until the advent of the Christ. It is noticed that, as any allegoric interpretation, Justin's reading of Scriptures identifies two or more different meanings for the same scriptural elements.

It is necessary, therefore, to clarify what Justin meant by the Law of Moses. Justin does not define the Law, but by the content of the *Dialogue*, as in 8,4 and thereafter, it is understood that he refers exclusively to the Jewish Written Law, because the Jews also held a set and practices and traditions called the Oral Law⁷⁰³, which interpreted and supplemented the Written Law. When dealing with the Law, Justin identifies two purposes in Jewish ritual to argue about its obsolescence: the rituals served to the Jews of biblical times as prophetic signs of the redemption that would be performed by the Messiah; and also were necessary for personal purification, meanwhile awaiting the advent of the Christ. Even though this is considered the most important aspect Justin understands about the Law, a division of the same into different meanings or purposes is not an original contribution of the *Dialogue*. Ptolemy⁷⁰⁴ had also divided the Law in three categories. In his case, in order to assign different authors for each one of them.⁷⁰⁵

Anyway, the trail followed by Justin is 1 Cor. 7,19; Rom. 2, 21-26 and 13, 8-10 where Paul makes clear distinctions between ritual practices and ethical injunctions. As already mentioned, Justin interprets Scriptures as a regulatory paradigm of Christians' actions. The historicity of Christianity is given by the incorporation of Scriptures as proofs of the arrival of the Messiah and the consequent extension of the Biblical ethical code to all mankind. According to Justin:

⁷⁰³ Danby 1933, p. XIII, XIV.

⁷⁰⁴ Christian Gnostic theologian who belonged to the Italic or Western branch of the school of Valentinus. Wrote the *Epistle to Flora*, preserved by Epiphanius in *Haereses* (I,33.3 - 8). In his work, Ptolemy divided the Pentateuch into three categories. He attributed different origins to each one of them. The first category would be the moral laws dictated by God. The second division, encompassing civil and criminal law, would have been idealized by Moses. The third part, the cultic norms, was originated from the elders of the ancient Hebrews. According to Ptolemy, Jesus reinforced the first category of Law, abolished the second and spiritualized the third one (Filoramo in Di Berardino, 2002 p. 1202 - 1203).

⁷⁰⁵ Sylianopoulos, 1975, p. 51.

“But if we do not admit this, we shall be liable to fall into foolish opinions, as if it were not the same God who existed in the times of Enoch and all the rest, who neither were circumcised after the flesh, nor observed Sabbaths, nor any other rites, seeing that Moses enjoined such observances; or that God has not wished each race of mankind continually to perform the same righteous actions: to admit which, seems to be ridiculous and absurd.”⁷⁰⁶

(Ἐὰ ἐ ὕ ὕ μὴ ὀμ μ , μ ἦμ ἰ ᾄ ἐμ μ , ὠ ὕ ὕ ὕ ὕ μὴ ὀ ὕ ἄ ὀ ’ ὠ ἰ ὕ ᾄ , ἴ μ μὴ ἦ ἄ ἔ μ ἔ μ ἐ ἄ ᾄ , ἐ μ ὕ ἴ , ἦ ἄ ὕ ὕ ὠ μὴ ἄ ἰ ᾄ ἄ ἦ ᾄ ἴ ἰ ἄ ὀμ ἴ .).

At this point, considering the universal ethical precepts given by God to Enoch, Justin outlines the Christian God as the same Jewish God by forcing the opponent to an agreement. Thus, the validation of Justin’s argument circumscribes the ritual of the Law as an exclusively Jewish and temporary practice, since it had been dictated by Moses. A negative response to his argument, as it was put in the passage reproduced above, would force the Jew Trypho to hold the same belief of the Gnostics or the Marcionites: as known, some Gnostic groups had a high regard upon the ancient biblical patriarchs, especially Enoch. To assume that it was not the same and only God who saved Enoch without any law, but later revealed the Law to Moses would create a distinction between the Demiurge and the true God, a belief considered heretic also by normative Judaism. Such argumentative strategy allows the Gentiles Christians to hold the same belief in YHWH and his Scriptures, but under another paradigm: to emulate the character of the God servants; to observe the ethical commandments revealed to Moses, especially the Ten Commandments and, finally, to adopt a distinctively Christian spiritual interpretation of the Leviticus’ liturgy and other rituals commandments. We can better understand how Justin builds his argumentation in the passage reproduced below:

[...] For what in the law of Moses is naturally good, and pious, and righteous, and has been prescribed to be done by those who obey it; and what was appointed to be performed by reason of the hardness of the people’s hearts; was similarly recorded, and done also by those who were under the law. Since those who did that which is universally, naturally, and eternally good

⁷⁰⁶ *Dial.* 23,1.

are pleasing to God, they shall be saved through this Christ in the resurrection equally with those righteous men who were before them, namely Noah, and Enoch, and Jacob, and whoever else there be, along with those who have known this Christ, Son of God, [...]"⁷⁰⁷

([...]) ἀ ἀ ῶ μω ἀ ἀ ὕ ῆ ἰ μ ὕ
 μ ὕ ῆ, ἰ ὀ ἐ ὤ ὤ, ἰ ἰ ἀ ἰ
 ἰ ἰ ἀ ἐ ὕ ἰ ῶ ῶ, ἰ ἀ ὤ ὤ ἐ ἦ ἀ ὀμ
 ῆ μ ὕ ὤ, ὤ ἀ ὠ ἀ ὠ ἀ ἰ ᾄ,
 ὕ ῆ ἐ ὀ ὀ ὤ ὤ ὤ ἰ, [...]).

The passage reproduced above is another example of what we are explaining. Justin says that the ethical principles contained in the Mosaic Law represent what is "naturally good and pious and righteous." In other words, for the Christian philosopher, the ethical precepts of the Mosaic Law present norms of an innate sense of honesty and justice accessible to all men, because all the righteous legislators drank from the eternal Logos source who became incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth.⁷⁰⁸ That is why Justin may admit the salvation of all who lived before the advent of Christ, even the Pagans who never knew him, but live according to their understanding of the Logos.⁷⁰⁹ On the other hand, Justin identifies the distinctly Jewish elements of the Law as having been ordained by God "by reason of the hardness of the people's hearts." Thus, he based his assertion on the futility of the rituals from the words of Christ, who summarized all the Scriptures in two commandments⁷¹⁰.

Interestingly, when Justin speaks on "which is universally, naturally, and eternally good," he maintains the historical connection between Christianity and the religion of the Ancient Israel, universalizing what he sees as Christian in the Jewish text. On this issue, the most striking evidence are the Ten Commandments. However, analyzing Justin as a tributary of Pauline conceptions, we realize

⁷⁰⁷ *Dial.* 45,3 – 4.

⁷⁰⁸ *Apol.* II, 10,1.

⁷⁰⁹ *Apol.* I,46,3 – 4.

⁷¹⁰ cit. *Dial.* Cf. *Matt.* 22,37 – 40.

that the distinction he made between ethics and what he considers to have been appointed to be performed by reason of the hardness of the people's hearts "raises the necessity of an explanation about how the performative commandments must be understood by the Gentile Christian. A good example is the Sabbath ordinance:

"You have now need of a second circumcision, though you glory greatly in the flesh. The new law requires you to keep perpetual Sabbath, and you, because you are idle for one day, suppose you are pious, not discerning why this has been commanded you: and if you eat unleavened bread, you say the will of God has been fulfilled. The Lord our God does not take pleasure in such observances: if there is any perjured person or a thief among you, let him cease to be so; if any adulterer, let him repent; then he has kept the sweet and true Sabbaths of God. If any one has impure hands, let him wash and be pure."⁷¹¹

(ἡμ μῆ , ἰ ὑμ ἰ ἔ ἰ ἡ ἰ μ ἰ ἡ ἰ ὑμ ὀ ὀ
 μ ἄ ὀ ἔ , ἄ ὑμ ἰ μ ἄ ὖ ἡμ ὀ ἰ ἰ ἰ , μῆ ὖ ἄ ὑμῖ
 ἰ ἔ ἄ ἄ μ ἄ , ὀ μ ὖ ὖ . ὀ ἔ
 ἔ ἰ ὖ ὀ ὀ ἡμῶ . ἰ ἔ ἔ ὑμῖ ἔ ἡ , ἰ μ ,
 μ , ἄ ἄ ἄ ἄ ἄ ὖ ὖ . ἰ ἄ ὀ ἔ
 ἰ , , ἄ ἔ).

In this passage, Justin deals with the Trite - Isaiah speech⁷¹², which gives a social interpretation to the ritual, but does not invalidate its practice. The original meaning of prophecy is a heavy reproach to the Jewish elites at the time of the return from the exile. However, we realize that the manner Justin interprets the Trite - Isaiah implies a stigmatization of all the people of Israel, as the author of the *Dialogue* takes the prophet rebukes as valid for all Jews of all time, including his contemporaries.⁷¹³

To legitimate Christian practices through a Jewish text, Justin worked from the eschatological prophecies of Scriptures, interpreting their prophetic content through its understanding of Jesus as the Christ. To that end, Justin needs to oppose parts of the Bible that announce a happy eschatological future when all men must submit to divine ethics, which is the core of the message of the great Hebrew

⁷¹¹ *Dial.* 12,3.

⁷¹² Isaiah 58,13 cf. Gottwald, 1988, p. 473

⁷¹³ Bobichon, 2003b, p. 410; says that Justin repeatedly accuses the Jews, appearing to believe in a continuity between the charges to the Jewish people moved by the biblical authors and the behavior of the Jews of his day.

prophets; with those Torah passages that command the literal compliance of the Law while ethnic customs and rituals. Note that Gentile Christianity in Justin's *Dialogue* is disputing with Judaism the same religious identity, *ie*, Israel, the people chosen by God. All the *Dialogue* aims to explain to his Christian readers why and how they may consider themselves Israelites without living according to the Law. Hence, the real conflict is not really based on the differences between Jews and Christians, but on the similarities. In another words, the common identity played on both sides. As Simon Harrison⁷¹⁴ states, social groups can go into shock by disputing the same identity. In such cases, it is not the differences that make the coexistence intolerable, but both groups' claims of being recipients of the same heritage and cultural identity. Let's see how Justin shows this cultural conflict in the passage reproduced below:

“But now — for I have read that there shall be a final law, and a covenant, the chiefest of all, which it is now incumbent on all men to observe, as many as are seeking after the inheritance of God. For the law promulgated on Horeb is now old, and belongs to yourselves alone; but *this* is for all universally. Now, law placed against law has abrogated that which is before it, and a covenant which comes after in like manner has put an end to the previous one; and an eternal and final law—namely, Christ —has been given to us, and the covenant is trustworthy, after which there shall be no law, no commandment, no ordinance.”⁷¹⁵

(ἰ ἐ δ ἄ , ὦ , ὄ ἔ ἰ ῖ μ ἰ ὦ , ῆ ὦ ἄ , ὄ ῆ ὦ ὦ μ ἄ ὦ . Ὁ ἄ ἐ ἡ ὀ ῆ μ ἰ ὦ ὦ μ ὦ , ὀ ἐ ἄ ὦ . μ ἐ ἄ μ ἰ ὀ ὀ ὦ ὦ ἔ , ἰ μ μ ῆ ὀ μ ἔ . ἰ ῆ μ ῖ [μ ἰ ῖ ὀ ὀ ἐ ἰ ῆ μ ῆ ὦ μ , ὦ μ , ὦ ἐ .)

With this passage, Justin begins to answer the question raised by Trypho in Dial. 8, 3; 10, 2-4 on why Christians, who claim to be superior to the pagan mass for worshipping the God of Israel, do not perform the prescribed commandments in the Law. Here, Justin begins to develop his thesis that the

⁷¹⁴ 1999, p. 239.

⁷¹⁵ Dial. 11,2.

law has become obsolete as opposed to a "final law" and a "covenant, the chiefest of all," "which it is now incumbent on all men to observe." The Law is then characterized as the work of Christ in the hearts of believers. Perceive the use of flattering labeling to characterize the Christian Law and alliance and, concomitantly, the use of a derogatory labeling to characterize the Jewish law as "old" that "belongs to yourselves alone".

We can already distinguish, at this point of the speech of Justin, an appeal to the rejection of the Mosaic Law as a distinctive factor of Christian identity, which will be resumed and reaffirmed numerous times throughout the work. The passages referred by the author of the Dialogue, respectively. Isa. 58,13 and Jer 31,31; come from apocalyptic discourses, whose eschatological tone predict a new social order, of divine origin, by reformulating the old order, still present . As mentioned before, such eschatologies denounce the time of anomy experienced by Jewish identity. To validate his position, Justin proposes at the end of the excerpt, a judicial principle for the validity of Christian interpretation, stating that a "law placed against law has abrogated that which is before it, and a covenant which comes after in like manner has put an end to the previous one ".⁷¹⁶

This solves the question raised by Trypho about worshipping the same God but not observing the Law established by Him. However, on Sabbath, Justin returns to the issue linking its observance to the supposed wickedness of the Jewish people:

For we too would observe the fleshly circumcision, and the Sabbaths, and in short all the feasts, if we did not know for what reason they were enjoined you,—namely, on account of your transgressions and the hardness of your hearts.⁷¹⁷

(' μ ῖ ἄ ἰ ἄ ἡ μὴ ἡ ἄ ἰ ἄ ἰ ἄ ἔ ἄ ἄ ὦ ἔ μ , ἰ μὴ ἔ μ ' ἡ ἰ ἰ ὕμῖ , ἄ ἄ ἄ μ ὕμῶ ἰ ἡ).

⁷¹⁶ Jer. 31, 31 – 32 cf. Heb. 8,8 – 9.

⁷¹⁷ Dial. 18,2.

Thus, Justin ties the ritual performance of the commandments to the traditional category of Israel's disobedience to God, as seen in the Deuteronomy and the Prophets. This procedure is essential for the purpose of Justin's Dialogue. It is the "key" required to "unlock" the Scriptures and find in them Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of prophecies of the same Scriptures. To argue about the Messiahship of Christ, Justin reframes the Law, giving to it an allegorical character:

"And in short, sirs," said I, "by enumerating all the other appointments of Moses, I can demonstrate that they were types, and symbols, and declarations of those things which would happen to Christ, of those who it was foreknown were to believe in Him, and of those things which would also be done by Christ Himself. "⁷¹⁸

For Justin, the rituals instituted by the Pentateuch have a deeper spiritual meaning than what is perceived by the Jews. Furthermore, it is clear in the text, the universalization of Jewish practices by Justin, treated as prophetic utterances. Maybe the best example of this line of thought is given by that treatment dispensed to the circumcision, according to the Bible, a practice adopted by the ancient Israelites long before the institution of the Mosaic Law, represented to the Jews a sign of God's covenant with Abraham and his descendants. Justin, having in mind Jesus as the savior, generates a new meaning to it. In his view, circumcision symbolized the cleansing of believers hearts that would be accomplished by Christ, in his coming.⁷¹⁹ Even if circumcision was a symbol of the coming Messiah, elsewhere in the text, Justin alters its sense from a prophetic sign to a divine ordinance to be fulfilled until the coming of Messiah: "This circumcision is not, however, necessary for all men, but for you alone, in order that, as I have already said, you may suffer these things which you now justly suffer."⁷²⁰

The author extends the eschatological character of the prophetic and apocalyptic texts to whole of the Hebrew Scriptures (LXX), including those with an eminently historical character. The prophetic

⁷¹⁸ *Dial.* 42,4.

⁷¹⁹ *Diál.* 24,2.

⁷²⁰ *Diál.* 19,2.

and apocalyptic discourses, which, at the time of their composition, denounced an anomic social and political order; in the context of Christian differentiation of Judaism, these discourses assumed an essentially nomic character, evidenced by the literal fulfillment in the person of Jesus, of certain passages of the history of the Hebrew people (Shotwell, 1965, p.31). However, this method of scriptural interpretation raised some contradictions. For instance, in *Dial.* 33,1-2, Justin objects the Jewish interpretation of Psalm 110, which applies it to King Hezekiah, by denouncing the non literal compliance by Hezekiah of the Psalmist's words. It is noticed here that if the prophecy resembles the events of Jesus' life, its interpretation must be literal. Otherwise it must be allegorical. Another example of this way of interpreting Scripture literally can be found on *Dial.* 34, where the author denies that the Psalm 72 applies to King Solomon, but, instead, to Christ. The prophetic books, however, are predominantly allegorically interpreted.⁷²¹

Thus, the Scriptures as a whole, act as a great messianic and eschatological discourse, whose fulfillment is realized from the birth of Christ onwards. If Jesus is the Messiah, as Justin says to Trypho, the immolations no longer need to be carried out, since represented the passion suffered by Jesus.⁷²² Different positioning, however, Justin takes on the following passage: "And that you may learn that it was for the sins of your own nation, and for their idolatries and not because there was any necessity for such sacrifices [...]".⁷²³ The above transcript fragment relates the historical dispensation of the Law as a divine punishment for the iniquities of the Jews. In short, the Jewish rituals are represented as a historical dispensation, ordained by God to Israel while awaiting for the Messiah, and, in other passages, the same ritual is something unnecessary to God ordained only to curb the sinful inclinations of Israel.

⁷²¹ Shotwell, 1965, p. 29 - 31.

⁷²² *Dial.* 111, 1-3.

⁷²³ *Dial.* 22,1.

However, in the narrative of the order of YHWH to the people of Israel to offer sacrifices, this ordinance is due to the divine grace to provide the Israelites with a distinct form of worship, in order to differentiate them from other peoples, who used idols of gold and silver⁷²⁴ Justin, however, sees in this passage two meanings: a foreshadowing for what would be the redemption effected in the future, by the wounds of Christ's body, and a divine punishment for the Jews supposedly inherent perversities.

Lets take another example of how Justin works the Hebrew traditions in order to see in them the way how the crucified Jesus fulfilled in his body and in his life example all the rituals observed by the Jews:

For the lamb, which is roasted, is roasted and dressed up in the form of the cross. For one spit is transfixed right through from the lower parts up to the head, and one across the back, to which are attached the legs of the lamb. And the two goats which were ordered to be offered during the fast, of which one was sent away as the scape [goat], and the other sacrificed, were similarly declarative of the two appearances of Christ: the first, in which the elders of your people, and the priests, having laid hands on Him and put Him to death, sent Him away as the scape [goat]; and His second appearance, because in the same place in Jerusalem you shall recognise Him whom you have dishonoured, and who was an offering for all sinners willing to repent, and keeping the fast which Isaiah speaks of, loosening the terms of the violent contracts, and keeping the other precepts, likewise enumerated by him, and which I have quoted, which those believing in Jesus do."⁷²⁵

Although Justin has been keen to argue just from the Written Law, in the above passage, the philosopher made no reference to the biblical text (Lev 16.) itself, but rather to an oral tradition, compiled in the *Mishnah* in *Yoma* 6,1. It is noticed that Justin mistook a precept of the oral law, whose purpose was to regulate the writing, with the Law itself.⁷²⁶

⁷²⁴ *Ex.* 20, 22-24.

⁷²⁵ *Dial.* 40, 3-4.

⁷²⁶ Shotwell, 1965, 73.

According to the previously explained, the common Christian understanding that in Christ are the Scriptures fulfilled is used by Justin as the base of his claim for the extinction of the obligation of the ritual practices of the Law of Moses. To this the author reshapes the meaning of these practices and refers them directly to the person of Jesus. In order to avoid unnecessary repetitions of the repeated typological interpretation that Justin does of the Jewish liturgy, it is necessary only to point that Justin follows the footsteps of Paul. According to the Apostle, scriptural exegesis should be Christocentric.⁷²⁷ As a tributary of the Great Church's traditions, Justin also envisions the realization of the prophecies of the Scriptures in the birth of Christ.⁷²⁸

“For Isaiah did not send you to a bath, there to wash away murder and other sins, which not even all the water of the sea were sufficient to purge; but, as might have been expected, this was that saving bath of the olden time which followed those who repented, and who no longer were purified by the blood of goats and of sheep, or by the ashes of an heifer, or by the offerings of fine flour, but by faith through the blood of Christ, and through His death, who died for this very reason [...]”⁷²⁹

One more time, Justin declares the emptiness of Jewish rituals, when not understood as anticipations of the true spiritual meaning, offered by the Christian faith.

Aware that the Scriptures consider damned every man who dies hanging on a tree, according to the Septuagint translation of Dt.21, 23; Trypho denies the Messiahship of Jesus by the conditions of his death. The man who would redeem the sins of God's people would not lose his life in conditions clearly cursed by God in the Torah. To answer this objection, Justin counter – argues by claiming, about the existence of a prophetic type of Christ in the words of the Law and hold the Jewish people responsible for Jesus' death.

⁷²⁷ Shotwell, 1965, p. 51)

⁷²⁸ *Diál.* 11,2.

⁷²⁹ *Dial.* 13,1.

“For the statement in the law, ‘Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree, confirms our hope which depends on the crucified Christ, not because He who has been crucified is cursed by God, but because God foretold that which would be done by you all, and by those like to you, who do not know that this is He who existed before all, who is the eternal Priest of God, and King, and Christ. And you clearly see that this has come to pass. For you curse in your synagogues all those who are called from Him Christians; and other nations effectively carry out the curse, putting to death those who simply confess themselves to be Christians; to all of whom we say, You are our brethren; rather recognise the truth of God. And while neither they nor you are persuaded by us, but strive earnestly to cause us to deny the name of Christ, we choose rather and submit to death, in the full assurance that all the good which God has promised through Christ He will reward us with. And in addition to all this we pray for you, that Christ may have mercy upon you.⁷³⁰

In the passage above, Justin distances himself from the interpretation given by Paul to Deut. 21,23. While Paul admits that Christ suffered this curse as part of his vicarious sacrifice⁷³¹ Justin claims that the curse of the hangman is actually a prophetic type of persecution that would be brought against Christ and his followers, due to the Jewish refusal to recognize Jesus as the Christ promised. The fulfillment of biblical curse happens when the Jews pray against Christians in their synagogues, a probable allusion to the *Birkat ha – Minim*. The biblical curse is then carried out by the Pagan authorities, when they put Christians to death.

⁷³⁰ *Dial.* 96,1-2.

⁷³¹ *Gal.* 3,13.

Reshaping the *Verus Israel*: from the inclusion of the Gentiles to the Exclusion of the Jews

As reported in the previous chapters, as soon started receiving non - Jews to faith in Christ, the Jewish - Christian community of Jerusalem became divided. On the one hand, some of its leaders found necessary that the new Christian proselytes also submit to circumcision and keep all the Mosaic Law; on the other hand, others required them only the "Noahide commandments." The earliest Christian community reproduced thus, the differences existing in the Diaspora Jewry on the proselytes of Pagan origin.⁷³²

Although Paul and Barnabas, the main missionary to the Gentiles, have convinced the assembly of Apostles and Elders in Jerusalem about non imposing the Law to non - Jewish converts, the issue was not resolved. Paul continued to face opposition from Jewish - Christians who insisted on the necessity of the Law observance, especially circumcision, for all Christians, regardless of their origin.

A strong argument put forward by opponents of Paul was the biblical account of Abraham's circumcision. The passage tells of the covenant God made with him and his descendants, that is, the Hebrews, from which came the Jews. Without the mark of circumcision, the men would be out of God's covenant with his people.⁷³³ So Paul felt pressured to explain his understanding of how the Gentile Christians would be included among the children of the divine promises made to Abraham, even without adopting the characteristic visible sign of the descendants of the same Abraham.

This is one of the topics to be discussed in this chapter: the Pauline exegesis of Abraham's justification before YHWH and the promises he has made to the Patriarch - to be the father of many nations - in order to understand how the Gentile Christianity included the Gentiles in the Abrahamic sonship. This analysis is necessary to establish and understand the use and development by Justin of

⁷³² Flusser, 2002 v.3, p.177.

⁷³³ *Gen.* 17,14.

Paul's arguments. In the *Dialogue*, the same Pauline argument appears, but in order to distinguish the Christians from the Jews, in order to consolidate a Gentile cultural identity to Christianity. Justin therefore interprets the Jewish sacred writings to represent Abraham as a Christian patriarch, not Jewish.

We can see an example of this method of argumentation in the chapter 11: Justin explains to Trypho how he believes Christ fulfills the prophecies about a new covenant and a new law. The Christian Philosopher starts the chapter proclaiming that Gentile Christians believe in the same God who freed the ancient forefathers of the Jews from captivity in Egypt. That is: the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. However, Justin highlights that Christian hope is not upon the Law of Moses, otherwise they would perform the same practices of the Jews. On paragraph 2, Justin tells to Trypho that he has read in Scriptures about the future coming of a new law and a new covenant, superior to the previous ones given on the Horeb, and intended by God to last forever. Justin recalls the Pauline arguments of a second law and a second covenant which abrogates the previous ones, declaring Christ as the definitive law and covenant. Then, on paragraph 3, Justin cites the *Deutero – Isaia*⁷³⁴, and *Jeremiah*⁷³⁵ following the Christological interpretation of the author of *Hebrews*.⁷³⁶ Proceeding with his argumentation, Justin states that those prophecies were fulfilled among the Gentile Christians, which renounce their ethnic deities and iniquities and approach the biblical God through the name of the crucified Christ. Justin also alludes to Gen.49,10 (LXX) and declares that Christ is the new law and the new covenant. Finally, the Philosopher concludes his line of thought founding all Christian theology on the Pauline doctrine of justification of Abraham by faith, prior to his circumcision, and reaches the logical conclusion of all his reasoning: the Christians of all origin are the true and spiritual Israel promised by God to Abraham. In the words of Justin: “For the true spiritual Israel, and descendants of Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham

⁷³⁴ *Isa.* 51,4 – 5.

⁷³⁵ 31,31 – 32.

⁷³⁶ 8,8 – 9.

(who in uncircumcision was approved of and blessed by God on account of his faith, and called the father of many nations), are we who have been led to God through this crucified Christ".⁷³⁷

To understand the Abrahamic support used by Paul to release the Gentiles from the ritualistic charges coming from Judaism, it is essential to review the figure of Abraham in the Pauline epistles, interpreted in the light of the historical context of their writing. We will follow the chronological order accepted by most New Testament scholars.

Paul and the lineage of Abraham

According to Philipp Vielhauer⁷³⁸, the *Letter to the Galatians* would have been written in the same space of time the of the *1st Epistle to the Corinthians*, that is, between the spring of 54 and the Easter of 56.⁷³⁹ The main objective of the *Epistle to the Galatians* was to refute the preaching of Jewish – Christian missionaries in the community of Galatia, which was founded by Paul. These same opponents, which - it is assumed by the dramatic tone of Gal. 4,17 - 20 - claimed a doctrinal authority superior to that of Paul and taught that it was necessary for the Galatians to circumcise themselves and keep all the Mosaic Law in order to enter the people of God and be true children of Abraham.⁷⁴⁰

The scenario we can reconstruct is of a Christian community founded by Paul that capitulates face of the religious scruples of the most conservative Jewish - Christians. The Galatian community, mostly constituted by Gentile Christians, suffered inevitably the Jewish influences that permeated the religious practices of First Century Christianity. This fact deeply disliked Paul, as the Council of Jerusalem, which established the religious injunctions to Gentile converts, was not being respected. As we have no written material produced by these "false brethren" (ἐ)⁷⁴¹, nor all the correspondence between Paul and the Galatians that remained faithful to the Apostle, we will seek to

⁷³⁷ *Dial.* 11,5.

⁷³⁸ 2005, p. 154 - 171.

⁷³⁹ Vielhauer, 2005, p 152 - 154.

⁷⁴⁰ Sanders, 1985, p. 18; cf. *Gal.* 3,23 – 29.

⁷⁴¹ *Gal.* 2,4.

reconstitute the complaints of Jewish - Christians, and their preaching, from the Pauline answer. According to the Apostle's offensive, Paul's opponents did not object to faith in Jesus as the Messiah promised to the Israelites, but only to the Galatians distinctly Gentile way of life⁷⁴². In *Galatians* 1,9 and 3,22, we find two references to the existence of such factions in the fledgling Christian communities. The first passage - "As we have said before, so now I repeat, if anyone proclaims to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let that one be accursed!" (ὃς ἢ μὴ ἴδῃ ἄλλο εὐαγγέλιον ἢ ὃ ἠκούσθη ἐν ἐμοὶ κηρύττειν, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.) - reveals the strong opposition the Jewish - Christians held to the Pauline teaching of non-compliance of the Jewish rites by the Gentile Christians. The second passage deals with the invalidity of the same Law to the Gentiles: "But the scripture has imprisoned all things under the power of sin, so that what was promised through faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe." (ἀλλὰ ἵνα ἡ ἐπαγγελία ἡ ἐν Χριστῷ ὑποσχεθεῖσα ἡμῖν, ἢ ἡ ἐν νόμῳ ἡμῖν ἔσται, ἵνα ἡ ἐπαγγελία ἡ ἐν Χριστῷ ὑποσχεθεῖσα ἡμῖν, ἢ ἡ ἐν νόμῳ ἡμῖν ἔσται.)). Paul then develops his thesis of the Law being accomplished in the person of Christ, by reshaping the religious identity from the observance of the Law, to faith in Christ. In fact, Paul claims the invalidity of the Law of Moses as a prerequisite to belonging to the chosen people, in order to extend salvation to the Gentiles.⁷⁴³

Paul then gives his interpretation of the scriptural narrative about Abraham's justification before YHWH and the covenant between God and the Patriarch. Thus, the Apostle declares that the *status* of children of Abraham is no longer the prerogative of practicing Jews, but rather of the universality of believers in Jesus. The Pauline argument is essentially based on the belief by the Apostle that, the true

⁷⁴² Jens Schröter (2013, p. 135) points out that when Paul calls out the "gospel of Christ" in his defense (*Gal.* 1,7), he is actually reminding his readers that faith in Christ is the common ground between he, Peter, Barnabas, and even his own opponents.

⁷⁴³ As Ed Parish Sanders (1985, p. 18) correctly states, the true discussion in *Galatians* is not to determine what persons, abstractedly conceived, must do to be justified before God, but what is the condition to be fulfilled by Gentile converts to being able to enter the people elected to salvation.

understanding of Christian faith is contrary to the Pauline understanding of justification by faith in Christ, as explained before.

According to the theological understanding of Paul, the insistence of the Jewish - Christians in circumcising Gentile Christians and enforcing on them all the Law, would make the Gentiles into Jews, and thus diminish the importance of Christ for the salvation of mankind; becoming a human attempt to earn salvation by the works of the Law. Far from being an entry door for the Gentiles, the observance of the Law would be a way to one exclude itself from God's grace, and, therefore, from salvation: "You who want to be justified by the law have cut yourselves off from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. (ἡ ἀὸ ὕ, ἴ ἐ ὀμω ὕ , ἦ ἀ ἐ ἐ).

One of the hallmarks of the Epistle to the Galatians is the highly polemical tone with which Paul refutes the arguments of Jewish Christians and tries to defend his own apostolic authority, that he saw be seriously threatened. This alerts us not to try to reconstruct, from the text, the understanding of Paul on the status of the Jews non believers in Jesus before YHWH after the advent of Christ. To this end, it is more prudent to rely on the *Letter to the Romans*, which was written without the fierce struggle for recognition of his authority in the Christian community addressed. Another reason is because we can see in Galatians, a negative setting for the non - Christian Jews, since he declared the Law is "bearing children for slavery" (ἰ ἰ ὦ̃).⁷⁴⁶ In the words of Dunn⁷⁴⁷, the *Letter to the Romans* "is the most continuous and reflective exposure of the entire theology of Paul, by himself." Nevertheless, for reasons of chronological order, before we will do the analysis of the *2nd Letter to the Corinthians*.

⁷⁴⁶ Siker, 1991, p. 49 cf. *Gal.* 4,24 - 25.

⁷⁴⁷ 2003, p. 6.

In *2 Cor.* 11,22 we find the only Pauline reference to Abraham out of *Galatians* and *Romans*. This letter, dated by Vielhauer⁷⁴⁸ as written between the autumn of 56 and the spring of 58, gives us, as a background, a Pauline community made by a majority of Gentile converts, under strong Jewish - Christian influence. Once more, Paul finds himself challenged by other teachers, struggling to keep his position as apostle amid that Christian community. Both letters, *Galatians* and *2nd Corinthians* suggest that the Jewish religious heritage was used by the Jewish - Christians as the main argument in favor of their position, advocating the need of Gentile Christians to observe the Law. There is an almost certain possibility that Jewish identity was even considered by the Corinthians, the central point of the Christian faith, forcing Paul to enumerate it as one of his own “credentials”:

“To my shame, I must say, we were too weak for that! But whatever anyone dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast of that. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.”⁷⁴⁹

(ἄ ἄ μί ἐ , ὠ ὄ ἡμ ἴ ἡ ἡ μ . Ἐ ῶ ᾿ ᾷ μᾶ, ἐ ἄ ὕ η ἐ , μῶ ἄ ὠ. Ἐ ἴ ἴ ἴ ἄ ὠ. ἴ ἴ ἴ ἄ ὠ. ἐ μ Ἀ ἄμ ἴ ἄ ὠ.).

In both letters, Paul reacts against the teaching of his opponents characterizing it as a "different gospel" (ἕ ὕ ἐ).⁷⁵⁰ Thus, Paul uses Abraham's figure with two purposes. First, to match up to the Jewish credentials presented to the Corinthians by the Jewish - Christian missionaries. As already mentioned, the Jewish religious heritage displayed by the opponents of Paul seems to have much impressed quite the Corinthian Christians. Second, the Abrahamic argument could beat opponents with their own weapons. After reminding the Corinthians that he was a Jew, a descendant of Abraham, and therefore invested with the same authority that the Jewish - Christians claimed for

⁷⁴⁸ 2005, p. 186.

⁷⁴⁹ *2 Cor.* 11,21 – 22.

⁷⁵⁰ *Gal.* 1,7; *2 Cor.* 11,4.

intended to visit.⁷⁵⁴ To prepare the Roman Christians for his arrival, Paul developed in the letter, his theory of justification by faith in Jesus. He also worked out in advance his answers to some theological problems caused by the coexistence of Gentile Christians and Jewish - Christians. In the letter, it is possible to realize that probably some Gentile Christians considered the non - Christian Jews excluded from the salvific plans of God due to the refusal to recognize Jesus as the promised Messiah. Others had doubts on their own inclusion in the condition of "children of Abraham" and heirs of the divine promises. Finally, to present his theology before his arrival, Paul expected undo any negative rumor of antinomianism that the Romans would have heard about him.⁷⁵⁵

In writing *Romans*, Paul once again resorts to the figure of Abraham in defense of his theology, given the fact that the Gentile Christian identity was still in its beginnings, and Abraham was an already consolidated figure as the founder of Jewish identity, horizon from which Christianity emerged. Among the objectives undertaken by Paul with this epistle there was the answer to the question raised by the Gentile Christians of the Roman community about what would be their exact relation with the God of Israel.

As already mentioned in Chapter 1, this community had close contacts with the Jewish community. One more time, we face the issue of human justification before God. The traditional Jewish thesis was that a person had to keep the Law given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai⁷⁵⁶, and, even more, perform circumcision, ordained by God to Abraham, the first Hebrew patriarch⁷⁵⁷. This thesis was also espoused by Jewish - Christians. Connected to this argument is the Abraham's sonship and the abandonment of the Jewish way of life. To accomplish this task, Paul reinterprets the biblical traditions about Abraham. In *Romans* chapter 4, the Apostle writes at length about the justification by

⁷⁵⁴ Vielhauer, 2005, p. 206.

⁷⁵⁵ Siker, 1991, p. 52; Sanders, 1985, p. 31.

⁷⁵⁶ Ex. 34,27.

⁷⁵⁷ Gen. 17, 9 - 14.

faith apart from the works of the Law. In this Pauline text, the emphasis is on the figure of Abraham, because he was the founding myth of the Jewish people, from whose progeny Jesus was generated and proclaimed the universal savior. As we can check from the following passage in *Rom.* 4,1-12; 23-25, transcribed below, Paul struggles with the exact in moment in which Abraham was justified:

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. So also David speaks of the blessedness of those to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works: “Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the one against whom the Lord will not reckon sin.” Is this blessedness, then, pronounced only on the circumcised, or also on the uncircumcised? We say, “Faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness.” How then was it reckoned to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the ancestor of all who believe without being circumcised and who thus have righteousness reckoned to them, and likewise the ancestor of the circumcised who are not only circumcised but who also follow the example of the faith that our ancestor Abraham had before he was circumcised.”⁷⁵⁸

(ἰ ὕ ἐ ὕμ ὕ ἐ Ἀ ἄμ ὀ ἄ ἡμῶ ἄ ἄ ἰ ἄ Ἀ ἄμ ἐ ἔ
 ἐ ὦ , ἔ ὕ μ , ἄ ’ ὕ ὀ ὀ . ἰ ἄ ἡ ἡ ἐ ὦ ἐ ἐ μέ ὠ ὀ μ ὀ ὕ
 ἰ ἄ ἄ ἄ ἄ ὀ ἰ μ , ὦ ἐ μῆ ἐ μέ ὠ ὕ ἐ ἐ ἰ ὀ ὕ
 ὀ ἄ ἡ ἰ ἡ ἰ ὕ ὕ ἰ ὕ . ἄ ἰ ἰ ἐ ὀ μ μὸ ὕ
 ἄ ὦ ὦ ὀ ὀ ἰ ὕ ἰ ἔ μ ἄ ὦ ἄ ἐ ἰ ἄ μί μ ἄ
 ἄ ἡ Ὅ μ μὸ ὕ ὕ ἐ ἰ ἡ μῆ ἡ ἰ ἐ ἰ ἡ ἄ ἰ ἐ μ ἄ . ἐ ἰ
 ὦ Ἀ ἄμ ἡ ἰ ἰ ὕ . ὦ ὕ ἐ ἰ ἐ μῆ ὀ ἡ ἐ ἄ ἰ α ὕ ἐ
 μῆ ἄ ’ ἐ ἄ ἰ α . ἰ μ ἰ ἔ μῆ ἰ ἡ ὕ ἡ ἰ
 ἡ ἐ ἡ ἄ ἰ α , ἰ ὀ ἰ ὕ ὀ ἐ ἄ ὦ ὀ ’ ἄ ἰ , ἰ ὀ
 ἡ [ἰ] ὕ ἰ [ἡ] ὕ , ἰ ἐ μῆ ἰ ὕ ἐ μῆ μὸ ἄ ἄ
 ἰ ἰ ὕ ἰ ἰ ἡ ἐ ἄ ἰ α ἰ ὕ ὀ ἡμῶ Ἀ ἄμ .)

⁷⁵⁸ *Rom.* 4,1 – 12.

Continuing his argument, Paul explains the fact that God could not reject the children of Israel is due to His own character, which cannot deny himself, as He swore to the patriarchs to bless their seed forever. The visible sign that God has not rejected his people, for the Apostle, is the fact that He still elected many from the Jews. Paul goes so far as to stand as the living proof of the continuity of God's mercy to the Israelites, as shown above by Rom. 11,1 - 6.

To include the Gentiles in the Abrahamic affiliation, Paul said that God hardened the hearts of the Jews. He does not explain how this divine dynamic operates. Paul explicitly states that the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus by the Jews is the work of divine providence for the salvation of the Gentiles. It further states that this hardening is temporary. It will last only until the completion of the "fullness of the Gentiles", and at the end, all Israel will be saved.⁷⁷² Gentile Christians should not regard the Jews as rejected by God, although at the time of Paul they seemed to be enemies of God, in reality, the Jews continued to be loved by God and to be part of his salvific plan, because the election of Israel is irrevocable.⁷⁷³ The use of scriptural passages that compare Israel to Sodom and Gomorrah, or even the minority of faithful to YHWH in Elijas' time does not imply that God will save only one rest of the Jews, but rather that the "seven thousand "represent the faithful of the Jews which are in the eschatological tension of the " already ", while most of them is in the "not yet " of the coming kingdom of God. Paul's goal is, ultimately, to prevent the Jews about the danger of apostasy, so often denounced in the past by the prophets.⁷⁷⁴

From this argumentation, one can see that Paul does not deny the Abrahamic sonship to non-Christian Jews. Conversely, the Apostle gives such sonship to Gentile Christians through the argument of justification by faith, given to Abraham. He also creates an analogy to justify such reconciliation,

⁷⁷² Rom. 11, 26.

⁷⁷³ Siker, 1991, p 72; Dunn, 2003, p 598 - 602 cf. Rom. 11,28.

⁷⁷⁴ Dunn, 2003, p. 589 - 590.

drawing on the example of the Egyptian Pharaoh of Exodus: “For the scripture says to Pharaoh, ‘I have raised you up for the very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.’ So then he has mercy on whomever he chooses, and he hardens the heart of whomever he chooses.”⁷⁷⁵ (ἔ ἀ ἡ ἡ ῶ ὠ ὄ ἰ ὕ ὀ ὤ ἔ ἡ ἄ ὄ ἔ ἰ μ ἔ ἰ ἡ ὕ μί μ ἰ ὄ ἡ ὀ ὄ μ ἄ μ ἔ ἄ ἡ ἡ ἡ ἄ ὤ ὀ ἔ ἔ ἱ ὀ ἔ ἔ ὕ).

Thus, the Abrahamic affiliation develops in Paul without its materialization, ie, circumcision; and, together with the doctrine of faith in Christ, serves as a support for the salvation of the uncircumcised Gentiles also. Although not denying to the Jews the *status* of people of God, something will be done later by Justin, Paul greatly criticizes Judaism of his days. Even though children of Abraham, the Jews, in Paul’s opinion, still were in disobedience before God for not recognizing Jesus as their savior.⁷⁷⁶ In Paul’s mind, the Jews sought justice through the ritual works of the Law and not by faith. This is why, also according to Paul, they failed to recognize the conversion of the Gentiles to faith in the God of Abraham through Christ, as a work of divine providence. By not accepting that the Gentiles could retain their Gentile *status*, the Jews did not accept Christ. But there is also a curious fact in Romans: Paul claims to be the apostle of the Gentiles to incite the Jews into jealousy in order to save some of them. His effort to save the Gentiles sought to hasten the conversion of Israel: “Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry in order to make my own people jealous, and thus save some of them.”⁷⁷⁷ (Ὑμῖ ἔ ἔ ἱ ἔ ἔ ἔ ὄ μ ἔ ὤ ἔ ὤ ἄ ὀ , ἡ ἰ μ ἄ , ἱ ὠ μ ἡ ἄ ἰ ὠ ἄ ἔ ὕ ῶ).

⁷⁷⁵ Rom. 9,17 – 18.

⁷⁷⁶ Siker, 1991, p. 75.

⁷⁷⁷ Rom. 11, 13 - 14.

Abraham as the Father of Christians Only

As mentioned before, Justin Martyr wrote the *Dialogue with Trypho*, around 155, in order to consolidate the Great Church's Christianity and accelerate the construction of a Christian identity apart from Judaism. In Justin's work, the discussion takes place around the correct interpretation, according to the narrator - character, of the Scriptures. More specifically, Justin discusses the basis for the justification of sinful men before God, and the true descendancy of Abraham. In this sense, Justin recovers Pauline arguments about justification by faith apart from works of the Law, and led them on, extrapolating the conclusions drawn by the Apostle.

Early in the *Dialogue*, after narrating the way he was' converted to Christianity, Justin puts in the mouth of Trypho the main Jewish objection: the lack of observance of circumcision and other ritual commandments of the Law.⁷⁷⁸ Justin then argues, exploiting the example of Abraham, about the lack of necessity of circumcision and the charge of the Law. However, unlike Paul, who built his theology in order to include the Gentile Christians in the Abrahamic sonship, keeping the place of the Jews in the divine promises; Justin, in his turn, also used the Pauline exegesis of the *Genesis*' texts, but denied to the Jews the *status* of children of Abraham. He disinherited the Jews as a distinct ethnic people of the divine promises.

In the *Dialogue*, Justin makes extensive use of the figure of Abraham, citing the Patriarch exact 103 times. Of all these citations, the most frequents are referring to circumcision.⁷⁷⁹ It can be observed that the Christian Philosopher credited to the circumcision the role of infamous mark, identifier of the Jewish people:

⁷⁷⁸ *Dial.* 10,3 - 4; 19,1.

⁷⁷⁹ *Dial.* 11; 16; 19; 23; 26; 27; 33; 43; 46; 47; 92; 113; 114 etc.

"For the circumcision according to the flesh, which is from Abraham, was given for a sign; that you may be separated from other nations, and from us; and that you alone may suffer that which you now justly suffer; and that your land may be desolate, and your cities burned with fire; and that strangers may eat your fruit in your presence, and not one of you may go up to Jerusalem.'For you are not recognised among the rest of men by any other mark than your fleshly circumcision. For none of you, I suppose, will venture to say that God neither did nor does foresee the events, which are future, nor foreordained his deserts for each one. Accordingly, these things have happened to you in fairness and justice, for you have slain the Just One, and His prophets before Him".⁷⁸⁰

According to the Author, the circumcision, more than a sign of a divine covenant between YHWH and the descendancy of Abraham, the ultimate meaning of circumcision actually was an identity mark ordained because the divine prediction of the deaths of Christ and the Prophets before him. According to Visonà:

"What the Jews are suffering around 135 AD, the time of setting of the *Dialogue*, is the suppression of the uprising led by Bar Kokhba against Rome, [...] To see in this event a precise divine plan (and exhausting in this horizon the significance of circumcision) is the result of an elementary scheme of theology of history, that binds guilt and atonement and has its archetype in the experience of the exile of the Jews to Babylon. The catastrophe of 70 A.D. was already read by Christians as the punishment for the killing of Christ; [...] these paragraphs, however, give us an idea of the serious tone reached by the anti - Jewish polemic by the time of Justin."⁷⁸¹

On the other hand, Justin also identifies in the circumcision a prophetic metaphor of Christ's coming, meaning the spiritual circumcision performed by Christ: "And we, who have approached God through Him, have received not carnal, but spiritual circumcision, which Enoch and those like him observed. And we have received it through baptism, since we were sinners, by God's mercy; and all men may equally obtain it."⁷⁸²

⁷⁸⁰ *Dial.* 16,2 - 4.

⁷⁸¹ Visonà, 2009, p. 123, note 2.

⁷⁸² *Dial.* 43,2.

With regard to Abraham, the fleshy circumcision is also a spiritual circumcision of the heart, from which, also Abraham's uncircumcised ancestors were beneficiaries⁷⁸³; but with regard to Abraham's descendants, the Jews, it becomes a sign of a divine curse. An additional argument is drawn from the Genesis' narrative on the war moved by Abraham against the confederation of State cities led by the king of Sodom. In the biblical story, the circumcised Hebrew Patriarch gave tithes regarding the spoils of war to Melchizedek, the king - priest of Salem, which was uncircumcised:

"[...] Even you, who are the circumcised according to the flesh, have need of our circumcision; but we, having the latter, do not require the former [...] Melchizedek, the priest of the Most High, was uncircumcised; to whom also Abraham the first who received circumcision after the flesh, gave tithes, and he blessed him: after whose order God declared, by the mouth of David, that He would establish the everlasting priest. Therefore to you alone this circumcision was necessary, in order that the people may be no people, and the nation no nation; as also Hosea."⁷⁸⁴

In the passage above, Justin alludes to *Gen.* 14,18 – 20, which he interprets according to *Heb.* 7,1 - 10. The concern of the author of Hebrews was to prove the superiority of Christ's priesthood, as he said, "according to the order of Melchizedek"⁷⁸⁵, when compared to the Leviticus' priesthood, derived from Aaron, a descendant of Abraham. Justin, in turn, recovers and adapts the argument of Hebrews, to prove the superiority of faith in Christ, typologically represented by the uncircumcised Melchizedek, when compared to the circumcision, represented by the already circumcised Abraham.

Justin also followed *Hebrews* in interpreting the encounter between Abraham and Melchizedek in hierarchical terms: "But this man, who does not belong to their ancestry, collected tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had received the promises. It is beyond dispute that the inferior is

⁷⁸³ *Dial.* 43, 2.

⁷⁸⁴ *Dial.* 19,3 - 4.

⁷⁸⁵ *Heb.* 6,20 *in fine*.

Justin reaffirms the Pauline theme of two seeds of Abraham: the material and the spiritual ones. Ultimately, what Justin does is dissociating the true children of the promise, *ie*, those who had the same faith of their ancestor, from those who are merely physically descendant. The interpretation of Justin, therefore, goes beyond Pauline theology. For the author of the *Dialogue*, the Jews should not be included in God's promises to Abraham, because, actually, they were never part of them. As the Philosopher represented the Christians as the only fulfillment of the posterity promised, the Jews are not true descendants of Abraham:

“Such are the words of Scripture; understand, therefore, that the seed of Jacob now referred to is something else, and not, as may be supposed, spoken of your people. For it is not possible for the seed of Jacob to leave an entrance for the descendants of Jacob, or for [God] to have accepted the very same persons whom He had reproached with unfitness for the inheritance, and promise it to them again; but as there the prophet says, ‘And now, O house of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of the Lord; for He has sent away His people, the house of Jacob, because their land was full, as at the first, of soothsayers and divinations;’ even so it is necessary for us here to observe that there are two seeds of Judah, and two races, as there are two houses of Jacob: the one begotten by blood and flesh, the other by faith and the Spirit. ” Dial. 135, 4 - 6.

If Christians, not Jews, were the prophetic posterity of Abraham, the true spiritual Israel would be disconnected from the ethnic Israel. Hence it follows that for the Jews to be saved, they should repent of their sins, recognize Christ as their Messiah and be baptized in the true faith:

"So that it becomes you to eradicate this hope from your souls, and hasten to know in what way forgiveness of sins, and a hope of inheriting the promised good things, shall be yours. But there is no other [way] than this,—to become acquainted with this Christ, to be washed in the fountain spoken of by Isaiah for the remission of sins; and for the rest, to live sinless lives."⁷⁹⁰

Using a contemporary language, we can say that Justin dissociates religion from ethnicity. It is not important anymore from what *genos* people come. The only important thing is converting itself to the only true religion: the Christian one.

⁷⁹⁰ Dial. 44,4.

It should be noted, however, that while Justin follows the trail of Pauline theology, the Apostle stops suddenly and does not take, at least explicitly, the logical conclusion of this line of argument, which is the Church as the only *Verus Israel*. As pointed out by Sanders, the concept of *Verus Israel* is also present in the Community of Qumran. It is true that the Qumranites did not call themselves "Israel" or "true Israel"; they preferred the term "children of light" and other similar terms. It seems that there was a reluctance to designate themselves as "Israel" while the other Jews still existed and the awaited eschatological events were not yet fulfilled. According to 1QS^a, there would come a time when the other Jews would join the sect and the title "Israel" would become appropriate to the group. Both, at Qumran as in Paul, the theology of the remnant needs the conversion and / or destruction of the wicked Jews.⁷⁹¹ We believe that this was the eschatological expectation of Paul. Past, however, more of a century after the coming of Christ and the *parousia* not met yet, Justin draws the appropriate conclusions of Pauline exegesis and proclaims the Gentile church as the only Israel promised by God to Abraham, as we shall see.

⁷⁹¹ Sanders, 1985, p. 175 – 176.

Reshaping the *Verus Israel*

The concept of *Verus Israel* is eminently Christian. It has been progressively developed in the first Christian literature in the midst of disparities and nuances that reveal the existence of many questions and reactions among the Christian communities. The source of this concept is the New Testament. The epistles *to the Romans*, *Hebrews*, *Galatians* and the *Gospel of John* offer the themes that play an essential role in the development of the *Verus Israel* concept: the seed of Abraham and Sarah; Isaac and Rebekah; the meaning of the Law and of the circumcision; the hardening of Israel; the opposition between the notions of people and nation; the eschatological remnant etc.

The New Testament also has expressions that paved the way for the *Verus Israel*: *Rom.* 9,6 (Abraham's seed) cf. *Gal.* 3,28 - 29 ("all Israel"; "The God of Israel", "Israel after the flesh"; "He is a true Israelite"). However, the expression *Verus Israel* does not appear in any of these documents.⁷⁹²

It also does not appear in the *Epistle of Barnabas* (130 – 140).⁷⁹³ The Pseudo - Barnabas devoted himself to prove the futility of observing the Mosaic Law. For him, the Jews (and also the Jewish - Christians) are associated with the ways of darkness and are designated as "Israel". The Christians, to the contrary, are always presented in a positive way and get the following designations: "Church"⁷⁹⁴; and the most frequent: "the people"⁷⁹⁵ with adjectives to distinguish it from the Jews; "The new people"⁷⁹⁶; "The people who come"⁷⁹⁷; "Holy people"⁷⁹⁸; "The people of inheritance".⁷⁹⁹

The author of *Barnabas* devotes a long chapter to answer the question of which one of the two people will inherit the biblical promises. He then argues on the basis of the already traditional scriptural

⁷⁹² Bobichon, 2005b, p. 423.

⁷⁹³ Vielhauer, 2005, p. 638 – 639.

⁷⁹⁴ *Barn.* 7,11.

⁷⁹⁵ *Barn.* 13,1.6.

⁷⁹⁶ *Barn.* 5,7; 7,5.

⁷⁹⁷ *Barn.* 13,5.

⁷⁹⁸ *Barn.* 14,6.

⁷⁹⁹ *Barn.* 13,1.

themes: the double seed of Isaac and Rebekah⁸⁰⁰ and the blessing of Jacob to Ephraim and Manasseh, sons of Joseph.⁸⁰¹

The themes of Esau / Jacob and Ephraim / Manasseh were already traditional among Christians.⁸⁰² *Barnabas*, however, considers Jacob and Ephraim as ancestors exclusively of the Gentile Christians, while Paul had them into account of ancestors of all Christians, circumcised or not.⁸⁰³ It seems that Justin's *Dialogue* is the first work where appears explicitly the notion of *Verus Israel*: "the true, spiritual Israelite race"⁸⁰⁴; "We are the true Israelites".⁸⁰⁵

The effort made by Justin to reshape the *Verus Israel*, as well as the claim of obsolescence of their practices, serve to the same purpose: substantiate the legitimacy of Gentile Christianity. By assimilating and reframing the main elements of the Jewish religion, the Christians were able, because of the stimulus provided by the apocalyptic-eschatological movement, identify the public appearance of Jesus, his preaching and crucifixion, and the belief in him, the temporal continuum with the Hebrew tradition, fundamented on Abraham. According to Justin:

" Moreover, by the works and by the attendant miracles, it is possible for all to understand that He is the new law, and the new covenant, and the expectation of those who out of every people wait for the good things of God. For the true spiritual Israel, and descendants of Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham (who in uncircumcision was approved of and blessed by God on account of his faith, and called the father of many nations), are we who have been led to God through this crucified Christ, as shall be demonstrated while we proceed. "⁸⁰⁶

⁸⁰⁰ *Gen.* 25,21 – 23.

⁸⁰¹ *Gen.* 48,9 s.

⁸⁰² cf. *Rom.* 9,6.13.

⁸⁰³ Bobichon, 2005b, p. 424.

⁸⁰⁴ *Dial.* 11,5.

⁸⁰⁵ *Dial.* 135,3 and 123,7.

⁸⁰⁶ *Dial.* 11, 4 – 5.

The movements engendered by Paul's and Justin's texts gave great contribution to this identity delimitation. The first connects the Gentile world to Jewish eschatology, through belief of its fulfillment in the person of Jesus. By linking Abraham to Gentile Christians, Paul opens up the possibility of disconnection between the Christian salvation and the Jewish religion and culture. This was taken forward by Justin.

We must not forget, however, that the Pauline *Verus Israel* proves to be the Church, the body of Christ. However, this Church is understood as the universal salvation of the Jewish God to all peoples of the Earth. Thus, the *Verus Israel* for Paul has two ethnic identities: the Jewish and the Gentile. Due to the eschatological urgency, they must coexist, culturally separated, but religiously united. It is worth noting that Paul could only keep the non – Christian Jews within the spiritual Israel, probably because at the time of writing *Romans*, he still awaited the *parousia* for a relatively near future. In theological language, the Jewish believers in Christ "already" had entered the Kingdom of God, while the other "not yet", but will do it at the time of Christ's return. Thus, it is possible that he had not properly reflected on the problem of eternal salvation of the Jews who died without being converted to faith in Christ.⁸⁰⁷ If we consider the possibility of a short-term eschatological expectation, the number of individuals who died supposedly in disobedience to God would not be a threat to the maintenance of the ethnic Israel as part of the spiritual Israel.

Justin, on the other hand, having lived about a hundred years later, had to face this problem, and to provide a coherent response based on the Christian belief in Jesus as the expected savior. We saw in the previous chapter of this research how Justin could be quite liberal and inclusive with respect to the heathen who have never heard of Jesus or the God of Israel. However, towards the Jews, the picture changes. The Christian Philosopher does not accept the salvation of the souls of those Jews who die

⁸⁰⁷ Sanders, 1985, p. 195 – 197.

without being converted to Christ.⁸⁰⁸ Regarding the Pagans, the matter is resolved in a simpler way: although they live in ignorance of the true God to the concept level, they do not ignore the light of his Logos in the natural law, which is also reflected in the Greek philosophy and all the ethnic laws. All the Heathens need is to live according to common ethics to have guaranteed their salvation. The Jewish situation appears more complex for Justin. The Christian Philosopher admits that Jews converted to Christ eventually can continue to observe the what is possible from the Law. On this, he remained on the same track of Paul. On the other hand, however, Justin could not follow the Apostle about the other Jews. The empirical reality imposed itself on him: on the one hand, he saw before him "the time of the Church": A Church developing its full institutional structures formed by a majority of non-Jewish individuals, strangers to Jewish culture. On the other hand, the total lack of a plausible expectation of mass conversion of Jews in the short term due to their restructuring around the pharisaical – rabbinical model, and also the cursing against the Jewish – Christian in their synagogues. This situation prevented the Philosopher to apply to the Jews the same solution given to the Heathen who have never heard of Christ.

⁸⁰⁸ cf. *Dial.* 47.

A Sociological Analysis of the Symbolic Power Relations Between Jews and Christians

At this moment, we consider necessary to explicit the operation and the importance of stigmatization mechanism operating inside the power relations between the two social groups objects of this research. Our theoretical framework, as mentioned in the introduction, is the book *The Established and the Outsiders: A Sociological Enquiry into Community Problems* by Norbert Elias and John L. Scotson. We know that social relationship between Christians and Jews in the second century was particularly tense because of the restructuring process both “religions” were been under. The Jews, rallying up around the pharisaic - rabbinical model, and the Christians, merging the sinoptic, johannite and Pauline communities into the Great Church.⁸⁰⁹ In such a situation, both groups constituted their own internal hierarchy: the Jews, trough the Patriarchate of Yavneh, and the Christians, with the monoepiscopal system.⁸¹⁰ As well as the study done by Elias and Scotson in the English countryside, in the 50s of the twentieth century, also the relation Jews *versus* Christians in the second century was founded on the issue of antiquity of constituent groups.⁸¹¹ The Jews were owners of a millenial cultural and religious heritage and the Christians instead, newcomers in the religious landscape of the Roman Empire. At the time of writing the *Dialogue*, they did not yet count two centuries of existence. If we consider that the institutional hierarchical structures of the Gentile communities have developed during the second century⁸¹² the Gentile Christianity did not have a hundred years of autonomy from Judaism.

However, unlike the outsiders in the study of Elias and Scotson, Gentile Christians of all types (synoptics, johannines, paulines etc.) developed, since their beginnings, a complex and efficient network of relationships between the various communities. The communication channel was informed by the Pauline theology of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ, which individual members and

⁸⁰⁹ Scardelai, 2008, p. 128 - 156.

⁸¹⁰ Poliakov, 1979, p. 20.

⁸¹¹ Elias, 2000, p. 21.

⁸¹² Poliakov, 1979, p 20.

local communities were included.⁸¹³ On the other hand, the Jews, instead of leaning on a strong and respected ancestral tradition, were, at the time of writing the *Dialogue*, with their internal structures shaken, in view of the recent military defeat by the Romans in 135. It is clear, the character of *outsider* regarding the Greco - Roman society, in both communities here concerned.

Christianity was beginning its legitimacy in the Roman world, and, at Justin's time, featured on relative internal organization. Judaism, in contrast, whose condition of an *established* ethnic religion, because of its age-old tradition, found itself, however, fragmented in its internal organization and considerably restrained because of antiproselitists laws enforced by the Empire.⁸¹⁴

At this point, when the hierarchies of the two religions sought to increase the internal cohesion of their communities, the ceremonial practices again played a key role in determining the identity of both groups. As we have long discussed when analyzing the theologies of Paul and Justin, the ritualistic commandments of the Mosaic Law indelibly mark the Jewish ethnic - religious identity.⁸¹⁵

It is not therefore surprising that Justin launches strong attacks against the practice of the Law, following a trend among the first Christian theologians.⁸¹⁶ Because both groups, Jews and Christians, were contesting the same religious heritage, but with significant differences in theological understanding and way of life; the way found by Justin was to stigmatize the Jewish people, Law's receptacle, as we see in the passage transcribed below:

⁸¹³ Bultmann, 2004, p. 140 - 141.

⁸¹⁴ The proselytism by way of circumcision was prohibited by Emperor Hadrian, after the defeat of the Jewish revolt led by Bar Kokhba, in 135. The punishments established for such action were the death penalty or banishment, which were confirmed by Antoninus Pius, even after reestablishing to legality the Jewish religion (Poliakov, 1979: 8-9; 18-20.).

⁸¹⁵ Dunn, 2003, p. 573.

⁸¹⁶ Scardelai, 2008, p. 156.

"You have now need of a second circumcision, though you glory greatly in the flesh. The new law requires you to keep perpetual sabbath, and you, because you are idle for one day, suppose you are pious, not discerning why this has been commanded you: and if you eat unleavened bread, you say the will of God has been fulfilled. The Lord our God does not take pleasure in such observances: if there is any perjured person or a thief among you, let him cease to be so; if any adulterer, let him repent; then he has kept the sweet and true sabbaths of God. If any one has impure hands, let him wash and be pure."⁸¹⁷

Justin makes an indirect quote of Isaiah 58,13. In the passage, the prophet uttered a tough rebuke to what seemed to be a sterile ceremonialism lived in his time, and also scanned a moral interpretation of the ritual commandments of the Torah. However, contrary to what Justin hints with his quote, Isaiah never says the rituals are expendable in benefit of a behavioral change. Justin makes use of negative characterizations linked to corporeality and morality as a way to detract the Jewish perspective on Scripture and resignify the perspective of Scripture on the Jews.

According to Elias⁸¹⁸, one key factor for keeping the internal cohesion of a given social group is the compliance of its members with the rules of behavior and moral values accepted. The social groups need to design to its members a self-image of moral superiority when facing other interdependent groups. This is achieved, among other ways, by highlighting the antiquity of the group, reinforcing the social norms and stigmatizing and excluding anomic individuals. We can see how Justin inserts negative descriptions and condemnations to the Jewish way of life, managing the biblical passages out of context:

“And God himself proclaimed by Moses, speaking thus: ‘And circumcise the hardness of your hearts, and no longer stiffen the neck. [...] For the circumcision according to the flesh, which is from Abraham, was given for a sign; that you may be separated from other nations, and from us; and that you alone may suffer that which you now justly suffer; and that your land may be desolate, and your cities burned with fire; and that strangers may eat your fruit in your presence, and not one of you may go up to

⁸¹⁷ *Dial.* 12,3.

⁸¹⁸ 2000, p. 171.

Jerusalem.’ [...] Accordingly, these things have happened to you in fairness and justice, for you have slain the Just One, and His prophets before Him [...]”⁸¹⁹

We have below another example of how Justin couples misunderstanding of religious practice with moral profligacy:

“Baptize the soul from wrath and from covetousness, from envy, and from hatred; and, lo! the body is pure. For this is the symbolic significance of unleavened bread, that you do not commit the old deeds of wicked leaven. But you have understood all things in a carnal sense, and you suppose it to be piety if you do such things, while your souls are filled with deceit, and, in short, with every wickedness”⁸²⁰

This stigmatization was driven by a distortion of the events narrated in the Bible, where the extraordinary moments in Jewish history were made the rule, the standard measure of the character of an entire people, from its beginning to the days of Justin. We can see below another example of such use of the Scriptures:

“Now, although these and all other such unexpected and marvellous works were wrought amongst and seen by you at different times, yet you are convicted by the prophets of having gone to such a length as offering your own children to demons; and besides all this, of having dared to do such things against Christ; and you still dare to do them: for all which may it be granted to you to obtain mercy and salvation from God and His Christ.”⁸²¹

It is not fortuitous that Justin has made efforts to accuse the Jews of idolatry, since, this is the ultimate violation of Law.⁸²² Although he cannot impute the taint of idolatrous to the Jews of his own time, Justin arrange his arguments in order to match the practices of these with those of past times, denounced by the prophetic and apocalyptic literature:

“For indeed you are not in the habit of sacrificing to Baal, as were your fathers, or of placing cakes in groves and on high places for the host of heaven: but you have not accepted God’s Christ. For he who knows not Him, knows not the will of God; and he who insults

⁸¹⁹ *Dial.* 16,1 - 4.

⁸²⁰ *Dial.* 14,2.

⁸²¹ *Dial.* 133,1.

⁸²² Dunn, 2003, p. 410.

and hates Him, insults and hates Him that sent Him. And whoever believes not in Him, believes not the declarations of the prophets, who preached and proclaimed Him to all." Dial. 136,3.

That's what Elias⁸²³ calls "distortion *pars pro toto*". The stigmatizing group selects those specific events of anomic behavior of the other group in order to prove that the other is "evil." However, Justin always mention that Christians even accept martyrdom in order not to renounce their faith, making this behavior the standard of all Christians,⁸²⁴ which forges the representation of his group as "good" as quoted below:

"[...] And our hearts are thus circumcised from evil, so that we are happy to die for the name of the good Rock, which causes living water to burst forth for the hearts of those who by Him have loved the Father of all, and which gives those who are willing to drink of the water of life. [...] For Jeremiah thus cries: 'Woe unto you! because you have forsaken the living fountain, and have digged for yourselves broken cisterns that can hold no water. Shall there be a wilderness where Mount Zion is, because I gave Jerusalem a bill of divorce in your sight?'" . 114, 4-5.

It is noteworthy that a group can only effectively stigmatize another when properly installed in positions of power, from which the stigmatized group is deleted. When this happens, the stigma of collective shame attributed to the outsiders can prevail.⁸²⁵ The way Justin imputes to the Jewish community a generalized "hardness of heart", blindness, adultery, idolatry, among other negative characterizations denounces the numerical prevalence of individuals of Gentile origin in the Great Church communities and their position as holders of ecclesiastical offices. But it also betrays a very big concern on the part of Justin, about the contacts between Gentile Christians and non – Christian Jews. These contacts had probably intensified with the new waves of Jewish fugitives as a consequence of Bar Kokhba's war.⁸²⁶ Such dispersed Jews may have been seen as a threat to Christian communities, which already had established for its members a non – Jewish way of life and identity. Maybe it is not

⁸²³ 2000, p. 22 – 23.

⁸²⁴ However, one must take into account the sincerity of the Christian philosopher. After all, he and six of his disciples were martyred for the sole reason of being Christians. What we intend here, is solely understand the argumentative strategies of Justin in his general representations of both the Jews and the Christians.

⁸²⁵ Elias, 2000, p. 23.

⁸²⁶ Poliakov, 1979 p. 19 -20.

fortuitous that Justin presented Trypho as a circumcised Jew, fugitive from the war and without fixed residence.⁸²⁷

For this stigmatization could have success, the labeling should be done using terms inserted in the specific context of the relationship between *established* and *outsiders*.⁸²⁸ That is why Justin, repeatedly refers to the Jewish people as "hard-hearted", "idolaters", "murderers," "adulterers" and similar expressions drawn from the Hebrew Scriptures, which symbolize the most complete social and religious anomie.

It is also very important the symbolism that is part of some of the aforementioned characterizations. The word "adultery", for example, as well as "prostitution", have a long association with the worship of foreign gods, thus becoming true synonyms of "idolatry". This is because, in Israelite tradition, the institution of marriage is constantly used as a metaphor for the relationship of the people with their God.⁸²⁹ That's why the words for sexual immorality and marital infidelity are metaphors for religious religious sincretism, or even for apostasy from the God of Abraham.⁸³⁰ See, for example, the following passages from the book of Hosea:

“When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea, “Go, take for yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the LORD.” [...] I will punish her for the festival days of the Baals, when she offered incense to them and decked herself with her ring and jewelry, and went after her lovers, and forgot me, says the LORD.”⁸³¹

[...]

⁸²⁷ *Dial.* 1, 3.

⁸²⁸ Elias, 2000, p. 27.

⁸²⁹ For instance, Psalm 45; Song of Songs.

⁸³⁰ *Isa.* 1,21; 54,6 - 7; 62, 4-5 *Jer.* 2, 2; 3, 1.; 3, 6-12; *Ez.* 16,23 etc.

⁸³¹ *Hos.* 1,2; 2,13.

This same wedding metaphor is also present in the New Testament, where the groom's role is filled by Jesus Christ.⁸³²

It is understood, therefore, that Justin when he the Jews adulterers is playing with the double meaning, moral and religious, that this word has in the Hebrew Bible, and also in the Christian writings that would be canonized in the New Testament. The charge of adultery is revealed as particularly effective because it affects the moral and theological sensibilities of both, Jews and Christians. To the Jews, such an act is the imputation of the greatest sin conceived by their belief system; and to the Christians, it means a clear warning to stay apart of all Jews, to not to be defiled with their supposed idolatry and immoralities. In the words of Norbert Elias:

"The complementarity between the grupal charisma (of its own group) and the group dishonor (of others) is one of the most significant aspects of the type of *established -outsiders* found here. It deserves a moment of consideration, as it provides an indication of the emotional barrier erected in such figuration by the established against the outsiders. More than anything else, perhaps, this emotional barrier is responsible for the stiffness, often extreme, of the attitude of the established groups towards the outsiders groups, generation after generation, even when decrease their social superiority, or, in other words, their surplus power."⁸³³

On this regard, Elias also highlights that the accusation of anomie is often the most common reproval made to a group of outsiders. It is no coincidence that Justin strives to select parts of the eschatological texts from the Prophets that denounce the breaking of the covenant with YHWH. In Judaism, the maintenance of the pact depends on the observation of specific rituals with positive and negative precepts which leads us to believe that this accusation was particularly incisive to the Jews.

All stigmatization process is not only intended to keep the *outsider* out of the *establishment*, it also has the objective of creating in its members a satisfaction for belonging to a collective with such charisma. Such satisfaction is conditioned by the compliance of the rules applied by the group

⁸³² *Matt.* 22, 1-14; 9,15; 25, 1-13; *John* 3,29; *1 Cor.* 6, 15 - 17; *2 Cor.* 11, 2; *Eph.* 5, 25-33; *Rev.* 21,2.

⁸³³ Elias, 2000, p. 25.

leaders.⁸³⁴ For the Christian readers of the *Dialogue*, it meant the complete rejection of the Jewish way of life by reframing its rites. This is one of the main reasons because we disagree with the scholars who saw in the *Dialogue* an instrument to convert the Jews:

"“And the offering of fine flour, sirs,” I said, “which was prescribed to be presented on behalf of those purified from leprosy, was a type of the bread of the Eucharist, the celebration of which our Lord Jesus Christ prescribed, in remembrance of the suffering which He endured on behalf of those who are purified in soul from all iniquity, [...] [So] He then speaks of those Gentiles, namely us, who in every place offer sacrifices to Him, i.e., the bread of the Eucharist, and also the cup of the Eucharist, affirming both that we glorify His name, and that you profane [it].”⁸³⁵

The attack against the Jewish way of life, also present in the Pauline epistles, seems to have a different function in the work of Justin. The Apostle aimed at the maintenance of the Jewish *status* in the Christian Church, as well as to include the Gentiles in it.⁸³⁶ Justin, on the contrary, craved to dissociate entirely Christianity from Judaism. For this purpose, the Pauline conclusions would not be useful for him, since Paul kept the Jewish people within the sphere of salvation.⁸³⁷ So, what resulted was a subversion of Pauline thought, through a relation of continuity and discontinuity operated by Justin. Justin sought to reinterpret the historical roots that connected both religions to have a *Verus Israel* made exclusively of culturally Gentile Christians, organized around the Gentile community model:

"‘Behold, I am God,’ He says, ‘to the nation which called not on My name.’ For this is that nation which God of old promised to Abraham, when He declared that He would make him a father of many nations; [...] What larger measure of grace, then, did Christ bestow on Abraham? This, namely, that He called him with His voice by the like calling, telling him to quit the land wherein he dwelt. And He has called all of us by that voice, and we have left already the way of living in which we used to spend our days, passing our time in evil after the fashions of the other inhabitants of the earth; and along with Abraham we shall inherit the holy land, when we shall receive the inheritance for an endless eternity,

⁸³⁴ Elias, 2000, p. 26.

⁸³⁵ *Dial.* 41, 1.3..

⁸³⁶ Vielhauer, 2005, p. 144 ff.

⁸³⁷ Dunn, 2003, p. 602.

being children of Abraham through the like faith. [...] Accordingly, He promises to him a nation of similar faith, God-fearing, righteous, and delighting the Father; but it is not you, 'in whom is no faith.' "⁸³⁸

By identifying with the preexistent Christ, later incarnate in Jesus, the angel who appeared and called Abraham; Justin declares that the Christians are those who have a faith similar to the Patriarch's; that's why the Christians are his true children, not the ethnic descendants of the same Patriarch. It is evident in Justin a certain reproduction of Paul's theology. Nonetheless, Justin does not refer to Paul's conclusion regarding of Israel's status before God after the advent of Christ (Rom. 11: 1-6.28.29; Siker 1991: 13-14.). It should also be noted that, according to Elias, the extreme distortion of reality, so much as to own group, also about the outsiders, denotes the identification of a danger, real or imagined, which must at all costs be avoided. In the words of Elias:

"Overall, we can say that the more the members of a group feel sure of their superiority and pride, the lower the distortion tend to be, the discrepancy between image and reality, and the more threatened and insecure they feel, the greater the probability that the internal pressure, and as part of it, the internal competition take collective beliefs to extremes of illusion and doctrinal rigidity. Indeed, in many cases, we can use the degree of distortion and rigidity of group beliefs as a standard of measurement, if not of the real danger, at least of the danger experienced by a group, and in that sense, can help to reconstitute its situation."⁸³⁹

The Jews of the first century, though deeply divided into numerous currents and schools of thought, attributed themselves as a religious and ethnic society, a human value superior to the other peoples of the Empire. This was done, among other factors, by linking their collective genealogy back to Abraham, and from this to Adam; and, for adopting a religion that involved a differentiated way of life compared to the one predominant among polytheist peoples.

After the destruction of Jerusalem and the final expulsion of the Palestinian Jewish population in 135, Judaism was restructured around the farisaic – rabbinical model . This model, whose history,

⁸³⁸ *Dial.* 119, 4 - 6.

⁸³⁹ Elias, 2000, p. 125 - 126.

preceding the Academy of Yahvneh, also was one of the many strands of Judaism, relatively anomic. Nonetheless, after the destruction of the Temple in 70, grew up and settled itself, powered by its interpretation and observance of the Law, in contrast to the orthodoxy of worship, represented by saduceism.⁸⁴⁰ From this point onwards, consolidated itself and became the new paradigm of Jewish social and religious unity.⁸⁴¹

At this crucial time of reconstruction of the Jewish identity; Jewish teachers reinforced the traditional brand of Jewish nomie, especially the circumcision and the Law. The latter duly adapted to the living conditions in Exile, in order to ensure the survival of the Jewish ethnicity.⁸⁴² On this regard, we would like to remember Elias' lesson on the importance of ancestral customs, consolidated by time, in the construction of a self - image of a given group:

"The shared taboos and the characteristic restraint reinforce the ties that bind the network of" best families ". Adherence to the common code works for the members as a social insignia. It reinforces the sense of joint group insertion in relation to the "inferior", which tend to exhibit less control in situations where the "superiors" require. "Inferior" people tend to break taboos that the "superior" are trained to respect from childhood. Failure to comply with these taboos it is a signal of social inferiority. Often deeply hurt the feeling of good taste, decency and moral "superior" people - in short, their sense of values emotionally rooted. It raises in the "superior" groups, according to circumstances, anger, hostility, disgust or disdain; while adhering to a common code facilitates communication, infringe it creates barriers. "⁸⁴³

We already discussed at length the emergence of Paul of Tarsus and his impact on incipient Jewish - Christian setting, to extend the fulfillment of Abrahamic promises to the Gentile converts, freeing them on observing the circumcision established by Abraham himself, and the observation of Torah's ritual commandments which goes back to Moses. We also showed the Jewish identity's

⁸⁴⁰ Goodman, 1994, p. 87 ff.

⁸⁴¹ Scardelai, 2008, p. 142.

⁸⁴² Stegemann & Stegemann, 2004, p. 171 - 174.

⁸⁴³ Elias, 2000, p. 171.

implications that Paul tried to avoid to his disciples of pagan origin.⁸⁴⁴ The Christians at that time, were also redefining their own identity, as the Gentiles became more numerous than the Jews and assumed positions in the episcopal hierarchy outlined throughout the century, as set out in the Pastoral epistles (Comblin, 1993 p. 185-186) and the other Christian writers of the time (Allert, 2002, p. 203-205).

As the pharisaic -rabbinic Judaism of Yavneh reinforced the need of the Law as the identitarian factor for its people, Gentile Christianity of the Great Church continued building its ethno - religious identity of *tertium genus*, apart from the characteristically Jewish elements. To accomplish this task, it recovered and modified the theology of Paul. Clashes between both groups were inevitable. From the Jewish side, we had, among other things, the recasting of the synagogue liturgy, with the Birkat ha-Minim (the blessing against heretics), resized against the Nazorean Jewish Christians. This measure was taken by the Patriarchate of Yavneh for standardization and homogenization of beliefs and religious practices around the pharisaic - rabbinic model, raised up to the status of new nomie.⁸⁴⁵ On the Christian side, there was the total rejection of circumcision and the liturgical and ritual commandments of the Law. However, all Christian religious heritage existing until then was Jewish in its origin.

Thus, by the dispute over the correct exegesis of the Holy Scriptures, the Messiah and Redeemer and of God himself, the Christian heritage was constituted. In the meantime, the divergence about the Messiah eventually detach progressively the Christian faith from its Jewish origins. This disparity of views required the creation of a legitimizing discourse for the Gentile appropriation of Jewish cultural heritage, especially the Scriptures, which was done by Paul. However, it was in Justin that decoupling between mainstream Christianity and Judaism deepened its borders. In the heterodox movements, such as Gnosticism and Marcionism, this process reached its paramount.

⁸⁴⁴ Dunn, 2003, p. 573.

⁸⁴⁵ Parkes, 1974, p. 94 - 95.

The foundations of the theology of Justin present in *Dialogue*, that we analyzed, were his interpretation of the Law of Moses, of the person of Jesus as the Christ, and the sonship of the Gentile Christians to the Hebrew God through the patriarch Abraham, , and all other righteous men of Jewish history, all of them duly deJudaized; what ended up subverting the Pauline theology that served as a starting point.

This reconstruction has proved essential to the purposes of this research, because, as demonstrated, Justin's theological argumentation exercised a key role in the sociological normalization of the Pauline and Johannine schools as the Gentile Christian *nomie*, as opposed to Christian visions anchored in its original Jewish substrate.

The *Dialogue*, tries to convince its readers that Gentile Christianity is the *establishment*, the good society, with all its positive attributes. Hence the invective against the Jewish character and morals. This can be seen in the emphasis of Justin on building upon Abraham an essentially Christian and Gentile image, in order to consolidate an authoritative and legitimating tradition. The Jews are portrayed then as *outsiders*. For Justin, the ties that bind Christians are their Gentile origin and their determination to be martyred for their faith. The Jews, on the contrary, were merged to the children of Abraham, but never were in fact: they are outsiders.

The Christians are presented as the *establishment* when Abraham and his descendants in spiritual fathers of Christians. The Jews, on the contrary, are qualified as thieves, murderers and idolaters. Because of the Socratic structure of the *Dialogue*, Christians and Jews appear in a relationship of interdependence, in which the Christian denies the Jew's validity, and vice versa.

However, the relationship has its *equilibrium* (recognition of Christian establishment) when Trypho and his friends are put in the condition of Justin's students.⁸⁴⁶

It is important to highlight that, from the beginning of the Dialogue, the Jews, represented by Trypho and his friends are clearly portrayed as outsiders: starting with the space - time characterization of the Dialogue, held in Ephesus, between a philosopher of Greco-Roman culture who converted to Christianity, and a group of Jews, defeated by the Romans and escaped from their land.⁸⁴⁷

Justin's figure eventually formed the basis for the strengthening of the dissociation of Christians and Jews through the legitimizing discourse of the Christian *Verus Israel*. In addition, the exegetical methods adopted by the Christian Philosopher influenced later Christian thinkers as Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen and Eusebius.⁸⁴⁸ The highlighting of the differences between Christians and Jews, markedly established in Justin's text persisted strongly throughout the Christian customs.

⁸⁴⁶ *Dial.* 18,1; 89,1.

⁸⁴⁷ *Dial.* 1,3.

⁸⁴⁸ Shotwell, 1965, p. 117.

General Conclusion

In order to conclude our work we will recapitulate the main research topics of the three chapters, the partial conclusions we have reached and, finally, we will expose the general conclusions of the research.

The first chapter was started by a *General Introduction*, where we described the guiding theme of our research, that is, the construction of a social religious representation of Judaism by Christian polemical literature, with particular attention to the writings of Paul and Justin. Also in the *Introduction*, we described the theoretical and methodological tools that would be used in the interpretation of ancient sources. We made a special mention on the concept of *social representation* as defined by Roger Chartier; the concept of *anomie* as theorized by Émile Durkheim and the conflictual social relationship between *establisheds* and *outsiders*, according to Norbert Elias and John L. Scotson. Soon after, we briefly justified the legitimacy of the application of these theoretical tools to study the emergence of the Christian faith and his separation from its Jewish matrix by denying the legitimacy of Jewish worship. Continuing, we presented a review of the main literature on the Jewish – Christian separation in order to trace the *status quaestionis* of the matter. Finally, the chapter ended with a classification of the various early Christian groups according to the quadruple model proposed by Raymond E. Brown and John P. Meier.

Our research itself started in the section entitled *The Socio-religious Background of Justin Martyr*. In this part of the first chapter, we reconstructed the probable history of the Christian community in Rome, since its inception in the mid-first century, to the days of Justin in the middle of the next century. Our sources were the Christian literature produced between the mid-I to the mid-II centuries and the record of Tacitus about the execution of Christians under Nero. We then concluded that already in the time of Nero, the Roman Christians were seen by the pagans and by the imperial

authorities as a social group apart from the Jews. Continuing this first introductory chapter, we also analyzed the early Roman Christianity from the point of view of its doctrinal and ecclesiological fragmentation. We exposed our understanding of the emergence of orthodoxy and heterodoxy/heresy through the emergence of the Gnostic and Marcionite movements. We also explained how this environment contributed to the strengthening of the Great Church's hierarchical structure and development of a New Testament proto - canon. Afterwards, we continued our analysis tracing the social profile of the adherents of the of the Great Church's communities and of the Marcionites communities and Gnostic schools. We came to the conclusion that at the time of Justin, Roman Christianity was a heterogeneous reality, based on different immigrant communities, with a strong attachment to the Christian traditions of their homelands. Nevertheless, the Roman Christians had reached the self understanding of being members of a religion apart from Judaism, and have also started the process of setting up a doctrinal orthodoxy, discriminating between true and false doctrines.

Continuing with our thesis, the second chapter, entitled *Justin: Teacher, Philosopher and Martyr* was dedicated to present the figure of Justin and to find his specific *locus* within Roman Christian community. We started the chapter tracing the *status quaestionis* of studies on the rise of ecclesiastical offices, with special emphasis on the Christian teacher figure. We also analyzed the historiographical current understanding about the Jews and pagan teachers and the relationships between them and their disciples. We then presented Justin and his philosophical school in Rome, discussing the likely content of his teachings and the profile of his disciples. We also discussed about the political situation of Christians in the mid-second century, and analyzed the *Acta Iustini* to better understand the judicial procedure, conviction and execution of Justin and six of his disciples. We advocate the thesis of Justin exercised the master role in the Christian communities of his time, but, in parallel, kept his philosophical school. We believe he was the transitional figure between the New Testament teacher and Christian philosophers of later centuries.

Always in the second chapter, we analyzed the references made by Eusebius of works attributed to Justin that not survived. Finally, we studied the *Apology* of Justin. We covered the stylistics aspects of the work, and Justin`s arguments in defense of Christians, based both in the Hebrew Prophets and in Platonic philosophy. We discussed with special interest the doctrine of *seminal logos*.

Finally, we dealt with the anti-Jewish question in the third and final chapter. Because Justin was a follower of Pauline theology, we needed to recapitulate the theology of Paul, and the rising of the first internal conflicts that gradually led to the separation between Jews and Christians. Therefore, we reconstructed the internal conflict at the Jerusalem Jewish – Christian community that led to the creation of the group of the "Seven", responsible for the Hellenized Jewish - Christians. Then we did an overview of the troubled political situation of the Jews and of the profound changes that the Jewish religion has passed from the destruction of the Temple in 70, which imposed to the Jews the need to restructure around the Pharisaic rabbinic model; the related *Birkat ha- Minim* and the increasing of issue of mutual intolerance from Jewish and Christian leaders. Continuing the research, we then introduced the *Dialogue with Trypho* and explained the manuscript tradition of the works of Justin and proceeded to a stylistic analysis. In sequence, an overview of several scholars about the audience intended by Justin, exposing our opinion to be a work directed to the conversion of Jews, but with a concern about the Jewish - Christians, due to their border situation between the two religions, which could be a way for the apostasy of Christianity, as Justin himself attested.

Upon entering Justin's argumentation, the first topic was the Philosopher`s understanding of the Law of Moses, which he regarded as both a deposit of prophetic type of Christ, and as code of moral laws that should be followed by all. As for the rituals prescribed in the Law, however, these Justin considered as given to the Jewish people only until the advent of Christ, and yet, to curb the sinful tendencies of the people, regarded by him as hard-hearted. Finally, we analyzed the presentation of the

Gentile Church as the only *Verus Israel* promised by God to Abraham. Therefore, we critically compared the Pauline understanding of the Church as *Verus Israel* with the analogous understanding of Justin, identifying continuities and discontinuities between the two Christian authors. Our final conclusion is that at the time of Justin, the survival of the Jewish religion and the indefinite extension of awaiting time for the *parousia* imposed on Christians the need to operate a radical reinterpretation of the entire Hebrew salvation history: ultimately God had promised to Abraham the Christians from the Gentile peoples as spiritual descendants. The ethnic descendants would only a stiff-necked people, which should be tamed by the Law until to the coming of the Messiah. The Jewish rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus would mark the exclusion of the Jews from the spiritual Israel.

In closing, we hope to have contributed to a better understanding of Christian autonomization process from Judaism and the role played by Justin for the consolidation of a Gentile Christian social identity, as well as for a better placement of the Christian Philosopher within Roman Christianity of his days.

Bibliography

Primary bibliography

Adam, J. (Ed.) (1902). *The Republic of Socrates*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bastiaensen, A.A.R.; Hilhorst, A.; Kortekaas, G.A.A.; Orbán, A.P.; Van Assendelft, M.M. (Eds.) (1987). *Atti e Passioni dei Martiri*. Introduzione di A.A.R. Bastiaensen. Testo critico e comment a cura di A.A.R. Bastiaensen, A. Hilhorst, G.A.A. Kortekaas, A.P. Orbán, M.M. van Assendelft. Traduzioni di G. Chiarini, G.A.A. Kortekaas, G. Lanata, S. Ronchey. Segrate: Fondazione Lorenzo Valla & Arnoldo Mondadori Editore.

Bobichon, P. (2003a). *Justin Martyr. Dialogue avec Tryphon*. Introduction, édition critique, traduction, notes par Philippe Bobichon. Paradosis, 'Études de littérature et de théologie anciennes', 47.1, 47.2, 2 vol. Fribourg: Academic Press & Éditions Saint – Paul.

Burnet, J. (Ed.) (1903). *Plato. Platonis Opera*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Danby, H. (1933). *The Mishnah*. Translated from the Hebrew with introduction and brief explanatory notes by Herbert Danby, D.D. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Donaldson, J.; Roberts, A.. (Eds.) (1885). *Ante – Nicene Fathers, Volume1: The Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus*. Revised and chronologically arranged, with brief prefaces and occasional notes by A. Cleveland Coxe, D.D. Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library.

Elliger, K.; Rudolph, W. (Eds.) (1997). *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. 5th, revised edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.

Geffcken, J. (1907). *Zwei griechischen Apologeten*. Leipzig & Berlin: Druck und Verlag Von B.G. Teubner.

Lake, K. (Ed.). *The Apostolic Fathers: I Clement, II Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, Didache, Barnabas, The Shepherd of Hermas, The Martyrdom of Polycarp, The Epistle of Diognetus*.

Marcovich, M. (1997). *Iustini Martyris Dialogus cum Tryphone*. Patristiche Texte und Studien, Vol. 47. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Munier, C. (2011). *Giustino. Apologia per i Cristiani*. Sources Chrétiennes - Edizione Italiana, vol. 10. Introduzione, testo critico e note di Charles Munier. Traduzione italiana e aggiornamento di Maria Benedetta Artioli. Bologna: Edizioni San Clemente & Edizioni Studio Domenicano.

Nestle, E.; Aland, K. (2012). *Novum Testamentum Graece*. 28.ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.

New Jerusalem Bible (1985). London: Darton, Longman & Todd.

NRSV Bible with the Apocrypha (e-book) (2015). The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible. (1989). New York: Harper Collins.

Pietersma, A.; Wright, B. (Eds.) (2009). *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included Under that Title*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ruiz Bueno, D. (1974). *Padres Apologistas Griegos (S. II)*. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos.

The Complete Ante-Nicene & Nicene and Post-Nicene Church Fathers Collection: 3 Series, 37 Volumes, 65 Authors, 1,000 Books, 18,000 Chapters, 16 Million Words. (2014). Kindle Edition. Catholic Way Publishing.

Visonà, G. (2009). *S. Giustino. Dialogo con Trifone*. Introduzione, traduzione e note di Giuseppe Visonà. Letture cristiane del primo millennio, vol. 5. 2.ed. Milano: Paoline.

Whiston, W. (Ed.) (1895). "The Wars of the Jews". In: *Flavius Josephus. The Works of Flavius Josephus*. Translated by William Whiston, A.M. Auburn and John. E. Beardsley. Buffalo, New York. Available at: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0148>

Secondary bibliography

Allert, C. D. (2002). *Revelation, Truth, Canon and Interpretation: Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho*. Leiden: Brill.

Bobichon, P. (2003b). "Pérecutions, Calomnies, 'Birkat ha – Minim' et Émissaries Juifs de Propagande Antichrétienne dans les Ecrits de Justin Martyr." In: *Revue de Études Juives*, Vol. 162 N. 3 – 4, juillet – décembre 2003, p. 403 – 419.

_____ (2005a). "Justin Martyr: Étude Stylistique du *Dialogue avec Tryphon* Suivie une Comparaison avec l'*Apologie* et le *De Resurrectione*." In: *Recherches Augustiniennes et Patristiques*. No. 34, p. 1 – 61.

_____ (2005b). "Le Thème du 'Verus Israel': Est – il Constitutif de la Controverse entre Christianisme et Judaïsme?" In: *Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi*, 22.2, p. 421 – 444.

Bokser, B.Z. (1973). "Justin Martyr and the Jews." In: *The Jewish Quarterly Review*. Vol. 64, p. 97 – 211.

Bori, P.C. (1983). *Il Vitello d'Oro: Le Radici della Controversia Antigiudaica*. Torino: Boringhieri.

Boudillon, J. (1971). "La Première Épître aux Corinthiens et la Controverse sur les Ministères". In: *Istina*, Vol. 16, p. 471 – 488.

Boyarin, D. (2006). *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo - Christianity*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

_____ (2013). *The Jewish Gospels*. New York: The New Press, 2012. Italian translation: *Il Vangelo Ebraico: Le vere origini del cristianesimo*. Roma: Castelvechi.

Brown, R. E.; Meier, J. P. (1987). *Antioch and Rome: New Testament Cradles of Catholic Christianity*. New York & Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1983. Traduzione italiana: *Antiochia e Roma: chiese madri della cattolicità antica*. Assisi: Cittadella.

Burtchaell, J.T. (1992). *From Synagogue to Church: Public Services and Offices in the Earliest Christian Communities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chadwick, H. (1964). "Justin Martyr's defense of Christianity." In: *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Manchester, p. 275 – 297.

Chartier, R. (1991). "Le monde comme représentation" In: *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 44/6 (1989), 1505 - 1520. Brazilian translation: "O mundo como representação". In: *Estudos avançados*, São Paulo, v. 5/11, p. 173–191.

Chartier, R. (1988). *A História cultural: entre práticas e representações*. Algés: Difel – 82.

Danby, H. (1933). "Introduction" In: *The Mishnah*. Translated from the Hebrew with introduction and brief explanatory notes by Herbert Danby, D.D. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. XIII - XXX.

Delorme, J. (1974). *Le Ministère et les Ministères selon Le Nouveau Testament: Dossier Exégétique et Reflexion Théologique*. Paris: Seuil.

Durkheim, E. "Le Suicide". In: *Les classiques des sciences sociales*. Available at: http://www.uqac.quebec.ca/zone30/Classiques_des_sciences_sociales/index.html

Edwards, M.J. (1991). "On the Platonic Schooling of Justin Martyr." In: *Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. 42, p. 17 – 34.

Elias, N.; Scotson, J. L. (2000). *The established and the Outsiders: A Sociological Enquiry into Community Problems*. Second edition. London: Sage Publications, 1994. Brazilian translation: *Os estabelecidos e os outsiders*. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor.

Falcetta, A. (2006). *Early Christian Teachers: From Their Origins to the Middle of the Second Century*. Post – Doctoral Thesis. Bologna: Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose Giovanni XXIII – Alta Scuola Europea per le Scienze Religiose. Unpublished.

Feldman, L. H. (1993). *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Garriba, D.; Guida, A. (Eds.) (2010). *Giovanni ed il Giudaismo: Luoghi, Tempi, Protagonisti*. OI Christianoí, Vol. 11. Trapani: Il Pozzo di Giacobbe.

Georges, T. (2012). “Justin’s School in Rome – Reflections on Early Christian ‘Schools’”. In: *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum – Journal of Ancient Christianity*. Vol. 16:1, Between Education and Conversion, ways of Approaching Religion in Late Antiquity. Berlin & Boston: Walter de Gruyter & Co.Kg, p. 77 – 78.

Gianotto, C. (2012). *Ebrei Credenti in Gesù: Le Testimonianze degli Autori Antichi*. Milano: Paoline.

Gnilka, J. (2000). *Die fruhen Christen. Ursprung und Anfang der Kirche*. Frerlag Herder, 1999. Italian translation: *I primi cristiani: origini e inizio della Chiesa*. Brescia: Paideia Editrice.

Goodman, M. (2012). *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Civilizations*. London: Allen Lane, 2007. Italian translation: *Roma e Gerusalemme: lo scontro delle civiltà antiche*. Roma & Bari: Editori Laterza.

Grant, R.M. (1988). *Greek Apologists of the Second Century*. London: SCM Press.

Hamman, A.G. (1992). *Les Pères de l'Eglise*. Paris: Desclée de Browuer.

Harrison, S. (1999). *Identity as a scarce resource*. *Social Anthropology* 7/3, p. 239 – 253.

Jacobs, A. S. (2007). “The lion and the lamb: reconsidering Jewish – Christian Relations in Antiquity”, in: Becker, A.D.; Reed, A. Y. *The ways that never parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, p. 99 – 118.

Heid, S. (2001). “Iustinus Martyr I.” In: *RAC* 19. Stuttgart: Hiersemann, p. 801 – 847.

Hezser, C. (1997). *The Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Roman Palestine*. JSAJ 66. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.

Hill, C.E. (2007). “Was John’s Gospel among Justin’s *Apostolic Memoirs*?” In: Parvis, S.; Foster, P. (Eds.). *Justin Martyr and his Worlds*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, p. 88 – 94.

Hoffmann, M. (1966). “Der Dialog bei den Christlichen Schriftstellern der ersten Jahrhunderte” In: *Text und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*. Vol. 96, p. 10 – 28.

- Holfelder, H. H. (1977). “ὁ ἵσχυρός . Literarische Einheit und politischer Kontext von Justin Apologie.” In: *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, vol. 68. Berlin. p. 48 – 66; 231 – 251.
- Holmberg, B. (1978). *Paul and Power: The Structure of Authority in the Primitive Church as Reflected in the Pauline Epistles*. Lund: Gleerup.
- Hubik, K. (1912). *Die Apologien des hl. Justinus des Philosophen und Märtyrers, Literatur – historische Untersuchung*. Wien.
- Hüntemann, U. (1933). “Zur Kompositionstechnik Justins. Analyse seiner ersten Apologie.” In: *Theologie und Glaube*, vol. 25. p. 410 – 428.
- Johnson, P. (2001). *A History of Christianity*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1976. Brazilian Translation: *História do cristianismo*. Rio de Janeiro: Imago.
- Joly, R. (1973). *Christianisme et Philosophie. Études sur Justin et les Apologistes grecs du IIe siècle*. Bruxelles: Editions de l’Université de Bruxelles.
- Kimelman, R. (1981). “*Birkat Ha – Minim*” and the lack of Evidence for an Anti – Christian Jewish Prayer in the Late Antiquity.” In: Sanders, E.P.; Baumgarten, A.I.; Mendelson, A. (Eds.) *Jewish and Christian Self - Definition*, Vol. II. *Aspects of Judaism in the Greco – Roman Period*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. p. 226 – 244.
- Kinzig, W. (1991). ‘*Non-separation*’: *closeness and co-operation between Jews and Christians in the Fourth Century*. *Vigiliae Christianae* 44/1, p. 27 – 53.
- Kretschmar, G. (1975). “Zur Relionsgeschichtlichen Einordnung der Gnosis.” In: Rudolph. K. (Ed.). *Gnosis und Gnostizismus*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, p. 426 – 437.
- Lampe, P. (1979). “Das Spiel mit dem Petrusnamen.” In: *New Testament Studies*, Vol. 25, Issue 02, p. 227 – 245.
- _____ (2003). *Die stadtrömischen Christen in den ersten beiden Jahrhunderten: Untersuchungen zur Sozialgeschichte*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/18 Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1989. English translation: *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries*. London & Minneapolis: Continuum & Fortress Press.
- Lausberg, H. (1972). *Handbuch der Literarischen Rhetorik*, 2 vol. München.

Le Boulluec, A. (2000). "Eterodossia e Ortodossia." In: Alberigo, G. *Il Nuovo Popolo (dalle origini al 250)*. Storia del Cristianesimo. Religione – Politica – Cultura. Vol. 1. Roma: Città Nuova, p. 260 – 264.

Linton, O. (1932). *Das Problem der Urkirche in der neueren Forschung: Eine Kritische Darstellung*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell.

Lüdemann, G. (1980). *Paulus, der Heidenapostel*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Mach, M. (1996). "Justin Martyr's *Dialogus cum Tryphone Iudaeo* and the Development of Christian Anti – Judaism". In: Limor, O.; Stroumsa, G. G. (Eds.) (1996). *Contra Iudaeos: Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews*. Texts and Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Judaism, Vol. 10. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), p. 27 – 47.

Massaux, E. (1993). *Influence de l'Évangile de Saint Matthieu sur la Littérature Chrétienne Avant Saint Irénée*. *Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium*, Vol. 75. Leuven: Leuven University Press. English Translation: *The Influence of the Gospel of Saint Matthew on Christian Literature before Saint Irenaeus*. Book 3: the Apologists and the Didache. New Gospel Studies 5/3. Macon: Mercer University Press.

Marcovich, M. (1992). "Notes on Justin Martyr's 'Apologies'". In: *Illinois Classical Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2, Fall 1992, p. 323 – 335.

Marguerat, D. (2000). "Ebrei e Cristiani: la separazione." In: Alberigo, G. *Il Nuovo Popolo (dalle origini al 250)*. Storia del Cristianesimo. Religione – Politica – Cultura. Vol. 1. Roma: Città Nuova. p. 191 – 222.

Marrou, H.I. (1965). *Histoire de l'Éducation dans L'Antiquité*. Paris: Le Seuil.

Marvilla, M. (2007). *O Império Romano e o reino dos céus: a construção da imagem sagrada do imperador em "De laudibus Constantini", de Eusébio de Cesaréia (sec. IV d.C.)*. Vitória: Flor e Cultura.

Munier, C. (2011). "Introduzione". In: Munier, C. (2011). *Giustino. Apologia per i Cristiani*. Sources Chrésiennes - Edizione Italiana, Vol. 10. Introduzione, testo critico e note di Charles Munier. Traduzione italiana e aggiornamento di Maria Benedetta Artioli. Bologna: Edizioni San Clemente & Edizioni Studio Domenicano.

Neymeyr, U. (1989). *Die christlichen Lehrer im zweiten Jahrhundert: Ihre Lehrtätigkeit, ihr Selbstverständnis und ihre Geschichte*. Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae, Vol. 4. Leiden: Brill.

Otranto, G. (1979). "Esegesi Biblica e Storia in Giustino (*Dial.* 63 - 84)." In: *Quaderni di Vetera Christianorum*, Vol. 14. Bari: Istituto di Letteratura Cristiana Antica – Università di Bari.

- Parkes J. (1974). *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue: A Study in the Origins of Antisemitism*. New York: Atheneum.
- Parvis, P. (2007). "Justin, Philosopher and Martyr: The Posthumous Creation of the *Second Apology*." In: Parvis, S.; Foster, P. (Eds.). *Justin Martyr and his Worlds*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, p. 22 – 37.
- Pedersen, N.A. (2014). "Aristides". In: Engberg, J.; Jacobsen, A. – C.; Ulrich, J. (Eds.). *In Defence of Christianity: Early Christian Apologists*. Early Christianity in the Context of Antiquity, vol. 15. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Edition, p. 35 – 50.
- Penna, R. (2011). *Le prime comunità cristiane: persone, tempi, luoghi, forme, credenze*. Roma: Carocci Editore.
- Pesce, M. (2011). *Da Gesù al Cristianesimo*. Antico e Nuovo Testamento, vol. 11. Brescia: Morcelliana.
- Piganiol, A. (1949), *Histoire de Rome*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
- Pokorný, P. (1975). *Der Ursprung der Gnosis*. Darmstadt : Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Poliakov, L. (1981). *Histoire de l'Antisémitisme, Vol. 1. Du Christ aux Juifs de Cour*. Paris: Hachette.
- Pouderon, B. (2003). *Aristide d'Athènes, Apologie*. Sources Chrétiennes, vol. 470. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf.
- _____ (2005). *Les Apologues Grecs du IIe Siècle*. Initiations aux Pères de l'Église. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf.
- _____ (1997). "Le contexte polémique du *De Resurrectione* attribué à Justin: destinataires et adversaires". In: *Studia Patristica*. p. 143 – 166.
- Prigent, P. (1964). *Justin et l'Ancien Testament. L'argumentation scripturaire du traité de Justin contre toute les heresies comme source principale du Dialogue avec Tryphon et de la Première Apologie*. Paris: Librairie Lecoffre J. Gabalda et Cie Editeurs.
- Puech, A. (1928). *Histoire de la littérature grecque chrétienne depuis les origines jusqu'à la fin du IVe siècle: Tome II, Le IIe et le IIIe siècles*. Paris: Societé d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres".
- Rokeah, D. (1982). *Jews, Pagans and Christians in Conflict*. Studia Post – Biblica, Vol. 33. Jerusalem & Leiden: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University & E.J. Brill.

_____ (2002). *Justin Martyr and the Jews*. Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series, Vol. 5. Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill.

Rudolph, K. (1975). “Randerscheinungen des Judentums und das Problem der Entstehung des Gnostizismus.” In: *Gnosis und Gnostizismus*. Wege der Forschung. Band CLXII. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft. P. 768 – 797.

Sanders, E.P. (1985). *Paul, the Law and the Jewish People*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Sacchi, P. *Tra Giudaismo e Cristianesimo: Riflessioni sul Giudaismo Antico e Medio*. Antico e Nuovo Testamento, Vol. 7. Brescia: Morcelliana.

Schenke H.M. (1966). “Die Gnosis”. In: *Umwelt des Urchristentums*, Leipoldt, J.; Grundmann, W. Berlin. p. 371 – 415.

Schröter, J. (2013). *From Jesus to the New Testament: Early Christian Theology and the Origin of the New Testament Canon*. Tübingen & Waco: Mohr – Siebeck & Baylor University Press.

Schürmann, H. (1978). “... und Lehrer”: Die Geistliche Eigenart des Lehrdienstes und sein Verhältnis zu anderen geistlichen Dienst im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter.” In: *Orientierungen am Neuen Testament: Exegetische Aufsätze III*. Düsseldorf: Patmos.

Shotwell, W. A. (1965). *The Biblical Exegesis of Justin Martyr*. London: SPCK.

Slusser, M. (2007). Justin Scholarship: Trends and Trajectories. In: Parvis, S.; Foster, P. (Eds.). *Justin Martyr and his Worlds*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, p. 13 – 21.

Siker, J. S (1991). *Disinheriting the Jews: Abraham in Early Christian Controversy*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.

Stroumsa, G.G. (1996). “From Anti – Judaism to Antisemitism in Early Christianity?” In: Limor, O.; Stroumsa, G.G. (Eds.). *Contra Iudaeos: Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews*. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) Tübingen.

Silva, G. V. (2008). “A condenação dos judaizantes nos concílios eclesíasticos do século IV”, in *Phoînix* 14, p. 164-168.

Simon, M. (1964). *Verus Israel. Études sur les Relations entre Chrétiens et Juifs dans l'Empire Romain (135 – 425)*. Paris: Éditions de Boccard.

Simonetti, M. (1994). *Ortodossia ed eresia tra I e II secolo*. Catania: Rubbettino.

_____ (2010). “Roma ed il papato”. In: Di Berardino, A.; Fedalto, G.; Simonetti, M. (Eds.). *Letteratura Patristica*. Alba: Edizioni San Paolo, 2007. Brazilian translation: “Roma e papado” in: *Dicionário de literatura patristica*. São Paulo: Editora Ave - Maria, p. 1441 – 1474.

Schwarzschild, S.S. (2007) “Noahide Laws” In: Berenbaum, M.; Skolnik, F. *Encyclopedia Judaica*. Vol. 15. 2ed. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA.

Skarsaune, O. (2007). “Jewish believers in Jesus in Antiquity – problems of definition, method, and sources”. In: Skarsaune, O.; Hvalvik, R. (Eds.). *Jewish believers in Jesus: the Early Centuries*. Peabody: Hendrickson, p. 3-21.

Stark, R. (2007). *The Rise of Christianity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996. Italian translation: *Ascesa e Affermazione del Cristianesimo: come un movimento oscuro e marginale è diventato in pochi secoli la religione dominante dell'Occidente*. Torino: Lindau.

Stegemann, E. W.; Stegemann, W. (2004). *Urchristliche Sozialgeschichte : die Anfänge im Judentum und die Christusgemeinden in der mediterranen Welt*. Stuttgart; Berlin & Köln: Kohlhammer, 1997. Brazilian translation: *História Social do Protocristianismo: Os primórdios no Judaísmo e as Comunidades de Cristo no Mundo Mediterrâneo*. São Leopoldo & São Paulo: Sinodal & Paulus.

Stylianopoulos, T. (1975). *Justin Martyr and the Mosaic Law*. Society of Biblical Literature, Dissertation Series, vol. 20. Missoula: Scholars Press.

Tadeu da Silva, T. (2010). *Identidade e diferença: a perspectiva dos estudos culturais*. 9 ed. Petropolis: Editora Vozes.

Tobias, G. (2012). “Justin’s School in Rome – Reflections on Early Christian Schools.” In: *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum – Journal of Ancient Christianity*. Vol. 16, Issue 1. Between Education and Conversion: Ways of Approaching religion in Late Antiquity. Berlin & Boston: Walter de Gruyter & Co. Kg. p. 62 – 74.

Ulrich, J. (2014). “Justin Martyr.” In: Engberg, J.; Jacobsen, A. – C.; Ulrich, J. (Eds.). *In Defence of Christianity: Early Christian Apologists*. Early Christianity in the Context of Antiquity, vol. 15. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Edition, p. 51 - 66.

_____ (2012). “What do We Know about Justin’s ‘school’ in Rome.” In: *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum – Journal of Ancient Christianity*. Vol. 16, Issue 1. Between Education and Conversion: Ways of Approaching religion in Late Antiquity. Berlin & Boston: Walter de Gruyter & Co. Kg. p. 62 – 74.

Van Unnik, W.C. (1961). “Die Jüdische Komponente in der Entstehung der Gnosis.” In: *Vigiliae Christianae*. Vol. 15, Issue 1, p. 65 – 82.

Vielhauer, P. (2005). *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1975. Brazilian translation: *História da literatura cristã primitiva: introdução ao Novo Testamento, aos Apócrifos e aos Pais Apostólicos*. Santo André: Academia Cristã.

Visonà, Giuseppe (2009). “Introduzione” In: *S. Giustino. Dialogo con Trifone*. Introduzione, traduzione e note di Giuseppe Visonà. Letture cristiane del primo millennio, vol. 5. 2.ed. Milano: Paoline, p. 14 – 70.

Wartelle, A. (1992). “Le Traité ‘De La résurrection’ de s. Justin ou le destin d’une oeuvre.” In: *Histoire et culture chrétienne: Hommage a Monseigneur Yves Marchasson (Cultures & christianisme)*, vol. 1. Paris, p. 3 – 10.

Weber, M. (1921). *Gesammelte Ausfsätze zur Religiossoziologie III: Dan Antike Judentum*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.

Wehofer, T. (1897). “Die Apologie Justins des Philosophen und Märtyrers in literahistorischen Beziehung zum erstenmal untersucht.” In: *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde*. Suppl. 6. Freiburg.

Wilken, Robert Louis (2007). *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*. 2.ed. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003. Italian translation: *I cristiani visti dai romani*. Brescia: Paideia Editrice.

Woodward, K (2000). “Identidade e diferença: uma introdução teórica e conceitual”. In: Tadeu da Silva; Hall, S.; Woodward, K. (Eds.). *Identidade e diferença: a perspectiva dos estudos culturais*. Petrópolis: Vozes.

Zetterholm, M. (2005). *The formation of Christianity in Antioch*. London & New York: Routledge.