

## Genealogies of History : *The Ecclesiastical History* and the Production of Christian Knowledge

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As a textual product, the *Ecclesiastical History* has been such a successful representation of third- and fourth-century textual transmission associated with a burgeoning self-understanding of *Christianismos* that its underpinnings have been subsumed into a narrative whole. Despite demonstrably philosophical, apologetic framing and language and imperial chronographic ambitions, its very composite nature has remained unquestioned, as has its mobilization of polemic conceptions of time, empire, and community. The *Ecclesiastical History* is a text stitched out of other texts: a meta- or hypertext, if you will, basing on conceptions of time that allow the reader to see not only parallels across vast spans of temporal dislocation but also the evolution of specific threads through temporal and geographical shifts. At its root are the projects of Roman Palestinian chronographic writing, notably the *Chronographiai* of Sextus Julius Africanus,<sup>1</sup> and the aggregation of “canon lists” of accepted Christian books into metaform of the canon table<sup>2</sup>. The *Ecclesiastical History* is a collection of collections in which the principle of specificity has been lost, a massive assembly of individual pieces shaped to form a collective whole. Readers tend to focus on the framing of the work or on aggregated texts, but rarely on the principle of collection itself and what it implies about a fourth-century Christian readership

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<sup>1</sup> The *Chronographiae* were produced in the context of third-century Roman Palestinian, drawing in part on traditions from the archives of Edessa. For the edition, see Africanus, S. J., Wallraff, M., Roberto, U., Pinggéra, K., & Adler, W. (2007). *Chronographiae: The extant fragments*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

<sup>2</sup> On the *Chronici canones*, see Burgess, R. (2009). A Chronological Prolegomenon to Reconstructing Eusebius' *Chronici canones*: The Evidence of Ps-Dionysius (the Zuqin Chronicle). *Journal of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies*, 6(1), 29-38 and Burgess, R., Witakowski, W., & Eusebius. (1999). *Studies in Eusebian and post-Eusebian chronography* (Historia (Wiesbaden, Germany). Einzelschriften ; Heft 135). Stuttgart: F. Steiner.

that could understand itself to be a node in a massive imperial network stretching through a time and space that defined itself in imperial terms with imperial markers and a Christian *telos*.

Compositionally, the *Ecclesiastical History* is an eastern history rooted in the knowledge available in Roman Palestine at the beginning of the fourth century CE. While the scope of the text covers communities and textual products that stretch into the Western Empire, notably Rome and North Africa, the focus is on eastern sources and eastern figures. Paradoxically, the chronological framing of and justification for the *Ecclesiastical History* is entirely Roman *quā imperium*, that is to say, rooted in the city of Caesarea and its status as a provincial capital of Roman Palestine. *The Ecclesiastical History* is simultaneously a colonized and colonizing text, a work that represents a high point of imperial production of knowledge and that replicates this production in its project of framing time and space as belonging to a Christian political entity within the Empire.<sup>3</sup>

In the *Ecclesiastical History*, the narrative project maps the first century onto the fourth and glosses over the differences between historical and social contexts to make the one a natural continuation of the other. While there is an apologetic teleology that connects the history of the Judean Jesus movement to the Roman Palestinian Christian movement, there is a remarkable set of discontinuities that the narrative seeks to elide. Despite the differences between first- and

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<sup>3</sup> As Spivak writes of what she identified as the postcolonial intellectual position in colonial discourse: “The historian, transforming ‘insurgency’ into ‘text for knowledge’, is only one ‘receiver’ of any collectively intended social act. With no possibility of nostalgia for that lost origin, the historian must suspend (as far as possible) the clamor of his or her own consciousness (or consciousness-effect, as operated by disciplinary training), so that the elaboration of the insurgency, packaged with an insurgent-consciousness, does not freeze into an ‘object of investigation’, or, worse yet, a model for imitation. ‘The subject’ implied by the texts of insurgency can only serve as a counterpossibility for the narrative sanctions granted to the colonial subject in the dominant groups. The postcolonial intellectuals learn that their privilege is their loss. In this they are a paradigm of the intellectuals.” “Can the Subaltern Speak?” in Williams, P., & Chrisman, L. (1994). *Colonial discourse and post-colonial theory : A reader*. New York: Columbia University Press, p. 82.

fourth-century contexts to a modern (and ancient) reader, the attempt to harmonize and assert unchanging, ahistorical truth and even pre-Christian lines of descent from a paradisiacal proto-Christianity draws from Biblical and other texts on the ancient Hebrews<sup>4</sup>, and the Greek New Testament asserts the status of “Christians” as a national group to be recognized under Roman law, a third *genos* and *politeuma*. This strategy, while rooted in a Greek-speaking, multilingual, Eastern context, emphasizes the continuity of the Roman Empire as a political order and its goodness towards Christians as recognition of the ancestral traditions and veracity of the ancient practices of the construct Christian race.<sup>5</sup>

In fact, the programmatic structure of the narrative undertaking of the *HE* bears witness to the effort required to bring these eras and allegiances into alignment across political divisions, temporal separations, and religious self-conceptions. Political divisions are bridged through a reading of geography that emphasized ahistorical (or transhistorical) space. Temporal separation is bridged through a series of “successions” beginning in the apostolic era that tether the first century religious practices and figures to the fourth through the medium of apostolic authority that then transfer into episcopal authority. The community’s religious conception is perhaps the most difficult to illuminate, but it hinges on the juxtaposition of related but not equivalent social expressions of religious meaning-making and possible religious identities. The monarchical episcopacy and church offices, the codification of individual and collective ascetic community

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<sup>4</sup> On this trope of Hebrews as the ancestors of the Jews, see Inowlocki, S. (2006). *Eusebius and the Jewish authors : His citation technique in an apologetic context* (Ancient Judaism and early Christianity ; v. 64). Leiden ; Boston: Brill, pp. 109-111.

<sup>5</sup> Several recent studies illuminate this racialized conception of the Christian polity. For the milieu of the *Ecclesiastical History*, see Johnson, A. (2006). *Ethnicity and argument in Eusebius' Praeparatio evangelica* (Oxford early Christian studies). Oxford: Oxford University Press. See also Iricinschi, E. “Christians as triton genos in Eusebius' apologetic writings” in Inowlocki, S. and Zamagni, C. (2011). *Reconsidering Eusebius : Collected papers on literary, historical, and theological issues* (Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae v. 107). Leiden ; Boston: Brill, pp. 69-86.

rules, the canonization of textual accounts, the philosophical-doctrinal practice of apologetic, the veneration of the martyrs and holy people, the emergence of church orders: many of these can be anchored in the early texts of the Jesus movement, but the historical consciousness that the connections show displays a distinctly fourth-century character. To put it another way, the *Ecclesiastical History* presents fourth-century Christian narratives stitched together from a vast panoply of details recorded in the earlier centuries.

One of the reasons why it has been easy to overread the proximity of the *Ecclesiastical History* to Roman imperial policy and imagine direct connections between the groups that produced both is that the Roman emperors and *imperium* play a large role in the apologetic framing of the text. The paradisiacal, original peace of the ancient Empire, as evinced by Augustus and Tiberius in the first century according to the Christians, is paralleled with the tolerating and just emperors of the Christian fourth century. This wedding of beneficent imperial power and anchoring of the historical project to poles of the Empire's history suggests an entwined and interrelated stability between the flourishing of the Empire and the expansion of Christian practices. The *Ecclesiastical History* is very much the history of the Christian Roman ecclesia, which can be thought of variously as a history of gatherings or assembly, a history of communities, and also a history of political and civic unity. It is a concept and a designation that resonates in several different registers at once and likely was able to read differently to different populations.

## Judaea under Roman Rule and Roman Palestine

The first-century<sup>6</sup> Roman client-kingdom of Judaea was newly under Roman political *imperium*. Following the narratives of Josephus, which contribute significantly to the first chapters of the *Ecclesiastical History*, Judaea fully became a Roman province after Herod Archelaus was deposed in 6CE. Herod Archelaus was the heir of Herod the Great who (re)founded Caesarea to honor Augustus Caesar. Roman Judaea differed profoundly in its identity markers and provincial structures to the Roman province of Palestine in the early fourth century where the *Ecclesiastical History* originates. In the first century, there was a provincial structure under Augustus and then Tiberius, but a Judaeans/Idumean royal dynasty was still in place, the Herodian dynasty which dated its kingship from Herod the Great's recognition by the Roman senate under the patronage of Marc Anthony.<sup>7</sup> Herod the Great's building plan for Caesarea fundamentally transformed the harbour of Caesarea: it was his dredging that put Caesarea on the Roman coastal resource map just as his political affiliations put Caesarea and the Herodians on the Roman administrative map. During the first century, the dynastic political influence waned with Agrippa I's death in 44CE and disappeared finally after Agrippa II's death. Yet, despite this influence of Herod the Great and the Herodian dynasty, the *Ecclesiastical History* presents Josephus' account of the Herodian dynasty and its Idumean origins as an opportunity to emphasize a separation of political governance and sacrality in the province (*HE* 1.6) This intermediary of Herod allows for a transfer of governance

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<sup>6</sup> Even by participating in the dating framework of the Common Era, a reading project draws on a conception of history that dates centuries of Christian activity. As an heir of the historiographical conception of Christian time that the *Ecclesiastical History* helped map in the early "fourth" century, this interpretation carries with it an ordering of time that accords with the retrospective calculations made by Christian chronography. The ordering of time is intrinsically connected with the apparent truth of historical narrative. *Vide infra* on "The Ordering of Time."

<sup>7</sup> Josephus, B. J. 1.14.4.

and sacrality of the messianic kingship of Jesus Christ which is then linked to prophecy of Genesis 49:10<sup>8</sup> to certify the transfer of power from the princes of Judah to Jesus Christ under the Roman Empire. In *HE* 1.8, Herod becomes the type of the persecuting tyrant, embodying a typology that will recur in the fourth-century accounts of the tetrarchs and their power struggles.<sup>9</sup> Chapter 8 recounts the slaughter of the innocents and Herod's physically detailed demise, drawing heavily from Josephus' *Antiquitates judaicae* (17.168-70) and the *Bellum judaicum* (1.656-664).

The omission of swathes of Roman and Judean history is necessary for the subsequent transmission of regnal power and kingship, first from the descent to Judah to Jesus Christ, then from first-century Judaea to fourth-century Christian Palestine. For one, the political structure of Roman imperium was fundamentally different in the first century and the Romanization of the territory of Judaea/Palestinian was profoundly different. The range between Tiberius and the Tetrarchs can almost be seen as two separate empire in form and cultural consciousness; the *Ecclesiastical History* creates Roman continuity alongside apostolic and sacral, doctrinal continuity for the Christian movements it charts--it is a history of a victorious Christian *politeia* within the Roman Empire. The first century alone was a period of profound loss and devastation for the communities of Judaea, culminating in the destruction of the Temple under the Flavians. In the *Ecclesiastical History*, this is a footnote to the historical project of claiming and construction a Christian *genos*.

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<sup>8</sup> From Jacob's Blessing upon his sons: οὐκ ἐκλείψει ἄρχων ἐξ Ἰούδα, καὶ ἡγούμενος ἐκ τῶν μηρῶν αὐτοῦ, ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ τὰ ἀποκείμενα αὐτῷ, καὶ αὐτὸς προσδοκία ἐθνῶν.

<sup>9</sup> The *HE* also cites verbatim the similarly gruesome death of Herod Agrippa (Agrippa I), *A. J.* 19.343-51.

The years between the first century and the fourth are counted in literary texts and their authors, teaching genealogies (particularly for the catechetical school at Alexandria),<sup>10</sup> bishops, and martyrs. The temporal stages of the *Ecclesiastical History* divides imperial eras roughly into generations, with a range of 25 - 60 years per book for a total 305 years over the first seven books. The first book covers Augustus to Tiberius, the second the end of Tiberius to the end of Nero, the third covers the year of the four emperors and Vespasian to Trajan, the fourth Trajan to Commodus, the fifth Commodus to the beginning of Septimius Severus, the sixth from the Severan persecution (203CE) to the persecution under Decius (251CE). The seventh book spans the so-called “Third Century Crisis” to the reforms under Diocletian and the tetrarchs.<sup>11</sup> While the Roman imperial power helps set the chronological ordering of the *Ecclesiastical History*, there are many missing pieces of the three hundred plus years of history. For example, there is no mention of the Palmyrene Empire or Queen Zenobia, although these would certainly have been large on the world political stage and awareness of the region just before the composition of the *Ecclesiastical History*. The Roman project in the Eastern Empire had almost collapsed in recent memory, but these troublesome details are elided to keep the image of the Empire intact.

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<sup>10</sup> A particularly good read of the catechetical school traditions in the *Ecclesiastical History* is Van den Hoek, A. (1997). The “Catechetical” School of Early Christian Alexandria and Its Philonic Heritage. *The Harvard Theological Review*, 90(1), 59-87. For the transfer of this teaching on Caesarea, an interesting case to consider is the teaching tradition of Origen, particularly as represented in the Gregory Thaumaturgus. See Jacobsen, A. (2012). “Conversion to Christian Philosophy—the case of Origen’s School in Caesarea.” *Zeitschrift Für Antikes Christentum / Journal of Ancient Christianity*, 16(1), 145-157.

<sup>11</sup> On the periodization of the *HE*, see “Writing Past and Peoplehood,” Johnson, Aaron P. (2013). *Eusebius* (Understanding classics). London: I. B. Tauris & Company, Ltd., pp. 85-112.

## Religious Self-Conception : Philosophical Christianity and the Absence of the Jews

The fourth-century philosophical Christianity evident in the *Ecclesiastical History* would likely not be recognizable in its form to the centuries of writers represented in it, particularly the original generation of the Jesus movement. Nonetheless, the book evinces a “Christianity before Christ” reading strategy that presents ancient Hebrew fathers, Greek philosophers, and Hellenistic Jewish ascetics as ahistorically continuous with the Christians of the fourth century CE composition time. Although the rustic nature of the Jesus movement has perhaps been exaggerated, nonetheless fourth-century Caesarea is different even to first-century Caesarea in terms of architecture, social composition, and connection to the larger Roman world. And yet, the city appears as a transhistorical organizing principle, a name or even emblem that ties the narratives of apostolic persecutions of the first century, especially the Apostle Paul, with the narratives of the fourth-century Diocletianic persecution. The kernel of the narrative, this image of a transhistorical Caesarea, contains analogies of Roman provincial administration, Christian persecution and martyrdom, Jewish and Greek writings (although the Jewish political and religious authorities are omitted rather resoundingly from the narrative of the *Ecclesiastical History*). There is minimal presence of contemporary Jewish history, Jewish sages, or Jewish writings. Given the closeness of Caesarea to Yavneh, the martyrdom of Rabbi Akiva at Caesarea at the end of the Bar Kochba revolt, and the importance of Caesarea as a site of Rabbinic learning and Hellenized Jewish communities, it is perhaps surprising that the *Ecclesiastical History* focuses on the misfortunes that befell the Jews after the death of Jesus and then is silent except for mentions of Hebrew scriptures, despite a rich fourth-century Jewish presence at Caesarea.

## Genealogy of Evil

The *Ecclesiastical History* presents the ordering form of succession (*diadochē*) to tie together the major sees of the Christian world and prominent teaching lineages from Apostolic beginnings to the fourth century. Much has been written on the succession strategies of the *Ecclesiastical History* and its programmatic agenda to outline Christian history and the legitimacy of fourth-century actors.<sup>12</sup> There is also a parallel genealogy of heresy and evil, a false set of doctrine and teachers to be opposed who descend from an ancestor as well. The “father and demiurge” of these heresies, according to the *Ecclesiastical History*, is Simon Magus (Acts 8:9-24). If the side of the Divine Logos and Christian philosophy must have its lines of succession, the side of evil and the opposition to this philosophy has a genealogy as well, including a human instrument and a metaphysical being (the *misokalos*, or Hater of Good, frequent epithet of the Devil, also the *epiboulos* or Plotter against Salvation.)<sup>13</sup>

The hater of good and plotter against the salvation of humans, the evil power, put forward the father of such evils and producer (*demiourgos*), Simon, at that time, as if (putting forth) a great antagonist of the great and divine apostles of our savior. (*HE* 2.14.1)

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<sup>12</sup> On the philosophical tradition and Christian biography, see Urbano, A. (2013). *The philosophical life : Biography and the crafting of intellectual identity in late antiquity* (Patristic monograph series no. 21). Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press. See also Devore, D. (forthcoming). *Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History and Classical Culture: Philosophy, Empire, and the Formation of Christian Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>13</sup> Notably this appears in Methodius, *Aglaophon, or On the Resurrection*, 1.36.2, a Christian philosophical dialogue commonly ascribed to the late third/early fourth century.

The register of this language places it within both the apostolic tradition from Acts, transmission of heresiological material from Irenaeus and Hegesippus, and the philosophical vocabulary of Platonic dialogues, also drawing on Homeric language.<sup>14</sup>

In *HE* 2.15.3, the composition of the Gospel of Mark occurs as a transmission from the apostle Peter after he defeats the heresy of Simon Magus. In fact, Simon's defeat appears to spark of the transmission of Peter's teachings, like a literary catalyst or text evincing the power of the apostolic truth, preserved for the hearers for whom a one-time event is not enough.

Therefore neither the artifices of Simon nor of anyone else of the people producing them at that time was able to resist during those apostolic times. For the light of truth and divine word that shone from God upon humankind on the earth, being full-blown and dwelling among its own apostles, conquered and prevailed completely over all things.<sup>15</sup>

The duration of the true Christian teachings contrasts with the impermanence of the false teachings. The span of time stretches from the apostles to the compositional time of the narrative, the early fourth century. Although the teachings do not last, their impermanence does. That is to say, the same Logos that shone forth in apostolic times continues to shine forth in the compositional time, and the effect is the same on a disparate body of heresy, always divided yet strangely also continuous in a shadow genealogy of evil opposition. The language of this passage also resonates with the letters of Paul and the designation of true apostleship. It describes a polity of apostles that the Divine Logos governs, giving national status to the Christian politeuma.

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<sup>14</sup> E.g., for a parallel to the use of τῶν θεσπεσίων τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν ἀποστόλων," cf. Plat. Theaet. 151b "σοφοῖς τε καὶ θεσπεσίους ἀνδράσι."

<sup>15</sup> As Gustave Bardy remarks, "Cette description idyllique des premiers temps chrétiens ne doit pas être prise à la lettre. Eusébe, comme tout le monde, embellit le passé." *HE* 2.14.3 n. 2.

This framing in negative and positive genealogy of the Logos continues in the next chapter, as the power of the Divine Logos to defeat Simon is asserted. Then the understanding of Peter appears with the Divine Logos, as a counterpart and even antidote to false teachings.

In this way, therefore, after the divine word (*logos*) came to dwell in the city among them, the power of Simon went out and was immediately destroyed along with the man. So much light shone upon the minds of the hearers (*akroatoi*) of Peter that they were not satisfied with one hearing at one time or the unwritten instruction (*didaskalia*) of divine proclamation (*kerygma*) being enough. With all sorts of exhortations they entreated Mark—whose Gospel is recorded—since he was the companion of Peter that he leave also a treatise (*hypomnēma*) in writing of the instruction transmitted to them through the word (*logos*). They did not let go until the man had completed the task. In this way, they became the cause of the writing of the so-called Gospel according to Mark.<sup>16</sup>

It is the very conflict with Simon Magus that authenticates Peter's teachings. Peter is not only a teacher but a wonderworker, a philosopher-teacher with the power to counter sorcery. While it seems perhaps logical from Acts that this would be the portrait of the Apostle, the sense of wonder and miracle that derives from the first-century and passes into the fourth-century compositional understanding adheres to the writings of Peter. In this passage, Mark is Peter's student who writes down the teachings of the Gospel. The *Ecclesiastical History* also cites 1 Pet. 5:13 at this juncture: the greeting to the churches in Babylon which identifies Mark as Peter's son.<sup>17</sup> There is a community around them (much like a philosophical community) who want to not only hear the teachings of the Apostle but also read them over again in the student's written record that draws on and creates collective memory (*hypomnēma*).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> HE 2.15.1

<sup>17</sup> 'ἀσπάζεται ἡμᾶς ἢ ἐν Βαβυλῶνι συνεκλεκτῇ καὶ Μάρκος ὁ υἱός μου.' 1 Pet 5:13.

<sup>18</sup> See Sandra Huebenthal (2020) : *Reading Mark's Gospel as a Text from Collective Memory. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company*. Chapter 1: "Exegetical Kaleidoscope : Images of the Genesis and Interpretations of Mark's Gospel" includes a discussion of memory awareness and audience-oriented textual production in the accounts of the *Ecclesiastical History*.

Also, the language of this passage harmonizes Biblical and philosophical language. The idea of the *didaskaleia*, “teaching” or “school,” and the *akroatoi* or “hearers” recalls the academies of the philosophers and the language of philosophical lectures. The emphasis on the *kerygma* and the unwritten forms suggests oral transmission of divinely inspired knowledge. The writing is itself caused by the community: instead of Gospel as a narrative of teaching alone, this is a community calling a text into being via their desire to review and understand the oral teachings of the Apostle. This emphasis on unwritten teachings and the permission to write lectures down at the hearers’ behest reoccurs in the *Ecclesiastical History* 6.36, when Origen permits his lectures to be written down at the end of his life.<sup>19</sup>

This remarkable set of readings on gospel writing, sonship and apostolic authority leads into a discussion of authentic ascetic “Christian” practice. The figure of Simon Magus also ties Caesarea to Rome and acts as a counter-narrative of the origin of evil, connecting the fourth-century to the power of apostolic suppression of false teaching through the means of Peter and Mark’s gospel. By contrast, the preaching of Mark’s Gospel creates a textualized community in Egypt: the Therapeutae. According to the *Ecclesiastical History*, this community occupies a liminal position between the creation and affirmation of the written Gospel. It is both created as a

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<sup>19</sup> Τότε δῆτα, οἷα καὶ εἰκὸς ἦν, πληθουσίως θουούσης τῆς πίστεως πεπαρησιασμένου τε τοῦ καθ’ ἡμᾶς παρὰ πᾶσιν λόγου, ὑπὲρ τὰ ἐξήκοντά φασιν ἔτη τὸν Ὀριγένην γενόμενον, ἅτε δὴ μεγίστην ἤδη συλλεξάμενον ἐκ τῆς μακρᾶς παρασκευῆς ἔξιν, τὰς ἐπὶ τοῦ κοινοῦ λεγομένας αὐτῷ διαλέξεις ταχυγράφοις μεταλαβεῖν ἐπιτρέψαι, οὐ πρότερόν ποτε τοῦτο γενέσθαι συγκεχωρηκότα. (*HE* 6.36.1)

This echoing of the Gospel of Mark composition narrative is more memorable because it also occurs in the context of a *didaskaleia*, the catechetical school of Alexandria, and it hints at the knowledge of the material textual production which the *Ecclesiastical History* both benefited from and through which it was also likely created. On the scriptorium of Pamphilus and Eusebius, see Grafton and Williams (2006): *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book*, especially Chapter 4: “Eusebius: An Impresario of the Codex” for a discussion of the new organization of scribal labor and ways of producing texts.

product of the preaching and recorded in turn by Philo of Alexandria.<sup>20</sup> In the spread of Mark's Gospel into Egypt, the community around Peter and Mark calls the written text into existence, which is then preached to create a community which is deemed worthy to be written down. The interplay of community and text conveys a sense of generative power, both of communities to demand textual production and of texts themselves to create communities.

One of the characteristics of this community that acts as an unimpeachable hallmark of Christian identity in the narrative of the Therapeutae in the *Ecclesiastical History* is that women are part of the philosophical asceticism.<sup>21</sup> Philosophical and devout virgins were important features of the ascetic landscape in the fourth century circle around the text of the *Ecclesiastical History*. The interpretation of the Therapeutrides here reflects on the later ideals of Christian philosophical community and also the possibility of women as religious office holders, projecting back into Marcan community and Egyptian Jewish asceticism an early, "pure" version of the developed religious ascetic networks of the fourth century.

## Ordering of Imperial Time

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<sup>20</sup> Τοῦτον δὲ Μάρκον πρῶτον φασιν ἐπὶ τῆς Αἰγύπτου στείλαμενον, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, ὃ δὴ καὶ συνεγράψατο, κηρῦσαι, ἐκκλησίας τε πρῶτον ἐπ' αὐτῆς Ἀλεξανδρείας συστήσασθαι. [2] τοσαύτη δ' ἄρα τῶν αὐτόθι πεπιστευκότων πληθὺς ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ γυναικῶν ἐκ πρώτης ἐπιβολῆς συνέστη δι' ἀσκήσεως φιλοσοφωτάτης τε καὶ σφοδροτάτης, ὡς καὶ γραφῆς αὐτῶν ἀξιῶσαι τὰς διατριβὰς καὶ τὰς συνηλύσεις τὰ τε συμπόσια καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν ἄλλην τοῦ βίου ἀγωγὴν τὸν Φίλωνα. (*HE* 2.16.1-2.)

<sup>21</sup> See Sabrina Inowlocki on the reading of Philo that underpins this identification: "Finally, Eusebius summarizes those passages that point to the Christian identity of the Therapeutae (*HE* 2.17.21–23). He notes the separation of men and women although Philo is not describing the place where they live but the place where they celebrate the seventh day. The summary nature of Eusebius's remarks here allows him to omit that the separation between men and women is not a permanent one." Inowlocki, S. (2004). "Eusebius of Caesarea's *Interpretatio Christiana* of Philo's *De vita contemplativa*," *HTR* 97:3, p. 317.

The production of texts in third and fourth-century Roman Palestine emphasized columnar outlays with notation and parallel versions. From the tradition around Origen, we have the Hexapla, a parallel biblical set of versions in six tables collated from Hebrew and Greek versions. From the school of Pamphilus and the work of Eusebius, we have the *Chronici Canones*, an ordering of universal time that presents timelines first by nation (Chaldean, Assyrian, Medean, Lydian, Persian, then Hebrew), then a synchronic list dating by Roman time and the Olympiads. It is this work, lost in the Greek but surviving in Armenian, that Jerome who worked in adapted for his *Chronicle*. This notion of time is in its essence imperial, in that it relays the time of empires, but it is particularly fourth-century imperial in the *Chronici Canones*.

The *Chronici Canones* are so intrinsically connected with the *Ecclesiastical History* that no dating hypothesis or compositional analysis can proceed without consideration of the *Canones*. The prior work of the ordering of time into columns and synchrony, into ordered and parallel ranks of dating increments, underpins the narrative structure of the *Ecclesiastical History*. The *Canones* are a compilation of times, creating a metanarrative time that allows Christian time to take its place and indeed supercede among Greek, Roman, and a number of versions of Hebrew time. For the section on Hebrew chronicles, several versions are considered, including Samaritan, and the apparent lack of synchrony sets the stage for resolution into a universal Christian / Roman time. The very construction of temporality is an argument for a Christian *telos*. It is the tabular, monumental construction of time that holds the larger, transtemporal narratives in place in the *Ecclesiastical History*. The format of the *Chronici Canones* also creates a dimensionality of time

that allows both for synchronous and diachronous surveys of history.<sup>22</sup> This underlying time map can fruitfully be compared with strategies for analysing collective memories in competition or harmony with one another, specifically the theories of multidirectional memory laid out by Michael Rothberg. As he writes,

Through mnemonic mapping, I arrive at a four-part distinction in which multidirectional memories are located at the intersection of comparison (defined by a continuum stretching from equation to differentiation) and an axis of political affect (defined by a continuum stretching from competition to solidarity-two nonsimple composite affects).<sup>23</sup>

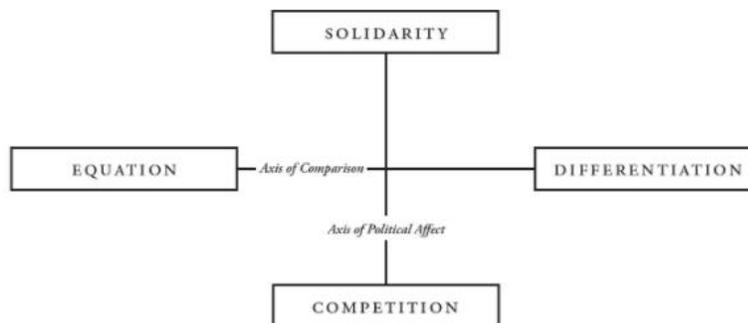


FIGURE 8. Mapping multidirectional memory. Figure created by the author.

In this set of axes, the political affect of the time of the *Ecclesiastical History* can be read multidirectionally as in solidarity with the ancient Hebrew and other ancient chronologies before the historically placed birth of Jesus Christ and then in competition afterwards (see the disasters of Jews after the death of Christ). Also, on the equation to differentiation axis, the reading project

<sup>22</sup> See Andrej, O. "Canons chronologiques et Histoire ecclésiastique." In Morlet, S., & Perrone, L. (2012). *Histoire ecclésiastique : [avec] commentaire (Anagôgê ; 6)*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres : Éditions du Cerf. "Ce format (une véritable révolution dans la forme du livre), à travers son entrelacement systématique de synchronie (temps horizontal) et de diachronie (temps vertical), rendait possible une conjugaison de la scansion annalistique de de la scansion *per intervalla*." p. 36 n.12.

<sup>23</sup> Rothberg, M. (2019). *The implicated subject: Beyond victims and perpetrators*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, p. 124, figure p. 125.

of the Chronicle shifts from equation (time before Jesus Christ and historical Judean practice) to differentiation (Christianism as the true religion and heir of ancient practice).

In this form of reading, time becomes an imperial product, the synthesis of other narratives and other religious and national teloi that are subjugated beneath the time of the Romans and, in the apologetic chronology of the *Ecclesiastical History*, the Christian control of time through the salvific, ahistorical but historically evident power of the Divine Logos. The integral time of national record gives way to a multilayered, tabular reasoning of relative maps of time, a new map composed of composite elements, chronology as nexus point of tabular metachronology. This way of seeing and reading itself implies the imperial management of many streams of time, and the tabular view controls the relative truth claims and self-understandings of each individual time system of significance, harnessing them as subjects of a larger imperial chrono-metanarrative.

### **The Cumulative Aesthetic and Late Antique Style**

The logic of the juxtapositions aesthetically conforms to other artistic representations of tetrarchic style, most famously the Arch of Constantine. This monument to Constantine's victory over Maxentius (his brother-in-law) at the Milvian Bridge in Rome is constructed with pieces from earlier monuments. In his introduction to the collection *Eusebius: Traditions and Innovations*,

Aaron Johnson calls this “the cumulative aesthetic” and sees it as the artistic and literary hallmark of Late Antique style:<sup>24</sup>

Unlike the struggling ascent of aesthetically-homogeneous figures on the earlier Column of Marcus Aurelius, the Arch juxtaposed artistic pieces detached from their earlier contexts in the reigns of Trajan, Hadrian, and Aurelius, and placed them in a new triumphal whole with a carefully worded inscription (which may exhibit more an attempt to slow down the growing religious changes in the person and reign of Constantine on the part of the Senate than an ambiguous expression by the emperor of his new religious allegiances).<sup>25</sup>

Much like the works in stone and representative art, to which memorials in words are compared, the stone monuments of the earlier Emperors are set within the framing monumental context of the triumphal arch, twining past and present together in a Rome of the earlier Empire and the restored Rome of Constantinian triumph. As a literary monument of this period which is ultimately also framed in Constantinian triumph, the *Ecclesiastical History* blends the tableaux and literary monuments of earlier eras into a monumental narrative of Roman domination and Christian triumph.

Patricia Cox Miller calls this stylistic representation in its literary and artistic sense “dissonant echoing,” and “narrative lines...that operate on the basis of two functional criteria:

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<sup>24</sup> The idea of a “cumulative aesthetic” appears in Jás Elsner’s 2006 essay, “Late Antique Art: The Problem of the Concept and the Cumulative Aesthetic” in Swain and Edwards eds., *Approaching Late Antiquity: The Transformation from Early to Late Empire*.

<sup>25</sup> Johnson continues the artistic narration of the Arch’s composite parts: “The panels of Trajan are made to collaborate in a new late antique visual program with the roundels of Hadrian, the artistic narratives of Aurelius, and friezes produced by Constantinian-age carvers. The heavy forms of Dacian soldiers (of Trajanic provenance), for instance, now collude with the lighter (Hadrianic) scenes of hunting; the formulaic sequences of a Constantinian adventus scene contrast with the individualism and spatial ease of a Hadrianic sacrifice scene. Though age has faded their original brilliance, the variegated marble (including Numidian yellow, white Proconnesian, and purple porphyry) contributed to a striking collage of images, styles, and colors. The Arch contained not only a sort of visual quotation of these earlier sources; Constantinian friezes narrated his campaigns in northern Italy and at the Milvian Bridge. More intrusively, the heads of the earlier pieces were recarved to resemble Constantine and another tetrarch (either his father or Licinius).” From the “Introduction,” in Johnson, A. and Schott, J. (2013). *Eusebius of Caesarea: Tradition and Innovations* (Hellenic studies ; 60). Washington, D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies, Trustees for Harvard University. Available online at [http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.ebook:CHS\\_JohnsonA\\_SchottJ\\_eds.Eusebius\\_of\\_Caesarea.2013](http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.ebook:CHS_JohnsonA_SchottJ_eds.Eusebius_of_Caesarea.2013).

one, they leave out unnecessary details, and two, they emphasize repetition.” Both of these reading and juxtaposition strategies are evident in the compilation of the *Ecclesiastical History*: unnecessary details and local specifics that would not allow for texts to be read together for common effect are left out. In Book 8 of the *HE*, which is a vast set of martyr accounts, specific narrations are framed by passages that emphasize the massive nature of the martyrdoms, the ultimate unknowability of every name (*HE* 8.12.11) or every detail (*HE* 8.13.7) except by local communities who partook in the sufferings as onlookers.<sup>26</sup>

In fact, there was a specific local set of martyrdoms that was written compositionally about the time of the *Ecclesiastical History*, also originating in this specific time and place and set of conditions of Palestine: *The Martyrs of Palestine*. How this text interweaves with the text of the *Ecclesiastical History* is both clear and unclear, or rather, the significant material overlap is clear, but the time frame of the manuscript stemma and its relationship to a compositional hypothesis about the *Ecclesiastical History* is the subject of argument. This text appears independently in Syriac, Greek, and Latin sources. A shorter version of it seems to underlay Book Eight of the *HE* and, in one manuscript tradition, appears alongside it. For the purposes of this discussion, the existence of multiple versions of this text, independent and embedded in the *Ecclesiastical History*, is interesting to show the principle of removing local details to create a larger collection for circulation beyond a local audience. It is similar, say, to the versions of epigrams that appear in the Greek Anthology and the loss of locally specific material in

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<sup>26</sup>As *HE* 8.6.10 poses rhetorically: πῶς ἂν πάλιν ἐνταῦθα τῶν καθ' ἐκάστην ἐπαρχίαν μαρτύρων ἀριθμήσειέν τις τὸ πλῆθος καὶ μάλιστα τῶν κατὰ τὴν Ἀφρικὴν καὶ τὸ Μαύρων ἔθνος Θηβαΐδα τε καὶ κατ' Αἴγυπτον; ἐξ ἧς καὶ εἰς ἑτέρας ἤδη προελθόντες πόλεις τε καὶ ἐπαρχίας διέπρεψαν τοῖς μαρτυρίοις.

collections, or to the work of collecting epic in Greek lyric.<sup>27</sup> Much like Patricia Cox Miller's work on imperial iconography and later fourth century orders of monumental art, the *Ecclesiastical History* is a collection that exemplifies the principle of collection, not the individual elements.<sup>28</sup>

### **Women and Resistance : Virgins, Martyrs, and Philosophy**

In the *Ecclesiastical History*, there are three places in which the term “virgins” (*parthenoi*) is used for women in communities identified as following Christian philosophical asceticism . The first, as mentioned above, is the appearance of the “aged virgins” in the community of the Therapeutae near Lake Mareotis, drawn from the accounts of Philo but identified in the *Ecclesiastical History* as Christians.<sup>29</sup> In the Christian historicized framing, these women are identified as virgins by choice (*kath' hekousion gnomēn*), preserving their chastity out of a desire for wisdom (*sōphia*). They partake of the fasting and observations of the community. In Book Three, the Daughters of Philip appear with their connection to the city of Caesarea and to prophecy.<sup>30</sup> The use of the participle of “diatribō” to describe Philip's daughters suggests a

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<sup>27</sup> For the Greek anthology, see “Editorializing the Greek Anthology: The palatin[e] manuscript as a collective imaginary” in DHQ : <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/14/1/000447/000447.html> retrieved 10.13.20. For local versions of epic in Greek lyric, see Nagy, *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past*, especially on the process of “panhellenization.” [http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.ebook:CHS\\_Nagy.Pindars\\_Homer.1990](http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.ebook:CHS_Nagy.Pindars_Homer.1990). retrieved 10. 20.20.

<sup>28</sup>For the discussion, see Miller, P. C. (2011). *The Corporeal Imagination: Signifying the Holy in Late Ancient Christianity*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. Chp. 2: “Bodies In Fragments,” pp. 42-61.

<sup>29</sup> HE 2.17.19, [19] φησὶν γὰρ τοῖς περὶ ὧν ὁ λόγος καὶ γυναῖκας συνεῖναι, ὧν αἱ πλεῖσται γηραλέαι παρθένοι τυγχάνουσιν, τὴν ἀγνείαν οὐκ ἀνάγκη, καθάπερ ἔναι τῶν παρ' Ἑλλήσιν ἱερειῶν, φυλάξασαι μᾶλλον ἢ καθ' ἐκούσιον γνώμην, διὰ ζῆλον καὶ πόθον σοφίας, ἧ συμβιοῦν σπουδάσασαι τῶν περὶ τὸ σῶμα ἡδονῶν ἠλόγησαν, οὐ θνητῶν ἐκγόνων, ἀλλ' ἀθανάτων ὀρεχθεῖσαι, ἃ μόνη τίκτειν ἀφ' ἑαυτῆς οἷα τέ ἐστιν ἡ θεοφιλῆς ψυχὴ.

<sup>30</sup> HE 3.31.5 citing Acts 21:8-9 : ταῦτα μὲν οὗτος· ὁ δὲ Λουκᾶς ἐν ταῖς Πράξεσιν τῶν ἀποστόλων τῶν Φιλίππου θυγατέρων ἐν Καισαρείᾳ τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἅμα τῷ πατρὶ τότε διατριβουσῶν προφητικοῦ τε χαρίσματος ἠξιωμένων μνημονεύει, κατὰ λέξιν ὧδέ πως λέγων· ἦλθομεν εἰς Καισάρειαν, καὶ εἰσελθόντες εἰς τὸν οἶκον Φιλίππου τοῦ εὐαγγελιστοῦ, ὄντος ἐκ τῶν ἑπτὰ, ἐμείναμεν παρ' αὐτῷ.

philosophical as well as a prophetic context. Finally, in Book Eight, the virgins in the city of Antioch appear, serving God in all things and true sisters (*alethōs adelphai*). These women are admirable in their zeal (*spoudē*) and way of life, which suggests a Christian philosophical asceticism. Their perfection is intolerable to the servants of the daimons (*hoi therapeutai ton daimonōn*), who torture them and toss them into the sea.<sup>31</sup> In this passage, the physical perfection and youth of the martyrs appear, as does their moral perfection and practice of piety. The fact that they are virgins and true sisters both may indicate a familial relationship as well as a shared ascetic office in the church at Antioch. As *therapeutai* of Christ, they are contrasted with the *therapeutai* of the daimons. Thus the earliest representations of the followers of Peter and Mark in Egypt, according to Book Two, the Therapeutae, resonate with the virgins of the fourth-century in Book Eight who belong to the persecutions of the early fourth century.

Virgins and servants of the daimons also appear in the accounts of the tyranny of Maximinus and Licinius in Books 8 and 10. In *HE 8.14.12* Maximinus appears as a ravisher of virgins. Similarly, when Licinius goes on a rampage, he too takes on this attribute of the tyrant (*HE 10.8.13*).

Thus, the early philosophical asceticism recalls the later forms, the roles of the philosophical virgins appear constant throughout time and space, and the servants of God are always opposed by (but never truly defeated by) the servants of the daimons. The awareness of prophecy and miracles is also transmitted across the axes of time and space, remaining as current to the narrative of the fourth-century as it was in the first. The miraculous teaching of the Divine

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<sup>31</sup> *HE 8.12.5*, Αἶδε μὲν οὖν ἑαυτάς: ἄλλην δ' ἐπ' αὐτῆς Ἀντιοχείας ξυνωρίδα παρθένων τὰ πάντα θεοπρεπῶν καὶ ἀληθῶς ἀδελφῶν, ἐπιδόξων μὲν τὸ γένος, λαμπρῶν δὲ τὸν βίον, νέων τοὺς χρόνους, ὠραίων τὸ σῶμα, σεμνῶν τὴν ψυχὴν, εὐσεβῶν τὸν τρόπον, θαυμαστῶν τὴν σπουδὴν, ὡς ἂν μὴ φερούσης τῆς γῆς τὰ τοιαῦτα βαστάζειν, θαλάττῃ ρίπτειν ἐκέλευον οἱ τῶν δαιμόνων θεραπευταί.

Logos maintains its efficacy from apostolic times to the compositional time of the *Ecclesiastical History* in the fourth century. The chains of textual successions and offices bind the practices of ancient proto-Christian philosophy to the expressions of the contemporary fourth-century church in Palestine. In the discussion of Philo's word, these shared traits appear as the characteristics of the ecclesiastical way of life (*hē ekklesiastikē agōgē*) [2.17.14] This pairing of ecclesia with the philosophical way of life suggests a philosophical lens on the entire project of writing an ecclesiastical account (*ekklesiastikē istoria*).

The precursor episode to the noble virgins of Antioch above is a similar event of a mother and two daughters who are threatened in chastity by the persecuting forces. Although they are identified as provincial elites from Antioch, they are threatened by state violence and trapped in an ambush by state forces. When the mother realizes that she and her children will suffer verbal threats from the soldiers of assaults to their chastity, she exhorts them to commit suicide by drowning themselves in the river. As the text reports her exhortation, their only hope of rescue was the escape (*katafugēn*) to Christ.<sup>32</sup> Although this episode is vividly drawn, the identity of the woman and her daughters does not appear in the narrative. The location of Antioch and the trope of virginity and its protection subsumes the identities of the individual women, identified by status markers and age alone. The details of individual suffering become embedded figures on a tapestry of Empire-wide suffering, suffering that particularly catalogues the Eastern map of the Empire. Many nations and peoples are reported in suffering, but the individual details are subsumed into the type of the martyr or the role of the virgin in resistance to state violence.

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<sup>32</sup> HE 8.12.3 τὰς ψυχὰς τῆ τῶν δαιμόνων δουλείᾳ πάντων ὑπάρχειν θανάτων καὶ πάσης χειρὸν ἀπωλείας φήσασα, μίαν τούτων ἀπάντων εἶναι λύσιν ὑπετίθετο τὴν ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον καταφυγὴν.

## Countergenealogies : Women and Tetrachic Kin(g)ship

Another feature both of the genealogies of evil and roles for women in the text of the *Ecclesiastical History* is the invisibility of the women of the imperial household. In the later books, several of the tetrarchs take on the characteristic of tyrants in contrast to the antitypes of tyranny, the good rulers Constantius and Constantine. Particularly Maxentius and Maximinus are cast in this role. A feature of their joint tyranny is their treatment of women, specifically sexual depravity and adultery with elite married women (8.14.2) and ravishment of virgins (vide supra 17, also for the later comparison to Licinius). In *HE* 8.14.7-8, Maximinus and Maxentius conspire to form a brotherhood of evil deeds.<sup>33</sup> It appears as a secret alliance (*filia*) that they are able to hide for a long time, but on whose basis Maximinus is punished. Their kinship in tyranny and common nature in evil-doing appears again in the next paragraph regarding the consultation with sorcerers and magicians.<sup>34</sup> Interestingly, as was the case with most of the imperial commanders at this time, Maxentius and Maximinus are actually related by ties of marriage as well. According to the *Epitome de Caesaribus*, the senior emperor in the East, Galerius, was married to the daughter of Diocletian, Valeria. Maxentius was married to their daughter, Valeria Maxilla. Galerius also adopted Maximinus, whose mother was his sister, as his son and heir. So by adoption and marriage, Maximinus and Maxentius were kin through the sister of a senior

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<sup>33</sup>*HE* 8.14.7: Ὁ δὲ ἐπὶ ἀνατολῆς τύραννος Μαξιμίνος, ὡς ἂν πρὸς ἀδελφὸν τὴν κακίαν, πρὸς τὸν ἐπὶ Ῥώμης φιλιαν κρύβδην σπενδόμενος, ἐπὶ πλεῖστον χρόνον λανθάνειν ἐφρόντιζεν: φωραθεὶς γέ τοι ὕστερον δίκην τίννυσι τὴν ἀξίαν.

<sup>34</sup>*HE* 8.14.8: ἦν δὲ θαυμάσαι ὅπως καὶ οὗτος τὰ συγγενῆ καὶ ἀδελφά, μᾶλλον δὲ κακίας τὰ πρῶτα καὶ τὰ νικητήρια τῆς τοῦ κατὰ Ῥώμην τυράννου κακοτροπίας ἀπενηνεγμένος.

Tetrarch and his daughter. This connection, while glossed in the *Ecclesiastical History* in a passage that emphasizes tyranny and adultery of the noble-born women of Rome, does not include the names of the women or the actual family bonds of the tyrants. As a substitution for their dynastic marriages and kinship through the imperial women, the rulers' crimes against other women are portrayed.

The final invisible woman who ties the apologetic historical threads of the text even more closely together is Maximian's daughter, Flavia Maxima Fausta. Maxentius was Fausta's brother, and she married Constantine in 307.<sup>35</sup> Fausta both informed her husband of her father's plot against him, and also witnessed her husband's defeat of her brother at the Milvian bridge. Although Fausta is related to most of the senior leadership of the Empire, she too appears nowhere in the apologetic narrative of the *Ecclesiastical History*. She is the daughter of an emperor (Maximian), the wife of another (Constantine), and the mother of three more emperors (Constantine II, Constantius II, and Constans). She also had daughters: we know of Constantina who was married to Hannibalianus and then Constantius Gallus, and Helena who was married to Emperor Julian. Fausta's stepson Crispus, whose death is often connected to hers, is mentioned in the *Ecclesiastical History* at 10.9.4 and 10.9.6. Fausta may have suffered a *damnatio memoriae* after her death 326CE, over the details of which the later histories speculate.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Even more invisible than Fausta, arguably, is Constantine's first wife, Minervina, whom he divorces to marry Fausta as part of a compact with Maximian.

<sup>36</sup> Fausta's cause of death, place of death, and reason for death are the source of intense historical speculation in a wide range of later histories, ancient and modern. Philostorgius, Zosimus, Zonaras, Gregory of Tours, John Chrysostom, Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Ammianus Marcellinus, Sidonius Apollinaris, and Orosius all give differing accounts. CIL X 678 may record her *damnatio*: in this inscription Fausta's attributes of wife and mother seem to be chiseled out.

### **The implicated subject : Eusebius as producer and product of the text**

One of the exercises that I have practiced in this paper is the discipline of refusing to name the author, Eusebius, as the originator or intender of historical presentation. This is not done out of a denial of historical reality--Eusebius was most certainly a figure of third- and fourth-century Roman Palestine who composed this and other works in the school of Pamphilus and is the presumed narrative voice of the text--but rather out of an attempt to look at the collective presentation of the act of writing and textual production. Although it is tempting to focus on Eusebius the author of the *Ecclesiastical History* and thus project motive and periodization into this textual character's life, the fact remains that there is very little record of this personage outside of the writings attributed to them. In this way, Eusebius can be seen as a product of the textual production, although certainly an "Origin-ator" as well. The very act of producing these compilations would have necessitated large numbers of writers and people trained in the act of writing and copying. We know that there were copies of the biblical books with notations from Pamphilus and his copying circle, which included Eusebius. Additionally, the composite nature of the *Ecclesiastical History* suggests a large-scale coordination of other texts, a massive marshalling of resources and organizational schemata. As Jeremy Schott writes on the cumulative aesthetic of the text, "This is a *historia*, the written account of Eusebius's inquiries into the past, but this inquiry is presented using a variety of generic conventions. The *Ecclesiastical History* is built by accretion, as Eusebius places literary stone next to literary stone, found textual object next to

found textual object.” Schott also uses the term “spoliation” for this project, the incorporation of pieces of older architecture into a new building.<sup>37</sup>

Nonetheless, the use of the figure “Eusebius” to focus this building project tends to overread for individual genius and artisanry (see the term “impresario of the codex” used by Grafton and Williams, for example) and deemphasize the collective labor and effort necessary for a textual product of this sort. Not only does the work depend on the works of others, quite literally, for its tissue, but the transcription, copying, and collation also certainly would not have been attributed to a single writer, Eusebius, but rather to a crowd of collective impresarios of the codex helping to create a communal product. When we read for the individual, we lose the collective quality of such works, as well as the generational and material qualities necessary for their production.<sup>38</sup> Although there is a first person within the text, and the narrator makes an appearance, particularly in the contradistinction of the earlier times to the present-day of the history, it may be a useful thought exercise to read for the collectivity -- the textual circle around or scriptorium of Eusebius -- rather than for Eusebius themselves<sup>39</sup>. Also, if we take the example of self-conscious textual production by a student (Jesus to Peter, Peter to Mark) and the

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<sup>37</sup> Schott, trans. (2019). *The History of the Church* (1st ed.). Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 34.

<sup>38</sup> As Aaron Johnson writes about the production of the *Chronici canones*: “Knowledge remains ever near to power: the resources required and the expenses accrued in the production of such a great exhibition of universal chronological knowledge would have been immense. We would like to know Eusebius’ sources for acquiring texts (only some of which could derive from Origen’s library, but what of Longinus’ library?), the materials for the book itself (who paid for the parchment and ink?), and the manual labor involved (slaves or students?) in the years so closely following the Great Persecution.” Johnson, Aaron P. (2013). *Eusebius*, p. 89.

<sup>39</sup> I am intentionally using this neutral pronoun, they/them, not to emphasize but rather to deemphasize the gendering of the narrative subject and make the gendering of this subject less fixed on masculine textual domination and impresario strategies and more on collective, potentially other-gendered (this is an ascetic philosophical intellectual circle, after all), more fluid practices of identity. If we are to take Origen as the fore-parent of this movement (which I believe we should), we should look at the relation of the story of Origen’s self-neutering as an example (*HE* 6.8 on the basis of Matthew 19:12).

community that calls the text into being (the community around Peter asking for a written copy of the teachings) as well as the the communities that are engendered by the experience of the text (Therapeutae).

Another aspect of this collective reading is the transformation of a persecuted to a persecuting society and the gruesome, vengeful readings of deaths of tyrants and heretics and ideological as well as physical destruction of Jewish and pagan institutions alike. Although philosophical and salvific in its framing, this history also partakes of a vengeful, cruel, visceral exultation in the humiliation of the Roman tyrants and Christian triumphalism and anti-Semitism. The narrative dominance of Roman time and the spoliation of the vanquished includes the physical subjugation of others, the stripping away of sacrality and temporality from other traditions, the denuding of places and the dehumanizing of opponents. The shadow side of the glorious salvific light of the Logos is the bloody exultation in the demise of its opponents. In this moral and philosophical field of responsibility, we can read the implicated subject of Eusebius as producer and product of the *Ecclesiastical History*.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> "By referring to the implicated subject as a figure, I draw attention to the tensions at the heart of that concept: the resonances of both figurative art--"art that retains strong references to the real world and particularly to the human figure"--and figurative language: language that diverges from the literal. An implicated subject is a figure insofar as it both alludes to human beings located in a real, material world and serves as a trope for describing a contingent, shifting and socially constituted position in that world. The implicated subject is not an identity, but rather a figure to think with and through." Rothberg, *Implicated Subject*, p. 199, citation on art from <https://tate.org.uk>.